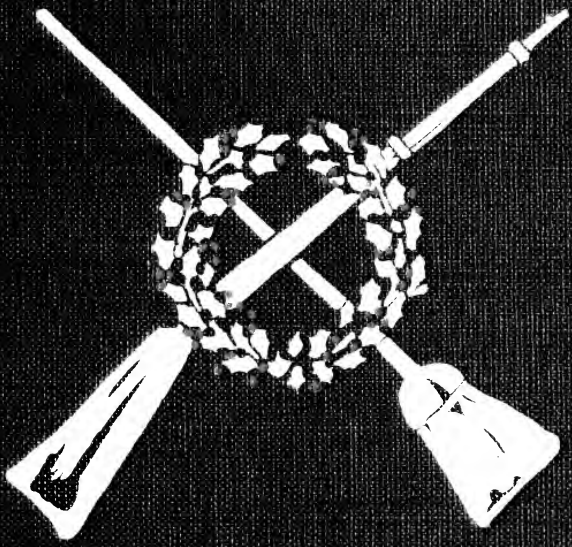
A STORY FROM THE PHILIPPINES



KATHERINE E. DRISCOLL

1. Juvenile literature—Fiction, American.

Frontispiece. "The Children Demanded a Story" (see page 9).

A STORY FROM THE PHILIPPINES

BY

KATHERINE E. DRISCOLL

THE
Abbey Press
PUBLISHERS
114
FIFTH AVENUE
London NEW YORK Montreal

I LOVINGLY DEDICATE

THIS LITTLE CHRISTMAS TALE TO MY

DARLING CHILDREN,

KATHERINE, MORRIS, EDNA, ANNE

AND

GERALDINE.

CONTENTS.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

A STORY FROM THE PHILIPPINES.

CHAPTER I.

"UNCLE WILL" RETURNS FROM THE PHILIPPINES.

"UNCLE WILL is coming to-morrow!"

"Uncle Will is coming to-morrow!"

An the children danced for joy as they shouted the joyful news to each other.

Grandma had just received a telegram, dated from Washington, D. C., saying:

"I will be with you to-morrow. Yours,

"WILL."

At first grandma cried so the children thought she had received bad news of dear

Uncle Will. But mama took the telegram and read it aloud, and then they knew that it was joy, not sorrow, that had made dear old grandma weep. And now I will tell you who Uncle Will was, and all about the Darling children.

They were five in all. Five of the dearest, sweetest little loves; each was a whole and separate love in herself, and altogether the "loviest" little family I ever knew. There was the oldest, a girl of ten. Her name was Katherine. She was tall for her age, had large, soft, hazel eyes, and pretty reddish-brown hair. She was always kind to her little baby sisters, ready at all times to read a story or play a game to amuse them. Every one loved her for her gentle, sweet manner, and mama called her "Mother's comfort."

Next came "our boy," as the girls called

him. There was only one boy in this family, and four girls. And proud, indeed, they were of their only brother. He was a manly little fellow, fond of playing with the boys, but kind and gentle to his sisters. He was "just like papa" (of course), so grandma said, and mama said, and the girls all said; but papa always smiled and said he failed to see wherein the little blue-eyed, yellow-haired son of the house looked like him. For papa wore a beard and was "awful big."

Although this little man of the house really had a name, you wouldn't think so; his name was Morris. But he was always either "brother" or "son" in his home.

Next came "Goldielocks" (7 years old) or "Duchess" as papa used to call her. She was the picture baby. She had long golden curls, the bluest of blue eyes, twin violets

some one called them. She was a "dreamikins" girl, and a little book worm. No one could remember when she learned to read. "Mamzelle" (the governess) declared she never had to teach her. Of course this was only a little joke of "Mamzelle's," but one thing quite sure was she had learned very easily and quickly and at seven could read all her favorite books to herself or aloud. Her favorite book was "Alice in Wonderland," and, next in favor, "Eugene Field's" poems.

Then next in line came wee Annabelle, age six. She, too, had her family pet name; she was more often called "Tween Anne." She was the only one of all the children who talked "baby talk," and whenever the children played fairy land, she insisted on being "Tween" of the fairies. And so they called her, for they all loved her dearly. Although

she was not "the baby" of the family she was the smallest, dainty as a fairy, always singing and dancing and happy. She had large brown eyes, and long, golden brown curls.

Next and last, but certainly not least, came Babs, or Gerry. She was just five years old.

Her real name was Geraldine. But papa said it was altogether too long and too heavy for such a wee little girl to carry. And she seemed ever so much nearer when he called "Gerry," "Gerry Jinkins," or more often Babs.

She was just a wee bit larger and heavier than "Tween Anne." She had large grey eyes, ash blond curls to her shoulders and the dearest and kissiest of mouths. Grandma called her her "bundle of love," she was so big and healthy and lovely.

So much for the babies, and now I will tell you of Uncle Will. Uncle Will was grandma's "baby boy."

This made the children laugh merrily when they heard grandma say so. But he was the youngest of seven sons, and great things had been predicted for him, because there is an old adage about the seventh son. Mama was Uncle Will's "big sister." This, too, made the children smile when they heard it. "For really Uncle Will was ever so much bigger'n mama."

Well, Uncle Will had been away to war. He was the greatest hero that ever lived, according to the children. When the Spanish-American war broke out, Uncle Will, (and this the children told in whispers) "runned away to war." And they remembered that grandma had cried and so had mama. And the children thought it very queer for

grandma to say, "he was so young," "such a boy to enlist." For to the children he was quite "growed up," and a warrior bold—and Babs called him "my bold soldier boy." She had a little way of naming all her friends. When all the children called mama, mama—Babs always said "Mother-dear."

To continue about Uncle Will. When grandma's letters from the far-away Philippines came, telling that dear Uncle Will was shot, and in the hospital, Morris shouted, "Good for Uncle Will!" "Hurrah!" What was a bullet wound compared with the gory glory! And so the little minds had weaved a crown and shield for their soldier uncle. And I think he was quite worthy of it. For he was truly brave and dear and good. Filled with good old Uncle Sam grit, he had enlisted as a "regular" in the cavalry, had

gone away a school boy and had come back to celebrate Christmas and his twenty-first birthday.

Birthday of all birthdays to a man!

True, in the army he was "listed" as "21" three years ago. But "that's another story," as Kipling would say. How the Darling babies loved to read Kipling's "Moglie stories" and "Wee Willie Winkie." They were very fond of reading, and although they were only weeny folks they knew their "Shakespeare" as well as the older folks. For they had their "Juvenile Shakespeare," and "Royal Children of History," and loved to read them. Well, to return to Uncle Will; I will show you a picture of him and that will tell you better than I could just how he looked. And later on if you are "very, very good" I will show you a picture of the five little Darlings.

Let me see, where did I begin? I must go all the way back to the beginning, where Uncle Will was coming home. Well, the very next day after the telegram arrived he came. And oh! what a "welcome home!" He was kissed and hugged by each and every one separately, and altogether, smothered with love almost.

After the first excitement had worn off and Uncle Will had had his luncheon, he let the children take him to the nursery, where they seated him, climbed upon him and demanded a story.

Poor "Uncle Will" pleaded fatigue and promised to tell a Christmas story—to-morrow—but the children were inexorable, and said, "Very well, tell us the Christmas story to-morrow, but *please,* dear Uncle Will, tell us just a wee little story to-day." So he did, and this is the story:

One day while I was far, far away in the Philippines, I was on guard. It was just about dusk. And I was leaning on my gun, thinking of home and of all you little dears, when I was startled by hearing a child's voice talking in "Filipino."

I looked around cautiously, for we were always on the alert for treachery, and as it was twilight there were shadows everywhere. I waited a while, for the voice had ceased. But in a minute or so, again the little plaintive voice said, and in this time it was in broken "Americano," "Señor Americano, no got." "No got what?" I asked. "No got casa, no got padre—madre," which means, little folks, "I am without home, father or mother."

