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## **The Christianization of Davao Oriental: Excerpts from Jesuit Missionary Letters**

Jose S. Arcilla, S.J.

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# Texts and Documents

## *The Christianization of Davao Oriental: Excerpts from Jesuit Missionary Letters*

JOSE S. ARCILLA, S.J.

The Jesuit missionary letters, also known as the *Cartas edificantes* or *Lettres édifiantes*, are a special class by themselves in the history of letter writing. Originally intended by Saint Ignatius to foster unity among his Jesuit followers scattered all over the world, they have through the centuries served a broader purpose than the internal government of the Jesuit Order, and are now an acknowledged source for history and the allied sciences.<sup>1</sup>

The following is a translation of excerpts from twenty-three letters to the Jesuit Superior in the Philippines of Father Pablo Pastells, Jesuit missionary to the Philippines in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Historians are acquainted with this Jesuit's scholarly writings, but they are less familiar with his activities as a Jesuit missionary in the Pacific coast of Mindanao.<sup>2</sup> The excerpts here translated form a

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<sup>1</sup> See Frank Lynch, "The Jesuit Letters of Mindanao As a Source of Anthropological Data," *Philippine Studies*, 4:2 (Ignatian Number, 1956), 247-272. The same edition of the letters was used for this translation. As an instance of the influence of the Jesuit letters on the history of ideas see the brief study of Arthur H. Rowbotham, *Missionary and Mandarin. The Jesuits at the Court of China* (New York, 1966), especially chapters XVI-XVIII; also, John Correia-Afonso, *Jesuit Letters and Indian History* (Bombay, 1955).

<sup>2</sup> His principal historical works include: *Misión de la Compañía de Jesus de Filipinas en el siglo XIX* (3 Vols., Barcelona, 1916-1917); *Historia de la Compañía de Jesus en la Provincia de Paraguay, segun los documentos originales del Archivo General de Indios* (3 Vols.,

theme, which is the Christianization of what is today the province of Davao Oriental. Prior to their expulsion and subsequent suppression in 1773, the Jesuits had been evangelizing the southwestern region of Mindanao and the Sulu island group. When they returned to the Philippines in 1859, they were assigned to take over the Mindanao missions of the Recollect Fathers, who never had enough personnel to take care of that far-flung region. In a sense, perhaps, the Jesuits can be considered as the first Christian missionaries of eastern Mindanao, for, until they came and stayed, there was no real Christianization of the pagan tribes that peopled that frontier area.

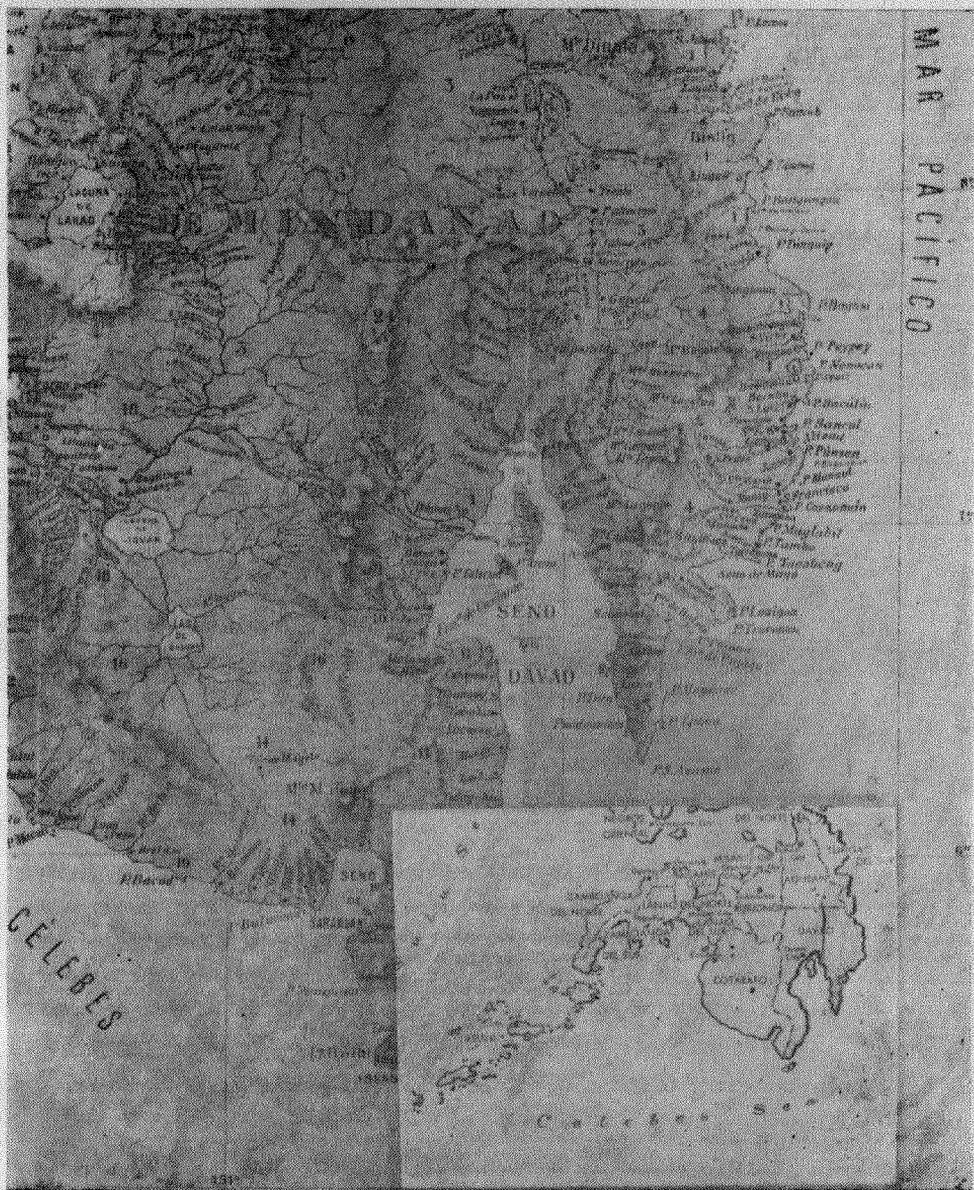
Father Pastells was born in 1846 and entered the Jesuit Order when he was twenty years old. He came to the Philippines in 1875, and a year later, was sent to the Pacific coastal area of Mindanao. His station was Caraga, Davao Oriental, from where he undertook several missionary trips to the interior. As Superior of the Caraga Mission, he carried out his plan of organizing into *pueblos* or civil towns what had formerly been mere clusters of sheds of the roving merchants in the area. He had a definite strategy which included: (1) choosing the best site for a town; (2) marking off future streets, and the areas for the central town plaza, church, municipal hall or *tribunal*, school, and residential houses; and (3) gathering or reducing the natives into the town with the help of the *capitanes* or tribal leaders.<sup>3</sup> That there were difficulties to thwart his projects can be easily seen from the letters, not least of which was the threat poised by the non-Christian leaders to ambush and kill him as he went from one town to the other. This, however, he felt he could solve; but he could not do anything against the power of nature in the form of *baguios* or typhoons, which almost always destroyed entire towns and left the people without food.

