

who understands the needs of the Apostles of truth, who sacrifice their all to finish the great work of the civilization of the Philippines, has refused me the peso for a subscription. I would visit many more persons if I had only time, but as unhappily I have no leisure, I wish to make my voice heard through "La Defensa" by all of you, Catholic Filipinos, praying you to subscribe to The Little Apostle.

If you do not know English, some of your friends who speak it, will gladly accept the review to read it and so, not only will you add your

penny to the relief of our brethren, but also you will make others interested in the mission work and stir up in them the desire to cooperate with the Missionaries of the Mountain Province, for the greater welfare and unity of our country and the glory of God.

Let us thus take an interest in removing a stain from the heart of our country. By our help we can and we must prevent the falling off of the work of the Catholic Missionary: God will reward us for it.

A Catholic and Patriotic Filipina.



LETTER

published in the Review of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Scheut (Belgian Missionaries), by the Very Rev. Father A. Van Zuyt, Provincial Superior, after his annual visit to the different missions in the Mountain Province in the year 1923.

(Continuation)

What a glorious spectacle at the entrance of Tucucan: a grotto on the slope of a mountain. It is made of great blocks of stone. In front of it a small level ground covered with flowers. Down the mountain rush the waters of the Bontoc river. Here and there a few houses whose inhabitants for the most ignore our religion but who may expect the protection of the Blessed Virgin and, let us hope, pretty soon their conversion.

The place is an ideal one which only the artistic soul of Father Biliet could discover. Of course all

the inhabitants of Tucucan were present. I put on the sacred vestments and, while singing a solemn *Magnificat*, we entered the town and went to the grotto. I blessed it and then sang a Solemn Mass.

The children of Bontoc and Tucucan seemed to be under the impression of the solemnity of the act: never did they sing better: they seemed angels from heaven who rejoiced at the sight of the honor given to their heavenly mother and the taking possession by God of the infidel town.

On and over these mountains,



The Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at Tucucan.

where so often innocent blood had flowed, the echo repeated: *Pax hominibus: peace to men.*

And where cries of hatred and death had resounded many a time, now was announced that a God of charity and life had come: "et incarnatus est."

For the first time was here proclaimed that, higher than the beauties of this tropical mountains, a Supreme Beauty lives, and rules: "Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus."

The bell rang . . . Jesus is present. Welcome, oh Savior: "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini."

And now the voices melted into a more intimate prayer: may the blood of a murdered God-man take away the sins of hatred and murder committed in this as yet uncivilized part of the beautiful Philippines: "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mun-

di, miserere nobis."

I dare not attempt to describe further such a moving scene: this first solemn mass, celebrated in the midst of a luxuriant vegetation and, alas! uncivilized natives, in the heart of a catholic Luzon: the thought of it brings tears to my eyes and makes my hand tremble.

Father Billiet too, I saw, was not less touched than I was. His voice trembled when, after the gospel, in the open pure mountain air, near the statue of the Blessed Virgin in the grotto, he gave these simple mountain folks a simple talk that goes to their hearts, and of which he has the secret.

At the Communion of the mass all the children received the Blessed Sacrament. Like us they had come from Bontoc on foot without breaking their fast. They had come to

pray for those who were their enemies, the people of Tucucan, and for the benefactors who support the priests in their work of civilization. Let this be enough about the solemnity of this inauguration. Permit me to paint for a moment some of the black shadows of the tableau.

As soon as I began mass, the sun peeped from over the mountains and shot its hot rays over the crowd and myself. I felt it: it would be impossible for me to continue. An umbrella would have remedied the case, but in Tucucan it was impossible to find such a piece of furniture. After a while I was sure I would faint. The other fathers saw it. No umbrella. What shall be done? One of the flagbearers has found the solution. Proudly he advances and, with his flag, he posts himself between me and the sun. It was the case to say: "on a souvent besoin d'un plus petit que soi."

Needless to say that, on our way back, nobody was killed. The children of Bontoc had mixed with the inhabitants of Tucucan. No anito was in sight and never did I hear later that a spirit had bothered one of these little pilgrims of Bontoc. Needless too to say that our songs on our way back were songs of triumph and thanks after our great victory against Satan's fortress of Tucucan.

"Father Provincial", said Father Billiet, "would you mind coming to Bayo to bless our new chapel there. From Bayo you can easily go to Baguio passing thru Quiangan."

"Bayo, where is that town?"

"Bayo is what we called 'Cigarillo' because at your last visit the children followed you for a great distance shouting 'cigarillo!'"

I laughed and on we went to Bayo or Cigarillo.

Once in sight of the small town, a deafening noise of beaten cymbals and ganzas echoed over mountains and valleys. It was the sign of welcome given by the people of Bayo. From all sides, from the slopes of the hills, from the tall grass of the small levels come men and more men. They take our horses and make us descend the stiff slope on a newly cut road. The whole village waits for us. A small little chapel at the foot of one of the many hills makes a nice contrast with the irregular huts of the people. There is a feast prepared. It must last two days. Never did I receive a more hearty welcome than here. We go straight to the chapel and from there to the adjacent room built for the visiting missionary. It was late in the night when the last inhabitant of Cigarillo left us. In the meantime the younger generation had examined our saddles and other belongings. Many of them had never seen a horse nearby, so nothing more natural for them than to take a rattan and to tickle the tails of our horses. Whether the animals in their own way returned the compliment, I do not know.

In the evening when we recited our rosary together everybody was listening with respect. How we

prayed for the conversion of these simple good people, who certainly will make good christians.

The next day I blessed the new chapel and I sang the first mass in it. Many christians, especially children from our school, came from Talubing to enhance by their presence the ceremony.

How the boys and girls of Cigarillo wondered at the sight of their brethren of Talubing receiving Holy Communion. When shall they in turn receive the same bread that makes angels?

In the afternoon there was a bright feast at Bayo but when they were in full joy we left them to go to Banaue. From Banaue we went the next day to Quiangan.

Quiangan is the last of our missions in the Mountain Province to be visited. Here we meet FF. Moerman and Desnick all a-building. They are building a chapel at Burnay, another one at Bolog. The

next they will build at Mayaoyao and Banaue.

If I am to believe my missionaries of Quiangan I would have to give them money to build at least twenty chapels more and after they have built their chapels they would ask me for funds to pay as many catechists or teachers. But I refuse flatly, although with a sore heart, just because I do not have the funds and because my conscience reproaches me already too much for the extreme poverty in which I have found nearly all the missions I have visited. Oh! that the catholics of the Philippines only knew how soon their infidel brethren of the Mountain Province could be converted, if only our missionaries could go their way unhampered thru lack of funds to establish schools, to build chapels, etc. etc.....

A. Van Zuyt.
Provincial

A Great Opportunity

Father Vanoverbergh of the Mountain Province, who was sent by the Holy See to study the Negritos and their customs, says: "the Negritos are monotheists and are exceptionally moral. For instance among the Negritos adultery is punished by death."

But Father Vanoverbergh will publish very soon in "the Little Apostle" the result of his two months' study of the Negritos. Are you interested in this mysterious race? Take your subscription to "The Little Apostle" right NOW.