The woods are full of beggars and just such stories, and my training was to say "Vamose," which means go away. But this

The Little Insurrecto, "Billy's Kid" (see page 11).

was such a tiny little fellow and there were genuine tears and a look of loneliness that so touched me, that I said, "Venir a qui," which is Spanish for "Come here." And as he came out on the road, I had all I could do not to laugh out loud. He was such a funny sight. He was naked except for a little shirt, which garment was a guarantee that he was "moy-richo" (more rich) than Filipino children usually look and are. On his feet were shoes half laced, which looked like an "Americano" capture, for they were many sizes too large for him; but his little bare, brown, chubby legs were uncovered by hose. On his head was a large straw sombrero, the native hat, the size his father wore; and he was astride a sweeping or parlor broom; also an "Americano" possession. For the native brooms are made of bamboo and grass, and not used—too often.

The poor little fellow looked so frightened I did not laugh for fear I would frighten him away.

I spoke to him kindly in "Filipino," and offered him my hand. He trotted forward on his broom horse, and looking up into my face, said again: "No got casa." We had had a skirmish in the morning, and I remembered that a shack (Filipino house) had been burned, and I remembered too, seeing some women and children flying towards the hills. So I came to the conclusion after a few minutes' talk with the little fellow that he must have been left behind in the flight, probably forgotten. I asked him his name, but whether from fright or that he really did not know it, I could not learn it from him. I could not take him to the camp, for my guard would not be up for some time. So against all rule

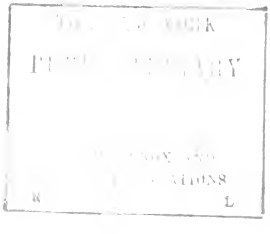
and regulation, I pointed out the camp to him, and told him in "Filipino" to go there and tell Señor Capitan (the captain) "no casa." He trotted away on his broom horse quite contented and apparently unconscious that he was entering the enemy's camp.

Next morning when I came into camp I did not need to inquire had my little Filipino come in. For in the "street" with a ring of soldiers around him was my little insurrecto, laughing gleefully and doing stunts for the boys. A child is such a novelty in camp that even a Filipino one had won the hearts of these rough soldiers. The moment the little fellow saw me he dismounted from his wooden horse, and running to me, cried, "Gracia, señor," (thank you, good mister). The men all looked surprised at this demonstration, for they did not know that I had sent him in. Nothing would induce

him to leave go of my hand; I asked the men what he had said when he came in and what they had done with him during the night. They told me that he had trotted into camp and that all he would say was, "Señor capitan." So the captain's tent was pointed out to him, for there wasn't a soldier bold enough to brave the captain's expression on the introduction of even so wee an insurrecto. So the little fellow had taken up his trot to "El capitan's tienda" (the captain's tent), and entering, walked in fearlessly and repeated, "No got casa."

The captain was surprised, of course, but being a kind-hearted man he melted at the sight of such a forlorn little "enemy." And he called one of the men and told him to look out for the boy for the night. And he had taken it all very natural and as though

"Under the Mistletoe" (see page 45).



he had had a soldier to rock him to sleep all his life.

In the morning he was awake with the birds and up and on his trusty steed, before the men had risen. And by the time I reached there he had made a friend of every man in camp.

When he made a rush for me I had to explain how I had found him the night before. So the men all decided that he belonged to me and they named him "Billy's kid."

For I wasn't known as "dear Uncle Will" there, you know.

And soldiers don't talk as prettily and nicely as we do at home. During the day the captain sent for me, and after giving me a slight reprimand for disobeying orders, by allowing the child to come into camp, he ended by saying, "It's all right, sergeant, I understand." And I knew that he did. For

I remembered that the day we left San Francisco, that his only son, a wee little boy of four, and his tiny daughter of six, had come down with their mother and nurse to bid "father good-by and Godspeed."

I asked the captain what I would do with the "kid" (for that's what we all called him), and he said, "Oh, let him play around as long as we stay here, and then, too, some one may come after him when he is missed." So for about three days he was the life and the delight of the camp.

Our doctor had a camera and I borrowed it and photographed him. We taught him to "salute," "shoulder arms," "mount" and "dismount," and a funnier sight I've never seen than the little insurrecto, soberly mounting his wooden horse by command, and when "Prepare to dismount" was shouted by the particular soldier who was

training him at the time, he would drop the broom, and bring himself to "position," and then, when the drill was over, laugh as heartily as we did. Every one had a kind word for the little insurrecto—or "Billy's kid." But on the evening of the third day, I was again on guard, at the same place and the same hour as I had been the evening the boy came. And again I was startled by a voice calling me in the Spanish tongue, and a voice singularly like the boy's, so like that I was startled and thought at first it was he. Calling out in Spanish, I said, "Who speaks there?" to which the voice replied in prettiest Spanish, "Amigo, señor," (a friend, sir), and then in plainest American (or English), "Please, may I speak with you a moment?" I said, "What is it you wish?" To which she replied, "Is the Americano camp near by?" I cautiously answered,

"Why do you ask?" All this time, all that I could see was the outline of a woman's figure. I could not see her face, but judged by her voice that she was young.

I asked, "Are you alone?" and again she replied in excellent English, "I am indeed alone." And her voice sounded so plaintive that I was moved to say, "Very well, advance." It is usual in the army not to allow an enemy to come nearer than five paces, for then a soldier has the advantage, for that gives him sufficient distance to shoot if necessary. As my fair enemy advanced I saw that she was a beautiful girl and I immediately thought she had come after my little insurrecto.

She was dressed as I had seen Spanish and Filipino ladies dressed, in the city of Manila. But out here in the wilds of Luzon it looked strange to see a beautiful, well-

"Ring-A-Ring-A-Rosy" (see page 45).

dressed Spanish lady. Her gown was white, and on her neck and shoulders she wore the soft lace fichu that most Spanish ladies wear. On her head was also a large lace scarf. She was only a girl about sixteen years, but she acted and dressed much older. As she drew near, she said with a touch of Spanish in her "Americano," "Good señor, I am looking for my little brother. Three days ago I lost him and I had almost given up the hope of ever seeing him again, and my heart was breaking. But yesterday an amigo insurrecto" ("friendly enemy"—men who are allowed to go from one side to the other to trade)—"came through the place where I and my people are in hiding, and I asked him as I had asked every one, 'Have you seen my little brother, my Antonio?'

"This man told me that he had seen a little Filipino child in the Americano camp.

And that he was the happiest little fellow, and had made friends of all the soldiers. When he told me that the boy he saw wore a big hat and was astride a broom handle, I knew that it must be my Antonio. So I started early this morning to walk here. Oh, tell me, good señor, is it true? And will they give him to me?" I was deeply interested in her story, and she looked so sweet and good, that she made me think of home, and how my dear sister, your "mother-dear" would feel if any of you little folks were lost. So I said, "Yes, señorita, I think we have your boy, but tell me how was it that you let him stray so far away. You know how dangerous it is for children to be alone in this awful country, and at such times as these." With tears in her eyes and voice, and wringing her hands, she replied, "Oh, señor, if you only knew all that I have

suffered since I missed him. Three days ago the Americano soldiers burned the shack —the place I was forced to call my home. I had lived there with my little brother and a few servants since our fight from Vigan. Our home in Vigan had been burned. My father, who is a colonel in the insurgent army, left me there many months ago. He left our good servant Tomas to guard and protect Antonio and myself. But alas! poor Tomas was killed a short time after my father left us. And so there were only the women servants and myself to take care of my baby brother—and oh! my father loves him so. One cruel day the American soldiers entered Vigan. We saw them burning the houses of our neighbors who were under suspicion, and I did not wait for them to reach us, for I had papers of my father's which he had bade me keep till his return.