Eleven years of missionary activity affected his health, and in 1887, he was recalled to Manila. After an initial recovery, he resumed work in the present province of Misamis Oriental, but weak with anemia, he was forced to sail back to Spain in 1892. His ruined health did not allow much external apostolic activity. Named assistant to the Provincial Superior of the Aragón Jesuits, he devoted his free time to historical writing, becoming an assistant to the famous historian of the Jesuit Order, Father Antonio Astrain.<sup>4</sup>

Madrid, 1912-1918). He also annotated Francisco Colin's *Labor evangelica de los obreros de la Compañía de Jesus en las islas Filipinas* (3 Vols., Barcelona, 1900-1902) and collaborated with W. E. Retana to re-edit and annotate Francisco Combés' *Historia de Mindanao y Jolo* (Madrid, 1897).

<sup>3</sup> See his letter dated 30 November 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Antonio Astrain, S.J., *Historia de la Compañía de Jesus en la Asistencia de España* (7 Vols., 1902-1905).



Davao Oriental, 1887

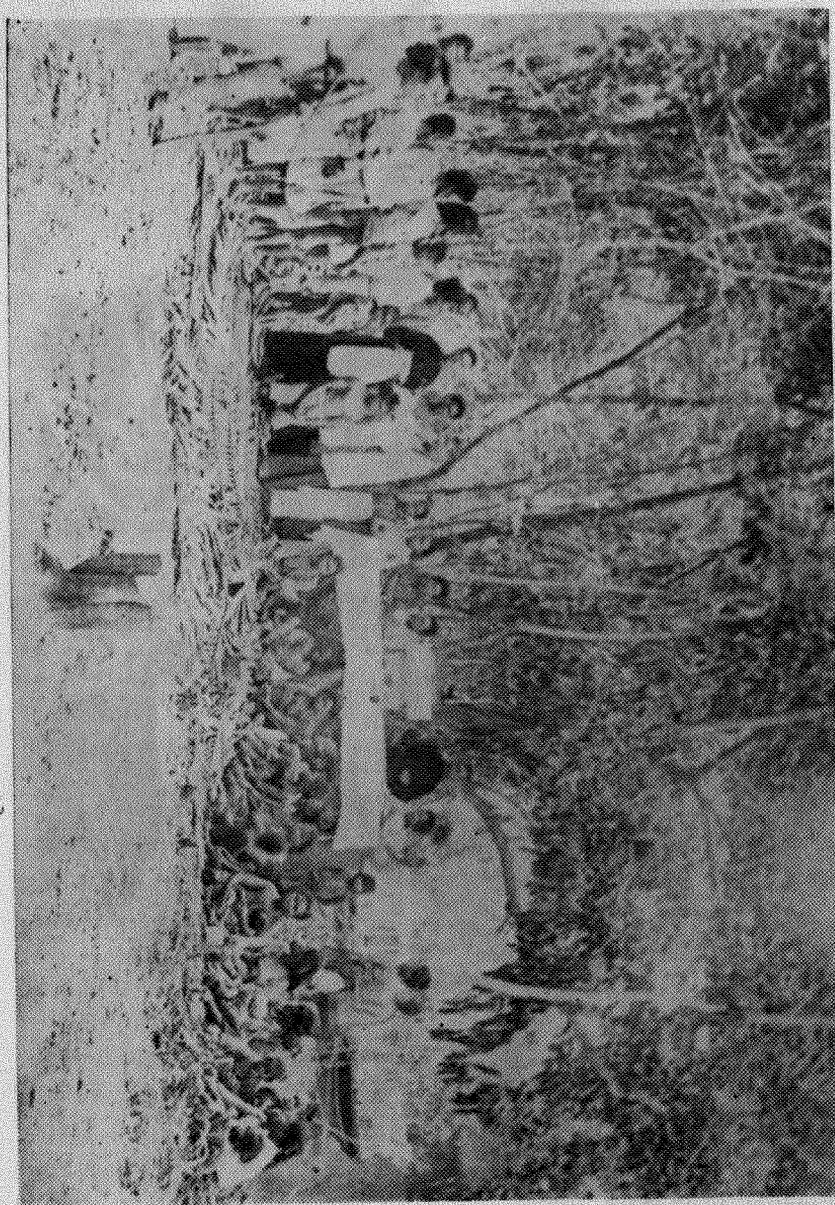
Topografía y descripción de las islas de Mindanao y Celebes, 1887



