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The Precursor

The Precursor

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Our cover pages: The Filipino farmer is as proud
of his garden produce as he is of his beautiful
country. O Philippines, my Philippines?
Mining region, Baguio, P.I.



KATETE,
NORTHERN
NYASALAND

HOSPITAL IN THE BUSH

Sister ST. LEO THE GREAT¹, M.I.C.

St. John the Baptist the Precursor asserted he was the voice of one crying in the wilderness... I also am a voice crying in the bush and I am relying on "The Precursor" to get my message through to those who are interested in our African work of hospitalization and have helped us so generously in the past. Once again through the medium of our review I wish to tell them how deeply grateful we are for their co-operation. May God bless and reward them every one.

Would that I possessed a TV set powerful enough to show you in a flash the result of six years of labour. For want of a better way to reach you, I shall imagine myself standing at the microphone and explaining to my audience the work already done at our Katete Sacred Heart Hospital, together with what remains to be accomplished.

Station K.T.T., first of the Catholic Missions of Northern Nyasaland established in 1938 by the sons of Cardi-

¹ Pauline Longtin, Montreal.

nal Lavigerie. Only the bare foundations of Sacred Heart Hospital emerged from the ground when I arrived here in 1950. By August 1951, the dispensary started to function in the few simple rooms made available. Slowly, much too slowly to my liking, the building neared completion; window frames were painstakingly adjusted, doors swung upon their hinges, furniture was secured, one piece at a time or almost. The organization of the hospital progressed somewhat like the building of a bird's nest; a bit of straw here, a twig there, tufts of down elsewhere. We had barely what we needed from day to day plus unbounded trust in divine Providence. Thanks to the patronage of incomparable benefactors, we finally were enabled to produce what is today known as a "bush wonder". Do not jump to conclusions, please, envisioning some streamlined modern unit. The mud walls are anything but solid, the roof is leaky in spots, the white ants outwit us at many a turn, swift demolishers that they are...

These slight mishaps notwithstanding, our miniature hospital is a gem especially since it has been endowed with electricity and running water. Progress along these lines will certainly comfort Canadian friends who expressed their skepticism at the possibility of conducting a hospital minus such elementary conveniences. Evidently, this would be unheard of in countries enjoying the amenities of civilization but in bush territories one has to take to heart the proverb "Paris (or was it Rome?) was not built in a day," and make the best of things. At present, Sacred

Heart Hospital is ten years old. Would you be interested in a few statistics? Since its opening 248,347 patients have received treatments at the dispensary; 1,727 were hospitalized; 326,855 medications and treatments were administered; 43,251 dressings were performed. Within the maternity ward 720 babies were ushered into the world; on this number 400 were afterwards registered at the weekly clinic for babies. The hospital has furnished us the priceless opportunity of opening the gates of Paradise through Baptism to 230 moribunds. I could easily write a volume telling of the wonderful conversions wrought within these humble walls... Truly may we sing with the Psalmist "the mercies of the Lord endure forever" even in the remotest corners of the earth.

If this retrospective glance at what has already been achieved is encouraging, plans for the future will not allow us to rest on our laurels. Beside the medical service centre, a wing called *Sanitation Block* has been slowly going up. Shifts of labourers have been hired to build a few brick kilns to provide building material for hygienic wards which will eventually replace the primitive huts now housing in-patients. The maternity clinic must also be enlarged and a chapel must be constructed where all the Good Shepherd's lambs and sheep may be gathered.

I hope I have not been tactless in letting my pen run away with my thoughts. Being daily faced with the tremendous amount of work to be done in this field, I can hardly help dreaming of improvements. The halls of my memory are crowded

with scenes such as the following. It was late at night. A woman was brought in who needed an immediate major operation if her life was to be saved. While the government surgeon worked over her I held a flash light at right angles, the ether employed as anaesthetic forbidding the use of an oil lamp. In such a situation, minutes stretch into ages. This brings me to make the tentative suggestion that since Sacred Heart Hospital has now entered the era of electricity, it would be greatly convenient if we had a bulb powerful enough to light up



the operation table. Where will this knicknack drop from, I wonder? There are other hospital items priced from 25 cents to \$50.00 which would also come in handy... But enough has been said on this score. There is just sufficient space left to relate the latest technical development in our mission.

On November 11, 1955, the Reverend Brother electrician of the Kacebere Seminary completed the installation of an X-Ray apparatus at the hospital. Sister Claude de la Colombiere's¹ pupils, Standard 8, witnessed the event; they study at the hospital in the evenings as the mission school has no electric lights as



yet. When Sister Superior² invited one of these young ladies to stand behind the fluoroscopy screen to allow her companions to study the structure of the skull, she cried out in dismay that she was afraid of being reduced to ashes. But once

Sister Superior had showed her there was nothing to fear she complacently showed not only her head, but her neck, her ribs, her heart, her hands . . . somewhat like the proverbial lark in French Canadian folklore, *alouette gentille alouette*.

¹ Suzanne Rinfret, Ottawa.

² Sister Marie of Lourdes (Irene Champagne) Montreal.







The silent language of the smile is learnt in the home.
Mr. and Mrs. Arai and their charming daughters, Tokyo.

Silent Language

Sister Mary of the Redemption
M.I.C

(Basilisse Maillet, St. Louis, N.B.)

Perhaps one of the most enigmatic things about Japan is the perennial smile which illuminates the faces of its people, young and old, commoner and aristocrat. To most Westerners this smile is all but inscrutable. At times it may even seem not only inopportune but slightly impertinent. Indeed one must have had close and sympathetic contact with the Japanese and have patiently probed beneath the surface of their daily life to grasp something of its significance. After a while one comes to regard it for what it is — a silent language.

Is she smiling at Buddha or at
Jesus Sama?



Politeness, an exquisite regard for the feelings of others is the key to this mysterious language. Japanese children are born with this happy tendency. Throughout their home education it is carefully fostered like the old courtesy of manners which makes of them perhaps the most well-bred children in the world. Upon all occasions, pleasant or unpleasant, to show constantly to the world a mien of happiness so as to convey an agreeable impression is part of the Japanese code of life. What though the heart be breaking? It is still a social duty to smile bravely. Behaving otherwise is considered rude, for this may cause needless anxiety or pain to those we love; it is likewise foolish for it may give rise to meddlesome curiosity on the part of those with whom we do not get on so well. Cultivated from childhood, this smiling habit gradually becomes instinctive. Even the most untutored Japanese is convinced that the outward expression of one's personal sorrow or pain or annoyance is rarely useful and always unkind.

In Japan, people can and do smile even in the face of the most annoying or distressing circumstances. This last smile may be of a very special sort, one which is forced out by the will when, if things were left to themselves, tears or recriminations might be more natural. Strength of character or at least an effort in that sense alone renders it possible. It is politeness carried to the utmost point of perfection.

The good ship that had brought us — a group of tyro missionary Sisters — across the ocean had just docked in Yokohama. Our eyes were not big enough to take in all the strange variegated sights that met our gaze. From a distance we watched a quaint old man squatting on the ground, expertly drawing huge ideographs on a large piece of paper. Suddenly a minor catastrophe happened. A careless passer-by bumped into the scribe, upsetting the pot of ink and drowning the ideographs in a pool of dismal black. We expected some sort of cloudburst. Instead, to our amazement, the two went through a series of prostrations highlighted by

smiling apologies. This was to be our first but by no means our last lesson in the Japanese silent language of the smile.

As a rule, Japanese children seldom squabble. But as they are human beings after all, it does happen that they have tiffs once in a while. Passing through one of the poorer sections of the city one day we were the unseen witnesses of a charming little scene. A group of excited children stood in a ring around two youngsters who were letting their fists fly at each other. An older child, a girl of about eight or ten, whom the others affectionately called Masa Chan, threw an arm about offender and offended in an attempt to have them make up. What a mixture of wise motherliness and mature wisdom there was in the smile that lit up her grimy face! We could not catch her words but we soon perceived that her smile had worked its magic. The culprits awkwardly bowed to each other, shyly smiled, and finally trotted off like old friends while Masa Chan continued to beam on them and on the rest of the group.