Telling the servants to follow I took my little brother in my arms and fled into the interior. And we walked for many days until we reached a place where we thought we would be safe. It was a hovel, but what mattered that? I could keep my baby brother safe there, it seemed so far away from everywhere. And we were comparatively happy, for we had enough to eat, such as it was. And we were safe until three days ago, when, Ave Maria! again the American soldiers found us. And I was so terror-stricken that I commanded my servants to follow, and with my baby brother I again took flight. This time my intention was to go to the hills, seek the insurgent army and if possible find my father; for since I left Vigan I have not heard from him. After walking many miles I laid down exhausted,

and when I awoke my little brother was gone."

And the little señorita hung her head and wept, saying between her sobs, "Oh, the awful Americano! Pardon me, good señor, for speaking as I do; once we thought the Americanos our good friends—but ah! you have been so cruel to us." I did not tell her then that she was mistaken, for it was not the time and place for argument or explanation. But, I will tell you now, little ones, that she was very much mistaken, for the American soldier is good and brave, fighting and dying to protect the Filipinos if they only knew it.

And later, the señorita learned that this was true and told me so. I waited a few minutes until she ceased crying, and then I said, "Please may I ask your name?" "My name is Marchan," she replied. This was

her given name, I knew, and I understood, as she gave me no other, that she did not wish to disclose her father's name; and I respected her for the brave little lady that she was. I said, "Señorita Marchan, your brother, for I am sure it is he, is in our camp. Our good captain has kept him thinking that some one would come sooner or later for him. We could all see that he is moy-richo, and he is such a cunning little fellow we all like him. We will be sorry to say good-by to him." For the first time she smiled. "How can I reach him?" she asked. "Well," said I, "I am on guard duty now, but expect to be relieved in about an hour; if you wish you can go right through this field. You can see the tents from here. Or if you prefer to wait, I will escort you to our captain and tell him your story, and I feel quite sure that he will help you out."

For I, with the other men, felt that "Captain Jack," as we familiarly called him among ourselves, was *"all right,"* and able to smooth 'most any tangle, even this poor little lady's tangled tale. She thought for a moment or so and then she said, "I will wait for you, señor—you are very good." And she sat down on a large stone that was in the road nearby, and by the time my guard was up, she had told me all about her life, all but her father's name. She loved him and respected him and thought him in the right. And she even made me like him, though I knew him to be a deadly enemy. While we were talking I asked her how it was that she could talk such pure good English, and why it was that her little brother looked and talked like a poor little Filipino. And where did he get the Americano broom? She laughed at this and said, "Oh, that is a

funny story. Way back in our home in Vigan, we had neighbors, whose father went every year to San Francisco. He was a merchant. He sent home many American household things to his family as well as more beautiful presents; and once he sent my brother and I a box of presents from the States. He sent us shoes and stockings and Americano clothes, and some useful things besides, among them an 'Americano' broom. I think you call it a—er—parlor broom. This was just about the time the war began. When Antonio saw the broom he claimed it for his own, and jumping astride of it he started to trot around the plaza, saying, 'Americano cabalia' (horse), and he looked so funny and made us all laugh so, we gave the broom to him for his very own. You ask me why I speak English so well. Señor is kind. I suppose I speak it better

than most girls in Vigan, because I had an English governess. My father is a Spanish gentleman, my mother—my dearest madre—is no more. She died when Antonio was a very little baby. When my father came here he had lived in England and in the States. He came to the Philippines on business. He met my mother, married her and made his home here. He is loved by all who know him. And when our dear friend Aguinaldo needed arms and aid, my father answered his call, and left me, as I told you before, with Tomas. Good, kind Tomas! It grieves me to think of you."

Just then my relief came. And explaining to the man who took my place briefly, what had happened, and why the lady was with me, I told her we would proceed to the camp. It was now quite dark; I could see the poor little señorita was nervous, and I

tried to comfort and assure her that it was only a short distance to the camp and quite safe for her to walk ten paces ahead of me. For such is army discipline that I would not disobey orders, even though my heart melted at the sight of the timid little lady, who did her best to look and walk bravely, but every few moments would cast a furtive glance behind to see if I were near. When we reached camp all was still. I had told the señorita on the way that she would not see her brother till the morning, and that it would be wise not to ask for him. I took her direct to the captain. He was sitting in his tent alone, for which I was glad, for the señorita's sake. I said, "Sir, I have a woman who has come to claim the boy." He said, "Show her in." He looked up and I could see that he was surprised, as I had been, at the little lady's beauty. For it was

a rare sight to meet beauty in the Philippines. It is only the Mestizo (half breed) such as Señorita Marchan, who are at all beautiful, so I think. The captain rose, offered the little lady a chair and asked her to tell him her story. I retired and waited outside for orders. In a little while the captain called to me and said, "Sergeant, see that this little lady is taken care of for the night. I will see her in the morning." As she was left in my care, I decided to take her to the tent where her little brother slept. It was my own. My bed, the hard, cold ground on one side, and the little fellow wrapped up in a blanket on the other, "snug as a bug in a rug." I saw he was sleeping soundly. I entered the tent, spread my poncho and blanket on the ground, and stepping out, I told the señorita in a whisper not to make a sound, but to look in. She clasped her

hands, nodded her thanks to me, and disappeared. What happened I do not know. I found another place to bunk for the night.

Early in the morning I could hear the merry laughter of Marchan and Antonio. I would like to have seen their meeting. I went as soon as my duties would permit to escort them to the captain. I found them both seated outside of the tent. For once Antonio had discarded his broom horse, and was seated on his sister's knee with his arms about her neck. Just as I have seen Babs and your "mother-dear" many a time. I called "Buenos dios" (good morning) and Antonio ran to me, crying, "Señor Billy." Marchan rose, laughing, and said with a pretty bow, "Buenos dios, señor. My Antonio has been telling me how kind and good you are—believe I am grateful." I said something about doing my duty and no

more, and asked if the señorita was ready to accompany me to the captain. She said, yes. And so, with Antonio in the middle holding my hand on one side and his sister's on the other we walked up the troop street to the captain's tent. There was a look of surprise and wonder on the faces of the men as they made way for us to pass. For of course I had not mentioned anything about the señorita to them. The captain received the little señorita kindly and told her that he had thought over her story, and that he had come to the conclusion that it would be best for her to return to her home. He said, "If I remember right, your home was not destroyed by fire, as you think, and the man Tomas is, I think, a prisoner in Vigan. He was arrested on suspicion. I remember his story and how tempted I was to believe him, but a soldier must be firm and sure first and

think kindly later. I think I am right in telling you that he is in prison in Vigan. I will give you a letter to the provost sergeant, permitting you to go through the prison, and if you find your servant Tomas, the provost sergeant will release him on your request. I think you had best start today, as we expect to move further north, and now we are only two days' ride from Vigan." The señorita stepped forward, and, kneeling down, caught the captain's hand, and kissing it, said, "Gracia, good captain. May Ave Maria bless and guard you." I could see that the captain was touched by the little lady's sincere gratitude. "Sergeant, pick out an escort of ten men, to take Señorita Marchan and her little brother to their home in Vigan. I will give her into your personal care; do not leave her till you see her safe

in her home or with friends, and report to me on your return."