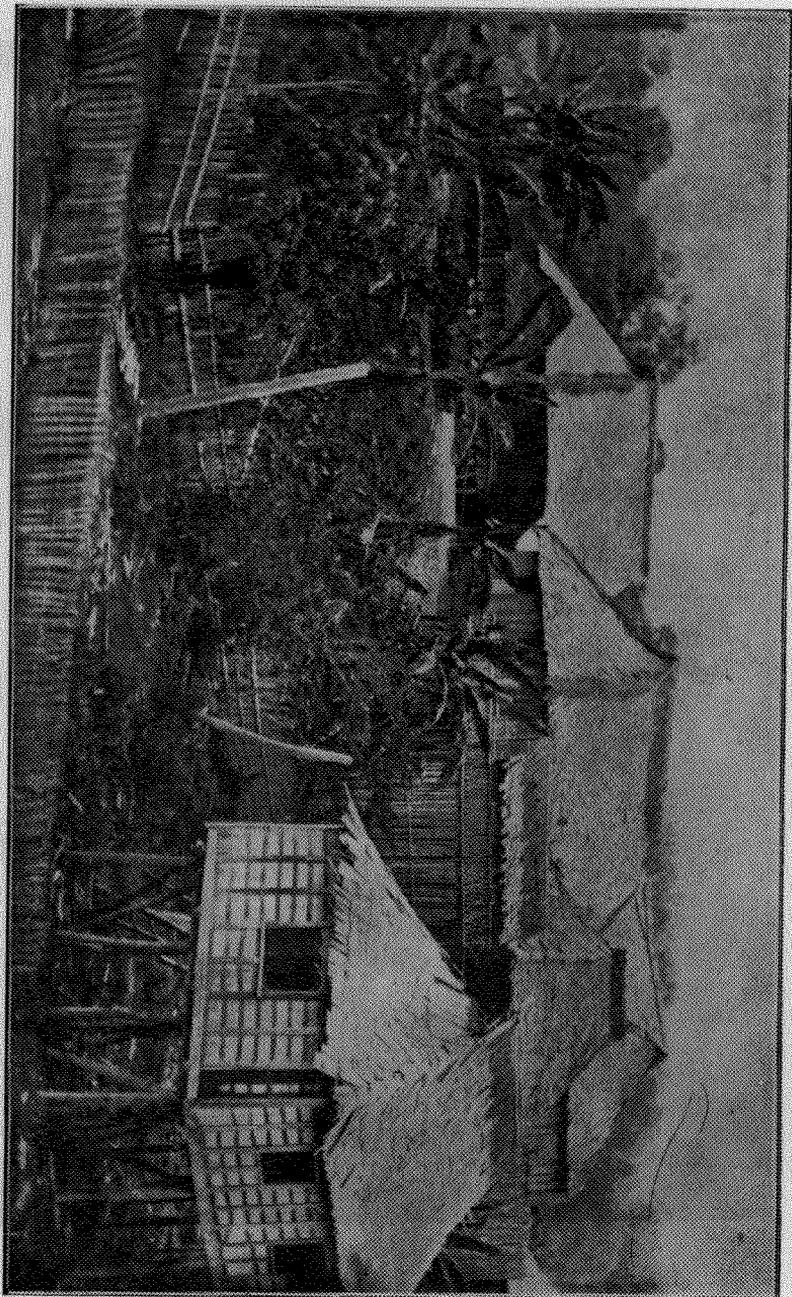
Fray Benito Romero de Madridejos y del Rosario, Bishop of Cebu, 1875-1886.



A Bagobo Altar in the Forest.



Baptism of 42 Moslems by the Iho River.



Houses of the New Christian Reduction of Jativa.



Church in Mati, Davao del Sur, 1895.

Father Pastells died in 1932 at the ripe age of 82 years. His biography still needs to be written, but perhaps the masterly introductions he wrote for each of the nine volumes of that monumental catalogue of Philippine documents preserved in the archives of the Indies in Seville are a measure of his genius.<sup>5</sup>

The printed edition of the *Cartas* already cited above was used for this translation, and the list of modern equivalents to old place names in Mindanao, also provided in that earlier number of this quarterly, has simplified the work of translation.<sup>6</sup> Because the English equivalents of the Spanish official titles do not convey the same idea, the original Spanish was kept—v.g., *Capitán*, instead of the English "Captain." Other local words have been kept, v.g., *buyo*, *tuba-tuba*, without any annotation.

In the face of the growing demand to "rewrite" the history of the Philippines, one hopes that, by offering this initial translation, students of Philippine society might be encouraged to read deeper and acquire a more lasting appreciation of the rich cultural heritage of the Filipino people.<sup>7</sup>

## 1

Manila, 20 April 1887

The island of Mindanao ("island of lakes") is located between north latitudes  $5^{\circ}42'30''$ , and between east longitudes  $125^{\circ}30'$  and  $129^{\circ}44'$ . In its greatest dimensions, it is around 470 kilometers from north to south and 490 from east to west, with an area of 94,400 square kilometers. The orography of this extremely fertile island is very simple. Its principal mountain ranges which constitute its skeleton, as it were, are four. . . . In these ranges, the highest mountains are: in the east, those of Surigao ("of the Spring"), Mag-diuata ("Cause of Joy"),

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<sup>5</sup> Pedro Torres y Lanzas, *Catálogo de los Documentos relativos a las islas Filipinas existentes en el Archivo de Indias de Sevilla . . . precedido de una erudita Historia General de Filipinas . . . por el P. Pablo Pastells, S.J.*, (9 Vols., Barcelona, 1925-1934). For a detailed account of Father Pastells' career in Mindanao, see his *Misión de la Compañía de Jesus de Filipinas en el Siglo XIX*, 3 Vols. (Barcelona. 1916-1917), *passim*.

<sup>6</sup> See note 1, above.

<sup>7</sup> These form a chapter of the forthcoming book by this translator on Jesuit missionary methods in the evangelization of Mindanao during the last century.