What more unaccountable smile could there be than that of the servant rebuked for a fault who bows low and smilingly asks pardon? This must not be taken for insolence or callousness. Expressed in words it means, "I am aware of the gravity of my fault. My sorrow and my necessity furnish me with the unreasonable hope that I may be excused for my great rudeness in asking pardon." Young people beyond the age of childish tantrums when punished for some misdemeanour receive the punishment with a smile which may be translated, "Much worse than this my fault has deserved."

Christianity enhances these gracious, natural traits. Kimiko belonged to an impoverished family of good social standing. In a spirit of filial dutifulness she consented to marry a man much older than herself, a wealthy widower, who agreed in return to cancel certain family debts. Her new situation was to prove the acid test of her truly noble character. Although she was charming and accomplished in every household art, her fastidious husband constantly found fault with her, rebuking her in the presence of the servants, not sparing her even before strangers. She went through her ordeal smiling in that heroic manner of generations of Japanese women before her. Did she not owe it to her own family to keep its honourable traditions unaltered? But the very bitterness of her trial at length drove her to

seek a clue to the problems of life in the teachings of the Catholic Faith. On the occasion of a trip made across Europe, she spent some time in Rome. It was there, while visiting the Catacombs, that she understood the value of human sacrifices offered in union with the supreme sacrifice of the Redeemer. Her smile was henceforth mellowed by loving submissiveness to the Will of the heavenly Father. She did not prize the legitimate honour of her family less but she appreciated the fact that her fortitude could be applied to a supernatural end.

Smiles of dear Japanese friends, sunny smiles of childhood, radiant smiles of youth, kindly smiles of age, you have flooded my life with sunshine. Still clearly etched on the screen of my memory, is the rare smile radiating from the furrowed face of an aged peasant woman. Life had dealt her many a hard blow. But she was content and unruffled having spent herself unstintingly for others. Although a non-Christian, death held no terrors for her. Only one more desire she had which she smilingly disclosed: "I have asked my son to bury me at the foot of the persimmon trees by yonder hedge, thus at least my body will still be of some use to others..." In her own original way had not this old woman fathomed the secret of happy living? Eager to serve, forgetful of self in life, she remained serenely so in the shadow of death wishing to serve even beyond its mysterious portals.

To limit our prayers, as to limit our alms, would be to play favourites. There are no favourites with God. All men are His dear children.



Joy of Dying a Christian

KORIYAMA, JAPON

Fujishima San literally drank in the doctrine lessons imparted by her friendly catechist, Sister Monica of the Blessed Sacrament¹.

Critically ill with tuberculosis, this Japanese mother had at first all but given way to despair. Her first months at Sukawaga Sanitorium had been dark and gloomy. She who had lived only for her children, could hardly bear being parted from every one of them; with reluctance she had had to leave three of her little daughters

¹ Monique Cloutier, Ottawa.

in our Koriyama home for orphans, place two of her boys in a Fukushima orphanage and a sick child in a Tokyo hospital. Salvation came to her through her oldest, a girl of fourteen, who although she knew practically nothing of Catholic teachings said to her one day, "Mamma, you must study the catechism."

Fortunately, while at the Sanatorium Fujishima San made friends with a fervent Catholic woman patient who introduced her to the wonders of the Rosary. When Sister Agnes of Assisi and Sister Monica of the Blessed Sacrament began making weekly rounds of the sick, they found this soul prepared by the

Queen of the Holy Rosary for receiving the precious seeds of Faith. One day, as her illness suddenly took a turn for the worse, Sister Anna Marie, Superior of our Koriyama Convent, poured on her forehead the waters of regeneration while her three youngest looked on wide-eyed and solemn.

Fujishima San died on a bright May day, surrendering to the heavenly Mother's care her beloved little family. "Never did I think death could be so peaceful" she murmured as she passed away to a blessed eternity, Mary's beads twined about her emaciated fingers.

Sister St. Ann, M.I.C.

CUBA

FIRST CLOSED RETREAT

Lately took place the first closed retreat ever held in Marti. Seventeen young ladies followed its pious exercises presided over by Rev. Gaston Pageau, P.M.E.

Every year various groups of Catholic Actionists from all over the province gather at our Colon Colegio for a few days of recollection. But, the mothers of our Marti students would never allow their daughters to go that far and remain absent from the family roof-tree for several days on end. This year then, we decided to invite the preacher to our little *convento*. Thus the girls would have no excuse for not attending, and their mothers no cause to worry.

Rev. Fernand Guilbaut, P.M.E.,

pastor of Marti, graciously placed the parish hall at the disposal of the retreatants. In between sermons, they could enjoy there the reading of good books or sewing for the poor. Let it be said in passing that the Marti *ropero* (sewing circle) is one of the most active in the region.

The programme of the retreat was as follows: Holy Mass, four sermons a day, the Way of the Cross, the Rosary recited in common, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. After the last instruction given towards seven in the evening, the young ladies went home for the night. Mothers and daughters were delighted with this arrangement. The girls enjoyed their first retreat and are now looking forward to others.

Sister Marie Emile¹, M.I.C.

¹ Rita Ouellette, Lewiston, Maine.



**Our
Holy Father
on
Mary, Queen**

... the origin of Mary's glories, the solemn moment which lights up her whole personality and mission, is that in which she, being full of grace, replied to the Archangel Gabriel with the "Fiat" ("Be it done"), expressing her consent to God's plan. Thus did she become Mother of God and Queen, receiving the royal office of watching over the unity and peace of the human race. We have firm confidence that, through her, mankind will little by little progress along this way of salvation; she will guide the rulers of nations and the hearts of their peoples toward concord and charity.

At the present hour, ... when world unity and peace, nay more, the very sources of life are endangered,

what can Christians do except turn their eyes toward her whom they see vested with royal power? At one time she sheltered in her mantle the Divine Child, first-born of all creatures and of all creation (Cf. Col. I, 15). So now may she deign to shelter all men and all peoples in her watchful tenderness; may she deign, as seat of wisdom, to manifest the truth of the inspired words which the Church applies to her: *Per me reges regnant, et legum conditores justa decernunt; Per me principes imperant, et potentes decernunt justitiam*" (Prov. 8, 15-16; Brev. Rom. in communi Fest. Beatae Mariae Virg., I Noct. Lect. 1)— "By me kings reign and lawgivers decree just things. By me princes rule, and the mighty decree justice." While the world at present struggles unceasingly to achieve unity and ensure peace, yet the invocation of Mary's reign — surpassing all earthly means and all human plans, which are always in some way defective — is the voice of Christian faith and hope, strengthened and reinforced by divine promises and by the inexhaustible assistance which Mary's sway has given toward the salvation of mankind. Nevertheless, from the unending goodness of the Most Blessed Virgin, whom We invoke today as Royal Mother of Our Lord, We also expect other benefits not less precious. Not only must she annihilate the dark plans and wicked works of those who are enemies of a united and Christian mankind, but she has also to communicate to modern men something of her own spirit. We mean that courageous and even audacious will which, in difficult circumstances and in the face of dangers and obstacles, is able unhesitatingly to take

the necessary decisions and put them into effect with unfailing energy; so that it sweeps along in its wake the tired, the weak, the doubtful and those who no longer believe in the justice and nobility of the cause they must defend. Who does not see how completely Mary embodied this spirit, deserving thereby the praise given to the "valiant woman"? Her "Magnificat," that canticle of joy and invincible confidence in the Divine Power whose works she undertook to carry out, fills her with holy daring, with a strength unknown to nature.

How earnestly do We wish that all those who today have the responsibility of ensuring the right and proper conduct of public affairs would imitate this luminous example of queenly feeling! Instead of which, is there not, perhaps, evident in their ranks, sometimes, a sort of tiredness, of resignation, of passivity, which prevents them from facing up to the arduous problems of our day with firmness and perseverance? Do not some of them sometimes allow events to take their course for the worse, instead of dominating them by sound and constructive action?