I saluted, secretly rejoicing that to me was given the honor and the pleasure of taking my little Filipino friends to their home; but of course I said nothing of this to the captain. Taking the señorita's hand, he said, "Adios, señorita (good-by). I am glad to be of some service to your brave father's daughter. Although you have not told your name I know who you are, and even while deploring that your father is on the wrong side, I respect him for a brave soldier." Then the captain patted Antonio on the head in farewell and the little fellow held up his chubby little face to be kissed. The captain caught him up in his arms, and kissing him tenderly, said, "I have a little son at home just your age, and it is because of him that I have done as I have for you. Good-by. God

bless you, children, and Godspeed." "God bless and prosper señor captain," murmured the señorita, and we went out into the open. I took them back to their tent while I bestirred me to pick out the ten best men I knew for the journey. By ten o'clock we were ready to start. I had given the señorita my own good horse, Brooklyn. I had named him for my dear old home so far away. I knew she would be safe on him. I mounted on another horse equally good but not so quiet. And I put Antonio on the saddle in front of me. This delighted him. And it was only the promise that he was to ride on a real Americano cabalia that would induce him to leave his dear, old broom horse behind. For days after the men laughed at the tears Antonio shed, when he was told he could not leave the camp as he had entered it, on his own cabalia.

By this time the story of the señorita, the captain's kindness, and "Billy's luck" had gone through the camp. And the men were all on the alert to see us off. There were three cheers for "Billy's kid," and a bow and hats off to the lady, and "Good-by, Billy," "Merry Chirstmas," and we were off. It was the day before Christmas, 1899. And now, little folks, no more till to-morrow, when I will tell you what happened Christmas day.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

"MERRY CHRISTMAS, mother-dear."

"Merry Christmas, Uncle Will."

"Merry, Merry Christmas."

And the children came rushing out of the nursery—first into mother's room, then into Uncle Will's, and then into dear grandma's. "Oh, mother-dear. Oh, Uncle Will, *please* hurry and come downstairs, we are so anxious." And wee Tween Anne leaned over the banisters and cried, "Oh, I'm sure I can see the Tritmus tree." As this was an utter impossibility there was a shout of laughter

from all, and fresh cries of "Oh, please, dearest, do hurry."

"Mother-dear" slipped on a wrapper, Uncle Will his bathrobe, and grandma put on her quilted house gown and a shawl, for it was five o'clock Christmas morning and it was cold even in the snug Darling home. Sliding, and some jumping two steps at a time, down the stairs the children scurried until they reached the parlor door. And there stopped, for they were so excited and nervous they wanted "mother-dear" to go first. Uncle Will threw back the portières and there was a rush into the room. And there, oh, scrumptious sight, was the biggest of big Christmas trees all alight. It was a good thing, too, for although it was morning it was pitch dark. I suppose that was why Santa lit the lights on the tree, for he knew what early birds the little Dar-

lings were, and he knew how good they were too, and how they loved dear, jolly old Saint Nicholas. The room was so bright you could see all and everything not at once, oh, no, for there was so much to see. There were cries of "Oh, see here, just what I wanted," and, "Oh, mother-dear, isn't this lovely?" "Oh, grandma, Santa brought me just what I wanted," and Morris held up with one hand a pair of skates, and in his arms he was hugging a football. There was a "juvenile printing press" and boxing gloves and books, all marked "for Morris." "For Katherine" there was a pretty work-box full of pretty ivory things, a pair of tennis bats and a pair of skates, a lovely book, and all her dear old dollies in new Christmas finery. There was "Molly Darling" and "Maggie May" and Rosa Jameaux and a few others. She had had Molly Dar-

ling since she was a wee little "one-year-old." Grandma had sent her from Chicago, and Rosa Jameaux had come all the way from the Bon Marché in Paris. Dearest papa had brought her to Katherine three years ago. At the same time he had brought all the girlies dollies, and our boy a watch, "a real gun metal watch that really and truly told the time." The children were very careful of these things and each Christmas time Santa would find their old dollies and dress them all in new, pretty clothes. For Goldielocks Santa had weighted his bag indeed. For there was a most beautiful bride doll in a long, white trained gown, a veil and orange blossoms, and a tiny white dolly's fan hanging from a ribbon on her hand. Goldie shrieked with delight when she found her name pinned to this lovely lady doll; beside her there was a trunk, the

cutest of dolly trunks, and on opening it Goldie found a full outfit, fit for a queen. Goldie was satisfied. She looked no further; the book, and the box of crayons laid unnoticed, while she took out and shook and loved and patted each little piece of Miss Bride's wardrobe. By this time "Mother-dear" had been pulled first to one side and then to the other to look at the "beautiful things" that good dear Santa had brought to Anne and Babs. There was a cook stove of iron, with pots and pans, a box of china dishes, Noah's Ark, and for each of the little girls a dolly's carriage, with the cunningest little baby doll with long clothes, seated in each. The children did not know what to love or look at first.

Finally mother said, "Children, you haven't looked in your stockings." Then there was a rush for the nursery, and more

"You Call Them Your Filipino Cousins?" (see page 53).

gleeful shouts and more satisfaction. Each found a stocking bulging with goodies. In the dark, and the flight to wake "Mother-dear," the children had forgotten to look at the nursery mantel first. Now they were filled with wonder and admiration at Santa's skill to fill all the stockings and to come and go without a sound.

Oh, blessed old Saint Nicholas, long life to you, and unending faith in your reality!

And now nurse came to dress the children for "brexus," Tween Anne called it. "Mother-dear," said:

"Let us say our morning prayers, and let us thank our Heavenly Father for having sent us this happy day."

"Thank Santa, too," said Babs. And "Mother-dear" smiled and said:

"Yes, dear, let us thank Santa, too."

You perhaps think it strange that Papa

Darling is so seldom mentioned, and that he was not here this blessed Christmas morn. Well, the children's dear, good father had died three years ago, leaving behind the sweetest and best of memories to the children and their "Mother-dear."

They never cried about him now, nor never felt sad when they talked of him; but rather loved to think of him as they would, if he was in the south and would return some day.

An hour later, and the family were assembled at the breakfast table. At the head sat "Mother-dear," on one side of her sat Tween Anne, and on the other Babs. In the centre, on either side, sat Uncle Will and grandma, Katherine beside him, and Goldie beside grandma, and at the foot sat Morris, the man of the house. There was a time when a place had always been left vacant, "Papa's place"; but "Mother-dear" had

wisely changed this, as it always made Christmas a wee bit sad. But there wasn't anything sad about the Christmas party at the table this morning. All the faces were bright and happy, and beaming. Even grandma's, for she, too, had received just what she wanted. In the first place, she had prayed that her son might be spared and be with her this holy day, and her prayer was granted. And then she had received some nice things, too, lovely warm bed slippers, a pretty white shoulder shawl and a pair of gold rimmed eye glasses. Mother, too, had received some pretty gifts and so had Uncle Will. When the Christmas mail arrived, among the cards and letters was a large envelope for Uncle Will, with the Philippine postmark on it. The children all waited breathlessly while Uncle Will broke the seal and took out, what do you think? a Christ-

mas card from "Marchan and Antonio," "to Señor Billy," painted by the señorita's own fair hand. There is no such thing as a Christmas card to be had in the Philippines. But this one was very pretty. It was a scene from the señorita's own home. Crossed at the bottom was a broom and a gun and entwining them was a wreath of holly. "Mother-dear" kissed Uncle Will, and said, she must indeed be a dear, sweet girl, and all the babes said they thought so too, and they wished she was here now and little Antonio too. And Babs said, "It just makes me want to cry when I think of Uncle Will's little boy way off in that hot country, without any Santa Claus." Of course everybody laughed, for it was such a contrast to Babs' idea of "real Christmas."

After breakfast they all went back to the

Christmas tree and the children played till dinner time. And oh, what a Christmas dinner it was. Everything that the soldier uncle liked. And almost enough to make up for what he had missed by being away so long. Grandma had made the pudding—a great big old English plum pudding—big enough for every one to have plenty and some left over. After dinner, they played games, "Hunt the slipper," "Ring-a-ring-a-rosy," and many others. And once Morris crept up and caught Tween Anne under the mistletoe just as papa used to catch "Mother-dear." And then Uncle Will caught dear grandma—and such kissing and laughter and jollity.