Agtunganon ("From the Center"), Campalili ("Palili's Place"), Mayo (Maayo" = Good; "Malayo" = Distant Mountain) and Sigaboy; in the center, Balatucan ("Hill of the Land Wind"), Apo ("Grandfather"), which rises 3,143 meters. In the third range, Malingaang ("Mountain of Malin or Maling," a giant elf) and Silingan ("Mountain of Siling," dwarf), and Tres Reyes.

The hydrography of Mindanao island is no less interesting. . . . Pulangui or Rio Grande stands out. It has its source in Buluan and Liguasan lakes and the slopes of the second and third mountain ranges. This river divides in two at Tumbao, with the north branch passing by Libungan and Cotabato, and the south by Tauran and Tamontaka. The delta is navigable now in each of its arms, but in a short time, unless it is dredged, it will be silted by the sand left in the river bed. Equalling the Rio Grande in importance is the Agusan river. Originating from the mountains Magsubay, Taggopo and Capungunan, it descends in a northeasterly direction until Campostela, from where it turns northwest; cutting into Talacogon, after many bends it turns abruptly to the north to flow into Butuan bay. Next comes Tagum river, which flows into the base of Davao gulf. Following in importance is Tagoloan river. Originating in the slopes opposite Rio Grande far beyond Migapanan mountain, it skirts down this mountain towards the north-east, then turns north, going east-north-east, then follows in an open semi-circle to the west, until it turns northwest to its mouth near the town of the same name. This is a very important river, not only because of the numerous ranches scattered throughout the valley it courses through, but also because from it one can easily communicate with the Rio Grande of Cotabato, with Agusan and Davao rivers, and so cross the island of Mindanao from different directions.

Then there is Iho river. It is swift, but navigable by banca from its sources until its mouth in Davao gulf. There are other rivers that are relatively less important . . . . I omit them in order not to delay. I have purposely cited these five rivers, because through them means of communication can be easily opened between one coast of the island and its corresponding

opposite coast—from Cotabato to Malalag, Sarangani Gulf and Cagayan; from Butuan to Davao; from this last point to Cagayan.

The principal lakes of Mindanao are Malanao, Buluan, Liguasan, Mainit and Linao. Besides these lakes, there are others of less importance, some of which are found on the mountain tops, like those of Mount Apo, Campalili, the second mountain of Samal and Maninit. These lakes are considered by scientists as the craters of extinct volcanoes. They are in general objects of worship for the pagans who live near them.

The meteorology of Mindanao can serve for interesting observations which can be utilized when this island is united to the rest of the archipelago by telegraph.

In general, the coastal climate is quite temperate due to the continual change of the winds outside the rainy season when the strong northeast and southwest moonsoons are blowing. During the first, it is rainy in the eastern coast but dry in the western coast, and vice-versa during the southwest moonsoon.

... the population is divided into Christians, pagans, and Moslems. In general, they belong to the Malay, the Indonesian, and native or Negrito races, and of the inter-mixture of these and with the other superior races, especially Chinese and Spanish. The Christians are classified as old and new. The old Christians number 186,000 .... Their customs are as primitive as the greater or less influence they have received from the pagan tribes from which they proceed. Without the powerful and effective influence of religion, one would note in them a marked tendency to laziness, drunkenness, gambling and lust. On the other hand, they are naturally hospitable, docile and unselfish. They are faithful to the practice of religion. Among their families and married people, one finds a strong moral sense, since there are no *rocks of scandal* in the towns. I have noted that in the parish books which register more than 200 baptismal certificates each year, two or three years would pass without an entry for a natural child.

They raise rice, abaca, sugar cane, cacao, coffee, tobacco, bananas, *lumbia*, coconut and other fruit trees, and tubers, like camote, gabi and *aroru*, which are commodities of prime importance for them in time of hunger. They extract mastic (*almaciga*) and other resin products, as, for example, *biao* and *bakao* oils; but since they do not know its use, neither castor nor coconut oil. Wax and honey are most plentiful. From this, and from sugar cane, nipa, coconut, rice and *cabo-negro*, they prepare their wines, and from these latter and from camagon, their vinegar. They also produce salt from sea water by the process of direct evaporation. The men are generally artisans and there are among them carpenters, smiths, silversmiths, brick-layers, tailors and even a dealer in arms as a hobby. The women weave piña, *tindog*, abaca, cotton and silk cloths. They embroider and sew with exquisite fine taste. At certain seasons of the year, the sea coast people travel and fish, especially for sea turtles, with or without the shell.

They live in lowly huts of nipa, bamboo and also, of wood, which among the powerful can become quite pretentious. The animals which they use for work, transport and travel are the carabao, cow and horse. Their work tools are limited to the plough and the bolo. Their domestic animals are the dog, the cat, the cock, and the pig. Their sports are the cockpit, cards, and *sipa*, a ball woven of thin strips of rattan which is passed around by the feet. They also have dances as recreation, especially the *moro-moro* and the *tapairon*. During their principal feasts, they decorate their houses with buntings, and they hold moderate banquets. They dearly love noise and excitement, especially that of fireworks. Their cutting tools are usually the hatchet, *sundang* (bolo), *ligdao*, *kris*, *kampilan*, *tabas* and, for women, the *badi*. Pointed weapons are: the lance, which can be of four kinds, *puyus*, *budiac*, *linayas* and *pinuypuy*, arrows of bamboo, *palmabrava*, iron and steel. Those that are both pointed and bladed are the *balaraos* or double-edged daggers whose hilts and sheaths they usually adorn with varied silver designs they themselves engrave. Their sailing craft are the *vintas*, *barotos bancas*, *bilus*, *pancos*, *faluas*, *paraos*, and *lancanes*. For fishing they use the harpoon, the arrow, the bobos, the fences and nets.

They also use the bark of a tree called *tublé* and the fruit of the *tuba-tuba* and *lagtan*. Their trade is generally limited to the prime commodities of food, drink, clothing, and work tools. Among the old Christians of Mindanao, there were no professional *tulisanes* (bandits) and of those that are now in the south, some are deportees [from Luzon].