.....
May then, Our invocation to the Queenship of God's Mother obtain for men who are solicitous of their responsibilities the grace to overcome despondency and indolence, at this hour when no one may allow himself a moment's rest, when, in so many countries, just freedom is oppressed, truth obscured by the machinations of lying propaganda and the forces of evil, as it were, seem to be unleashed upon the earth!

(Excerpt from address at a Marian celebration in Rome, November 1, 1954)



Music in the Philippines

Sister SAINT EDMUND¹, M.I.C.

Music is the universal language of societies. An exquisite mode of expression natural to man, it is the true mirror of a people's ideals, the best interpreter of its customs and characteristics. Peculiar kinds of melodies and of musical instruments are found all over the globe. Within the depths of the jungle, in the heart of populous cities, beneath temple roofs, about banqueting boards, in peace or in war, in triumph or in mourning each nation on earth attempts, through the medium of music, to express the many and varied emotions which stir in the human breast.

Filipinos seem to be born with flutes in their throats and little birds to warble in their ears. Observant tourists as well as foreigners settled in this country, sometimes called the Italy of the Orient, agree

in saying that the people have a natural flair for music. Tribute has been paid by eminent *maestros* of various nationalities to Filipino composers many among whom can hold their own in the world of artists. Indeed, delightful creations such as Dolores Paterno's *Sampaguita* do not appear below comparison with the subtle charm and impressionistic style of Debussy's "Clair de Lune".

Musical talent is early evidenced in Filipino children who can easily be taught to execute cantatas and operettas with gracefulness and technical skill. The islanders in general are endowed with surprising aptitudes for assimilating music as well as with the qualities of imagination, sensitiveness, and delicacy of taste which go into the making of virtuosos. What clever improvisators they are!

¹ Irma de La Durantaye, Cap St. Ignace.



On their way to a FIESTA. Filipinos enjoy musical life without music to enliven its



On the spur of the moment they create whimsical pieces for any combination of instruments; they very often play without using any musical score. Their interpretation is true, earnest, full of fire and limpidity. Varying their themes from the light fantastic to the grave melancholy, they delight in swaying the feelings of their audiences.

The enchanting landscapes of their native isles furnish Filipino artists with precious inspiration. Their soul is attuned to every breeze of beauty which blows from green hills and valleys, murmuring waters, gorgeous sunrises and sunsets. In the primitive hut on stilts of the mountaineers; in the shacks of the fisher folk; in the haciendas of planters; in labourers' quarters; in the humble dwellings of the poor; in the mansions of the well-to-do; everywhere this sublime art is woven into the warp and woof of the Filipino's existence.

Such a deep love of harmony necessarily must find an outlet in numerous *fiestas* and country fairs. Public events of local or national interest, family reunions, religious festivals furnish occasions almost without number to rejoice and play lilting accompaniment to the general merrymaking. Seeding time, harvesting, fishing, promotion of friends to lucrative posts, births, cures, friendly meetings, success in enterprises, all are marked by festivities where music plays a role. The greater number of orchestras present,

cal
its
jousts. What is
monotony ?

the better!

Each village possesses at least one *banda* besides a choral society. Processions in which five or six bands take part are by no means exceptional; at some *barrios fiestas* there may be as many as ten bands gathered from neighbouring districts. These *fiestas* last for days on end and, needless to say, during all this time the air waves billow with melodies of every kind.

Can we not assert that Filipinos are born, live, and die to the sound of music? Infants are carried to the sacred font to the most joyful strains; while the salt of wisdom melts on their rosy tongues, chimes and music unite in ecstatic cadenzas, perhaps in an effort to drown out any attempt at wailing on the part of the babies. The same village *banda* will in turn punctuate happy betrothals, announce merry weddings, mourn at pathetic funerals.

Instead of conveying in love epistles the warmth and depth of his feelings for the dark-eyed maiden to whom he has lost his heart, the Filipino suitor prefers serenading her under the stars in the peace of the balmy tropical evenings. Plucking the strings of his guitar, he spends hours pouring out his emotions in floods of tender wistful melodies. Happy like "Bess, the landlord's black-eyed daughter" in Alfred Noye's poem, "The Highwayman", his lady-love smiles upon his suit plaiting "a red love-knot into her long black hair."

Vocal or instrumental music is also



used to lighten daily chores.

Travellers are agreeably surprised to hear welcome snatches of song wafted to them wherever they find people at work, earning their daily life often in a precarious manner. The farmer sings as he rides his faithful *carabao* to the rice paddies in the first flush of dawn; the nimble youth climbing cocoanut trees in search of the heady *tuba* whistles merrily; inside her airy nipa home the housewife hums as she cooks the family meals or rocks her child to sleep; carefree students spilling from crowded buses, fill the air with boisterous song. This is hardly surprising for Filipinos possess a rich and varied folklore consisting of religious chants, ballads, archaic tunes, serenades, patriotic hymns, childish ditties, lullabies, chants for making new rice fields, elegies in honour of the dead . . .

Even among educators of ancient world civilizations, music was considered as one of the most important subjects on the curriculum of studies. Did it not serve as a link



between the world of mind and the world of matter? In the Philippines, development of musical talent in school children is greatly encouraged by good teachers who believe in music as an indispensable means of forming noble characters and rounding out personalities. Philharmonic establishments offer talented young people opportunities for specialized training. Many are the youths who embark in a musical career as concert pianists or orchestra leaders, much as others embrace teaching or a medical profession. Would that in this land of music lovers they always found the appreciative encouragement they deserve! As it is, not a few among them have to seek fame and fortune abroad.

Filipino musicians may be found in Macao, Vietnam, Thailand, Japan, Guam, as well as on the western coast of the United States of America where they give excellent showmanship of the artistry that is part of their national heritage. But the most important group abroad, lives in Hong Kong. They have founded there a well organized union which provides its members with steady employment and remuneration befitting their work. Once established in this queen of

beautiful cities with the pleasant climate, many decide to call their family over and settle down there for good.

But, for the simple untutored folk of the Islands, music is not merely a means of relaxation; it is a gentle, responsive friend whose language pulls at their heart strings, echoes in poignant accents the aspirations of their exiled spirit. In trials and sorrows they turn to it as to a loving mother to be comforted and heartened. Who could blame them? Always they quest for beauty in its mysterious realm and appraise it as a symbol of union and of social harmony. Music and song benefit societies and peoples, bringing about closer mutual understanding and the sharing of inner spiritual treasures. May we not apply to both what Francis Thompson says of poetry in his essay on Shelley? "... we do not believe that a truly corrupted spirit can write consistently ethereal poetry... The devil can do many things. But the devil cannot write poetry... Among all the temptations wherewith he tempted St. Anthony, though we have often seen it stated that he howled, we have never seen it stated that he sang."

Legion Rally in Haiti

Sister ST. JOHN OF THE CENACLE¹, M.I.C.

In April took place a Legion rally in our *Département du Sud*. The various *praesidia* from surrounding parishes had prepared beforehand

the work to be done. Reverend]Father Peloquin, O.M.I., spiritual director, being absent on a preaching tour in the United States, the programme of

the rally was elaborated by Reverend Father Lussier, O.M.I., pastor of Port à Piment where the meeting was to be held. Some of the officers arrived on the previous day, while the others came by jeep in time for the opening session. Accompanying this last group were Sister Gemma of the Saviour¹, Superior of our Les Coteaux Convent, Sister Helen of the Sacred Heart², assistant directress of the Roche a Bateau *praesidium*, and I.

At ten o'clock a.m., all the officers of the fifteen *praesidia* forming the *curia* of our department, were duly assembled in the large parish hall of Port à Piment, centre for the localities of Tiburon, les Anglais, Chardonnières, Les Coteaux, and Roche à Bateau. In all, seventy persons, the five spiritual directors and the assistant directresses, Sisters of St. Ann and Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception included.