And then Anne recited her pet piece, "The Dead Dolly," and Babs sang, "When Grandma Danced and Minuet Long Ago." Then the children dressed Babs in Morris' clothes

and she and Tween Anne danced the minuet.

It was a pretty sight. I wish you could have seen it. Then Uncle Will asked the children to sing "Merry, merry Christmas" for him, and Katherine played and the children gathered about the dear little old piano that had been grandma's long ago when she was a little girl. And their voices rang out the sweet refrain:

"Peace on earth,
Good will to men,
Let Christian hearts
Rejoice again,
'Tis merry, merry Christmas day."

It was growing quite dark and the children were in prime condition for the promised story. Tired enough to sit quite still, and so full of their own joy, that they

"Merry, Merry, Merry Christmas Bells,
Oh Sweetly, Sweetly Chime" (see page 46).

wanted to hear how Marchan and Antonio spent that Christmas. So Uncle Will sat in the big Morris chair, and with Babs and Anne on his knees and Katherine and Goldie on the arms of the chair and "our boy" cuddled up close at his feet, he began the promised

"Christmas in the Philippines."

THE STORY.

Let me see, where did I leave off?

Oh, yes—we were leaving camp for Vigan. Well, after we had got well started and settled into a good, steady trot, Señorita Marchan glanced at me occasionally, but kept silent. Little Antonio was talking gaily to the horse, and patting and caressing his mane. We rode on in silence for a long time. When we stopped to water our horses

at a river, the señorita said, "You do not look happy to-day, señor; perhaps you do not like to return to Vigan." I assured her that it was a pleasure to go there under the present circumstances—but she shook her head and said, "Oh, Señor Billy, I can see you are unhappy, that you are troubled." I told her that I was not really unhappy or troubled, but that I felt a little bit sad. "For, I am thinking of home and my dear ones," I said. The little señorita looked concerned. I said "This is a great day in my home. For the little ones it is the greatest day in all the year, except to-morrow, which Babs would say is the very 'bestest of all.'" The señorita looked surprised and asked, "Why are to-day and to-morrow so much to you and your people?" "Why, don't you know that this is Christmas eve and to-morrow is Christmas day?" I said.

"The gladdest, merriest, happiest day of all the year." "Yes," said Marchan, "I know that to-morrow is Navidad (Christmas). We, too, make a holiday of it. We all go to church, and we have processions and burn incense through the streets, and children walk through the streets holding lighted candles, and singing." I nodded my head. "Yes, I have seen your Christmas rejoicings. I spent last Christmas day in Manila." "Well, then," said Marchan, "what do you do on Christmas day, and what do you do to-day?" I said, "Señorita, it would take too long to tell you all that Christmas means to me and to my dear ones; I wish you could spend one Christmas week at my sister's home. You could crowd more merriment and real joy into that week than you could in half a lifetime here; and little Antonio here, he would be so madly happy,

that he would spend his time between New Year's day and the next Christmas howling for it all to come back. To-day in my country doubtless it is bitter cold; the people are dressed in furs. If there is snow many are driving in their sleighs from place to place to bring good cheer and 'wish a merry Christmas,' and the shops are filled with happy, eager people who are making their last purchases, to surprise and please some loved one. All is love to-day, and to-morrow. And to-night in thousands of homes children will hang up their stockings at the fireside for good Saint Nicholas to fill." Antonio interrupted to ask, "Fill with what?" And Marchan equally interested, said, "Who is he, this Santo Nicholas?" I looked as sorry as I felt for both these Filipino children. As Babs said a little while ago, I could almost cry for them. I answered

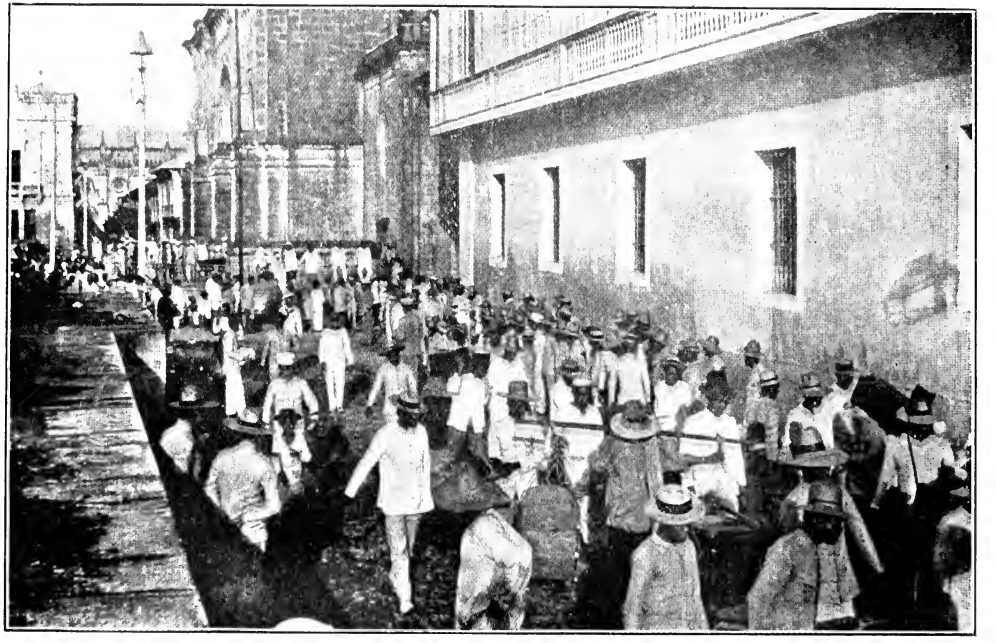
Friendly Filipinos Seeking Protection Inside the American Lines (see page 62).

Marchan first, and repeated the song of "Jolly old Saint Nicholas" to her. You all know it, how jolly old Saint Nick came down the chimney place, and to Antonio I explained that Santa filled the children's stockings with goodies, candies, fruits and nuts. And when I told him that Santa rode through the air, and over the house tops in his great big sleigh, and that it took six big reindeer to pull it, he opened his brown eyes as big as they would open, and stared in pleased astonishment.

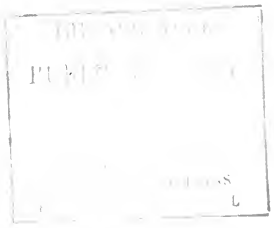
And I told him the story of "The night before Christmas." And when I came to the part where Santa is urging the deer "Up, Dunder and Blitzen, on, Dasher and Sport," Antonio grinned and said, "Antonio likes Señor Billy's Santa, Antonio want to ride in Americano Santa's sleigh." I said, "Yes, little man, and so would all your lit-

tle American cousins. But Santa never takes any, as he can't take all, because then some one or other would surely be unhappy, and that would never do. All must be love and happiness on Christmas day." And then I described the Christmas tree; or rather tried to, for it is indeed beyond description, my little ones. It is only distance—heartaching distance from home and Christmas that teaches us how indescribably dear it all is. Marchan had listened as attentively as Antonio.

I looked up at her. She was standing very still, with one finger on her lips for silence and was pointing with the other hand. I looked in the direction she was pointing, and I saw the queerest looking group of Filipino children. They had been attracted by our voices, and were looking with open eyed curiosity at our strange party. For of



Filipinos Leaving Manila to Join the Insurrection (see page 62).



