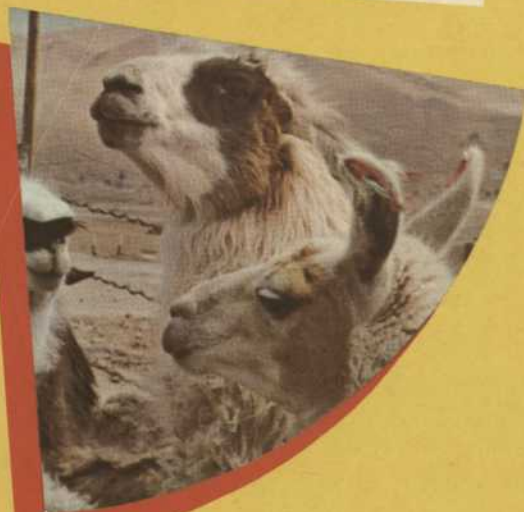




THE PRECURSOR

March – April 1970, Montreal – Vol. XXIX – No 2



THE PRECURSOR

No 2 — March-April 1970 — Vol. XXIX

DIRECTION: Sister Gisèle Villemure, M.I.C. — **EDITORIAL BOARD:** Sister Gabrielle Ouimet, M.I.C., Sister Lina Bourassa, M.I.C., Sister Madeline B. Maillet, M.I.C., Sister Agnès Lavallée, M.I.C. — **CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT:** Sister Rita Ready, M.I.C., Sister Anna Ready, M.I.C.

SUBSCRIPTION:

The Precursor
2900, St. Catherine Road
Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal 250
Canada

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

\$ 1.50 per year
\$ 2.75 for 2 years
\$40.00 for life

FRIENDLY SUBSCRIPTION:

\$ 2.00 a year

ABROAD:

\$ 2.00 a year

In case of change of address, please send both: the old and the new.

Bi-monthly magazine published by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception with the approbation of the Ordinary of Montreal.

NIHIL OBSTAT:

Reverend Jean-Charles Valin
November 26 1969

Second Class Mail Registration No 0358
Return Postage Guaranteed.



SECRÉTAIRERIE D'ÉTAT

DU VATICAN, 12 Septembre 1969

N. 144836

Ma Révérende Mère,

Votre Congrégation s'apprête à fêter le cinquantième anniversaire de la fondation de votre revue intitulée "Le Précurseur", par laquelle vous vous efforcez de mieux faire connaître les missions et les oeuvres pontificales missionnaires.

Le Saint-Père est heureux de savoir la contribution que vous apportez ainsi à l'une des tâches essentielles de l'Eglise, pour préparer les chemins du Seigneur chez ceux qui n'ont pas encore été profondément évangélisés, stimuler la prière et l'engagement des chrétiens à leur égard, éveiller enfin des vocations missionnaires. Il encourage aussi l'apostolat que vous assurez, non seulement au Canada, mais en de nombreux pays où le service et le témoignage des religieuses est tant attendu. Et c'est de grand coeur qu'Il vous envoie, à l'occasion du cinquantenaire que vous fêtez, sa paternelle Bénédiction Apostolique, qu'Il étend volontiers à toutes les Soeurs Missionnaires de l'Immaculée-Conception de Montréal.

Veuillez agréer, ma Révérende Mère, l'assurance de mon religieux dévouement.

J. Card. Villot

Rév.de Mère Supérieure Générale
des Soeurs Missionnaires
de l'Immaculée Conception

Montréal

SAINT JOSEPH, PRO

At first sight there seems to be no material for a meditation on Joseph, for what do we know of him, apart from his name and a few events that occurred in Our Lord's childhood? The Gospel does not record a single word from him; his language was silence; it was his attention to the angelic voices which spoke in his sleep; it was that prompt and generous obedience which was demanded from him; it was manual labour, in the most modest and fatiguing of forms which earned Jesus the reputation of being "the son of the carpenter" (Mt. 13-55). There is nothing else known of him, and it might well be said that he lived an unknown life, the life of a simple artisan, with no sign of personal greatness.

If we look carefully into this life that was apparently so unremarkable, we shall find that it was greater and more adventurous, more full of exciting events, than we are accustomed to assume in our hasty perusal of the Gospel story. The Gospel describes St. Joseph as a *Just Man* (Mt. 1:19). No greater praise of virtue and no higher tribute to merit could be applied to a man of humble social condition who was apparently far from being equipped to perform great deeds. A poor, honest, hard-working, perhaps even timorous man, but one with unfathomable interior life, from which very singular directions and consolations came, bringing him also the logic and strength that belong to simple and clear souls, and giving him the power of making great decisions, such as that decision to put his liberty at once at the disposition of the divine designs, to make over to them also his legitimate human calling, his conjugal happiness, to accept the conditions, the responsibility and the burden of a family, but, through an incomparable virginal love, to renounce that natural conjugal love that is the foundation and the nourishment of the family. In this way he offered the whole of his existence in a total sacrifice to the imponderable demands raised by the astonishing coming of the Messiah, to whom he was to give the everlasting blessed name of Jesus (Mt.

1:21), whom he was to acknowledge as the effect of the Holy Spirit, and his own son only in a juridical and domestic way.

So St. Joseph was a "committed" man, as we might say nowadays.

And what commitment! Total commitment to Mary, the elect of all the women of the earth and of history, and total commitment to Jesus, who was his offspring only by legal descentance, not by the flesh. He had the burdens, the responsibilities, the risks, and the labours surrounding the holy family. His was the service, the work, the sacrifice, in the shadows of that gospel picture in which we love to meditate on him; and we are certainly not mistaken, for we all know him now and call him Blessed.

This is the Gospel in which the values of human existence take on a different dimension from that with which we are accustomed to appreciate them. What is little becomes big, and in this connection we do well to remember Jesus' fervent words in the eleventh chapter of St. Matthew: "*I give thee praise, oh Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things (the things of the kingdom of the Messiah) from the wise and learned, but hast revealed them to little ones*".

In the Gospel's account, what is lowly becomes worthy to be the social condition of the Son of God made son of man; that which is elementary and the product of fatiguing and rudimentary handwork served to train the maker and continuator of the cosmos in the skill of human hands (cf. Jn. 1:3; 5:17), and to give humble bread to Him who was to describe Himself as "the Bread of Life" (Jn. 6:48); what was lost for love of Christ is here rediscovered (cf. Mt. 10:39), and whoever sacrifices his own life for Him in this world saves it for everlasting life (Jn. 12:25).

St. Joseph was the type of the message of that Gospel that Jesus was to announce as the programme in the redemption of mankind, once he left the little

TECTOR AND GUIDE

workshop at Nazareth and began his mission as prophet and teacher. St. Joseph is the model of those humble ones that Christianity raises to great destinies, and he is the proof that in order to be good and genuine followers of Christ there is no need of "great things"; it is enough to have the common, simple, human virtues, but they need to be true and authentic.

Our meditation now shifts from the humble Saint to our own personal circumstances, as is usual in the practice of mental prayer. We now turn to make a comparison and a contrast between him and ourselves. We have no reason to feel proud of the comparison, but we can derive some good suggestion from it for imitating him in some way which our own life condition allows, in our spirit and in concrete practice of those virtues which are so vigorously depicted in the saint, and one especially, poverty, of which there is so much talk nowadays. And let us not be upset by the difficulties which poverty brings with it today, in this world which is all devoted to conquest of economic wealth, as if poverty were in contradiction with the line of progress which must be followed, a paradox, an unreality in a society of welfare and consumption.

Let us think again of St. Joseph in his poverty and hard work, all his energy engaged in the effort of earning something to live on, and let us then remember that economic goods are indeed worthy of our Christian interest, on condition that they do not become ends in themselves, but are understood and used as means to keep going life which is directed towards other and higher goods; on condition that economic goods are not sought after with greedy egoism, but be rather a source and stimulus of provident charity; on condition again that they be not used as authorization for soft and easy indulgence in the so-called pleasures of life, but rather be used for the broad and honest interests of the common good.