Since 1876 up to the present the new Christians have numbered around 25,000. They are not distinguished in their general customs from the races of their origin, but, after they accept holy baptism, and in their living as Christians in an organized religious and civil system to which the Missionaries assign them, there is a notable change. Through a habit of obedience to law learned from a peaceful Christian education which it is the missionary's task to provide them with after he has won their trust, it is extraordinarily easy to change their customs; in a short time, the moral life of the families and the individuals themselves is renewed. I mean they persevere, for in this respect, there are some tribes more amenable than others. For example, the converted Mandaya is much less fickle than the Manobo, because the importance of being subject to a principle of authority is more deeply impressed on the mind of the former.

The pagans, more or less around 300,000 in number, are divided into different races or families of three races, properly called Malay, Indonesian and Negrito, with much crossing with other superior races, as the Chinese, Japanese, and, even according to some, the European.

The *Mamanuas*, (*man-banua* = country resident) are the true indigenous aborigines of the country. Of dark, oily complexion, kinky hair, they wear no clothes, have no fixed abode, passing the night wherever darkness overtakes them, sheltering themselves in an improvised shed of *palasan* or any branches and boughs of a tree. They eat the fruits and roots found in the forest and live on the flesh of deer, wild boars, monkeys, snakes, and reptiles. They go about armed with bow and arrow, spear and knife. They have an idea of God and of worship, and some principles also of natural law. They are shy,

they steal out of necessity, but are lazy. They live in the small peninsula of Surigao but are found as far as Tago in the mountains. Their chiefs usually marry Manobo women. This race is almost extinct because of the privations they suffer from their nomadic life. There are four small towns of Mamanuas in the parish of Mainit and another in Higaquit. The total number of this tribe will not go beyond two or three thousand, the baptized will reach around five hundred.

The *Manobos* or *Manuba* (*man-suba* = one who lives by the river) live, as their name says, along the rivers. They live on the basin of Agusan, from Butuan to Oloagusan. They are found also in Cape San Agustin, in the south of Malalag Bay and in the Cotabato district. . . . This tribe is numerous, fierce, fickle, easy to reduce, a little hard to keep in the reduction, suspicious and treacherous in war. They erect their houses along the rivers and many times in the foliage of the trees. Their religion is very much like that of the Mandayas. They are forced to move every year to open new fields because of the weeds and tares that grow; since they lack the means to till the soil properly, they do not have any attraction to own permanent property. They abandon their houses when someone dies in them and if the deceased is a stranger, they demand from the relatives the equivalent of the abandoned house. Their manner of life is patriarchial, under the aegis of their corresponding *bagani*.<sup>8</sup> The Manobo. . . is of two extreme types. One is athletic, the other is of smaller physique. These two types, combined in the majority of them, form a third middle type found more among the Manobos of Davao than among those of Agusan. Their apparel, arms and adornments are very much like those of the Mandayas, except that the Manobos prefer black bead necklaces to colored ones. Tattooing by means of the needle and ground charcoal is practiced among the Manobos. The number of Manobos in the Agusan basin reaches 20,000, half of whom have been reduced. The number of those in the Davao and Cotabato districts is unknown.

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<sup>8</sup> See below, letter dated 8 June 1878.

The *Mandayas* (*man-daya* = people of *ilaya*) are a tribe found from Tago until Mati, and from Gandia to the springs of Agusan, and around the sector below Salug. . . . The usages and customs of the Mandayas are described in a letter of Fr. Heras dated 8 June 1878. Their number will reach around 30,000, of whom 8,000 are now baptized and live in reductions.

The *Manguangas* (*man-gulangas* = people of the forest) live in the upper Salug. They are warlike, are in constant fights with the Mancbos and Mandayas of Agusan, the Moslems of Iho and the Aetas. They are easy to reduce.

The mountaineers (*buquid-non*) . . . of Mindanao are the people between Gingoog and Nasipit, who share their way of life, their social and religious traditions, and those who inhabit the mountains and various reductions of these people within the boundaries of the Balingasag parish. Their number will total around 4,000.

The *Atas* (from *itaas*, *ataas*, *atas* = those who live in the heights) are the natives who live ordinarily in the western neighborhood of Mount Apo. They are warriors, and keep warring against the Moslems and the Bagobos. The Atas spread northwest of Davao and their different groups are found up to the boundaries of the Bagobos, Guiangas, Mandayas and even the Subanons and mountaineers of Cagayan and Maguindanao. It is not known how many this tribe is, not even guessed at; but it is calculated correctly that their number must be big.

*Guiangas* (*guanga*, *gulanga* = inhabitant of the forest) . . . live in separate groups around the rivers and ranches of Dulian, Guinalan, Tamugan, Ceril and Biao near Davao, numbering 6,400. Their dialect is totally different from the rest; they show enough intelligence, but are still quite savage, and human sacrifice still prevails among them.

The *Bagobos* dwell in the eastern slopes of Apo, are of regular build, well-proportioned, because they suffocate children that are born deformed. They love to work. The practice human sacrifice to appease Darago (*De-dago*, *du-dugo*, *mu-dugo* = one who will shed blood or Blood-letter) or Mandarangan. They believe in two principles, are difficult to reduce, but easy to

keep after they are reduced. They are war-like and cruel, excellent riders and daring fishermen. They dress elegantly and sometimes sport a shirt worth two or three slaves. They drink *intus* (the fermented juice of the sugar cane) and when they entertain guests, they serve it to everyone present, beginning with the most honored guest. . . . The Bagobos number around 12,000, of whom 800 have been reduced and baptized.

The *Calagans* are not Moslems. Their *capitan* has been baptized with his entire family, and so, a new reduction for their tribe has been founded in Digos, between Piapi and Santa Cruz. They are good men, easy to deal with.