The session opened with the customary prayers and spiritual reading from the Legion Manual; followed the roll call, the financial reports, and the reciting of the *Catena*. Then, Reverend Father Peloquin, O.M.I., who had just returned from his trip, expressed his satisfaction at seeing so many Legionaries gathered together, and his gratitude to his confrere who had so kindly supplied him during his absence.

Pending the report of the secretary, President Elion Damas presented the following points for special consideration: (1) that charity is the queen of the three theological virtues; (2) that charity is required in the admission of subjects so that no distinction of social rank or others be made; (3) that cha-

rity is required in our relations with other associations. Thanks to the clear-cut explanations of Reverend Father Lussier, the *forum* discussions were both instructive and interesting. The close of the reunion was highlighted by the spiritual director's blessing.

At 2 p.m., a good number of priests, religious, officers, and members of the Legion gathered from numerous districts, met in the same hall to form into a large procession which advanced towards the parish church singing Legionary hymns. Once they had reached destination, the participants recited the Rosary and made an individual then a collective act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin. Reverend Father Henry, O.M.I., curate of Les Coteaux, preached an inspiring sermon then gave benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

After the ceremony everybody returned to the parish hall where a recreational programme was presented by the members of the different *praesidia*. Needless to say, Mary Immaculate was the central theme of all the songs, playlets, and choruses. Towards the end of the afternoon the President and Reverend Father Lussier thanked the assistance in cordial terms for participating at this congress meant to promote the interests of God's glory and the salvation of souls. A fervent *Magnificat* brought the celebrations to a close.

All the Legionaries enjoyed to the full this wonderful Marian Day. May it have brought them renewed fervour and strength to battle courageously for another year under the banner of their Immaculate Queen.

¹ Gemma De Grandpre, St. Simon of Bagot.

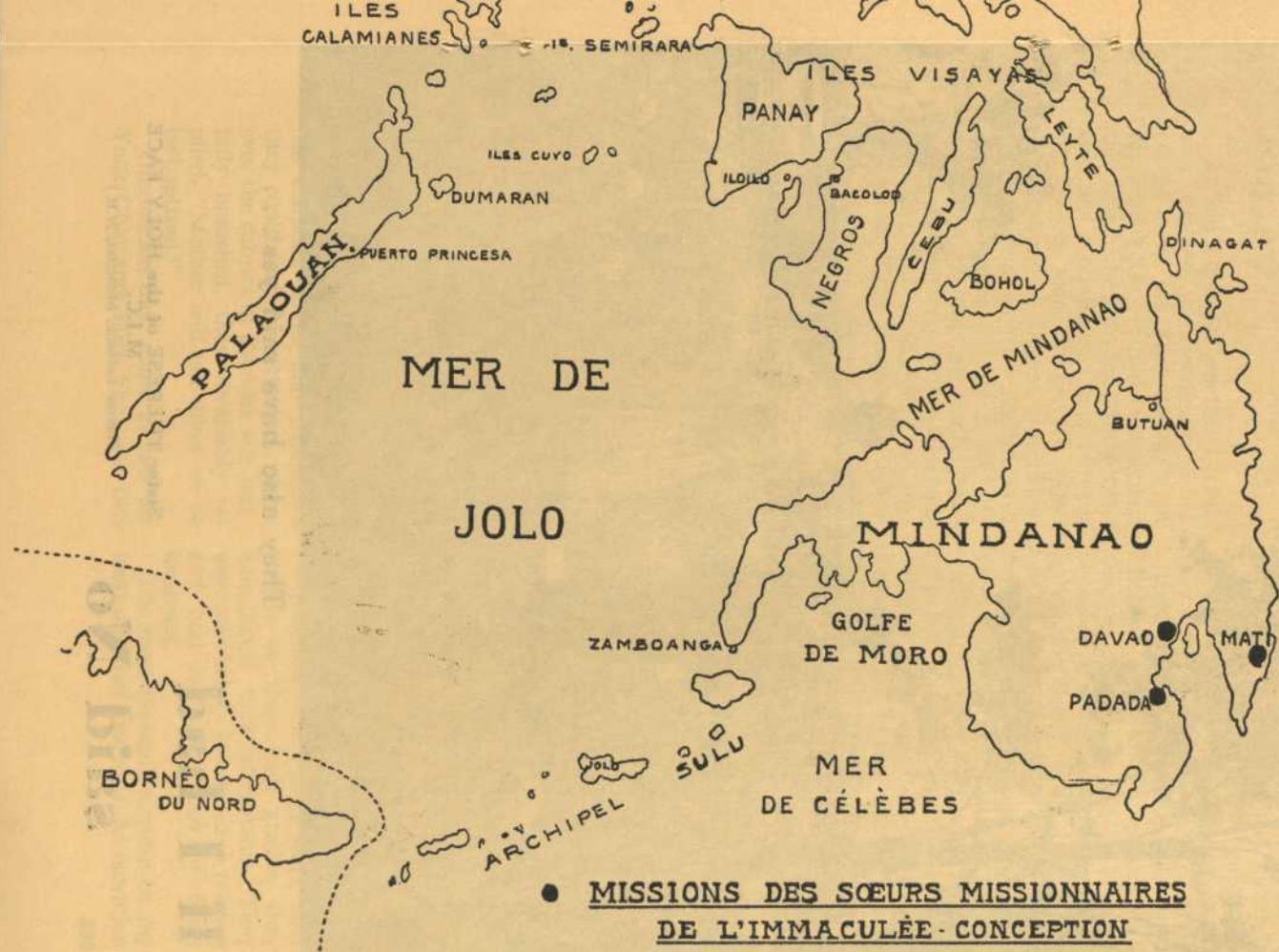
² Helene Hetu, Montreal.

Philippines

MER DE CHINE
MÉRIDIONALE —



Océan
PACIFIQUE



● MISSIONS DES SŒURS MISSIONNAIRES
DE L'IMMACULÉE-CONCEPTION



They also have said yes . . .

**If I had
said No**

**Sister THERESE of the HOLY FACE
M.I.C.**
(Therese Leblanc, Moncton, N.B.)

At first I doubted whether I would ever succeed in pronouncing their names right — Yuck Chin, Yuck Shui, Yuck Kay — still less in pinning the right name onto the right person. God had endowed each one with the charms He alone knows the secret of bestowing on Chinese girls everywhere. Whenever they flashed their bright smiles on me, deep-felt pity blended in my heart with warm affection for these three sisters who were as yet deprived of the life of sanctifying grace. That precious life, how they yearned after its possession! I was too deeply touched for words, when I first noticed Catholic rosaries around their necks. When I questioned them about this practice, I was further pleasantly surprised to learn that although living in a thoroughly non-Christian environment Yuck Chin, Yuck Shui, and Yuck Kay managed to recite their beads every day. I felt confident Our Lady would eventually lead them to her divine Son. Soon after their enrollment in our classes, they began making daily visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. When time came for tests in the religion classes, the Lee sisters led the grades their hands waving at high mast as they gave correct answers to my questions. Between school hours, they scoured the library in search of all the Catholic books and pamphlets they could find. Nevertheless, whenever the subject of Baptism was tactfully broached, they invariably replied, "Mother will not allow us to be baptized."

Graduation day came at last for Yuck Chin and Yuck Shui, the two

oldest sisters. Graceful and dignified they looked in their simple but tasteful formals!. On the following morning, they were present at the special Mass offered for the graduates by Msgr. Michaud; afterwards, together with their classmates, they earnestly promised to attend a Catholic College during the coming year.