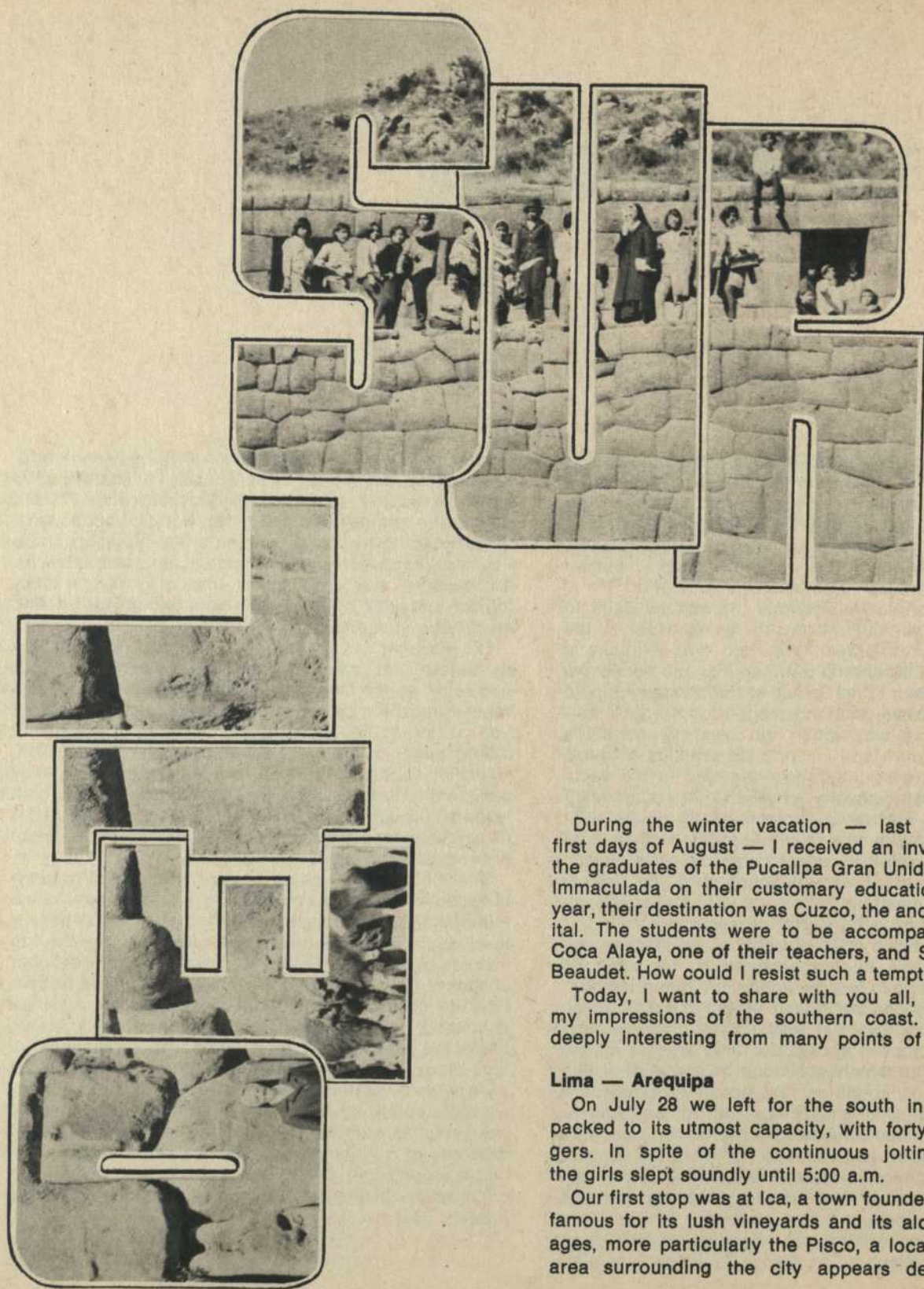
This saint's laborious and dignified poverty, can still be an excellent guide for us to follow the path

traced by Christ's footsteps in the modern world. It can also eloquently instruct us in positive and honest wellbeing, so that we may avoid losing Christ's path in the complicated and giddy world of economics, to avoid going too far on one side into tempting ambitions of conquest of temporal riches, and too far on the other side, into making use of poverty's ideological ends, as a power to rouse social hatred and systematic subversion.

St. Joseph is an example for us. Let us try to imitate him, and we shall call upon him as our protector, as the Church has been wont to do in these recent times, for herself in the first place, for spontaneous theological reflection on the marriage of divine with human action in the great economy of the Redemption, in which economy the first, the divine one is wholly sufficient to itself, but the second, human action, which is ours, though capable of nothing (cf. Jn. 15:5), is never dispensed from humble but conditional and ennobling collaboration.

The Church also calls upon him as her Protector because of a profound and most present desire to reinvigorate her ancient life with true evangelical virtues, such as shine forth in St. Joseph. The Church invokes him as her Patron and Protector through her unshakeable trust that he to whom Christ willed to confide the care and protection of His own frail human childhood, will continue from heaven to perform his protective task in order to guide and defend the Mystical Body of Christ Himself, which is always weak, always under attack; always in a state of peril. Finally, we call upon St. Joseph for the world, trusting that the heart of the humble working man of Nazareth, now overflowing with immeasurable wisdom and power, still harbours and will always harbour a singular and precious fellow-feeling for the whole of mankind. So may it be.

Pope Paul VI
Osservatore Romano



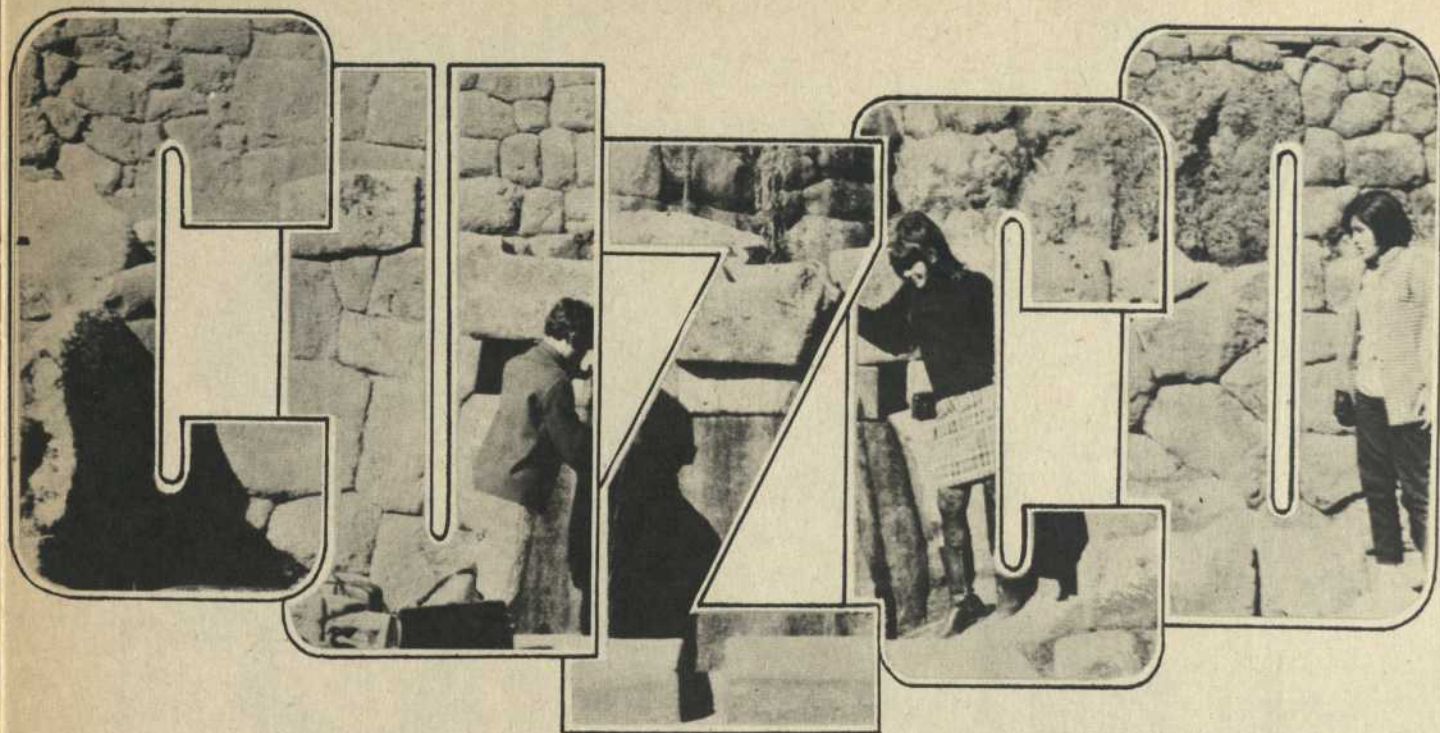
During the winter vacation — last days of July, first days of August — I received an invitation to join the graduates of the Pucallpa Gran Unidad Escolar La Immaculada on their customary educational trip. This year, their destination was Cuzco, the ancient Inca capital. The students were to be accompanied by Miss Coca Alaya, one of their teachers, and Sister Thérèse Beaudet. How could I resist such a tempting invitation?

Today, I want to share with you all, dear readers, my impressions of the southern coast. The trip was deeply interesting from many points of view.

Lima — Arequipa

On July 28 we left for the south in a small bus packed to its utmost capacity, with forty-nine passengers. In spite of the continuous jolting, nearly all the girls slept soundly until 5:00 a.m.

Our first stop was at Ica, a town founded in 1563. It is famous for its lush vineyards and its alcoholic beverages, more particularly the Pisco, a local brandy. The area surrounding the city appears desert-like, but



by Sister Simone Sabourin, M.I.C.

Just as we were going to press, we learned the sad news of the death of Sister Simone Sabourin which occurred after a painful illness. "The Precursor" loses in her a constant and devoted collaborator to whom we owe pages alive with missionary inspiration.

wherever water can be brought, vegetation flourishes. Irrigation canals carry life-giving fluid to many gardens and vineyards. The Chincha valley is the chief grape-growing Peruvian region; it supplies the national wine industry. Another important product is cotton, "the white gold of Peru".

All the day long we drove through the barren countryside, with only a few oases emerging here and there. Between the oases, we drove for miles that varied from flat to hilly, but always dry, dry, dry . . . The monotony, the utter absence of life holds a beauty at once haunting and terrifying.

After a good twenty-five hours of travel with hardly a stop, we finally reached the city of Arequipa, Peru's second most important, and its commercial and agricultural hub. It was almost midnight. How thankful we were to find lodgings with some of our Pucallpa teachers spending their holidays in this city! We were literally played out. Beds had been hospitably prepared and we threw ourselves on them to sleep and dream of giant sand dunes bent in the shape of sharp-ridged crescents by constant winds from the west.