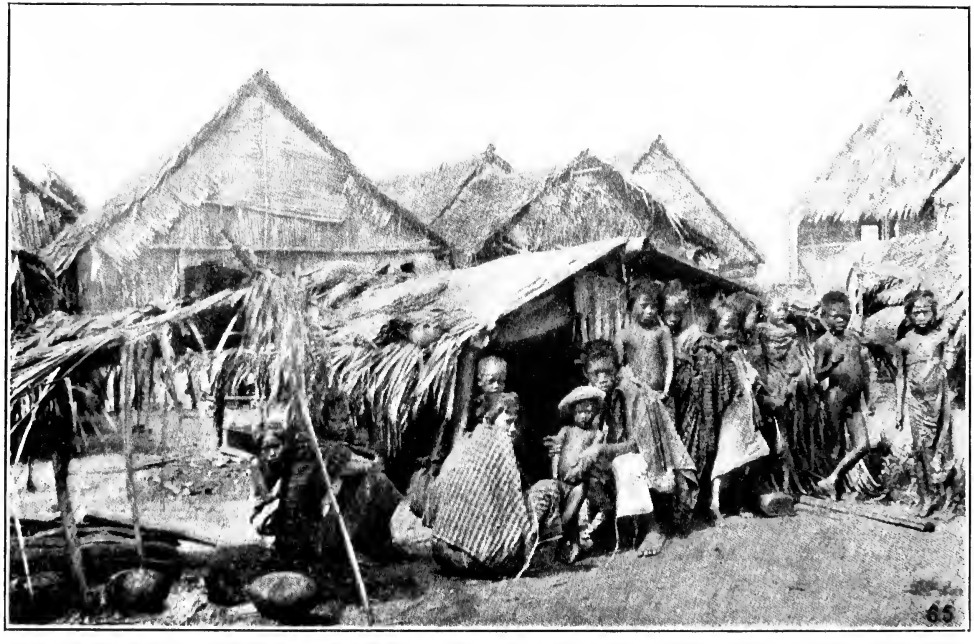
course we presented a strange sight to these little savages. It was indeed unusual to see a Filipino lady and child with an American soldado, and talking in a friendly manner. They did not seem to notice that I had ceased to speak, but stood staring at us in open-mouthed wonder.

Señorita Marchan laughed a low, amused laugh. She said to me, "And you call them your Filipino cousins?" I shook my head in disgust and said, "No, I am more choice in my selection of relatives. I would like to be able to pick my cousins in these fair islands." I looked at these savage little wretches again. There were five of them. They were almost naked. One of them carried two bolos (swords) and the biggest one a spear. In strong contrast to them came a picture in my mind of five other little children at home; and I shouted to the young

insurrectos, "Vamose"—(Go away, quick). They turned in terror, dropped their arms and vamoosed quickly. I turned to the señorita and found that she and Antonio were laughing. I said, "If you are ready and rested we will move on." And we mounted again. Antonio played Santa all the way till the next stop, calling the horse first Dunderen-Blitzerro and again Dasheren-Sporto.

I did not correct him. I was glad he had heard, and could enjoy even so small a shadow of the real thing. We talked very little on the ride. The señorita rode well. We had two or three brushes, which delighted Antonio, but he was not at all gallant to his lady sister. He wanted to come out ahead every time.

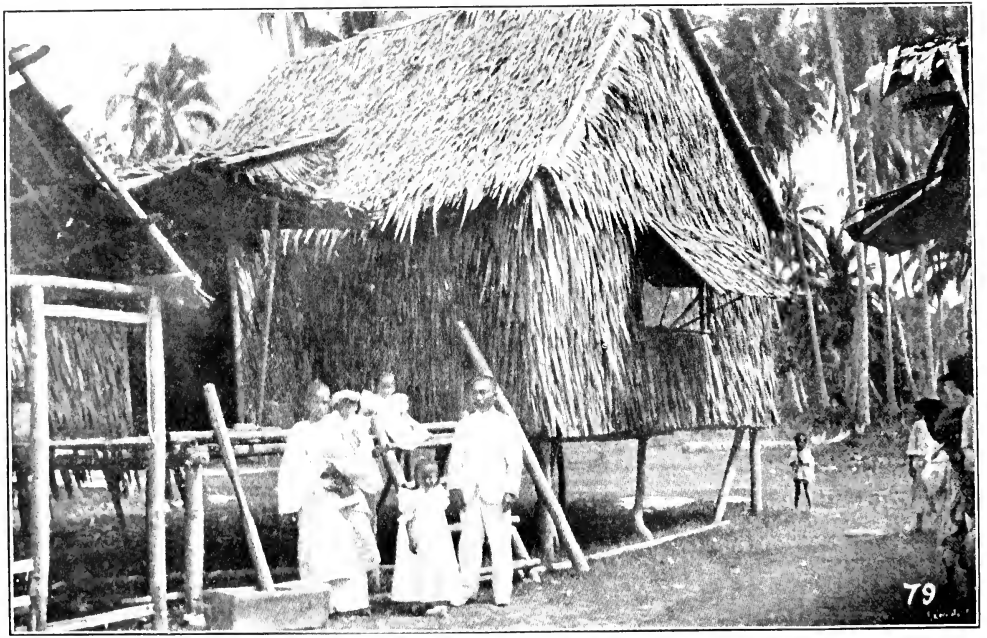
We had stopped for a few minutes to eat a little lunch, but did not dismount. But



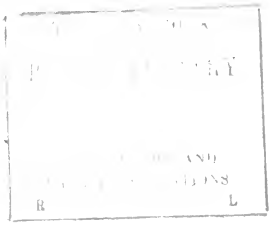
Farmhouse and Children (see page 56).

it was now getting late in the day, and I felt a little concerned as to what I would do with the señorita for the night. I had counted on finding a shack fit to put her and Antonio in for the night, and I and my men would camp outside. But so far we had only passed deserted, bullet ridden shacks, and at times only charred beams, telling the awful story of war and destruction. We rode on and I saw the men ahead of us draw rein. Our escort rode three ahead and three behind, about a quarter of a mile from the señorita, Antonio and myself. The other four rode directly in our rear. I saw the men draw rein and we urged our horses on to see why they had stopped. When we reached them they told me they had seen a farm house ahead and would they ride on to it and halt in waiting for us, if they found it was fit for the lady? I said

yes, and they cantered on. When we caught up with them again we found that the occupants of the house were only three in number, and, therefore, room and welcome for the señorita and the boy. The usual number crowded into these hovels is from ten to fifteen, mostly women and children. The space inside is usually 10x15 feet. Not as big, little folks, as mother's kitchen. And in this space all this enormous family must eat, sleep and live. True, in the dry season they live or squat out of doors most of the time. But in the rainy season, and this lasts for about five months at a stretch, these poor creatures have to huddle together in these pens. A self-respecting pig would mutiny at the conditions. Do you wonder that even though we despise it all and are disgusted, that we pity and wish to help these poor people into civilization?



"And the Style of the Farmhouses or Shops Denoted that We Were Near a Town" (see page 61).

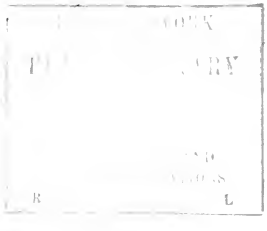


Well, to continue my story. In this place, where we had stopped to rest, there was only an old woman and two boys. We learned that the boys' mother was dead and that the old woman was their grandmother. And furthermore their father and three older brothers had gone "to the hills," to join the insurgents. When the old woman saw Señorita Marchan and Antonio she bowed herself to the earth. She recognized that they were of the nobility. She told the señorita in Filipino that she was welcome to the shelter of the shack but that she did not have anything to offer her to eat. That she and the two children were almost starving. They had been living on rice for days and days. I said, "All right, madre (mother), we will attend to the feast if you can make the señorita and the boy comfortable for the night." We had carried sufficient rations

for the two days' ride. Before pitching tent the men built a fire and prepared the supper. The menu was a plain one, but it tasted good after the long day's ride. We fed the Filipino woman and her boys, and they ate ravenously and gurgled their satisfaction at the feast. As it was now getting quite dark, the señorita and Antonio retired to the shack, and I and my men, except those on guard, rolled ourselves up in our blankets and laid down on the ground, glad to rest, for we intended to be up and away early in the morning. As I went to sleep, visions of home, sweet home, Christmas trees, stockings hung by the mantel, and the jingle of sleigh bells, all floated through my mind and I sighed at the thought, "so far away."