The first part of the holidays went by uneventfully enough. Then, I unexpectedly learned that Yuck Chin had disappeared from Mati, vanished as if into thin air. What could have happened? I wondered. I was not long to be left in suspense. It seemed that the girl's mother had invited a guest, a young non-Christian Chinese gentleman. Too conversant with family traditions not to sense in her mother's diplomatic move a desire to link her own future with that of the handsome visitor, Yuck Chin sought safety in flight. What ensued, I have not learned, for the Lees are remarkably discreet people; but Yuck Chin was not forced to marry the man of her mother's choice.

Some time later a letter brought me the welcome news that Yuck Chin had enrolled as a pre-nursing student at the Davao ICC College while Yuck Shui had chosen to study as pharmacist. They were happy and satisfied, they wrote, because for another year at least they would be under the direction of Catholic Sisters. So smoothly did things work that thanks to their high grades, they maintained their scholarship. They were still keenly interested in religion and had not lost hope of being baptized.

The most pleasant surprise on my feast day that year was the reception



Yuck Chin

Yuck Kay

Yuck Shui

of a lovely spiritual bouquet from my two alumnae; Masses, rosaries, ejaculations, even sacrifices were enumerated. Only the Communion line was left blank. An explanatory note flooded my missionary heart with consolation, "We are at present attending Mass regularly. Perhaps we shall be baptized soon... Pray for us; that is our wish for now." As if I ever could forget to pray for them! At Christmas when they came home for a short holiday, their first visit was for their dear Alma Mater, *I.H.M.A.* As merry as larks they were and brimful with expectations for a happy future.

Yuck Kay was about to graduate, the following Spring, when she re-

ceived a mysterious message from her two sisters, "We have a wonderful secret to tell you... Be patient! You will share our happiness." It turned out that the pair had gone up to the Regional Headquarters of the *P.M.E.F.* on March 2, and boldly asked for Baptism. Not only was their wish granted but Msgr. Thibault confirmed them as well. Imagine our joy on hearing this glad news. Yuck Kay, no longer to be put off after hearing of her sisters' victory, asked for Baptism as her graduation gift. Her wish being granted, she became a child of God on Holy Saturday, receiving the beautiful name of Mary. Her sponsor was Erlinda her best school friend and rival.

The three Lee sisters now receive



Graduates of Mati High School.

Yuck Kay is one of the group.

Holy Communion nearly every day. One morning, during the holidays, I approached the altar rail with a former pupil of mine, a Chinese girl from Manila visiting us, another convert. I happened to glance at my neighbour on the left and noticed that it was Yuck Shui! Here I was, about to receive Our Lord between these two young girls to whom I had had the privilege of teaching religion. So great was my joy, that

I could hardly hold back my tears. Perhaps the priest wondered as he gave me the Bread of Life, but Our dear Lord knew! He knew that gratitude was overflowing in my heart and that all I could do was to repeat: "Thank you, dear Lord! Thank you for having made use of me, and of my Sisters, as instruments to help bring about the conversion of these young girls. Ah! if I had said 'No' when you called..."



The procession of the Sorrowful Mother on Good Friday.

Holy Week

In

Padada

Sister ELIZABETH OF THE TRINITY¹, M.I.C.

If you have all but decided to take that long deferred trip around the planet do arrange your schedule so as to enjoy Holy Week celebrations in Padada — that is unless you are allergic to colourful and long drawn out ceremonies. The Filipinos of today, more particularly those who live in rural districts, continue to cherish religious traditions of Spanish vintage as old as the Church in these islands. Deeply woven into the fabric of their national life is their love of processions and of other collective manifestations of piety. This may well be explained if one remembers that as for centuries, the people had no books, they naturally resorted to simple theatricals to represent in a vivid manner the life of our blessed Saviour. Westerners may term these celebrations as quaint; they are nevertheless impregnated with a genuine Gospel fragrance.

The three last days of the Holy Week being legal holidays in the Philippines, the faithful take advantage of this to perform their Easter duty. In Padada, a young parish with more than 70,000 parishioners, under the care of the Fathers of the Pont Viau Foreign Missions, the church and its premises are packed from the earliest hours of Holy Thursday. Among these people many have walked considerable distances. Giving up their regular pursuits, they have come to share with Holy Mother Church, the emotions of sorrow,

¹ Rhea Allard, St. Elizabeth of Joliette.



remorse, penance, and joy of *Semana Santo*. Confessionals are besieged. In spite of the sizzling heat the poor missionary Fathers are freed from their cramped position in the Holy Tribunal only during liturgical offices, and even then one of them often has to go on hearing confessions while the other officiates.

Are there many people in our good province of Quebec who have an idea of what it can mean for two lone priests to be entrusted with the charge of ministering to 70,000

souls? Under such conditions, even if a priest sat five hours a day in the confession box, he still would not be able to hear the confessions of all his parishioners during the year. My deepfelt admiration goes out to our Canadian missionaries who live such entirely dedicated lives in this arduous mission field.

Towards evening on Holy Thursday, the first procession is organized. At the head of the cortege is carried a statue of Christ represented on His way to Calvary; a statue of Our Lady of Seven Dolours swathed

The float representing the entombed Saviour.



in mourning apparel brings up the rear. Bearing lighted tapers, the faithful follow in subdued recollected mood. The cortege — it is really that rather than a real procession or a parade — winds its way around the whole town. Those who have had to stay at home to mind the babies or the sick kneel by the windows with rows of candles burning on the sills. Upon the return to church the statues are placed on either side of the altar.

Now comes the solemn ceremony of the Washing of the Feet. The building serving as church here in Padada is of vast proportions as far as the roof is concerned for that is all there is to it as yet, no walls, no boarded floor, no pews. Throughout the ceremonies the faithful kneel on the bare earth. Within the sanctuary also floorless, a row of prie-dieu have been disposed for the Sisters, on the epistle side; the twelve "Apostles" wearing gaudy garments of pink, red, yellow, and green occupy the gospel side. After the sermon, the officiating priest kneels in the dust to wash the feet of the twelve whose grave and pious demeanour proves how deeply they enter into the spirit of the Church.

The Good Friday Office is celebrated according to the recent liturgical regulations of the Church. Nevertheless, the Filipinos for whom this is the biggest day of the year are not to be deprived of celebrating their own particular rites once the strictly liturgical ones are over. In front of the church they erect a mound of verdure on top of which is hoisted a huge crucifix. When the

time comes for the adoration of the Cross, the men take down the veiled figure of the Crucified, carrying it in front of the altar. Meantime, there is a general rush to the mound of green everyone being desirous of carrying home at least a frond or a twig. It looks like another Palm Sunday.

After the crowd has succeeded in untangling itself, another procession takes place especially designed to dramatize the events of the day. Children lead the cortege followed by a cart drawn by several men and containing the *Santo Entiero* or coffin. The bloodstained body of Christ is covered with a linen sheet, only the head being visible; behind comes a band playing a funeral dirge. The women walk last, sympathetically surrounding the statue of the Sorrowful Mother garbed in the black of deepest mourning. Stars are blinking out of a warm dark sky when the procession returns having gone the rounds of the village. Apparently, the length of all these manifestations has not yet satisfied the people's piety. At half-past eight, the children of Mary have a procession of their own chanting the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary as they walk along. They are followed by a third group of Catholic Actionists.

On Holy Saturday, the offices which begin at six o'clock are the same as those taking place in Catholic churches everywhere except that the faithful keep their candles lit until Mass is over. Grouped in front of the altar rail the children, tired of holding their candles, heap little mounds of earth in which they in-



Baptism session on Easter Sunday

Rev. C. Bernard, p.m.e.



are they in what is going on at the altar.

The highlight of the *Semana Santa*, in my opinion, is the *Elcuentro*, procession of the meeting. At three o'clock on Easter morning the church bells ring out a joyful summons. We hasten to join the women who escort Our Blessed Mother's float while the men follow that of the risen Christ, each cortege coming from an opposite direction. In what hurry everyone seems to be! Never have I grasped in a more realistic manner the eagerness with which the holy women must have flown over the road outside Jerusalem on that Easter morning ages ago.