When we woke up the following morning, we caught our first glimpse of Arequipa, the "White City" gleaming like a gem set in the green valley of the Chili River. All the building material that went into its houses, churches, and public buildings was poured down from snow-capped El Misti, the "Old One". The white and pink lava is porous, easy to saw into blocks, and lasts forever. Arequipa enjoys a stimulating, spring-like climate all the year round. This may account for the energy and dynamism of its citizens who have initiated several history-making revolts. Lima may feel "superior" to other cities on the Coast, but the Coast, for the most part, feels itself "superior" to the Sierra; and Arequipa is a meeting-place of both Coast and Sierra influences.

We admired fine examples of Spanish colonial architecture flanking the famous Plaza de Armas.

Climbing up the Altiplano

On July 31, early in the morning, we left El Misti's "Great Door of Legend" and passed through its portals into Inca land. All about us loomed towering peaks



Incan vestiges. Very few tourists will pass by Peru without visiting the peculiar ruins of the city of Machu Picchu. Bordered by the impressive Cordillera of the Andes, this city is counted as one of the vestiges of the Incan civilization still in good state.





and ranges hunching their great shoulders skyward. We soon began to feel the effects of *soroche*, mountain sickness. Our bus driver ordered the window panes lowered. After a while, I became so indifferent that I forgot about the possibility of being hurled down yawning precipices bordering our way ... Towards noon, I recovered my senses enough to admire the green, red, brown, blue, and gray hues of the mountains, and their outlines suggesting shapes of forts, pyramids, castles, and domes.

We took a light supper. Towards 11:00 p.m., Tio (Uncle), as the students call our kind bus driver, announced a stop of three hours. He had been driving since morning and badly needed a rest. A few passengers alighted and installed themselves on park benches where they slept more or less soundly until 2:00 a.m. The driver then woke everybody up and on we drove. Four hours later we reached Cuzco, the fabulous capital of the ancient Inca empire.

Volumes have been written on this city. I have no intention of saying anything new about it, but will give only a few descriptions and narrations.

Cuzco is unique and original. Lying at the bottom of the Cuzco Valley it comprises the old Incaic and colonial cities, and the modern and republican cities. Someone has compared it to Rome, the Eternal City. During my brief stay in the city, I had the impression of treading on sacred ground. At almost every step, we discovered some important vestige of the past. The city still rests for the most part on Incaic masonry.



Above the first floors, rise the Spanish colonial style upper stories of masonry, adobe, and carved wood. Among the colonial churches, the cathedral, begun under Pizarro, is probably the largest and most beautiful. It houses treasures of great value. I noticed more particularly the great sculptured altar-piece, the choir stalls encrusted with silver, and in the sacristy, several precious objects kept in a vault. Chief among these was a great golden monstrance studded with 331 pearls, 263 diamonds, 63 rubies, 221 emeralds, 89 amethysts, 5 white sapphires, 43 topazes, and 1 agate. A relic of the true cross is set in a reliquary ornamented with emeralds.

Situated on the Plaza Mayor, like the Cathedral, the church of the Jesuits, the *Compania*, was built in 1650 on the site of the Inca emperor Huayna Capac's palace. Smaller than the cathedral, it is built in sober style and contains priceless works of art created by Spanish, Indian, and Mestizo artists and craftsmen.

The *Merced*, situated at a short distance from these two churches, is remarkable for its graceful cloisters. In the sacristy, we admired a huge golden monstrance set with countless precious stones. Unfortunately, one loses sight of the latter, lost in the great gold mass.

In my opinion, all edifices having a religious character ought to be visited, for they form part of the unique atmosphere of this city.

San Domingo church is particularly interesting since it was erected on the foundations of the Inca Temple of the Sun. Passing through the basement, still well preserved, one can have some faint idea of what Incaic architecture must have been like.

The church of Saint Francis blends both the Incaic and colonial styles of architecture. Visitors spend hours examining the intricate sculpture of choir stalls, walls, ceilings, the work of a genial Franciscan artist, Brother Luis Montes.

Whoever visits Cuzco, should see the famous pulpit of the church of San Blas, perched on a hillock at a short distance from the spacious Plaza de Armas.

Roger Boutet de Monvel has aptly said that "the Peruvian cathedrals are like the Spanish temples.

Once you set foot inside, you can hardly wrench yourself away because of their beauty and splendour".

Cuzco department

Cuzco is at times designated as "the archeological capital of America". It still contains vestiges of a good number of Incaic palaces, temples, fortresses; each boulder seems to have a historical significance attached to it. The monumental fortress of Sacsahuaman, on the heights above the city, is one of the most amazing works of ancient men in our western hemisphere. Some of the huge stones measure fifteen to twenty feet in height and weigh many tons. No mortar or cement was used. The boulders were so accurately shaped and fitted that a needle could not be thrust between them.

At Pisac, reached after an arduous climb of Mount Intihatana, we admired an ancient astronomical device destined to observe the movements of the sun. Massive works of carefully quarried ancient stones still stand in place, overlooking the Urubamba river. Attacks of centuries by man and weather have been powerless to topple them.

Manchu Picchu — Secret Shangri La

The sole means of communication between Cuzco and Machu Picchu is a small local railway and a kind of auto-wagon affected to tourists. A switchback road leads 2,000 feet up. We chose the train as the fare was cheaper.

Shortly before noon, our train came to the Machu Picchu or rather the Santa Anna Station. We still had several miles to go by station wagon before reaching the lost city of the Incas. Everywhere, we saw remarkable traces of a glorious past, and objects of supreme interest: broad plazas; burial and parade grounds; well-preserved remains of houses with only the roof, usually thatched, missing; shrines, mystic markers, baths, fountains. . . .

Every section of the huge walls functioned as part of a fortress, the whole forming a community of hun-

Numerous vestiges of the Incan cyclopean constructions can be seen in Cuzco; among these, thick, high walls built of enormous



dreds of terraces. For hours we wandered through the vast labyrinth of stone halls and terraces where wild flowers bloom between cracks, amazed at the ingenuity of the Incas who had perched this metropolis on the pinnacle of an all but inaccessible mountain. No wonder the Spaniards never found it! The dead city was discovered by Hiram Bingham in 1911.

Mount Huayna Pichu (young mountain) frowned at us across the abyss. From its precipitous summit, the Inca's lookouts could spot invaders from afar and warn the city in case of danger. Far below, the Urubamba River flowed silently on.

Farewell, Machu Picchu!

We could have spent days admiring the splendours of this secret Shangri La, but unfortunately, we had to start down towards four in order to reach the train in time for Cuzco where we arrived at midnight.

The following day, we left for Lima, named by Pizarro, its founder, City of the Kings, probably because the site was discovered on Epiphany, January 6. In order to learn more about the country, we followed a different direction on our way back. Late in the afternoon, we reached Abancay, capital of the department of Apurimac, 130 miles west of Cuzco, on the Abancay, an affluent of the best beet-sugar districts of Peru.

We arrived in Lima at 1:30 a.m. From the historic Plaza de Armas where Pizarro laid out the original town, Lima eventually spread along the Rimac river, up the San Cristobal hill, becoming in time the wealthiest colonial capital of South America. Today, Greater Lima, comprising several beautiful suburbs, extends over an area of about forty square miles, and has a population of over one million, making it the sixth largest city in South America.

After seeing so many wonderful things and exploring such interesting historic sites during this educational excursion, we could only say, "*Venos a regressar*" "we shall come again".



stone blocks so well-adjusted, that it is impossible to insert even the thin blade of a knife between the non cemented blocks.



THE LLAMA - ORNAMENT OF THE



The long pointed ears of the llama gives its head an expression of intelligence.

In his, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, Father José de Acosta, a Spanish missionary priest, remarks that God gave the Indians the llama which costs them nothing and serves them so faithfully because "He knew they were poor". At any rate, it is true to say that this animal, domesticated by Andean forebears, has been for centuries and still is their main standby.

The South American camel family is represented by the species vicuna, guanaco, llama, and alpaca. The two former are wild; the latter domesticated.

