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## Just Little Things

● Herbert Hilscher in the *Cosmopolitan* let enthusiasm run away with his prudence when he enlarged on the opportunities in the Philippines for young Americans, and now it turns out that hundreds of his readers have set their caps to come here and are writing to the chamber of commerce or to businessmen for jobs. Hilscher was probably misunderstood, scores of Americans are on Manila's streets without jobs or very much hope of getting any, and other scores are eking out hand-to-mouth existence either on irregular work lowly paid or regular work at mere Manila wages, or perhaps on small retirement pay or pension. Young Americans with no work are in our office every day desperate over their circumstances; and Secretary Clifford, who handles such appeals, has only a job now and then for many, many applicants. All of Hilscher's victims must be advised that the Islands have nothing for them, and by all means not to come here unless on a roundtrip ticket. It's all too bad, and bad Christmas information.

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● Jesuits spend about eleven years at their college work, we believe, after being carefully selected in the first place, and they are dynamic fellows always thoroughly informed and grounded in Plato, Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine and the other approved philosophers as few men can be. When something deep and moving hits the world, Jesuits get to the roots of it quickly and often try to do something about it; not always as a society of teaching priests, more often as individual scholars of the pulpit inspired by some particular misery of

mankind to proffer practical means of relief. And Jesuits write like all get out, write as well as they talk. So they are powerful when they get going, and we wish they would get going here—on some of our own sociological problems.

This is all suggested by a circular, *Free America* that has come to us from 112 East 19th St., New York, and seems to be the name of a magazine that is a new one on us and is edited by Chauncey Stillman. It may not be all Jesuit, but surely some Jesuits have something forceful to do with it because the circular speaks of the work of a Jesuit among the Nova Scotia fishermen that we mentioned in passing some months back. *Free America* tries to instruct these Nova Scotians, who through cooperation are steadily solving their economic problems, "building their own canneries, buying tools, and putting up livable homes on the first land they've ever owned." *Free America* also reaches Suffern, New York, quite a different community made up of commuters to the city. Cooperative home building captivated Suffern. A group of Suffernians took a whole tract of land, subdivided it to suit each buyer, and worked out a long-term low-interest financing plan with *non-speculative sponsorship*.

"At the upper end, business men are learning to spread out their centralized plants and start shops in the country run by local men and seeing to it that they have homes and land," says the circular, adding that readers are finding renewed faith in economic democracy. We dare say there's a lot of everyday secular work to be done everywhere, even here, as well as in Nova

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Scotia and Suffern, by talented religious men wise enough to see that while they tend the lamps of the temple they can't have philistines undermining the foundations; though churches began in a pastoral and agricultural age whose communities were all self-sufficient save where trade benefited a few seaports, ours is ineluctably an industrial age in which, as always, new occasions teach new duties. The price of *Free America* is a dollar a year.

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● When we saw by a morning newspaper, the *Tribune*, that George T. Boles of Mindanao was in Manila for the first time in thirty years, and had seen Commissioner McNutt and had his picture taken with him, we looked Boles up at the Pioneers Club on calle Echague—a good place for one of your Christmas remembrances to go. Boles is a sandy, stocky whilom sailor 51 years old who did some of his navy work under Admiral "Fighting Bob" Evans. He enlisted at Cleveland in 1904, having gone to Cleveland on french leave from his home in Erie, Pa. Just two weeks before his father died, he wrote his first letter home; his mother is still living, in the old home at Erie, and is only 75 years old. For a man who has spent 30 years in Mindanao, Boles is not as old as you would think. He is not at all an oldtimer, and he has not gone to seed in Mindanao. He came here a night bos'n on the U. S. A. T. *Logan* 31 years ago, and left ship here because the ship was too small to hold him and the mate, who bulldozed him, but some years later was in stir at San Quentin for opium running.

For a fortnight soon after reaching Manila, Boles was chief of police of Parañaque, then during a few months he was a packer at Fort McKinley in Packtrain No. 9 under Joe Gardner. He says he is a flapjack specialist, no one can beat him making flapjacks, but he tired of the packtrain because the packers all agreed

with him and kept him over the cookstove every morning. He now loped off to Mindanao, landed at Iligan from the coastguard *Negros*, and plunged into the wilderness to learn about the various peoples living there and pick up their talk. He smokes mildly, but does not drink, and has a sailor's cunning about leaving the wrong women alone.

He worked when he first went to Mindanao, the best job he seems to have had was that of a supervising lineman for a provincial telephone system. What we suspect is that Boles always saved money, even at sea, and that he saves it now. We are glad to see, in talking to him, that he reads widely in current literature and that he has steadily added to his schooling since the formal part of it ended at Grade VIII in Erie nearly 40 years ago. He speaks a number of the Mindanao dialects, he says, and claims mastery of Bisayan, but he mingles very few patois phrases with his English, and uses no pidgin at all. Many years ago, out of his savings, he bought the 60-hectare farm at Lama-Lama that he still owns. It is 9 kilometers from Kolombang (site of the lumber mill of the Findlay Millar Timber Co.), on Panguil bay. Boles says his house stands on the spot where Mohammedans of Panguil once auctioned off their Christian captives as slaves. Originally the place belonged to Sultan Na Minata, the one sultan in all the Kapitagan valley. Na Minata sold it to W. W. Swain, who sold to a German, Otto R. Siefert, who in turn sold to Boles.

Boles planted coconuts and has just short of 4,000 bearing. He gardens and cultivates fruits, and has a few cattle and buffalo, and the coconuts made into copra are his cash crop seldom turning up less than ₱150 a month. We dare say the place yields 1,000 piculs of copra a year, if there are about 4,000 bearing palms. This would keep a family nicely. There are two boys and a girl in the family, the girl now sixteen and soon to live among Boles's relatives at Erie and try for a good education. The boys plan to stay on at the farm, which, supplemented by hunting and fishing, employs them well enough. Boles does not believe in schooling a boy very far, unless he schools himself. At the Commissioner's Boles registered his children as Americans, and he gained the assurance, for which he had come to Manila, that things will probably keep on all right for everyone here after 1946.

Manila depressed Boles exceedingly. As he expressed it, it made him seasick. Instead of tender care, he found some daughters of men he had known being exploited; and Boles is clean, all this went through him like a knife; he was glad, in a few days, to be heading back to Lama-Lama, with him a tot 7 years old that he could care for without tongues of malice licking after them. He promised a widow and her daughters to look up a small place where they might garden and raise chickens, and possibly have a store, if they wanted to come on later. It wouldn't be much, he told them, neither would it be too little—provided they worked. Lama is a petty Mohammedan title at Panguil, it seems, and perhaps signifies just an elder of the community, or a liaison functionary. Boles says that no one from sultan down to sacop undertakes to do anything affecting anyone else without first consulting the lama. He adds that during all his 30 years in Mindanao no one has been a bad neighbor to him. There's a new highway building now, 275 kilometers, clear to Zamboanga.

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