At the end of the street leading to the convent an arch has been erected where the meeting is to take place. An enormous mechanical star beams from the topmost part and at each of the four corners kneel pretty brown angels. When the two floats meet under the arch, the star opens and from it emerges a dainty pink cherub who sings the *Regina Cæli*. On a stout rope, down it glides and in a graceful gesture snatches the veil concealing Our Lady's face. She may now look upon her risen Son and rejoice.

There are people it seems who smile a superior smile at what they regard as childish customs. Maybe they would have laughed also at the shepherds and Magi. Thanks to all this strange pageantry, processions, coffins, mechanical stars, angels swinging from rafters, the simple folk of Padada *know* the story of the Redemption by heart — they *live* it for one week every year of their lives.

sert them halfway. They barbecue luckless insects over the dancing flame but this does not cause their elders any distractions so engrossed

NORTHERN NYASALAND

Visiting a Rubber Plantation

The caoutchouc or rubber tree was originally found growing wild in the forests of the Amazon valley. Its cultivation introduced into Africa

towards 1910 flourished to such a remarkable extent that the production of this country now seems to exceed that of the South American continent.

In the neighbourhood of Nkata Bay there is a rubber plantation numbering about forty thousand trees. As teachers we had long been eager

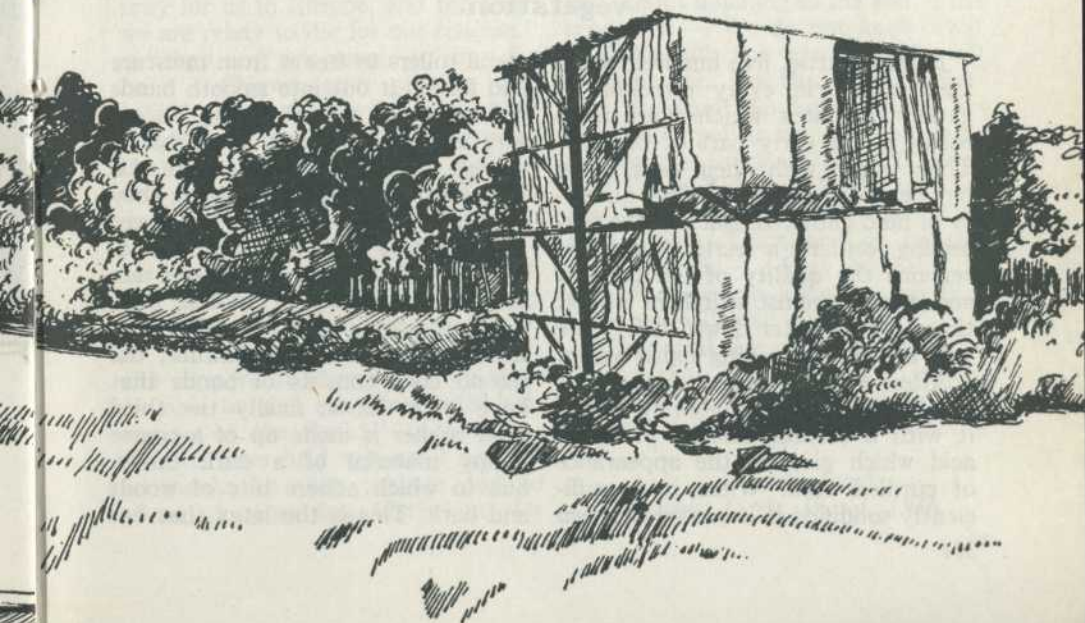


to visit it so as to gather firsthand information but until lately we had been unable to do so, means of conveyance being scarce in Northern Nyasaland. Some time ago, however, Providence graciously placed a golden opportunity at our door. Thanks to friendly offices, our Sisters from Katete arrived in a large car to visit at our convent one fine day. Without wasting time in palavers, we immediately decided to make the long desired excursion with our eight companions. After inquiries at Limpasa secondary school conducted by the White Fathers, we drove straight on to Vizara.

In a short while, the edge of the plantation was reached. There were trees of all sizes some as high as fifty feet or more with branches close to the top. The bark is smooth, of a whitish gray. From these trees the latex, a milky fluid, is obtained by

making an incision in the bark after they have reached their fifth year and have attained a circumference of at least eighteen inches. The latex gradually flows down a vertical channel, from the top of the tap to the bottom of the tree where it is caught in porcelain or glass cups. Rubber trees are in full output when they are ten years old. From this time onward, they can be expected to produce continually for fifty years except during the hottest days of summer when the precious fluid momentarily dries up.

A route cuts the plantation in half leading to a factory where latex undergoes several transformations. This rather primitive establishment is under the direction of an obliging Indian supervisor who showed us all over the plantation explaining the various methods used in farming the rubber trees.





Sister Marie Delia admires Nyasaland's lush vegetation.

Before sunrise, five hundred workmen scatter in every direction to gather the latex which flows more easily in the early part of the day. They hurry with their task, their pay being in proportion to the quantity of fluid gathered. Back at the processing center, a certain test ascertains the quality of the product and guards against swindlers who at times try to water down their share with a view to obtaining higher wages.

After being poured into large moulds, latex is coagulated by mixing it with a certain amount of acetic acid which gives it the appearance of curdled milk. When it is sufficiently solidified it is passed between

metal rollers to free it from moisture and flatten it out into smooth bands one eighth of an inch thick. To ensure complete dryness, these bands are left hanging from the rafters of a large shed for about two weeks; they are then cut into rectangular pieces measuring 24 x 12 inches, and carefully sorted into three classes according to quality. The first class product is of a light cream colour, smooth and flawless in texture; the second class consists of bands that have slight flaws; finally the third class rubber is made up of a coarse lumpy material of a dark brown hue to which adhere bits of woods and bark. This is the latex that has

dried on the tree; notwithstanding its crudeness it can be put to manifold uses.

All the caoutchouc produced in this local plantation is sent to Southern Rhodesia where it is utilized in the manufacture of rubber soles. In the sheds enormous bales were awaiting shipment but the production we were told never meets constantly increasing demands.

Before we left, our guide very kindly provided us with samples of various sorts which will be of great

help to us in our classrooms. As we walked down the narrow plantation road, groups of smiling Blacks milled about us greeting us pleasantly. It is not often that such a large group of *Wamayi* (Sisters) is seen gathered together in these parts. May the 60,000 non-Christian Katongas of Nkata Bay come to the knowledge of the heavenly Father who has given them these trees as precious means of livelihood. In this wise we prayed as we rolled back home in the peace of the early evening hours.

Sister MARIE DELIA M.I.C.

(Marie Marthe Terrien, Ottawa.)