The llama

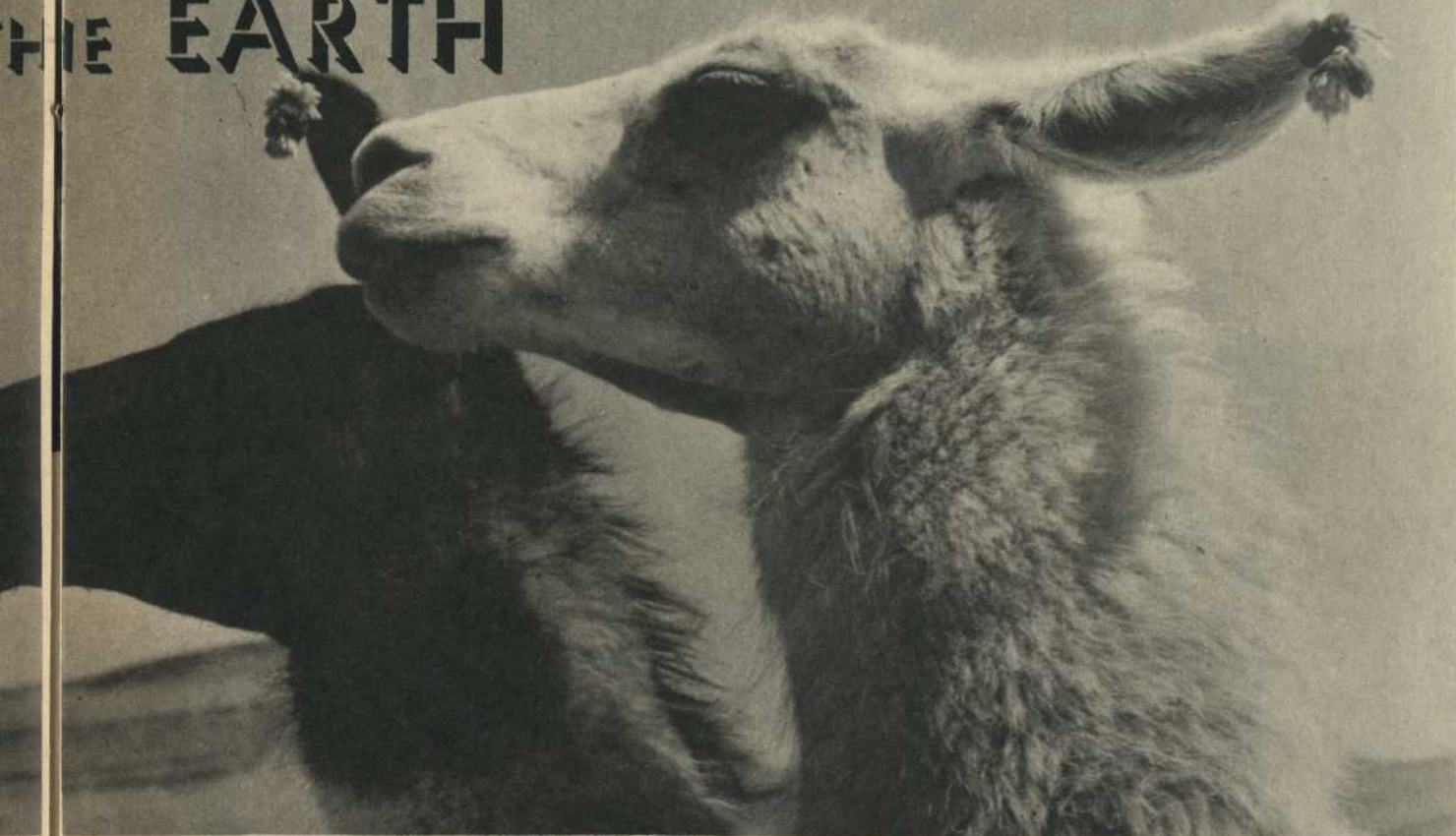
Smaller in size and build than camels, llamas have no hump on their backs. Their pointed ears are rela-

tively small; their tails are mere stumps; their toes are separated, each with its little pad. Their all-around operating cost is practically nil, for they get sufficient nourishment on their journeys merely by grazing on the coarse grasses found in the highlands. Like the camel, they are able to carry over a few spare cud in their complex stomachs in case a snowstorm covers up their usual food supply. Although their life span may extend to thirty or even thirty-five years, they are often slaughtered when only seven or eight years, for their meat and hide.

Indian women weave ponchos, skirts, shawls, and caps out of the llamas' black, white, or coffee-brown wool. Recently, large amounts of this wool have been shipped abroad.

Bolivia

THE EARTH



A serviceable animal, the llama furnishes food and fur, besides being a beast of burden.

Llamas are the sierra Indians' beasts of burden. "Sturdy ships of the Andes", they can travel 15 to 20 miles a day, at high altitudes. Their partially cleft feet, sharp and faintly hook-like, make them more sure-footed than mules. A strong llama can carry as much as 130 pounds, but the average animal can seldom manage more than 100 pounds. When too heavy a burden is laid upon their backs, they go on strike; lying down on the trail with front feet neatly tucked under their body, they refuse to budge.

In March, the llamas convey sacks of potatoes to market. From June to July, the Indians move down to the plains and valleys to till their plots of ground. Their llamas accompany them, loaded with plows, salt, Peruvian bark, and *khoa*, a special brand of fertilizer.

The llama at "Man and his World".





A poncho made of llama wool
... what a nice souvenir from
the Andes!

According to the Indians' expressions, *khoa* provides food for the *Pacha-Mama*, Virgin of the soil, considered as a deity.

Climbing back to the highlands, later in the year, llamas carry loads of maize and of various medicinal herbs. On these occasions, the animals' ears are adorned with brightly coloured woolen tassels and festive trappings decked with bells.

You will never see Indians mistreating their llamas. On the contrary, they handle them with great gentleness, speaking to them softly, and coaxing them along with low whistles. They consider them more as friends than as animals, friends who share the loneliness and harsh living conditions of the bleak altiplano.

Only males over three years of age serve as carriers; females are kept for breeding and for their hair.

From their tiniest hair to their droppings, llamas are utilized 100 percent by the Indians. *Charqui*, jerked llama meat, provides nourishment; hides are made into sandals; tibias are fashioned into flutes; long hairs are braided into ropes; dried up droppings constitute *taquia*, Peruvian charcoal used as fuel.

The Quechuas nourished such deep veneration for these friends and benefactors that they envisioned them in a starry constellation. In the Cuzco Korikancha Temple, a white llama was daily offered in sacrifice to the sun god. On great festivals, thousands of these animals were thus slaughtered.



Even today, in remote altiplano districts, Indians continue to offer a white llama in sacrifice to the sun god, more especially on popular festivals.

The alpaca — gift of the gods

This animal, which thrives in Bolivia and on the Chilean border, was considered by the Incas as a gift of the gods. Alpacas today are still the most important lamoids as far as wool production is concerned. Unlike llamas, they have never been acclimated in other lands. Their body is heavily covered with wool. Their range of colour seems to be as varied as that of the llamas; in a herd of alpacas one can see all colours from white to browns and blacks; with many blotched hybrids.

The dainty vicuna

The daintiest, most agile, and also rarest of the lamoids is the deerlike vicuna. Rigorously protected by excellent Inca conservation laws, the species has since almost become extinct due to the depredations of man upon it for its incomparable fleece. There is no other wool in the world quite so fine, soft, and silky. Compared with it, a human hair appears like coarse wire.

The vicuna's head is large in proportion to its slender neck and trim body, and its ears are seldom held as erect as those of the other lamoids. Vicunas are wary of men more than of cars, and their slender limbs can get them out of harm's way with deerlike agility.

The guanaco

It is believed that this animal roamed the altiplano in the wake of America's prehistoric men. Somewhat

like an oversized goat in shape, it has a much longer neck surmounted by a camel-like head with long pointed, alert ears. Its coat of short coarse hair, reddish-brown or grayish-white in colour, has no commercial value.

Touchy and easily aroused, it manifests its ill-humour by spitting out half-chewed food at offenders. The Indians eat its flesh, less tender than that of the vicuna.

In Bolivia, fast runners are often nicknamed *guanaco*.

The llama "ornament of the earth"

Peruvians appreciate the llama. Today as in the days of the pre-Inca civilization, it remains the most important all-purpose animal. This faithful carrier and friend is represented as subject in textiles, on hand-decorated gourds, on pottery, on silver and gold jewelry. The llama is also honoured on Peru's postage stamps, coins, and national emblem.

Indeed, the lowly animal has perhaps done more for the Indians than many an illustrious national hero. . . . Aptly called "ornament of the earth" the llama is cherished by the *serranos* (mountaineers), as a faithful friend and purveyor. Were it not for its warm fleece and its nourishing milk and flesh it is doubtful whether the inhabitants of the altiplano could exist at such altitudes.

Céline Trudeau, M.I.C.

First Chinese translation of Bible from original texts

The Hong Kong Bible Centre conducted by the Franciscans has just published a popular one-volume edition of the Bible translated into Chinese from the original texts. This edition is the first of its kind to have been published. The Protestants who initiated the translation of the Bible in Chinese (over one hundred years ago), did so solely from the texts of the *King James Version* or of the *Revised Bible Version*.

From this point of view, the translation just completed by the Hong Kong Franciscans is an appreciable improvement. Up to now, Chinese non-Christians in Hong Kong and elsewhere were led to believe that the complete Bible was the sacred

book of Protestants alone, Catholics being satisfied with the New Testament.

The Franciscans on the staff of the Hong Kong Bible Centre started work on the present popular edition back in 1961 after completing, in August of that same year, the Chinese translation of the Bible in twelve volumes. This may be considered as an event of paramount importance in the evangelization of the Chinese. The slogan used as propaganda — a Bible to every Catholic family — as well as the modest price (\$20.00 HK) will facilitate widespread distribution.

The history of this translation of the Bible in Chinese manifests the merit of its authors. The work was

done in two distinct phases: the Peking phase, and the Hong Kong phase. Difficulties of all sorts beset the beginnings of the Centre. Since the inception of the work, in 1945, the Franciscans had to move five times; finally, in 1948, they were forced to leave Communist dominated territory; they resettled in Hong Kong taking up their abode in an old house of the colonial type.

Their actual quarters are plain but suitable to their purpose, with a library of 20,000 volumes relating more particularly to biblical studies. Consultation rooms well stocked with dictionaries and reference books have been at the disposal of the Fathers for over twenty years. The group comprises seven Fathers (4 Chinese, 1 German, 1 French, 1 Italian), Father Gabriel, and Mr. Allegra, Director of Centre. Work on the translation has been going on for twenty-three years. It took one entire year just to correct the proofs of the works which involved over three million characters.