The *Tagacaolos* (*taga-ca-olo* = dweller at the head or origin of the rivers) are as skillful as the Bagobos, but not as cruel and superstitious. In their skirmishes, they are quite brave, especially the widowers, seeing that to have killed a man is good recommendation to be able to contract a second marriage. The Tagacaolos are of good build, of a fairer complexion than the other tribes, except the Mandayas. The Tagacaolos occupy the Hamiguitan mountains in the small peninsula of Cape San Agustin. Between Malalag, Malita and Lais they number 7,000, and about 2,000 are in the peninsula of San Agustin. In Malalag there is a small town of newly reduced members of this tribe, and one counts 186 Christians among them. The *Loac* are Tagacaolo bandits, more despicable still than the Mamanuas who inhabit the heights of Hamiguitan.

The *Dulangans* (*Gulangans*) also called *Bangal-Bangal* like the Manguangas, are a forest-dwelling tribe. They live in the mountains some fifteen leagues south of the Rio Grande. They are fierce savages, and the Moslems who do not dare to mix with them, call them an evil nation. It could be that the ferocity so much feared of these Dulangans is a tale invented by the Moslems for their own purposes. . . . Their number is unknown. They go about completely naked and as a minimum essential covering they have some kind of frontal cloth made of barks or leaves of trees. Their food is like that of the Mamanuas. Neither do they have houses, for they dwell in caves or within tree trunks, or like the Mamanuas. Their weapons are normally arrows poisoned as I have heard with *curare*.

The *Tedurayes* or *Tirurayes* live in the left slopes of lower Pulangui, numbering 8 or 10 thousand at most. . . . They are gentle, friendly to the Spaniards, but are supported by the Moslems. Their fear of Moslem attacks, plus their nomadic way of life because of a lack of carabaos and farming tools, make their final reduction today difficult. Their government is patriarchal and their tribal chief is called *bandarra*. They pay a tribute to the Moslem datu, and a yearly tax on the land they till. The women adorn themselves in an ugly way, with heavy brass rings around their arms and legs, and they puncture the ears from which to hook earrings of more than a centimeter in diameter. The man let the hair grow like those of the other pagan tribes, but they do not tie it up. Their arms and industry show Moslem influence. They gird themselves with belts interwoven with heavy brass wire a decimeter long, more or less. Their religion is an unclassified mixture of superstitious beliefs. It is not correct to say that the Tirurays have so low an idea of shame that they consider it an honor to prostitute their wives or daughters to the Spaniards. Given an isolated instance which would appear to prove it, one could not draw a general statement contrary to the decency of the Tiruray tradition in this matter, which cries loudly to the nature, not to say of man, but even of the very brute animals themselves.

The *Tagabilis* or *Taga-bulu* are the owners, with the Bilanes, of Buluan Lake, and they dwell south of this lake. This is a war-like tribe, hostile to the Moslems, Tirurays and Manobos who live around them. The Moslems in Sarangani normally ally themselves with the Bilanes of Balud and Tumanao to war against the Tagabilis. I think their reduction will be as easy as that of the Bilanes.

The *Samals* of Samal Island near Davao, are a mixture of Moslem and Mandaya. They are courageous, loyal to the Spaniards. Their population will reach around 2,000. There is a new Christian reduction in Samal. They are not as hard to reduce as the Moslems.

The *Bilanes* or *Buluanes* (Bil-an, Bul-u-an, Bulu-an) reside in the surrounding region of Buluan lake, in the neighbor-

ing mountains of the lake and Sarangani Gulf. This is the most exploited and physically degraded tribe, except that of the Mananua. They are retiring, shy, docile, friendly, and easy to reduce. In two of the Sarangani Islands, Balud and Tumanao, there are also 1500 Bilanes, who are in good relations with those of their race in Mindanao and with the Manobos of Culaman.

The *Subanon* (people of the river) are a vanishing tribe due to the persecutions by the Moslems who exact heavy tributes from them. They farm, but the Moslems harvest from their sweat. They endure hardships, are peaceful and unaccustomed to the use of arms. They are superstitious and ignorant. Their docile nature will facilitate their total reduction. They occupy almost the whole Sibuguey peninsula, and are neighbors of the Moslems of Lanao and Illana bay, who come out from their sector to enslave them to till their lands. The military trail from Tacurong to Maranding opened by order of His Excellency Captain General Terrero will nullify the domination exercised by the Moslems of Lanao and Illana over the Subanon, cutting off and ending piracy and kidnapping, while at the same time facilitating missionary activity to reduce these pagans. There are now five reductions of 2,000 new Christian Subanons in Dapitan; one in Zamboanga district . . . and three reductions have already been successfully begun around Sibuguey gulf. . . .

The *Lutanga* Moslems are *Calibugans*, of a timid and peaceful nature. They live in Silanga of Olutanga, support themselves by fishing and have no dwelling places other than the *vintas* where . . . all of the members of each family live, bringing along with them their pitiful furnishings, spending years without setting foot on land, for even their firewood is taken from mangroves. They are habitually naked. Their number will not be more than 300 or 400.

The *Calibugans* are a mixture of the Moslem and Subanon, peaceful though a little warlike. They follow the Moslem religion, a bit changed by Subanon superstitions. The former consider them as a free people and demand from them only personal service with their *vintas*, their support being under-

taken by the Datus on whom they depend. They live in small groups along the coast of the Sibuguey peninsula. . . .