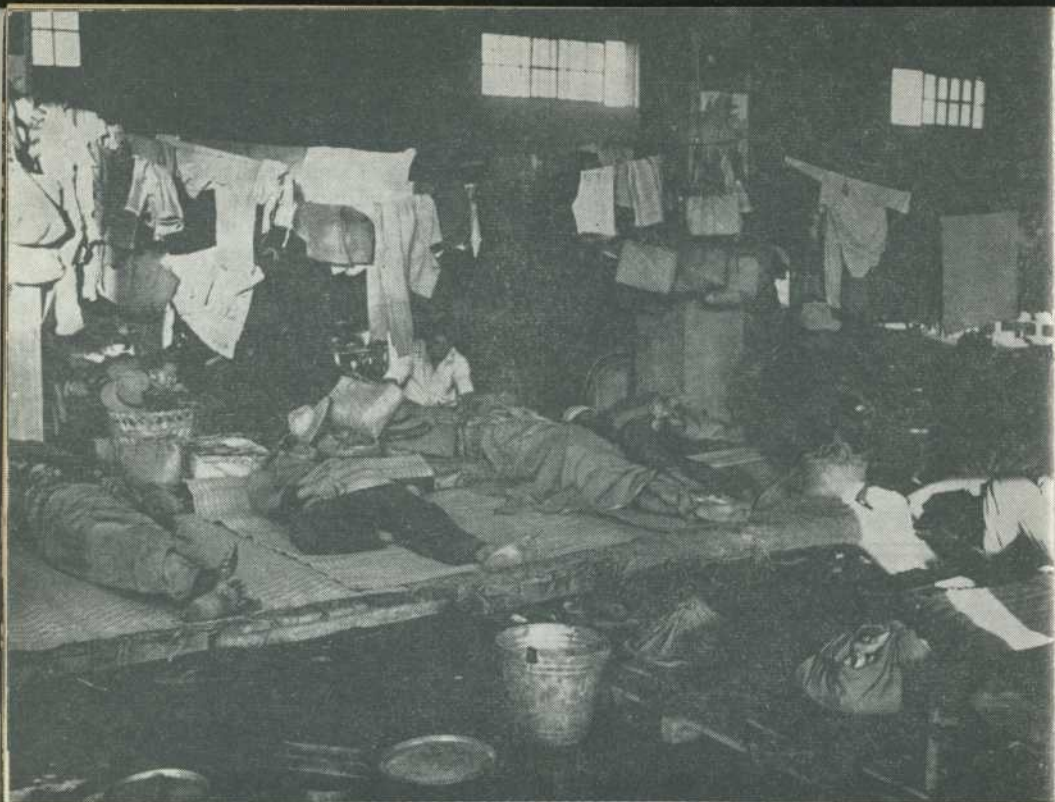
OUR CHINESE BRETHREN'S SUFFERINGS

All our persecuted Chinese brethren ask for our prayers. Here are some extracts of letters expressing what they expect of us. —“Ask them to pray for us in Europe, and tell them we are ready to die for our religion.” —“Pray and ask people to pray for us.” —“Never stop praying and asking people to pray for us, we need it badly. The situation is terrible, it is perhaps the last time I shall be able to contact you.” —“We are deprived of everything, both human and divine. That is why I thank you for the prayers you have said for us. We beg you to continue to give us your spiritual support in the future, so that, strong in divine grace and the support of Providence, we shall be able to give our life for the salvation of the flock!” (a priest)—“If we have held out until now, it is thanks to your prayers and to those of other free Christians, for

we have nothing in us to put up resistance, we are nothing and we can do nothing. Continue to support us before God so that we can march on without finching to the end of the road . . .” —“We do not know what is God's will, nor how long He will leave us here like this. What sufferings are ours! To have always beside you a policeman or a spy, is to live forever in fear. We still hope that God's Will and Might will before long assert themselves. Most people here, Christians or pagans, desire to die . . . Pray to help us. Let other people know too so that they too will help us.”

“Pray and ask people to pray for us, so that God will keep us all, priests, nuns, and Christians, faithful to him, and so that he will sanctify us! . . .”

Excerpt from
Christ to the World, 1956



Before Taiwan's National Housing program, these were typical of the poor and congested living conditions of dockworkers and other labourers.

Housing Project in Taiwan

Adapted from information published by ICA Mutual Security Mission to China. Photos were graciously furnished by the same Society.

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AMERICANS AID FORMOSANS

Proper housing on Taiwan, as in any community, has long been recognized as a source of social stability, higher productivity, and industrial improvement.

The need for suitable housing in the island was rendered more acute by overpopulation brought on by the Red "liberation" in China. Besides the massive influx of nearly 2,500,000 people from the Communist-dominated mainland during 1949-1950, other factors in this sudden increase

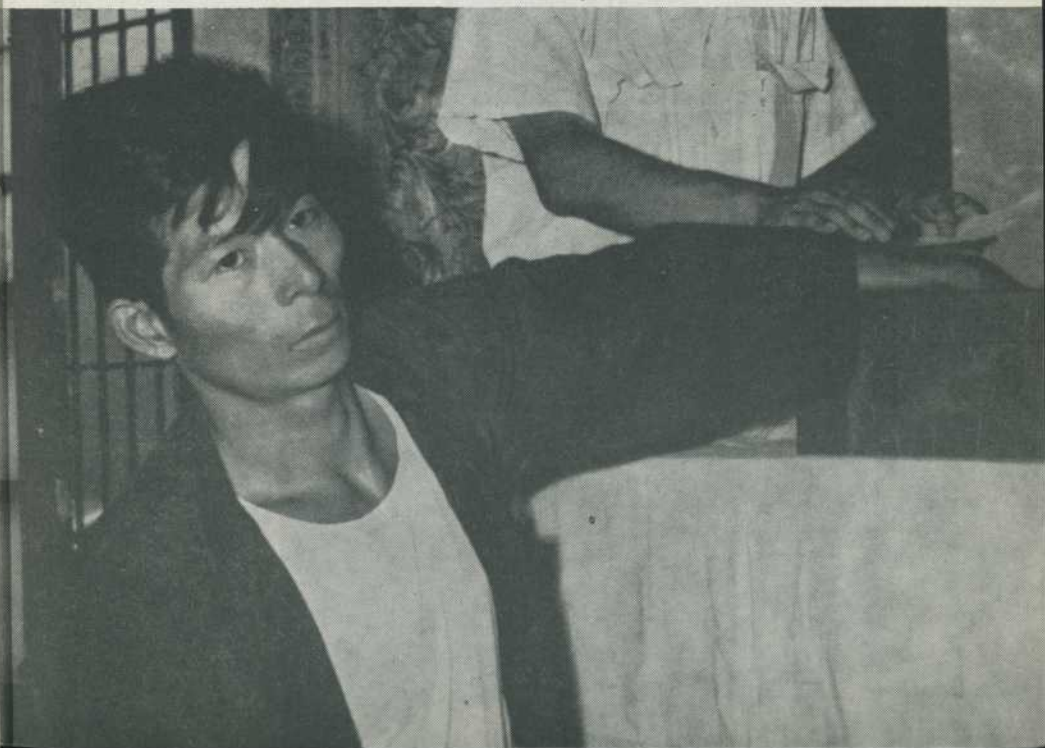
were the evacuation of the islands of Tachen and Nanchi and the constant outflow of refugees from Communist-occupied China via the Hong Kong camps. Let us not forget that outside of this influx, Taiwan's local population is yearly increasing by 300,000. Its birth rate — 50 per thousand — is one of the highest in the world while its death rate is as low as 10 per thousand. As the greater part of these people lived in deplorable conditions of poverty and congestion, it became urgent to devise practical plans for bettering their miserable situation.

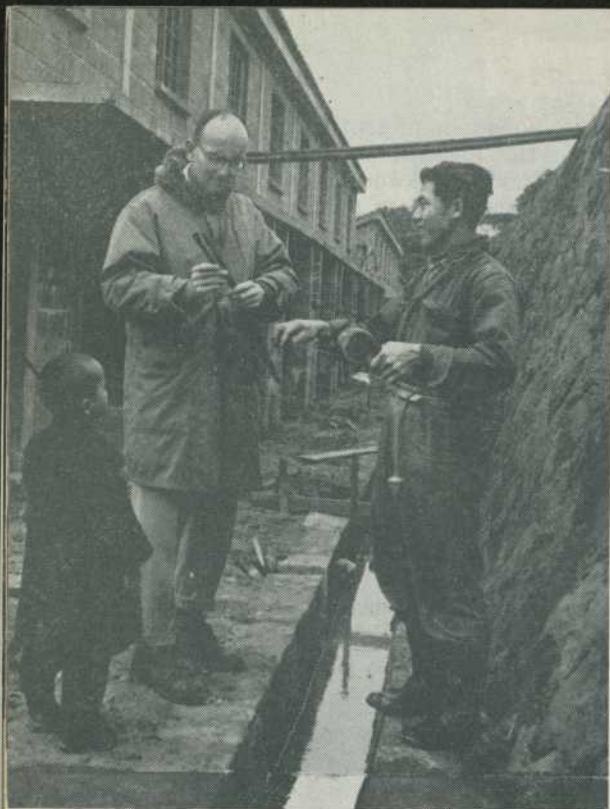
The pilot project which set the whole endeavour rolling and contained the main features to be

found in present day projects, was the low-cost housing plan for the 2,600 dockworkers of the island's large northern port city of Keelung. Sixty per cent of the shacks or hovels they had called home had been destroyed during World War II. Ground for this project was broken in September 1953; one year later 72 houses were neatly laid out on a steep hillside overlooking the harbor. The Dockworkers' Labor Union, the Harbor Bureau, and ICA Mutual Security Mission to China worked closely together on the financing of the project, the engineering, planning, and the execution of construction work.