The Bible in one volume is characterized by a remarkable unity of style and by a certain stability in biblical terminology. With regard to the Psalms and other poetical parts of the sacred texts, the authors tried to adapt the original rhythms of the Chinese tongue, in such a way as to facilitate understanding of these texts so often used in the new liturgy. Other characteristics of the work are: more abundant division of pericopes; certain geographical maps and appendixes; an outline of the history of great empires including China itself into which has been inserted the history of Israel; an outline of biblical theology in view of the history of salvation which practically does duty as an alphabetical index (there is no alphabet in the Chinese tongue) such as are often used in our western Bibles.

The Hong Kong Bible Centre plans to publish eight other works of which two are soon to be launched: a biblical concordance, and a biblical dictionary which will be a guide to all Chinese in the reading of the Scriptures.

(*Fides*, February 1, 1969)



號角

吹前四號角

以後，那七位持着七個號角的¹天使，就準備着吹號角。第一位一吹號角，就有攪着血的冰雹和火拋到地上，於是大地被燒毀了三分之一，樹木也被燒毀了三分之一，青草全被燒盡。

第二位天使一吹號角，就好像有一座燃着火的大山，投入海中，於是海的三分之一，便成了血，海裏一切有生命之物也死了三分之一，船隻也毀壞了三分之一。

第三位天使一吹號角，就有一顆大星，熾燃有如火把，從天上落下來，落在河的三分之一和泉水上。這星的名字叫「苦」。

艾。」於是水的三分之一變成苦的，許多人因水變苦了而死去。

第四位天使一吹號角，太陽的三分之一，月亮的三分之一，星辰的三分之一，都受了打擊，以致它們的三分之一黑暗了，白日三分之一失了光，黑夜也是一樣。^③

三種災禍的預報 以後，我看見，也聽見在天空中飛翔的一隻鷹大聲說：「還有另三位吹號角的天使，當他們發出號聲時，禍哉！禍哉！地上的居民！」^④

第九章

第五號角 精神的困擾

第五位天使一吹號

角，我看見有一顆星從天上落到地上，並給了他深淵洞穴的鑰匙。他一開了深淵的洞穴，就有烟從洞穴裏冒上來，像大火密裏的烟，太陽和天空都因那洞穴裏的烟昏暗了，遂有蝗蟲從烟裏來到地上，又賦給了牠們，好似地上的蠍子具有的權柄，且吩咐牠們不可傷害地上的草，凡青物，凡樹木都不可傷害，只可傷害那些在額上沒有天主印號的人，並且吩咐蝗蟲不可殺死他們，但要使他們受痛苦五個月，他們所受的痛苦，就如人被蠍子螫着時所受的痛苦。在那日期內，人求死而不得，渴望死，死却離開他們。

蝗蟲的形狀彷彿準備上陣的戰馬，牠們的頭上好似有像黃

馬的是這樣：牠們穿着火紅、紫青和藍綠色的盔甲，頭戴像

WOMAN'S ROLE IN JAPAN

by Sister Madeline B. Maillet, M.I.C.

Japanese woman's historical role

Among nearly all nations, especially at the dawn of their history, flourished the idea that compared to man, woman was an inferior being. Just as good is opposed to evil, heaven to earth, day to night, right to left, man was opposed to woman and prevailed over her.

The history of Japan, on the contrary, presents the remarkable fact that in the first centuries of its existence and well up to the Kamakura period (1192-1333) women played an important role. Indeed, they once held sway over the empire. One of the greatest rulers of Japan in the first centuries of our Christian era, was Empress Jinzu whose troops conquered Korea. Old chronicles mention several women who were chiefs of clans. Certain Chinese writers even called Japan, "Land of the Queen", because of the honour in which women were held. During the Heian period (794-1192) women wielded extraordinary influence at the imperial court.

Effect of Confucianism on Woman's Role

The Kamakura period ushered in a resurgence of Confucianism. This moral movement grew to be appre-

ciated above all others, due to its ethics, its logical codifications of the world, and the consummate wisdom of the great wise man of China, Confucius. That he had a poor opinion of women in general is borne out of his teachings. According to him, women are different from men as earth is from heaven. "If you trust them too much, they grow indiscreet; if you stand on your guard, they are vexed." Interpreted in a severe and dogmatic manner, his works impaired the status of Japanese women.

Ideas such as those mentioned above die hard. As late as thirty years ago, *Onna Daigaku* "Greater Learning for Women", a work written by a celebrated moralist towards the middle of the seventeenth century, continued to be read and studied in all schools for girls. A paragraph of this treatise of Confucian inspiration enumerates as follows woman's chief mental maladies: "The five worst maladies that afflict the female mind are: indocility, discontent, slander, jealousy, and silliness. Without any doubt, these five maladies infest seven or eight out of every ten women, and it is from these that arises the inferiority of women to men. A woman should cure them by self-inspection and self-reproach."

Another factor which contributed to the lowering of woman's status in Japan was the political turmoil of the Kamakura period. The world then belonged to men. Man, not woman, fought for emperor or feudal lord with unquestioned loyalty and dauntless courage; man, therefore, held the predominant role.

Modern Era

Since the end of World War II, Japanese society has undergone evolutionary changes, one of the most remarkable being the new status and freedom attained by women. Article 14 of the new Constitution states that all citizens are equal under the law and there shall exist no discrimination in political, economic, or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin. In all national or local elections, women over 20 have the right to vote. At 25 they are eligible to the House of Representatives and at 30 to the House of Councillors. In all local elections, they may be electors at 20 and eligible at 25. They cannot, however, be candidates to the post of provincial governor until they have reached the age of 30. Much to everybody's surprise, at the first general election, April 6, 1946, there were 39 women candidates to the House of Representatives. Although there has been an actual decrease in the total number of women MP's since the initial enthusiastic reaction, there have always been at least 20 seats occupied by women legislators. In 1966, women constituted 12.8 per cent of the total membership of Boards of Education, 29.7 per cent of the Mediation Commissioners of the Family Courts, and 27.7 per cent of the Public and Child Welfare Commissioners.

Teaching is one of the oldest professional positions held by women. In 1965 women teachers at all levels numbered 371,506 representing 34.6 per cent of the total number of teachers. As for administration posts, there were 101 women principals in the public primary and secondary schools. In private colleges and universities, there are as many as 7,289 faculty women members and 85 presidents.

Showing their mettle

All this goes to prove that Japanese women have shown their mettle in national life. Mrs. Masa Nakayama, first woman cabinet minister in the history of Japan, explained their new position as follows, "Looking after national affairs is an expansion of home management". She pointed out that before being a good politician, one must be a good individual. "I believe", she said, "that an ideal government is as good as a harmonious couple. . . . There is no gap between the two sexes as regards politics. It is a matter of ability, not of superiority." According to the Ministry of Welfare, over 63 per cent of all Japanese women above 20 belong to at least 42,000 feminine organizations. The most important is the National Council of the Federation of Regional Women's Clubs. Other well-known feminine groupings include the Widows' Association, the Young Christians' Association, the Association of University Graduates, the

League of Electors, the Federation of Housewives, the Association of Women Lawyers, etc. The activities of such groups vary according to their objectives. They may, for instance, campaign against exorbitant prices on staple foods, bribery in public offices, certain government policies. . . .

The public has learned that Japanese women have eyes to see and tongues to lash abuse in whatever segment of society it may occur. For example, in 1948, members of the Osaka Association of Housewives proved that they were fully capable of exercising efficacious action in lowering the cost of meat then being sold at unreasonable prices. As fish is easily substituted to meat in most Japanese families, housewives willingly took up the countersign and obtained a brilliant victory — the price of meat fell from 182 yen to 35 yen a pound. In 1958, the Yotsuya Association of Housewives organized, in its newly built Tokyo Centre, a laboratory for chemical analyses. The fully modern equipment of the laboratory is placed at the disposal of all who wish to analyse foods of all kinds sold on the market so as to make sure of their wholesomeness.

Whatever her position in life, Japanese woman performs her service with a serene graciousness that adds to her charm. There is about her an aura of simplicity and kindness which is most refreshing in this sophisticated world of ours. She can be an efficient office worker, an industrious shopkeeper, an attentive saleswoman, a smiling and tireless tourist guide, a competent teacher, a devoted and loving mother, a loyal wife.

Laefcadio Hearn (1850-1904), brilliant author and pioneer enunciator of the charms and virtues of Japanese woman, doubted that such exquisite womanhood could survive in the maelstrom of modern life. Apparently, his pessimistic conclusion was not borne out by time. Have social changes really transformed the character, way of thinking, and general attitude of Japanese women? After a century of incredibly fast-paced modernization they have emerged as fearless advocates of national welfare, while they continue to cherish the precious heritage of the past. A former ambassador to France, Mr. Akira Matsui, once remarked on this issue: "Some regret that the delicacy and femininity so characteristic of Japanese women, tends to diminish. For my part, I do not share the opinion of those who pretend that a reform of the law can by itself transform woman's nature. It remains possible and desirable to preserve the remarkable characteristics of our Japanese women although their social position has undergone a profound transformation."

Even non-Christian women nourish an instinctive reverence for the Woman above all others blessed. One of them once remarked: "I have often been told that the figure of the Virgin Mary served as an ideal in the liberation of western women from pagan servitude. . . . I think that even in our modern times, the question of the true emancipation of womanhood can find its inspiring solution in the ideal of life proposed by the Blessed Virgin."

THE EMER

GING



by Sister Edita Telan, M.I.C.

