

A Missionary

Before we come into contact with missionary labor in the pagan field, it may be good to know what a missionary is. Having finished his studies at the cost of much expense in a college for several years, at the moment he could enter the university and follow a career which might make him wealthy and cover him with honor, the candidate for missionary enters the seminary.

During another six years he is given a special training to acquire not only the sciences all priests must acquire to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, but also to practice the special virtues a missionary should have for his hard and sometimes ungrateful labors among pagans.

In the meantime he makes the threefold vow of religion and the vow binding himself forever to the foreign mission. By the vow of poverty he sacrifices all the goods of the world. By the vow of chastity he sacrifices the joys and pleasures that are found in the matrimonial state and by the vow of obedience he sacrifices his will, ready to do God's will for His greater glory. By the vow to go to the missions forever, he makes the supreme sacrifice of his home, his family, his country. He gives his time, energy, talents for the rest of his life, perhaps even his life, to unknown pagans, to bring them into heaven. The day comes for him to make these last sacrifices.

Who shall describe the heartrending of the missionary when he receives for the last time the blessing of his father and mother? Never again to see them perhaps . . . and the missionary too has a loving heart for his beloved parents.

He arrives at his mission after a long arduous journey. What a task lies before him! He has to learn a language, perhaps two or more. And he studies day and night, because he knows that he must make himself understood to reach the heart of his unknown but already beloved flock.

He is sent to a mission. A few shacks surround his modest dwelling. What a difference with his own home, his own town. Nobody to welcome him. Nobody to give him an encouraging word except at the rare visits of a confrere or a superior. But that ice he will break through. He visits his neighbors. They do not care for him. Never mind, he will care for them.

Somebody is sick . . . the missionary has studied medicine. He looks after the sick, consoles them, tries to cure them and procuring their health, he sows the seed that must cure their soul.

He talks with the first frightened little children, he attracts them with the few trifles all children like, he teaches them the sign of the cross.

He hears of a man in distress behind a distant mountain, he jumps

on his horse or walks on foot to the spot where, healing the body, he may save a soul.

At home he has a poor bed, a poor kitchen, poor food, no comfort or what might be called by that name in this century of comfort, but he has God and, while his pagan neighbors honor perhaps the devil, he kneels down before the little tabernacle to implore strength for himself and light for those who sit in the darkness of hell.

He wins some souls. What a joy! There is no joy on earth like the happiness of bringing some souls into the outstretched arms of the crucified God-man. But there are more to be won for heaven. Farther and farther he spreads his activities. Often he is tired. His travels are exhausting in the mountains. Dangers surround him: precipices, sickness without help, unknown roads, perhaps enemies who hate him as does Satan their master. But there is a guardian angel to guide him and a Providence to take care of him as long as it shall please God.

He builds a more decent chapel, a modest school, he writes letters upon letters to expose his necessities to his parents and friends. How

often does he write in vain! How excruciating to see the good to be done thru schools and catechists and not to have the means to do it! But on he goes.

And when success has crowned his superhuman efforts, some day a letter arrives from his superior saying "go" and he is sent to another distant unknown place to find it in the same condition as his first mission.

Discouraged? -- No. He will begin all his work over again and later he will begin it a third time and more, till finally an unwritten letter arrives from his Great Superior not saying: "go" but "come".

And even there the work of the Missionary shall not stop. Yes, even there he will remain a missionary praying for the missions, praying for his benefactors. Must not these prayers be powerful before the Lord?

Yes, the missionary will remember you in his daily mass; the converts you make by your help, owing to you their salvation, will be grateful and above all, Christ Your Redeemer, Whom you help by redeeming others, will reward you here and hereafter.

If You Don't, Who Will?

The object of this monthly Review is shown by the title: "THE LITTLE APOSTLE OF THE MOUNTAIN PROVINCE." My dear readers: You are all acquainted with the Mountain

Province of Northern Luzon. It is inhabited by 300,000 non christian people, Filipinos as well as are the Tagalogs, the Ilocanos, the Visayans.

In the year 1907 the Belgian Mission-