How was such a result achieved?

To draw a lucky ticket — and build his own home for himself and family !





Albert Fraleigh,
supply operations Officer
ICA Mutual Security
Mission to China,
demonstrates use of
building materials to
Keelung Dockworkers.



Dependents
of Kaousiung
dockworkers
look at scale
model of
*Multiple Unit
Housing.*

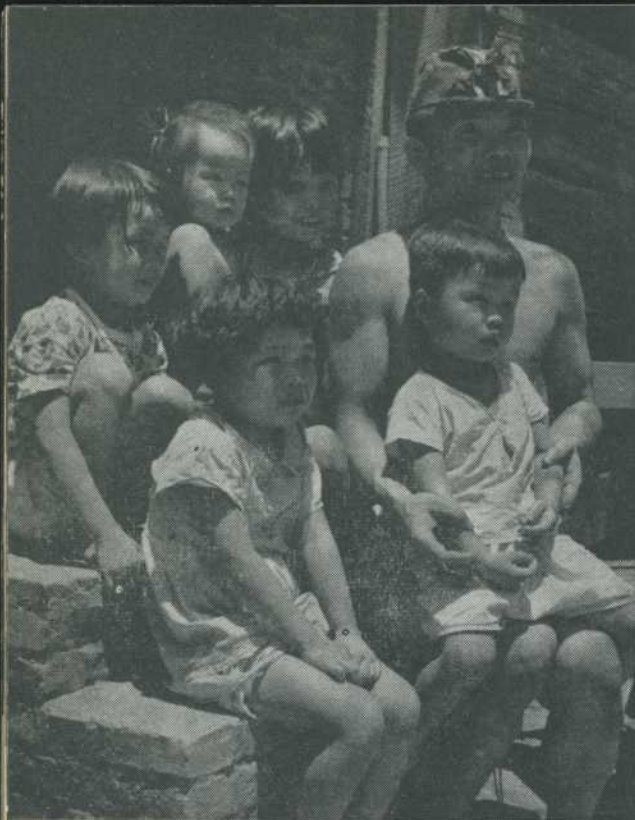


"Ellson Type" hand-operated high compression Block-making machine — 600 soil cement bricks (equivalent to 3,000 ordinary red bricks) can be produced in one day by one machine.

The housing project was part of a wider plan to develop a spirit of self-help among the evacuees, to provide them with permanent homes, and at the same time to integrate them in the economic life of the island by giving them work to perform. Then, the population as a whole was interested in the idea of neat, low-cost housing. Today, under the overall planning of the National Housing Commission, all Taiwanese are offered an opportunity to be helped towards the building of better homes. "Use your hands to build your own house!" Such has been the catchword of the Taiwanese campaign for

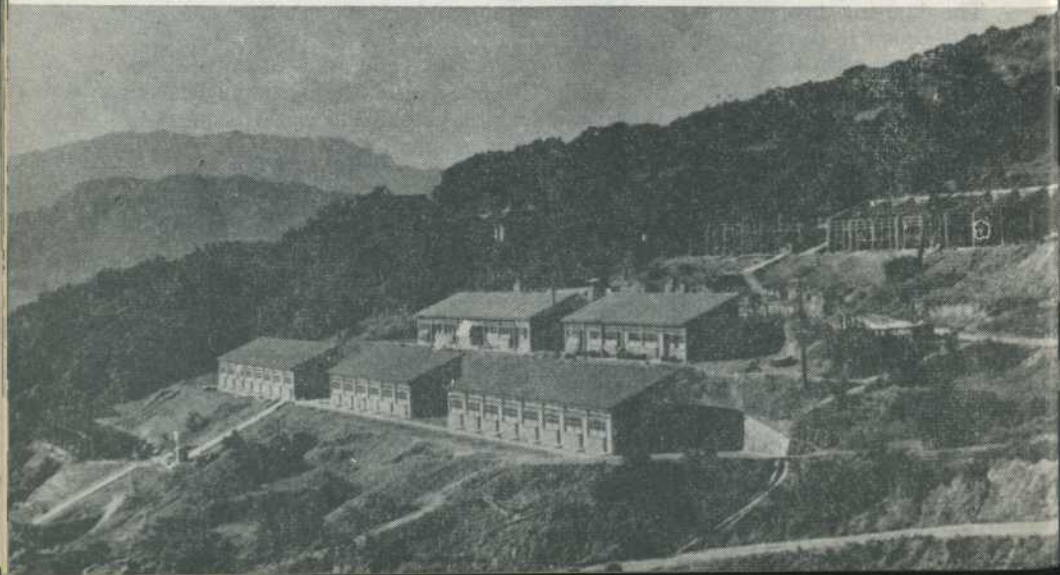
comfortable homes during the past year.

Tens of thousands of enthusiastic Chinese visited the National Housing Exhibit held in Taipei. Attractive and comfortable appeared the model houses built of cinder blocks and reinforced concrete, of wood, or in rare cases of aluminum. Each model, from the spacious "A" with four large rooms, kitchen, modern bathroom plumbing, and servant's quarters, to the modest but practical two-room "D" type looked cheerful and livable. Brochures and pamphlets showed the steps to be taken in order to construct any of these houses.



A coal miner
and
his children
at Ingko
near Taipei.

This is site of Dockworkers' Housing in Keelung, Taiwan.





The long-dreamed-of desire of proper habitations for all, suited to each one's tastes and financial means, was on the way to becoming a reality.

A further step towards the full realization of the project was the introduction of a hand-operated brick-making machine which enables the people to produce their own building material. The responsibility for construction is vested in the settlers who receive engineering guidance and construction advice from a small group of technicians. One of the requirements for the Keelung dockworkers to be eligible for a new house was their willingness to provide 60 days (or 480 hours) of their own labor — digging foundations, laying bricks, mixing mortar, carrying building materials and other unskilled or semi-skilled tasks.

A chain reaction of similar low-cost housing projects resulted all

over the island. Soon dockworkers in Kaohsiung, the southern port city, coal miners, and salt field workers had their own projects under way. There now exists on Taiwan a bold island-wide housing program under the supervision of the government, supported by the enthusiastic co-operation of workers and carried out by labor unions, co-operatives, and various groups.

One of the main reasons for the success of this campaign has been the excellent co-operation between Chinese and American agencies, between the government and private initiative towards providing the population with administrative, financial and technical assistance. With a young but already full past and a future rich in promise, the housing project on Taiwan has become a shining achievement in the island's political, economic, and social development.

TOWARDS CHRISTIAN UNITY IN CANADA

Irénée Beaubien, S.J.

What is the religious situation in Canada? How many denominations and sects are there? What are their origins? Which are the largest? What are the main tenets of these different groups? What is the hope for Unity? Irénée Beaubien, answers these questions in a clear, concise and readable manner. The want of a factual book of this kind has long been felt.

The author recalls that the population of Canada falls into about thirty different religious affiliations. The presentation of the more important of the non-Catholic denominations brings out their individual

traits and surveys what they hold in common. The author then deals with the Ecumenical Movement's effort toward Christian Unity and the Catholic position on this important subject.

There follows a review of various methods of approach to bring about the much desired Christian Unity. Here rich illustrations from personal experiences of individuals lend special warmth to the narrative.

The foreword has been written by the Most Reverend John C. Cody, Bishop of London, Ont.

Extensive bibliography and Index.

Price: \$3.00

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