FILIPINO WOMAN

It is as difficult to describe the Filipino woman as it is to explain a woman's mind. To use the logician's method of stripping off the individuating notes of a group of Filipino women and then to come up with: "Here is the Filipino woman", is a risky thing to do. In our Space Age where electronic gadgets take measurements with precision, a statistician might make a painstaking survey. But, what if 50% of the Filipino women do not measure up to the type that is described in this essay? Besides, there is another difficulty: the Filipino woman having received transfusions of foreign blood from about eight known major races, is of a much more complicated temperament than any of her Asiatic sisters.

This heterogeneity is not confined within her physical makeup. Hers is a complex personality. To come to a better knowledge and understanding of the emerging Filipino woman, one has to dig far into her past. For convenience sake, we shall take a look at her during the four main periods in the history of the

Philippines: The pre-Spanish era, the Spanish epoch, the American regime, and post-American regime up to the present time.

Filipino woman of the pre-Spanish era

Historians tell us that before the advent of the Christian faith, the status of the Filipino woman was high. Polygamy or divorce was unknown. She received respect and consideration from men. Names such as Lubluban the lawgiver, and the Amazonian Princess, Urduja, grace the pages of the Philippine saga. The Filipina was "queen of the home". She ruled her husband. It is told that the Spanish conquistador of Manila had to consult the wife of Rajah Soliman before concluding a pact of alliance. Even up to the present time, this high regard for woman is faithfully observed. Whenever a Filipino husband is offered a job, he consults his wife before accepting it. One might be tempted to say that the Filipino husband is weak in spirit and character, but this is not so. Upon noticing a



Ladies of fashion

52

- 1 — Miss Philippines "67" adorned for a festival: her gala dress is the modified *kimona* with the maxi-skirt.
- 2 — Contemporary version of *Balintawak* less the *panuelo*.
- 3 — In the centre, the traditional



- Moro costume; left and right, the draped *Malong*.
- 4 & 6 — The modified *kimona* with short skirt.
- 5 — The *Maria Clara* dress.
- On page 50 — *Terno* with butterfly sleeves.



Filipino woman's formal dress called the "terno" with its majestic train, a French student remarked, "Certainly, this is the costume of a respected and dignified woman. It could not have evolved among women who were oppressed and enslaved".

The Filipino woman of the Spanish era

The Hispanic colonization of the Philippines (1521) brought about many profound changes in the life of the Filipino woman. Under the tutelage of the Spanish friar and the *encomenderos* she was gradually moulded after the image of the Spanish woman: shy, diffident, puritanical. The Spanish woman had no other destiny than to be the mother of a family, or a nun. She was denied all culture. With this pattern before her, the young Filipina was trained to obey her father, cast her eyes down, pray the rosary, mask emotions, and look upon men with suspicion. The Filipina of the upper strata was taught how to write at least enough to sign her name, but not enough to exchange letters with her suitor whose courtship had to be circumspect. The Spanish woman was, nonetheless, a tender mother, a thrifty housekeeper, and a faithful wife.

Providentially, the woman of the genuine Filipino society kept intact her primitive virtues such as industry, care of the home, obedience and faithfulness to her husband. She was thus rescued from becoming completely dependent. Through their persistent diligence, the women of the lower and middle classes assured the economic welfare of their families.

The Filipino woman of the American regime

And what about the Filipino woman of the American period? In 1898, the Americans found that the Filipinos had already imbibed Western liberal ideas of Christianity and democracy as well as individual freedom. Made aware that the Filipino woman aspired to be educated and was ambitious to learn, the "magi" of the American regime flung open the doors of education, encouraging her to speak out, and instilling ideals of equality and freedom into her mind. She was told to enjoy life; she responded enthusiastically. Within the short span of twenty-seven years, there were forty women physicians. Still wearing their bulky *sayas* and *camisas*, Filipinas were already adept at playing tennis and even basketball. Although devoted to home life, they entered into the social, economic, educational, cultural, and political fields. Their special love went to the underprivileged; they had at heart the development of the community.

By 1942, the Filipino woman was becoming more and more familiarized with American ways. She cut her hair short and wore western dress. The Japanese occupation exerted no influence on the Filipino woman, unless it be to reinforce her obsession for self-sufficiency.

The Filipino woman today

The Filipino woman of today has emerged with a personality distinctly her own and composite in charac-

ter. At times she can be coy, but she can also be forward and direct in her relationship with men. Extremely hard to woo, she may at times be aggressive. She may also be extremely conventional and ultramodern. Her prudishness often gets the upperhand, although she easily adapts Western fashions. She is careful of appearances, even more so in matters that might affect her highly prized reputation. Religion being much a part of her background, her religiosity is at once instinctive and perfunctory. Nevertheless, she cherishes unquestioning attachment to the Church. If the law liberalizing divorce passed during the Japanese short-lived regime was repealed, it was due to the undaunted courage of Catholic women.

Politics has never failed to interest the Filipino woman. Even before the granting of women's suffrage in 1937, many women were already taking an active part in politics as campaign managers. Since 1937 the number of women who have gone to the polls has increased tremendously. The Filipino woman can look back with pride on the achievement of her sex in politics. Even the government has recognized the great potentiality of the Filipino woman.

Influenced by the American catchword "getting ahead", the Filipino woman has shown marked passion for finding a place in the sun. She may be accused of aping the Westerner, but this is explained by the fact that she has accepted the challenge thrust upon her by a rapidly changing world. No obstacle can stop her from realizing her ambition to acquire a college degree; even age cannot deter her from pursuing a Ph.D. degree. In the field of education, a large majority of teachers are women, for the Filipina feels that teaching is corollary to their role as mothers or daughters. Other fields of endeavour into which woman ordinarily fear to enter have been invaded by the present-day Filipino woman. The Philippines can boast of several women who are founders and presidents of universities, deans and superintendents. Actually the Filipino woman of today, as statistics show, is 70 years old in terms of educational equipment, 63 years old in club and social welfare, and 30 years old in political experience.

And now if you ask a psychoanalyst what he thinks of the Filipino woman, he will tell you at this point that she has a split-personality, trying to balance the modesty of the Victorian Age and the "a-go-go" era. If costume or dress can provide insight into the personality of the wearer in the same way that a nun's religious habit indicates a certain image of a Sister, then it would not be a hasty conclusion to say that the Filipino dress, be it a "terno", a "balintawak" or a "kimona and saya", reveals the hybrid character of the modern Filipino woman. Despite the strong sentiment of nationalism sweeping the country, the young women discard the stiff or soft "pauelo" or shawl that used to be worn on the shoulders or around the neck. The ankle-length skirt worn with the "kimona" has been raised to the knee, and even the latest style of the "kimona" is westernized. On the other hand, most



A scale of "modern faces".



middle-aged women in the barrios keep to the traditional length. The so-called "Maria Clara" that was popular in the 1950's is, at present, only worn in costume-ball travesty and exhibition of folk dances.

In the city, the Filipina may be an aggressive, resourceful, energetic, and self-reliant debutante. She devotes all her assets of mind and body to the fulfillment of her dreams: popularity through publicity. She is a true product of a business-minded society. She may be a glib coed who looks at life on a broad scale, smokes socially, every now and then; she may be a poised career woman, in chic tailored suit who knows how to take a tight schedule and can cope with trifles as well as with important issues. Or she may be a housewife busy with household chores: patching up old clothes, cooking special meals. She may have developed an addiction for the weekly magazines, *mahjong* sessions, civic or social meetings.

In the semi-urban areas, the Filipino woman is either a prim, complacent housewife who divides her day between checking on household helpers, and playing

to offer her assistance whenever one of her neighbours gets sick or dies. This she feels is her prime duty as a Christian.

While the Filipino girl in urban centres has easily adapted to a sophisticated life wherein chaperoning is passé, her counterpart in the barrio is still hedged in by the last century's rules of convention, especially in regard to the world of men. When a boy manifests some gesture of gallantry, she politely refuses the offer with blushes and giggles. She does not enjoy as much freedom as her city sister. During fiesta days, she is accompanied by doting aunts or elder cousins, lest covetous masculine eyes should be cast her way. Her teenage years are shorter, for she has to share the responsibility of her mother.

Such is the emerging Filipino woman — a daughter of East and West — without being the carbon copy of either parent. This is what makes her so womanly and so Filipino. As one writer aptly describes her: "It is the bivalent nature of the Filipino which rears its head sometimes with the fiery temper of the West and,



The Filipino woman of the barrio.



cards or *mahjong*, or a farsighted wife who teaches, or maybe, runs a *tienda* or a dressshop to provide for the dreaded rainy day. How about her counterpart in the rural settlement or in the barrio? Her day is full. She gets up early in the morning to prepare the meal, then dashes off to a nearby well or river to wash the clothes and take a dip. To supplement her husband's meagre earnings, she keeps a brood of chickens and a sow or two, and tends a patch of vegetables. Sometimes, the eggs and the chickens may rescue the hostess from a predicament when some guests pop in unexpectedly. She also serves as an emergency doctor. Ask her anything about medical plants and she is ready to advise you as to what is good for colds, fever, skin eruptions. . . . She rears her children according to the custom of the locality. As it is, the average housewife is pretty much tied down to her household duties. Social life is a luxury for her, but at times she may, on her way home from the market or the river, step in to exchange pleasantries with a friend. However, without any hesitation, she foregoes her work

at times, with the inscrutability of the East that has made her the subject of envy and admiration from her fellow Asian Women".