*The Moslems* — The Moslems to the Filipino Christians are as the Jebusites to the people of God. Consecrated to piracy and kidnapping since their first occupation of Jolo and Mindanao, this profession has always been the strongest base of their formidable power. Until 1860, when 18 steam gunboats arrived at this archipelago, it was impossible to break their indomitable pride and secure the sea lanes down to Mindanao. Much later, with the expansion of the navy and the installation of the mail boats, it has become impossible for them to leave their lairs and undertake their notorious raids. The expeditions of General Claveria against the Balanguingui, of Urbiztondo and Malcampo against those of Jolo, and the definite establishment of our forces in Davao, Rio Grande and Jolo, have been a mortal blow to the Mohammedan influence on the archipelago, limiting it to the narrow circle of the land on which they set foot and the ranches of the pagans around them, to whom the beneficent influence of Spanish power has not yet come in any effective way. However, from now on, the Moslems will be under the constant vigilance by the victorious lion of Catille, so that they may not inflict any damage on the frontiers. And that day when the Missionaries will have successfully planted the cross in the midst of the pagans surrounding the Moslems who, thereby will have no slaves to cultivate their land, clothe them, and serve them as objects of trade and their enjoyment, that day the Moslems will be forced to exchange the *kampilan* and the *kris* for the plough and the harness, the fierce arrogance of the warrior or pirate for the peace-loving meekness of a man forced to win his bread by the sweat of his brow.

The most hostile Moslems are those from Jolo, and some ranches along the beaches of Basilan called *Samal Laut*. . . the Illanos. . . who occupy Illana Bay, which gives them their name and who form some of the communities on the Sibuguey coast; those of Lanao lake; those in the Rio Grande basin; those on the shore line between Cotabato and Sarangani gulf,

The more peaceful are the Yacans . . . of the interior of Basilan, the Sanguils . . . and those of Sarangani, except those originating from Rio Grande. The Moslems of Davao Gulf and Mayo are not to be feared because of their isolation and small number.

## 2

Caraga, 30 November 1876

This date marks fifteen days that I am alone in Caraga. Awaiting the arrival of Father Terricabras<sup>9</sup> either today or tomorrow makes my loneliness more bearable. I have already preached in Cebuano on two Sundays, morning and afternoon. Everyone understood me perfectly, but I had to make sure there were no errors in my Visayan.

The main road from Manay to Dacong-Banua can be said to be a finished fact; the same with the link from Tubud to Caraga, between Bonga and Mampanon to Manay. Dacong-Banua has already been cleared and only awaits my coming (that will be in April), so that it will become the new Cateel, while the old Cateel will be a Mandaya town of 10 *cabecerías*.<sup>10</sup> May God bless our efforts.

Meanwhile, work is continuing feverishly. We meet with many difficulties, but they are solved with God's help. I believe six or seven Mandaya towns will have been formed . . . in July next year. I have called all the *capitanes*, *tenientes* and *principales*<sup>11</sup> of the surrounding areas as far as three days' hike.

<sup>9</sup> See below, letters dated 1 January 1878 and 8 June 1878.

<sup>10</sup> In the Philippines the town comprised a relatively wide area, but it had a principal residential section called either the *población* or *cabecera*, where most of the people have their homes. Municipal jurisdiction extended to outlying sectors, usually clusters of houses in the rural areas removed from the *cabecera*, and which were variously called *barrio*, *visita*, or *sitio*, according to the greater or less number of houses.

<sup>11</sup> These titles are not used in a military sense, but in their original meaning: the *capitán* (captain) was the tribal leader, and his immediate subordinate, who assumed command in his absence was the *teniente*, perhaps best understood as his "deputy." The *principales* were the chief figures in the locality, influential people who had held official responsibility in the past. In colonial Philippines, the title *Capitán* was given also to an *ex-gobernadorcillo*.

I have talked with Capitanes Inguilisa, Mandabon, Tibuc, Baoto and Limente, together with their Tenientes Mapayo, Mecalenta and Manocos, who are co-respondents in the formation of the town of San Francisco along Dauan river, near the point where the cattle of Caraga are pastured, a quarter of an hour away from town. The land is excellent, it is right beside the river itself, open but elevated, watered by the river, is near a mountain, open and accessible from a lake and to the sea itself. It is a week today since we have been there to draw up the plans, line up the streets and residential lots of the future town. I was accompanied by the whole *principalia* of Caraga, plus the Mandaya capitanes and tenientes I mentioned. The town will have four principal streets and six across them. Each house will have eight posts, will measure six *brazas* long and three and a half wide, just like those houses which the Christians are now building. The houses will be six yards apart, and on each lot the people will raise their little garden surrounded by a fence. A grand plaza will be set in the town center around which the public buildings will be erected. The main streets can be extended indefinitely according to the number of streets across and the residential lots. The principal streets will be named after the founding capitanes, and the town plaza after the *gobnadorcillo* of Caraga. This town could have 8 or 10 *cabeceñas*. After finishing the survey at one o'clock in the afternoon, it was agreed that the Mandaya capitanes would summon their *sacopes*<sup>12</sup> through their officials, and that within eight days they would all come together again to start the work of building the town. And so, I will wait for them tomorrow. In return, I have promised that I would intercede with the Government to have the titles of *Capitan* and *Principal* approved for those who now enjoy them. God grant the *sacopes* obey them. I have likewise promised to this and to the other towns that we would gather five *cavans* of palay, coffee and cacao; to till a communal field from which to succor the more needy; that I would give them a teacher to teach them to read and write. This, plus my acting as the physician of the people, has pleased and encouraged them.

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<sup>12</sup> The Visayan word for team member or follower, i.e. henchmen.

Capitan Ciriaco, who was the interpreter in Davao, is now my interpreter. He knows the Mandaya dialect perfectly. I have asked him to translate the catechism into Mandaya; he now has finished a good part of it. Immediately after he finishes this work, I shall make him translate the *Exercises* of *Saint Ignatius* by Father Samaniego, then the *Quinabuhi* or *The Christian Life*, and finally a manual dictionary. All of this will be revised afterwards by others, for there are many experts in the dialect; after revision, correction, and censorship, I shall send them to your Reverence for printing, if you think it worthwhile for the greater glory of God and the salvation of this race.

