

A Mason as Philanthropist

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How often do we hear of Jolo as a community of outlaws, juramentados and bandits. Perhaps this could have been due to irresponsible reporting of some newspapermen. What is disheartening is that we don't hear of Jolo as a producer of generals, ambassadors and philanthropists. A long list of our Philippine generals have been, at one time or another, assigned in Jolo, trained in actual combat, in real "war". General Mamarinta Lao, a member of the Craft, is the latest Jolo product of a long array of generals from General Arellano and Campo. Ambassadors Abubakar and Arpa, from Sulu, head a list of our country's representatives abroad. Indeed, we have a number of philanthropists like Bro. Romeo Teng Ban, Bro. Garama Abubakar, Bro. Manuel Lim and others.

We are interested in this article to mention one of Jolo's philanthropists — Manuel H. Lim, a brother Mason, a native of Jolo and a father of professionals. I heard much of this man since the Japanese occupation in Sulu, and what he has done for Jolo and its people makes me feel sincerely obliged to relay this significant information to all brethren, the better to enable us to profit by his example.

It was one sunny day in 1963 when I went to the Sulu Hospital to see my brother Dr. Darwin Rasul, a resident physician. One Mahmud Kipli, a poverty-stricken patient suffering from advanced tuberculosis, was given by the doctors fifty per cent chance to live.

The hospital was not sufficiently financed by the government and could not therefore give enough medicine free of charge to the patient. Bro. Manuel Lim was then approached for one hundred pesos cash to buy medicine. Bro. Lim rushed to the hospital and upon seeing the patient, he promised to help, not with just one hundred pesos, but with injectable medicines and nutritious food sufficient for six months. Mahmud Kipli, after six months, recovered and is presently alive and healthy, and grateful to Bro. Manuel Lim. To satisfy Bro. Lim, Kipli wanted to repay and offered his services free of charge in Bro. Lim's big coconut and fruit plantation. Kipli's offer was politely rejected because Bro. Lim believed that there could be no better satisfaction than the thought of having helped save one's life. That alone, according to Bro. Lim, was satisfactory to him. Bro. Lim has been doing this charity to Sulu people for many years. There are many "Kiplis" that have been saved by Bro. Lim under similar circumstances. The physicians of the Sulu Hospital that attend to more than 400,000 inhabitants of Sulu recognize the kindness of Bro. Lim who gave the ceiling fans, hospital concrete gate and several donations now enjoyed by the people of Sulu.

Perhaps, influenced by his Chinese ancestors, Bro. Lim believes, that to achieve immortality, one has to forget sometimes oneself in favor of humanity — in the fields of educational, spiritual and civic advancement of the



JOLO PLAZA TULAY BANDSTAND

Donated by Bro. Manuel Lim from L to R — The author, Bro. Lim, Bro. Sughan Tan (SD), and Bro. Rudy Lee (SS).

people. Bro. Lim contributed gate iron-fence and concrete panels to the Central School in Jolo, the Jolo concrete Evangelical Church, flagpole of the Sulu Red Cross building, electric fans and other aids to DXSM, the only radio station in Sulu. The recent community donation he gave to Jolo is the concrete plaza Tulay Bandstand in Jolo worth almost ₱20,00.00 (see picture). It has been said that if Bro. Lim has not done anything for Sulu except this concrete bandstand where community, political, religious and civic rallies are held for hundreds of thousands of cultural minorities in Sulu, this alone would entitle him and his family to the respect of the Suluanos.

Bro. Manuel Lim was born in Jolo, Sulu. Bro. Lim's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ramon H. Yson Lim were not more than the average or conservative family. That could have been the reason why Bro. Manuel Lim reached

only the fourth grade in 1915. A deeply religious man, Bro. Manuel Lim, belonging to the protestant sect, sympathizes with the poor. Being humble and sensitive to human suffering, he resents juvenile delinquency and considers it as due to parental faults. He has a deep sense of understanding of human nature. Once, he was approached for the hand in marriage of his daughter, Kattie, a doctor of Optometry now taking a master's course in Indiana University. He answered that if the man sincerely loved his daughter, that was good enough for him. He is a Mason who does not discriminate except with regards to the forces of evil against a sense of goodness under the Fatherhood of God. His other children are Beatriz, a master in Music now in Los Angeles, California; Nattie, B.S. Commerce now in Cebu City; Letty, B.S. Pharmacy now in Jolo; Hattie, B.S. Edu-

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cation in Music, now teaching in Cebu City; Samuel, Physician-Surgeon, now in San Francisco, California; Jimmie and Gemmuell, taking Agriculture and Architecture respectively in the University of the Philippines. With Bro. Lim's children almost all professionals, serving humanity in the different spheres of their influences, he could easily be the "Father of the Year" medalist of Sulu.

Brother Manuel H. Lim was initiated as an entered apprentice Mason on March 10, 1954, passed to the degree of fellowcraft on November 25, 1954 and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on December 2, 1954. He was conferred the 32 degree on March 8, 1956. As a Mason, he never fails to attend Lodge Meetings or respond to the call of a brother in distress. He is a Mason in deed.

There was one occasion which prompted me to ask personal questions to Bro. Lim. We were just through from Labor in the Lodge. While we were about to take a pedicab, he asked the driver: "How much?" "Twenty centavos," answered the driver. Bro Lim refused to pay. He said it should only be fifteen centavos since his house was very near the Temple. Because to me five centavos would not make any difference considering Bro. Lim's affluence, I asked Bro. Lim why? I thought he would

answer me that he had no small change. But surprisingly, he gave me an explanation that was almost philosophical and satisfying. Bro. Lim said to me:

"In this temporal world, everybody is in need—in need financially, spiritually, socially, and educationally. We must study the needs of a person. A rich man may not need money or a healthy man may not need medicine or a priest may not need spiritual guidance or advice. Don't give them what they don't need. But there are always needs of man that you are called upon to give or a gap to fill in every person. 'The driver you saw,' Bro. Lim continued, "was robust and healthy. He was not in real need. He wore good clothes. If I kept five centavos when I should not give it for the sake of giving, in fifty times a month, I would be able to help needy persons like a sick man, a hungry person or a worried accused from immediate disaster or catastrophe. That is the difference between thrift and extravagance; between foolishness and wisdom; between foresight and selfishness." Then Bro. Lim left me. I was astounded as if I had just heard a pagoda view!

Jolo and its people are indeed fortunate to have Bro. Lim in their midst, as a man, as a Mason, as a father and as a law-abiding citizen of our Republic. The Sulu Masons are proud of Bro. Manuel H. Lim. △



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