Role of the Filipino woman

Notwithstanding her defects, the Filipino woman may justly claim the glory of having kept the sanctity of the home. But more work is waiting for her, now that the Philippines has entered upon new paths. With the spread of democracy and freedom of conscience, our youths are being led astray by the current of irreligious skepticism that makes them not only unbelievers but also moral weaklings. The task of saving our youth falls on the shoulders of the Filipino woman who, because of her assets received from different cultures, especially from the Christian culture, is alone equal to the task. As a helpmate of man, she is called upon to work toward the formation of a people endowed with all the advancement of modern humanity, and at the same time to guard jealously genuine Filipino culture.



*I soon found out
that formation to
missionary life
extended over an
interminable period!*

NOVICES TELL ALL ABOUT NOVICES

Suzette, 23, musician
Pauline, 25, nursing assistant
Michelle, 20, office clerk
Nicole, 26, teacher





NOVICES TELL ALL ABOUT NOVICES

The novices mentioned above have been living for the last two years, in a formation centre where they are preparing for religious missionary life. They answered our questions in a spontaneous manner. Sister Aline, formerly missioned in Hong Kong, now in charge of formation, took part in the interview.

The Precursor: What is your idea of missionary life? Are you anxious to be assigned to the mission field afar? Why did you enter a missionary community such as ours, since all Christians are supposed to be missionaries?

Suzette: For my part, being a missionary simply means sharing the faith received in baptism; transmitting the Good News of salvation.

Sister Aline: I wonder whether you were not more or less influenced by your trip in one of the emerging countries. . . . Didn't you feel that the poor, the handicapped needed you badly?

Suzette: Indeed I did. I admit that the apostolic example of the missionaries at work in the area influenced my choice. After I came home, I was haunted by the thought of those people and their missionaries.

The Precursor: Then, you consider that being a missionary means carrying the Good News to foreign lands?

Suzette: Well, not exactly. I don't fancy the expression "foreign lands". A Pakistani for instance, might call Canada or France a foreign country. I think it would be better to say dechristianized or non-christian countries. But, to take up again your question, one can work in one's homeland, in dechristianized or non-christian countries, but on nonchristian realities. . . . There is a difference, I think. It is true that all Christians are missionaries by the very fact of their baptism. However, the call of a few to a more direct apostolate in a particular sector of the Church constitutes a specific vocation. This justifies my choice, I think.

The Precursor: Do you all agree with Suzette in the motivation of her choice?

Nicole: I think that the religious missionary vocation is a very special one.

Sister Aline: It surely calls for a more complete self-giving.

Nicole: Even the missionary sisters who have to remain in their homeland because of sickness or for other reasons, form part of the Congregation and share the same apostolic ideal.

Sister Aline: We do feel the need of rear-guard missionaries.

The Precursor: The members of the People of God are missionaries by their financial assistance, by their prayers, and we are missionaries by the gift of ourself. Do you think this is the motivation of all aspirants?

Suzette: I think so. We must first of all, and above all respond to the call of our vocation, to the divine call.

Pauline: We thus respond to the call of human misery, we serve the neglected, the destitute bereft of spiritual and material goods. This has been the motive which has led us to abandon the comfort and relative liberty we found in our family.

The Precursor: Then, you are convinced that missionary sisters are still needed in the world today?

Nicole: Definitely. They are needed more than ever before. But, the mission must be prepared; I believe in a solid formation period.

The Precursor: Is this the difference you find between missionary religious and lay missionaries?

Pauline: Maybe. But, I find that a still greater difference exists. The missionary sister has given herself to Someone; the consecration of the three vows has bound her more closely to the Lord. She must not consider professional competence more important than religious commitment. As a rule, there may be exceptions, the lay missionary's first consideration is his profession; his motivation is more humanitarian, if one may say.

For example, he can very well work in an emergent country without for all that dedicating himself to evangelization.

Sister Aline: This probably depends on a person's calling. For my part, I simply could not live such a divided life. I preferred to dedicate myself entirely to the apostolate. Many of the young today feel this need for total self-giving.

Pauline: I agree with you there, Sister Aline. For my part, I had first of all made up my mind to leave as a lay missionary. But, then I grew afraid of the venture because I lacked adequate preparation, and also because I longed to give myself entirely to Christ.

Suzette: In order to give Christ to others we must first of all have found him. . . We can't give what we don't possess. . .

The Precursor: Very true. But, what do you think of the formation given you as preparation to the apostolate? Do you find it adequate?

Sister Aline: I would be interested in your opinion on this subject.

Michelle: Before coming here, I felt sure of leaving for the missions within a short delay. I soon found out that formation to missionary life extended over an interminable period! Since then, I have changed my opinion of a speedy departure. Like all my companions, I feel the need of a thorough preparation in order to be able to exercise a fruitful apostolate. I'm only twenty, so I haven't got much experience, but I do try to learn. What do you think, Sister Aline?

The Precursor: You are apparently satisfied with your daily programme. Don't you ever find anything to blame, to disapprove?

Michelle: Last year, I found this kind of life almost too hard. I don't know what has happened since, but I think I have either grown more adaptable or the horarium has perhaps been mitigated. . .

Sister Aline: We have tried, gradually, to adapt the

way of life, the regulations, the horarium, etc. We have more and more recourse to consultation.

Pauline: How could we help accepting a schedule we have ourselves outlined?

The Precursor: Do you give priority to the intellectual over the manual?

Michelle: Our daily schedule is well balanced: courses in language, music, cooking, sewing, etc.

Suzette: Professional competence is not enough. We must know something of everything or almost. . .

Pauline: It stands to reason that we must be ready to do any kind of work as cooks, teachers, seamstresses, catechists. . .

The Precursor: What about spiritual formation?

Pauline: It holds the most important place on our schedule. We are given courses in religious sciences, Mariology, missiology. Much time is also given to prayer and contemplation.

The Precursor: Do you think that the commitment of missionary religious is still relevant in our twentieth century? What does modern youth think about it?

Nicole: The word commitment implies continuity, doesn't it? Likewise the word love implies the sense of the Absolute. Friends of ours who live in the world, can't understand our decision. They probably think we are more or less muddled in the head. They forget that marriage requires the same stability.

The Precursor: So many defections today may explain to a certain extent the confusion of the young regarding religious life. What about it, Michelle? Do you think that young people today balk at a life commitment?

Michelle: Not as a rule. Don't think that the girls of today with their mini skirts and their tousled hair are unable to feel the call of the Absolute. They are at times, strikingly deep thinkers. But alas, they are easily led. . .



NOVICES TELL ALL ABOUT NOVICES

The Precursor: Do you find it possible to reach fulfillment in a community life?

Michelle: Our openness to the world, and our family life with companions of various nationalities are a great help in this sense.

The Precursor: And the vows? Are obedience, poverty, and chastity still relevant in modern times?

Pauline: Obedience is not something we endure but something we live.

Michelle: I've never felt freer. I understand better the relative liberty enjoyed by our married brothers and sisters. The exigencies of their social and professional life are not always easy to accept.

The Precursor: You agree with Michelle's views on obedience, but what of chastity?

Pauline: I have found here another family.

Nicole: Love here has a different orientation.

The Precursor: Do you talk about love at the novitiate?

Michelle: Chiefly about the love of God.

Sister Aline: We study together the significance of the vows and our total donation to the Lord.

The Precursor: Do you ever discuss poverty? Do you live up to its exigencies?

Suzette: Well, we certainly have no worries about making both ends meet. . .

Pauline: Poverty for us signifies putting everything in common in a fraternal spirit. We are happy to share our halls with youth groups on occasion. This helps us in not feeling too well settled. We believe in witnessing to poverty as a missionary community.

The Precursor: Do you consider your participation in parochial activities a preparation to the mission?

Nicole: They do help prepare us for our future mission. Every week, I give catechetical courses at an institute for handicapped children. Last year, we visited patients in various Montreal hospitals.

Michelle: Every Saturday we meet with groups of young people at the parochial centre. Another means of spiritual animation consists in contacting young children of the 10-12 age bracket. We work hand in hand with the J.M.E. association (formerly the Eucharistic Crusade). The primary school children are often invited to play on our grounds. The novices are in charge of some youth movements on the parochial level. The novitiate is surely more "open" than it used to be. We also benefit by intercommunity encounters. How pleasant it is to fraternize with the novices of other communities!

Sister Aline: At the formation centre, the young sisters also have the privilege of frequent meetings with people of various nationalities. Openness to other cultures, to other channels of thought is thus favoured. This is worthwhile enrichment for our ten novices and three postulants.

The Precursor: Isn't there ever any contestation among you all? Do you always agree on everything?

Sister Aline: Not exactly. But, we can always rely on friendly dialogue to settle our problems.

The Precursor: Before bringing this interview to an end, how about a message to our modern girls?

Sister Aline: We extend a cordial invitation. On April 12, a day of missionary information, will be organized for all the young girls who "stand with reluctant feet where the brook and river meet". On this occasion our novices will be pleased to tell them all they want to know about novices in general. At any time information may be had on the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception by just mailing a letter to the Formation Centre, 68, Desnoyers St., Pont Viau, Laval City, or to the Missionary Information Centre, 2900 Saint Catherine Road, Montreal 250.



MALAWI

Fashion — a queen whose prestige is on the rise — formerly restricted her dictates to clothing and furnishings. Today, it imperiously reaches out to man's most intimate fibres: dreams, desires, opinions, all unawares, become her vassals. To be known as outmoded is an unbearable disgrace.

Fashion in clothing remains a current event of burning interest. Even Malawi feels its evolution.

