

Sibley

2050

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**OUR CHANCE**  
IN  
**THE PHILIPPINES**

BY  
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## CONGREGATIONALISTS *and the* PHILIPPINES

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**I**N spite of differences of opinion at home as to the Philippines and their relations to us, it is beyond doubt true that the men who know the situation best would agree that the floating of our flag there was ordered of God, was one of his acts in the progress of his plan.

The presence of the Stars and Stripes there sounded the death knell to ignorance and superstition, and ushered in the dawn of education and liberty. It did not mean the holding in slavery a weak and subject people. The inhabitants of the Philippines under the American flag have had greater possibilities for advancement along every line than any subject people under any great nation in the history of the world. The flag has meant peace, prosperity, protection, and liberty. It will float there till its mission is fully accomplished and His plan carried out.

The Protestant Church of America early saw its opportunities, privileges, and duty to the islands, and promptly undertook to put into the hands of the people the open Bible, the groundwork

and foundation of truth and greatness. The evangelical forces going there to operate wisely conferred and divided the field to economize time, effort, and funds, and to prevent overworking some sections and neglecting others. This division of the field resulted in the Congregational Church becoming responsible for the evangelization of Mindanao, the other evangelical churches assuming the task in the northern islands. While greatly interested in the work of the Kingdom there, we are especially interested in Mindanao, our own charge by agreement.

Mindanao is the great island in the south. It has a coast line of 1,500 miles, and with the small islands immediately south comprises about one-third the entire land area of the archipelago, or about 35,000 square miles. This land is richest in valuable timber and for agricultural purposes of all the islands, and is bound in the future to be the home of great enterprises and centers of civilization. With rare exceptions the thermometer stands between 75 and 95 the year round, though



ONE OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, MINDANAO

It contains the offices of the Governor, the Treasurer, and the President. In the rear is the post office



A GROUP OF MANSACAS FROM CROWHURST PLANTATION

the heat is oppressive because of the great humidity. The rainfall is abundant, averaging about 70 inches per annum.

The people of our field, however, interest us much more than soil, climate, rainfall, etc. They may be divided into three great divisions, namely, *Civilized Filipinos*, *Moro Mohammedans*, and *Pagans*. The civilized Filipinos occupy the northern and northeastern shores from Dapitan on the north to Mati on the east, and number probably over 100,000 souls. They have established themselves on Mindanao, but are people from the northern islands, such as Leyte, Bohol, Cebu, and Negros. As a rule they are not found far from the shore, say from five to ten miles. They present a great, ready harvest field, tired of the shams and forms of Romanism, waiting for the Congregational Church of America to send pastors and teachers of the Word of Life.

The great Moro field embodies the Cotabato and Llanao districts and the Zamboanga peninsula, with the adjacent small islands southward, namely, Basilian and the Sulu Archipelago. It is doubtless the largest and hardest

field in the islands. The population runs to between 300,000 and 400,000. The Moro is the known fighter. His hand is against every man. He respects only the arm of Mohammed and the arm of force.

Next to the absolute pagan he stands in need of the gospel. There is no hope for him except through the cross—a change from carnal to spiritual; through that change the Moro would doubtless be one of the greatest factors for good in the islands. The people who can fight well can love much, both their neighbors and their Master. Cowards are of little use in temporal or spiritual affairs. This great field of Mohammedan Moros has waited in mute silence for the Congregational Church of America to give it the "Bread of Life," yet fifteen years have swept by and not a single school, dispensary, chapel, or worker has been placed among them by the Congregational Church.

The great pagan field is in the Davao district. It is composed of the shores of the Gulf of Davao and the interior east, north, and west of that gulf. It is the home of the following wild tribes: Atas Bagobo, Bilan Bukiduo,

Calagan, Calaman, Mandayan, Manobo, Mansaca, Samal, and Lagacolo. Besides these tribes living in the district of Davao there is another wild tribe, the Subano, whose home is on the Zamboanga peninsula, which is said to be about 10,000 strong.

Some of the tribes mentioned are again divided, but this is a working classification. All these tribes are purely pagan, many of them head hunters, slaveholders, human sacrificers, and some said to be semi-cannibals. The total number of these tribes put together probably reaches in the neighborhood of 200,000. Among them our church has established a small mission, but it is not reaching yet one per cent of the people. The small mission has done and is doing a good and important work, but aside from this little mission to the pagans our church has failed utterly in doing its part of the work in the Philippines.