In the morning we were up and on the way at six o'clock.

The Shak Where We Spent Christmas (see page 58).



We rode on without stopping till noon, when we halted and dismounted for dinner.

Christmas dinner. One of the men said to me, "Sergeant, I wish you would let some of us men forage for chicken and whatever else we can find, to make a decent dinner for to-day. I can go hard tack and coffee most any day but Christmas."

I said, "All right, my man, if you can find anything fit to eat and do not take too long to do it, you may go. We are going to rest here for about two hours." I persuaded Señorita Marchan and Antonio to lie down and rest. And the men and I sat on the ground, pulled out our note pads and pencils and in a few minutes were all busy writing Christmas letters to our loved ones. We would mail them to-night in Vigan, but many weeks would elapse before they would be read, for you know it takes forty days for a

letter to travel from Manila to New York.

There were two or three men who had nothing to write—no one to write to, so they said, poor fellows, so I detailed them to forage for our Christmas dinner. In about an hour they returned. Two had half a dozen chickens hanging on their guns, and the third had captured a small pig. They had taken a sack with them and they brought this back filled with rice. The fires were started, the chickens cleaned and hung over one flame to cook and the pig over another. The men had captured an olla (pot) with the other spoils and in this the rice was cooked.

Dinner was ready in about half an hour; there was no table, no table-cloth, no anything that looked like home and Christmas; but we all enjoyed the meal and were merry. Marchan and Antonio sat a little apart from

Writing Christmas Letters to Our Loved Ones "At Home" (see page 60).

the soldiers, but I could see that they, too, enjoyed their dinner and were amused at the merry jests and Christmas tales that were told.

We drank in pure cold spring water, a heartfelt toast: "Home, sweet home, and a speedy end to the war."

Again we mounted and were on the road. After a while we commenced to pass farms that looked more cheerful and prosperous than any we had seen, and the style of the farm houses or shacks denoted that we were nearing a town. I said to the señorita, "Be of good cheer; we are nearing your home." She flashed a smile at me, and I could see that she was excited. Soon we passed a big convent, which only a few months ago had been occupied by some holy order. And when they had fled from it the insurgents took possession of it as a fort—but they too

had gone, and now it was bullet ridden and deserted. A little further on we passed a party of friendly Filipinos going into Vigan to claim American protection. I pointed out to the señorita how the American soldier would feed and shelter and protect these people. This is an every-day occurrence: they "come in" humble and starving, stay till they are fat and strong, and then, more often than not, they return to the hills to fight with renewed vigor, and I might safely say to fight us with our own guns. For while they are under our protection, such is their treachery that they watch every movement, learn our tactics and steal not only our ideas, but our very firearms.

This may seem almost improbable, but it is true.

We were now close to the city of Vigan. We could plainly see the wall of the city

"But It Was Now Bullet-Ridden and Deserted" (see page 62).

and the bell tower. The bell tower can be seen for miles about. I drew rein to speak with Señorita Marchan. I said, "Señorita, we will be in Vigan in a few minutes. What do you wish to do first? We are at your command." She replied, "I would like to find Tomas first." "Very well," I said. "The carcel (prison) is just inside the pueblo murallo (city hall). We will stop there first."

We stopped at the carcel. I presented the señorita to the provost sergeant. She gave him the captain's letter. When we had finished reading it he bowed to her, and said, "Señorita Marchan, I think I have your man. He is an exemplary prisoner. If you will follow me I will take you to him."

The señorita almost clung to me, and Antonio had my hand tightly clasped in both

of his. They both were frightened at the thought of being in the Americano carcel.

The sergeant led the way to the court yard. In it were gathered three hundred or more Filipinio prisoners. The provost sergeant stepped over to a man who was seated apart from the others. And in less time than I can tell you the man was prostrate at the señorita's feet, kissing the hem of her gown, and then he turned to Antonio, who by this time was climbing upon him and embracing him—he put him up on his shoulder, where the little fellow sat crowing with satisfaction. The provost sergeant turned to me and said, "There's no mistaken identity here, I guess. It's pretty safe to let him go."

And so we left the carcel.

The señorita explained why I was with her, and told how kind the captain had been.

She said in Filipino, "Tomas, do you think it is true that our home has not been burned, and that my father lives?"

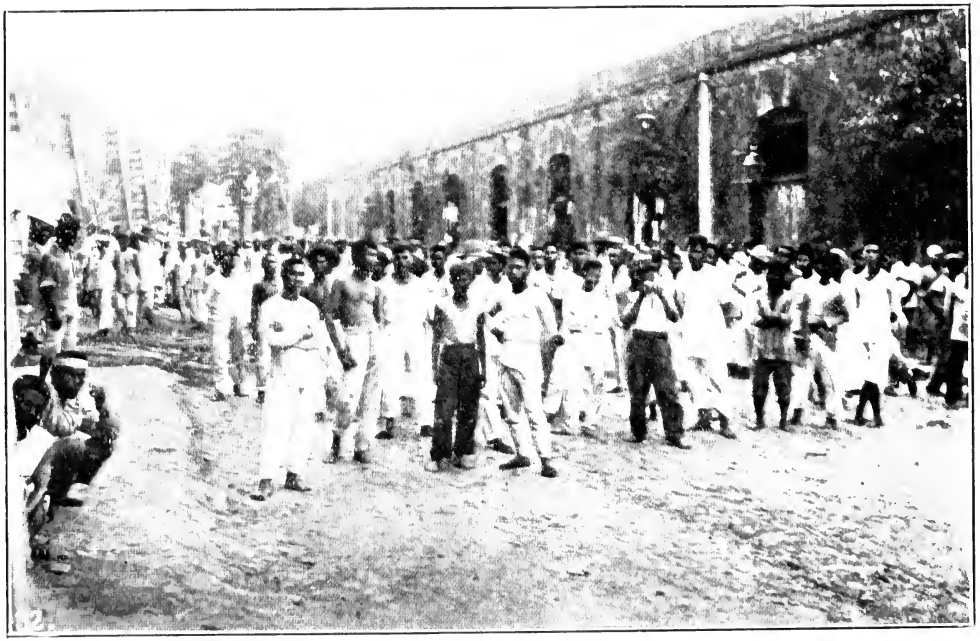
He replied in the native tongue, "Your home is unhurt, señorita, for every day I receive food from old Marta. When you and the other servants fled she hid herself, and when all was quiet she returned to the casa (house) and has lived there ever since; hoping from day to day that you would return. Of your father I only know that he lives. For old Marta told me she had seen him not long ago."

We had reached our horses by this time, and for once Antonio had no use for Señor Billy or the Americano cabalia. He was quite content to sit on the faithful Tomas' shoulder, and in this way he was carried to his home.

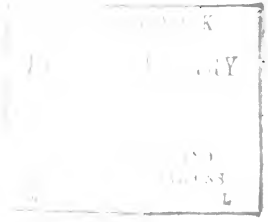
On the way to the señorita's home we

passed some worshippers celebrating Navidad (Christmas). We rode for about half a mile, when the señorita pointed out her home to me. It was a Filipino grande casa (big house or mansion). It was built on a piece of land which was almost an island. On one side stretched the ocean, and in front quite close to the house ran a little rivulet, over which was spanned a little bridge.

The house itself was plain, big and imposing. It was white and the porches were of bamboo. All the windows were latticed or barred with bamboo. We had to ride through a small grove of palms before we reached the house. As we drew rein, an old woman came out to the door-step. The señorita slipped from her horse, and in a minute the old woman was rocking her in her



"There Were About Three Hundred or More Filipino Prisoners" (see page 64).



arms, crying, "My favorita, my amor" (my darling child, my loved one).