For a long time, like the people of many another emerging country, Malawians could only envy the styles of colonial Whites and try to imitate them. But, today, they have at last been awakened to their own conception of beauty, conformably to their aspirations. Proud of their African heritage as they have every right to be, they can now boast of original realizations. Creativity comes easy to them and explains how successful they have been in inventing their own styles of clothing. The main point in this creative Malawian fashion has been the rejuvenated use of the traditional *saru*.

The *saru* has usually been described as a sort of skirt falling from the waist to the knees; but, the Malawian *saru* of colonial times was of larger proportions. It consisted of a piece of cloth wrapped around the body once or twice and knotted above the breast. Later, it was simply worn as a skirt knotted at the waist and topped by a very plain blouse.

There was not much tailoring involved in this national dress. Gaily coloured prints, imported from abroad, soon replaced the *saru* fashioned, prior to colonial times, out of the bark of certain trees.

At present, Malawi weaves its own cloth. At a fashion show recently held in Blantyre, the capital, the ancient *saru* proved very popular. Comely models wore it in various original styles: with a turtle-neck blouse reaching to the hips; with a frill giving it a frivolous touch; as a "maxi" skirt sewed up on both sides, hemline reaching the ankles; as a plain wrap-around. . . . There were also tunic-style formals with geometric designs in front, the sides being left plain. Geometric designs, as everyone knows, are a peculiarity of African art.

These colourful garments admirably set off the originality of African woman. At the fashion show, we noticed that even the jewelry adorning our belles, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, were "made in Malawi", out of the country's own resources: ivory from elephants' tusks, leopard skins, timber of certain trees, etc.

And the Malawian headdress! Imagine a square of cloth measuring one yard and a half, folded in a certain way, and elegantly wound around the head. Techniques vary, according to the feminine tastes, in the wearing of this "ancestor" of the turban. Each seems to reveal, in a subtle fashion, the personality of the lovely wearer.

Dear African sisters, I am glad to see you growing more and more aware of your personality. Keep your precious national heritage. Keep your characteristic way of dressing. The diversity of nations constitutes the richness of humanity.

Doris Twyman, M.I.C.

FEMININE FASHIONS





The "Precursor" on its
50th anniversary,
offers you 50 prizes.

HOW TO WIN 50 EXOTIC PRIZES

Conditions:

To whom will collect 8 new subscriptions or
8 renewals will be awarded a prize imported
from Hong Kong.

Address: THE PRECURSOR
2900 St. Catherine Road
Montreal 250, P.Q.

Latest date: July 1, 1970

<i>Saint Joseph, Protector and Guide</i>	34
<i>Oeil sur Cuzco</i>	36
<i>The Llama — Ornament of the Earth</i>	42
<i>First Chinese Translation of the Bible</i>	46
<i>Woman's Role in Japan</i>	48
<i>The Emerging Filipino Woman</i>	50
<i>Novices Tell All About Novices</i>	57
<i>Malawi, Feminine Fashions</i>	62

IN THIS ISSUE

MISSIONARY INTENTIONS:

March: That in mission lands the family life of the faithful may be an example for the non-christian population.

April: That the local missionary clergy may benefit by an adapted formation.

To communicate with the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

BOLIVIA. *Santa Cruz de la Sierra*, Cardinal Cushing Business College, 453 Calle Lemoine, casilla 70; *Cochabamba*: Academia Comercial, Calle Oruro No 3403, casilla 1667; *La Paz*: Academia Santa Rita, casilla 2893, 895, Juan Granier; *La Paz*: Academia Santa Rita (Irupana), casilla 2893, 895, Juan Granier; *Catavi*: postal address: casilla 434, (Catavi), Oruro, Bolivia. — CANADA. *The Generalate*: 314, St. Catherine Road, Montreal 153; *Cote des Neiges House*: 2900, St. Catherine Road, Montreal 250; *Novitiate*: Pont Viau, Laval City; *Chinese Hospital*: 355, Faillon Street east, Montreal 327; *Nominique*: Labelle County, Quebec; *Rimouski*: 225, Saint Germain Street; *Joliette*: 750, Saint Louis Street; *Quebec*: 1073, Saint Cyrille Street west; *Vancouver*: Immaculate Conception Refuge, 236, Campbell Street; *Vancouver*: Mount Saint Joseph Hospital, 3080, Prince Edward Street; *Trois Rivières*: 1325, de la Terrière Street; *Granby*: 35, Dufferin Street; *Chicoutimi*: 906, Sydenham Road; *Saint Jean*: 430, Champlain Street, Saint Jean, Quebec; *Ottawa*: Residence, 28 Goulburn Avenue, Ottawa 2; *Ottawa*: Chinese Centre, 30, Goulburn Avenue, Ottawa 2; *Perth*: Box 259, Perth, N.B.; *Chinese Mission*: 1062, Cheneville, Montreal 128. — CENTRAL AFRICA. *Katete*: Saint Teresa's Parish, Champira P.O. Box 8, Malawi; *Mzambazi*: Eutini P.O., Box 14, Malawi; *Rumpi*: Rumpi P.O., Box 15, Malawi; *Karonga*: Karonga P.O., Box 14, Malawi; *Kaseye*: St. Michael's Parish, Chitipa P.O., Box 100, Malawi; *Nkata Bay*: Nkata P.O., Box 9, Malawi; *Mzuzu*: Mzuzu P.O., Box 24, Malawi; *Mzimba*: Mzimba P.O., Box 47, Malawi; *Chipata*: P.O., Box 107, Chipata (Fort Jameson), Zambia; *Kanyanga*: Lundazi P.O., Zambia; *Nyimba*: Sacred Heart Hospital, Nyimba P.O., Box 13, Zambia; *Cikungu*: Kazimuli P.O., Zambia. — CHILE. *Ancud*: 227 Calle Errazuriz, casilla 82, Ancud (Chiloe), Chile; *Santiago*: 1175, Calle Santa Teresa, casilla 4782, Correo 2, Chile. — GUATEMALA. *Totoncapan*: Colegio P. Betancourt, Guatemala, A.C.; *Champerico*: Calle Xelaju No 3-27, Puerto de Champerico, Guatemala, A.C. — HONG KONG. *Tak Sun School*: 103 Austin Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong; *Mount Good Hope School*: Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong; *Novitiate*: 125, Waterloo Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong. — JAPAN. *Koriyama*: 3-18 Toramuru, Koriyama shi Fukushima ken; *Wakamatsu*: 1-49, Nishi Sakae machi, Aizu Wakamatsu, Fukushima ken; *Tokyo*: Fukazawa 8, chome 13, ban go 16, Setagaya ku — MADAGASCAR. *Morondava*: C.P. 53, Madagascar; *Ambohibary*: Sambaina, Madagascar; *Antsirabe*: C.P. 146, St. Theresa's Parish, Mahazoarivo; *Antsirabe*: Lot 02S10, Ambositra Road; *Tananarivo*: Tsaramasay; *Mahabo*: via Morondava. — PERU. *Pucallpa*: Apartado 241; Lima: Escuela Maria de la Providencia, Napo 1124, Azcona (Brena). — PHILIPPINES. *Manila*: Immaculate Conception Academy, General Luna Street, Intramuros; *Manila*: 2212 de Rosario Street, Gagalangin; *Manila*: P.O. 3400, D-404; *Las Pinas*: St. Joseph's Academy, Rizal, D-710; *Mati*: Davao Oriental O-507; *Davao*: Good Counsel Hall, Florentino Torres Street, Davao City, O-404; *Padada*: Davao Del Sur, O-412; *Baguio*: 73 Pacdal, Box 83, B-202, Baguio City. — TAIWAN. *Kuanhsi*: 83 Cheng I Lu, Hsinchu Hsien, Taiwan, Republic of China; *Shih Kuang Tse*: Hsinchu Hsien, Taiwan, Republic of China; *Taipei*: 363, An Tung Street, Taiwan, Republic of China; *Suao*: 36 Chung Cheng Road, Suao Ilan Hsien, Taiwan, Republic of China; *Hsinchu City*: 49, Chei Yuen Street, Kuang Fu Li, Taiwan, Republic of China; *Nan Ao Hsiang*: 25, Tai An Lu Ilan Hsien, Taiwan, Republic of China. — UNITED STATES. *Marlboro*: Mass., 207 Pleasant Street, 01752. — WEST INDIES. *Les Cayes, Haiti*; *Les Coteaux, Haiti*; *Roche a bateau, Haiti*; *Port Salut, Haiti*; *Camp Perrin*: Postal Address: C.P. 14, Les Cayes, Haiti; *Mirebalais, Haiti*; *Limbe, Haiti*; *Cap Haitien, Haiti*; *Chantal, South, Haiti*; *Trou du Nord, Haiti*; *Port au Prince*: Orphanage, Cité no 2, CP. 1085, Haiti; *Port au Prince*: Novitiate, Cité no 2, C.P. 1085, Haiti; *Croix des Bouquets*: Our Lady of the Rosary School, C.P. 1291, Port au Prince, Haiti; *Croix des Bouquets*: Holy Childhood School, C.P. 1291, Port au Prince, Haiti; *Deschappelles*: Albert Schweitzer Hospital, Postal address: Box 2213 B, Port au Prince, Haiti; *La Boule*: Postal address: C.P. 1085, Port au Prince, Haiti; *Hinche*: Haiti; *Colon*: apartado 21, Colon (Matanzas), Cuba.