Fifteen years ago there was, by mutual agreement of the evangelical forces operating in the islands, committed to our care the largest, hardest, truest, and best mission field in the archipelago. Today that field is the most grossly neglected of all. Should

the Stars and Stripes soon be removed and American protection withdrawn from the islands, the saddest bit of history connected with our flag and missions in the islands would be the neglected field of the American Board. Of the thousands of civilized Filipinos intrusted to you, next to nothing has been done; for the 400,000 Mohammedan Moros absolutely nothing done, and less than one per cent of the possible 200,000 pagans even seen.

In spite of all our wonderful machinery, our records and history in other parts of the world, we cannot but be ashamed of the neglect of our own. A half a million Mohammedan and pagan people under our own flag, put directly under the care of the Congregational Church of America, have never heard a Christian prayer, seen a Christian church or a Christian missionary.

Enough of the past. But what of the future? We trust this year of 1914 will see our church come forward to the call of duty and come into its own, and no Moro, Filipino, or pagan wait in darkness and the shadow of death, worshiping idols, birds, noises, or unknown gods under our starry flag.

*Boston, 1914. Charles T. Sibley.*



**CARABAOS AND**  
The familiar beasts of  
elephants, yet

**THEIR BAGOBO DRIVERS**  
burden in the Philippines: almost as big as  
as docile as cows

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## THE MISSION SITUATION *as it is* TODAY

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THE HOSPITAL AT DAVAO

BUT some one will ask: What is the actual situation today? What has been accomplished in the twelve years since the American Board's Mission to the Philippines was begun? How much of an impression has been made? What is there to show for the outlay?

There is a station established at Davao, where the present missionaries reside, Rev. and Mrs. Robert F. Black, who founded the mission in 1902, and Dr. and Mrs. Charles T. Sibley, who joined them in 1908; there also is Miss Mary R. Mathewson, serving as foreign nurse in the hospital and really directing it during Dr. Sibley's absence on furlough the past year.

A church of 104 members; a mission hospital caring for some 700 in-patients and whose five dispensaries treated 13,000 cases last year; a kindergarten; six schools with 239 pupils—these are the bare facts and figures on the institutional side. A good deal needs to be read into them before their significance is appreciated. For example, among the hospital patients were sixty leper suspects gathered at

Davao, who were found to be suffering really from malignant tropical ulcers. They were nearly all from wild tribes and were cared for in a separate location; six were in so frightful condition as to be beyond help, the others were all sent home cured.

The hospital building is small; its structure is crude; it was quickly built of unseasoned wood and is fit only for temporary use; a fine modern building is already planned in its place. But in this small building what miracles of healing have been wrought; what relief and comfort and new hope have been dispensed! And here the word of the gospel has been distributed in English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Visayan, and Tagalog, to patients of all these nationalities, besides great numbers of the semi-savage and really wild tribes.

Of the schools, also, two have been established among the wild Bagobo people; another is among the Mandayans, mostly Mohammedans, in a village near the Davao gulf. In all, five private schools have been main-



tained among the wild tribes in places where the government could not place them. In this way entrance has been effected into the interior parts of the island and acquaintance made and confidence won with several of its suspicious and warring peoples.

The church, though small and simple in construction, is yet one of the finest Protestant churches in all the islands—the mother church of Congregationalism in the Philippines, in a field which no other religious worker than Jesuit priest or Mohammedan pundit has ever touched. A native evangelist and his wife are laboring here with beautiful devotion; and they are winning results, both from their words and their example. Already the work in Davao has outgrown its quarters. A fine new mission site has been secured on the hill 100 feet above the hot and swampy town. One residence has been completed, where the Blacks are now living; “where peace and quiet reign; where the wild deer come up and challenge us less than 100 yards away at night; where the wild hog and jungle fowl creep up and investigate; where our boy has room to romp and yell; where the horses and chickens find sweet and abundant pasture; where—best of all—the people of the town like to come for a bit of fresh-

ness and a broad view.” A second residence is soon to be begun for the Sibleys, and the hospital also will be moved to this healthful location. The new site will also provide room later on for a school for the wild tribes. The present hospital building may be used as a town dispensary.

So far the American Board mission is chiefly an institution of Davao and vicinity; the great bulk of Mindanao is still untouched. Yet not altogether so. As has been indicated, tours of investigation and approach have been made into the interior at various points, and through schools some lasting contacts have been established. Particular attention has been given to the northern end of the island, where by the cordial coöperation of the Presbyterian mission on the neighboring island of Cebu, and through the labors of one of its evangelists, a very striking and successful work has been begun; several hundred have been baptized and organized into churches and Sunday schools. The Board still hopes to occupy this northern country, with stations at the important centers of Surigao and Cagayan. Rev. and Mrs. Frank C. Laubach have been appointed as new missionaries for this purpose; they plan to leave at once for their field.

W. E. S.



THE CHURCH AT DAVAO