When the señorita recovered her composure, she turned to me and said, smiling through her tears, "This is my good old Madre Marta—she has been my nurse since I was born. Marta, this is my very good friend, the Americano señor who has saved Antonio and myself perhaps from death, and he brought us home."

And then the old Filipino nurse wished to embrace me, but I said, "I think the señorita overestimates what little service I have been to her."

Señorita Marchan made a pretty, courtly curtsey to me, and said in Spanish, "Welcome to my father's home, señor."

She turned to Marta and to Tomas and said, "Take Señor Billy's men into the house and make them comfortable and happy.

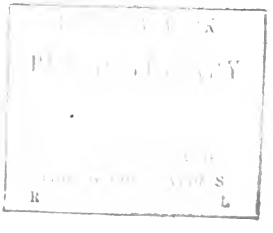
They are our guests for to-day." And turning to me she said, "You will spend your Christmas with us, señor—you shall occupy my father's chamber, and again I welcome you in his name." I bowed my thanks to the señorita and said, "I must first report to the adjutant and receive instructions, and if he will permit me I will gladly return and spend Christmas with you."

We left the señorita's home and rode through the town to headquarters. The town looked festive inasmuch as the people were all dressed in their gaudiest best.

But it was to begin with a scorching hot day, and in every way so different from home that it was almost funny to say "Merry Christmas."

I saw the adjutant. He gave me permission to return and spend the night in Señorita Marchan's home.

Catholics at Worship on Christmas Day (see page 66).



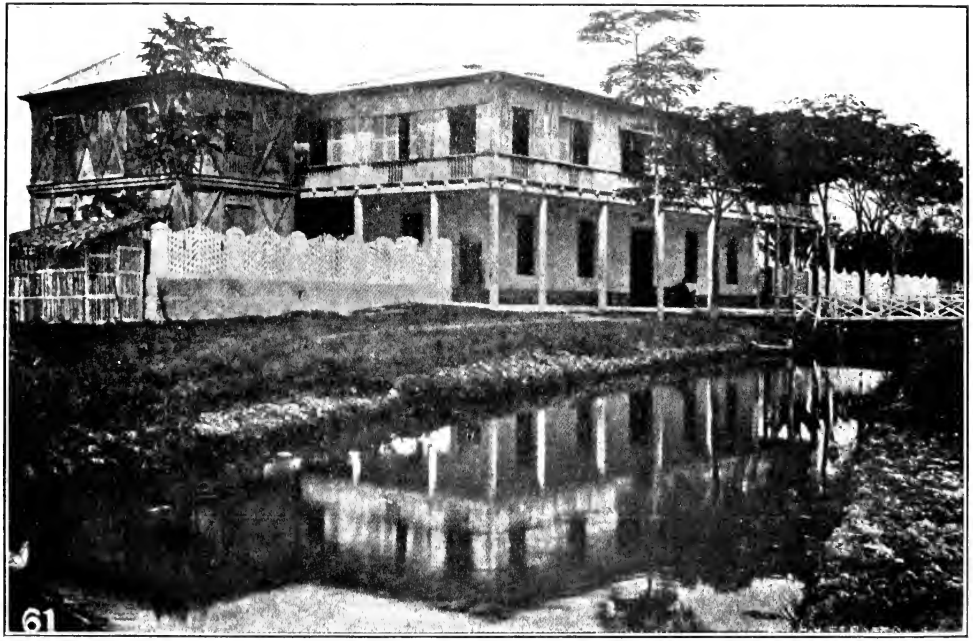
When we returned the señorita called Tomas to look after my men, and she ushered me into her father's room, where old Marta was lighting the candles. She seemed quite excited at the idea of an American soldado for a visitor and in truth I think she disapproved of it. As she followed the señorita from the room she pointed to a heavy cord and tassel and told me it was master's bell, and that by pulling it, I could summon either her or Tomas.

At last I was alone. I looked about me to see what sort of a place a Filipino gentleman's bedroom is. It was a most imposing room. The floor and walls were of solid mahogany, polished so that you could almost see your face in them. It was a large room. In one corner was the retablo (altar)—a fixture in every Filipino home —rich or poor.

For the first time in many months, in fact since I had left home, I made my toilet like a gentleman, and I certainly felt better, and more fit to present myself to my little hostess. It was just about the time appointed for dinner. I descended the broad polished stairs at the foot of which was Señorita Marchan and Antonio. They were both dressed in white. The señorita looked sweet and pretty. She had a white rose in her hair, and she looked a lovely little Spanish lady.

But Antonio was transformed. I scarce recognized my little barefoot insurrecto of the camp. He and his sister made a low curtsey and said, "Merry Christmas, Señor Billy." I replied, "Merry Christmas and many of them."

And we went into the dining room. Although it did not look like our home Christ-



The Señorita's Home (see page 68).

mas, still it made me very happy to see everything so bright and pretty. The room was lit with candles. Candles on the mantels and on the table; and under Marchan's instructions old Tomas and Marta had made the room look quite festive, with hangings and garlands of green. The table was dressed with green leaves and red roses, which made me think of our Christmas holly. Well, we sat down to our dinner. It was many months since I had sat at a table. But I managed to remember my manners and behave like a good boy. I told Marchan and Antonio a few more Christmas stories, and they listened attentively. They both agreed that it must be a beautiful country, where on the Christ day all is love and kindness and good cheer, and both declared that if ever this cruel war was at an end they would ask their father to take them to the

States at Christmas time. And Antonio said, "Yes, Señor Billy, and we are going right to your home, where the little boy and the lovely little girls hang up their stockings and have such a good time." I replied that my little boy and little girls would give him a warm and loving welcome, and that they would make him so happy that he would never want to say adios (good-by) to them.

After dinner we went out on the porch and the señorita played the mandolin and sang a Spanish song. Then although it was early I rose to retire. For I knew I must be up at daybreak and on my way to camp and to warfare. I said good-night, and thanked the señorita for her entertainment and her kindness. And I promised that if I ever again came to Vigan I would visit her home. I gave her the name of my sis-

ter's home, and in the name of my family asked her and her little brother to visit us if they ever could. I took Antonio in my arms and kissed him good-by. I had grown very fond of these young people, though our acquaintance was so short. "Why do you say adios to-night, señor?" said the señorita. "Why not wait until the morning." I laughed and said, "Why, by the time you folks are waking, I will be quite some distance on the way to camp. I mean to start at daybreak. So, once more, Merry Christmas and adios."

They both seemed sorry to say good-by, and so did I. It seemed almost like leaving home again. But such is the fortune of war; and a soldier must learn that there are no ties so dear, that they cannot be severed for duty.

And in the long march through these

dreary islands I had learned my lesson. I retired to my room, wrote a letter home telling you all that I had a pleasant Christmas. But I kept the story of the little boy and his sister until I returned, for I wanted to tell you all about it myself.

The next morning I was up at the first dawn of day, and day comes early in the Philippines. I could hear my men in the court yard below and I could hear the horses neighing, impatient to start after the long rest, although the men moved quietly, for I had cautioned them to, so as not to disturb the household when we were leaving. But the air was so warm and still I could hear every sound. I hurried down to the court yard. My horse was ready and waiting, and so were the men.

I was just about to mount when I heard my name softly called, and turning round

I saw the little señorita at one of the latticed windows.

She put her hand through between the bamboo bars, and said, "I wish to say good-morning, and wish you a pleasant journey. I told you last night that the time to say adios was this morning." So I kissed the little lady's hand, jumped on my horse, and the last I saw of her was waving her hand and calling, "A Happy New Year to Señor Billy."

THE END.