

Report from Mambajao

Operation "Hibok - Hibok"

About two months ago an unusual sight greeted the eyes of the townspeople of Mambajao, Camiguin Island. In a small school building under the shadows of famed Hibok-hibok volcano, 65 sturdy men filed in and out of the classroom regularly for three weeks. Inside the room where at other times tiny children noisily attended their class, the adults held their own sessions seriously.

The group were farmers of the town and nearby villages. They had come to learn how to produce more out of their land. And the class was a joint project of the College of Agriculture, Xavier University of Cagayan de Oro City and the Columbian Farmers Aid Association.

The class was conducted by Democrito K. Talian, an instructor in the College of Agriculture of Xavier University. Out of 65 who had enrolled, 34 finished the course to become definitely better farmers.

In the classroom, the farmers were taught the modern trends of farming. They learned how to increase productivity through proper land preparation, seed selection, proper weeding, fertilization, control of pests and diseases, proper storage of the harvested crop in the case of crop plants, control of diseases, scientific feeding and improvement of native livestock, and many others. From time to time, the class went out

to visit model plantations and livestock farms. Field demonstrations were conducted by the instructor.

Besides the instruction, the class offered the following services to the students: (1) Free pamphlets on farming and other subjects were distributed, (2) An improved Poland-China x Duroc-Jersey boar was made available to service native sows, (3) Six Single Comb White Leghorn layers and one New Hampshire rooster were given free to the class to upgrade their native poultry stock.

The project, conducted with the cooperation of Lt. Gov. Jose P. Neri of the Subprovince of Camiguin, Mambajao Mayor Sergio M. Lactao, and the local office of the Bureau of Agricultural Extension headed by Mr. Democrito L. Sagrado, was a definite success.

Instructor Talian reported that all the members of the class were serious and enthusiastic about the course. At graduation time, all 34 students who saw the course through had each started a new project in their farms from vegetable gardening to poultry raising.

But the greatest change came over the ways in which the farmer-students tilled their lands. In a survey conducted among the 34 members of the class, Mr. Talian

(Continued on page 22)

Special Project

Knights Shed Light On Rural Problems

Replies thus far received from the different Knights of Columbus Councils to the appeal of Senator Oscar Ledesma are yielding helpful information about the rural needs of the country.

A month ago, Senator Ledesma, as president of the Columbian Farmers' Aid Association, asked the various KC Councils to help the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, of which he is the chairman, to gather information that will help the Committee in its intensive study of agricultural conditions and needs of the people. Questionnaires were sent out and an encouraging number of replies have been and continue to be received.

The question posed by the circular was: "What is the principal way or ways in which our Government — relying, of course, on the mutual support and cooperation of the people themselves — can help to relieve the

(Continued on next page)

OPERATIONS....

(Continued from page 19)

found that only four were using fertilizer for their crops, only one employed the "Magasana" and "Margate" systems of rice planting, only a few used ready-mixed feeds for their poultry, and some even had superstitious beliefs and practices in their farming.

Mr. Talian reports that now these farmers are beginning to adopt the scientific techniques learned from his class. They are abandoning antiquated ways of soil cultivation and livestock raising.

The soil of Mambajao has been enriched by centuries of lava flow from towering Hibok-Hibok. With their newly learned methods, these farmers are better equipped to bring out the greatest potential of the land.

CHRIST CALLS....

(Continued from page 8)

together, and went to Mass each Sunday together. We ate our meals together, and picnicked and clowned around and pillow-fought together. In Tondo, there are not many happy homes because there are so many empty houses. If it's not the parents, it's the children who run away. I never thought of running away from home — even to a place called seminary. But it was at home where Christ began to call me. Because Christ was there.

I heard the call again on a camping-hike. We were Boy Scouts. Eight in that band that day. It was a windy day. I saw one of my comrades run to chase his wind-blown cap. The next second, I saw him smashed under the heavy tires of a lumber truck. A screech, a shriek, and he was dead. It happened so quickly. I didn't even find time to think. And when I recovered from the shock, I started to think. And I thought of becoming a priest. At first, I could not quite see the connection. I shrugged it off like a silly idea, and I picked up from where I left off. I re-joined my gang and tried to have a good time.

I heard the call again in a dancing hall. Very bright and full of balloons, and plenty to eat. It was our Freshmen-Sophomore Prom. I was Mr. Sophomore, and I was dancing with Miss Sophomore. It was a funny place indeed for Mr. Sophomore in his right mind to wish to become a priest. But Mr. Sophomore in that dancing hall did wish to become a priest. And he was in his right mind.

This time, I decided to give what I

FATHER FELIX....

(Continued from page 13)

confusion in despotical governments. Humiliation is good for the soul, Mr. Lopez."

"And so, when you and I go to Confession, provided only that we mention all of our mortal sins and are truly sorry for them, resolving to do our best not to sin again, through this humiliation, we can not only cleanse our souls of sin but we can also achieve peace and happiness.

"We may dislike ill-tasting medicine. But we know that it is good for our body. We know that it will bring pulsating physical health back to our diseased organs and limbs. So we take it. Similarly, through the disagreeable ordeal of sacramental confession, an ordeal instituted by Jesus Christ Himself according to the Holy Bible, we can bring pulsating life to our souls.

"Confession sometimes is disagreeable," Father Felix concluded, "but in its results, it is beautiful, it is heavenly."

thought was a silly thought a chance. I told it to my parish priest. He promised to pray over it with me. He urged me to start attending daily Mass. And I did. My folks were puzzled. And, of course, I felt awkward.

I heard the call again and again; and I knew that Christ really wanted a Tondo boy. And I felt somehow that He wanted me. It was hard to believe. But I knew that this was the beginning of the end — end of all my silly ideas like smoking cigars and drinking high-balls. For now I finally began to learn how to think sense . . . because I finally learned how to pray. And I saw everything fall into place; the cigars and high-balls and Tarzans and jazz and noise — things to which I clung most vehemently like an urchin to his paper-toys. What if the wind had blown the wrong way the day my friend died, and drove me instead chasing my own Scout-cap to my own death? Or, what if Mr. Sophomore had dropped dead in the middle of a jazz? What if . . . ? Contrary to fact conditions of course! Perhaps, it was because God wanted me to live on, and become a priest. Certainly, Tondo needs another one. Perhaps, Tondo needs me.

Not long ago, I met an old chum from Tondo. His name is Ben. He, too, wants to become a priest. He cannot believe it himself. "I feel too normal for that", he chuckled. I chuckled with him.

"I felt too normal too", I said. "Perhaps that's why Christ is calling you as He has called me. Because if priests weren't normal. He wouldn't wish to call them in the first place. Because they won't last."