Turning to the formation of towns: two Capitanes Alimbung, the one retired, the second the actual leader, Capitanes Col-las, Duque and Sinaama (kinglet of the Mandayas) and Teniente Lanquibo came to me. They also agree to build the town of Santa Fé on the beach, along the Panaan river between Manurigao and Caraga. Sinaama really wants to be baptized with his entire family and relatives. Not Col-las. Alimbung has been touched by grace. We went to the spot previously agreed on where they would erect the new town, and this time the whole caravan joined the expedition, part on horse, part on foot. The principalia of Caraga also came *en masse*; with them, the Mandaya capitanes, tenientes and sacopes. Their wives also appeared, although at a respectable distance. The site of the town was changed, and the second could not have been better; even better, perhaps, than the terrain of San Francisco. I decided then that Capitan Sinaama and Capitan Alimbung should stay there to await the sacopes whom Capitan Col-las would send by himself and the officials of the three capitanes, so that, as the sacopes arrived, they could begin to clear the forest, following the example which the two aforementioned capitanes shall have given and continue to show them. I told them that all their sacopes should be there in five days; that, as soon as the forest is cleared, they should help in gathering the posts and other materials; and that, as soon as the planting season is over, since the materials had been gathered

beforehand, they should begin to build the houses according to the plan I would draw for them, which will be the same as that of San Francisco. At the end of these discussions, we ended the meeting and retired to Caraga about nighfall.

Santa Fé will have seven cabecerias, as the sacopes have agreed. This morning Capitanes Manucaji, Maynat, Talaid and Teniente Enrique also came. They want to form the town of San Ignacio in Calatagan, midway between Caraga and Manay. This town will immediately consist of 80 married couples, whom I shall easily baptize in no time. They are now opening the road; I have promised that on the feast of Saint Francis Xavier when I go to Manay to install the statue of the saint, I would visit them with the same solemnities as in San Francisco and Santa Fé. Indeed from the Capitan to the last sacop they will all gather there, all those from Manay coming to receive the Saint in Tubud. I have decided that Capitan Dadom Hari-Hari, kinglest of all the Mandayas beyond Manay, should come to receive me in Manay; then I might go with him to Casau-man to trace the map of the town of Santa Maria, which would be as far from Manay as Santa Fé is from Caraga and Manurigao. Five or six cabecerias could be grouped there. The terrain is the same as that of Santa Fé except the anchorage; but, on the other hand, one could go there if one wishes even by carriage. May your Reverence please offer mass that all goes well.

I also have unfinished projects with the Capitanes Dadom, Duque, Lindayan, Manguilan, Atog Hari-Hari, Batete, Duping, Amdo, Manginsaua, Topas and Langdanganon. They will pass on to Manurigao to confer with me, and I shall go with them and the *Dacong-tao* (principalia) of Manurigao to Baogo, for the foundation of the town of San Luís. It is as far from Manurigao as San Francisco is from Caraga, but the terrain is the same. This will be during the amihan (north winds), after which I am thinking further of founding a town in Dapnan and call it San Manuel. Near Quinablangan there is an excellent anchorage 8 brazas deep, with a good river; an area is now cleared by the people of Quinablangan for their town, for they greatly want it. One could make them build their houses there,

starting with what is now Quinablangan to build another town for the Mandayas. This we could call San Victor in honor of the Governor, as San Manuel would be in honor of the Military Commander, unless the sacopes of the three Mandaya capitanes who dwell in Cateel be the same ones who will live there and we would have to name Dacong-Banua San Victor. Then I will call the town founded in Quinablangan San Juan; otherwise, Dacong-Banua will retain its name Cateel, and the Cateel of the Mandayas will be called San Juan.

All the married Christians are busy working on their houses. We have arranged ours to make it habitable. The Church can be locked and is so set up that it is ready to have the Blessed Sacrament which will be kept, beginning 1 December. The land of this garden, *convento*<sup>13</sup> and church was cleared and fenced by the system of *Pintakasi*.<sup>14</sup> I have already asked Don Victor for weekly workers for the Churches, conventos and roads of the towns and visitas. The Caragueños have offered me eight volunteers to build the church and convento.

## 3

Caraga, 2 January 1877

I suppose your Reverence will have received the previous letters which I have sent concerning the affairs of the Caraga mission. At the moment, ten towns are being founded: San Estanislao Kostka with 3 cabecerias; Santa Maria and San Francisco Javier in the *ilayas*<sup>15</sup> of Manay, the first with eight cabecerias, the second, three; San Ignacio de Loyola in Calatagan between Manay and Caraga, with six cabecerias; Santiago in the anchorage of Tubud, with four cabecerias; San José in Dauan, five minutes from Cabogaoan near Tigbauan, with six cabecerias; Santa Fé in Capanaan between Caraga and Manurigao, with six cabecerias; San Luís Gonzaga in Boaga, and Our Lady of Carmel in Lamiauan, both inside the *ilayas*

<sup>13</sup> In the Philippines, the parish rectory was called *convento*, most probably because, for the most part, the parish priests were *friars* and members of religious orders.

<sup>14</sup> One would use the word *bayanihan* today.

<sup>15</sup> The uplands of Manay.

of Manurigao, each with four cabecerias. This month and the next, God willing, I plan to found the towns of San Manuel, San Victor, San Juan Bautista and San Nicolas, and transfer near Mayo the town of Cateel, decimated constantly by the crocodiles and snakes, treacherous sand-banks, and the murderous heat. All these towns will have their convento and church, and the churches need at least a titular Saint and a bell. Likewise, the opening of these towns needs initial funds to support the workers, because generally all of them die of hunger, as the communal fields I have ordered to be planted will not begin to produce until after four months. Within this time, I believe I shall have finished all the towns. This does not discourage me since I suppose charity is alive in Manila. If to support a house for orphans in Cotabato which will in time result in the formation of a Christian town, part of the money assigned by the Government for the reduction of the pagans is used; now that the occasion is offered us to reduce into towns some 16,000 pagans dispersed throughout these forests, shall we not grab the opportunity, even if it costs two or even three thousand pesos? Your Reverence, I do not even ask that much. I ask only 800 or 1000 pesos, and with these I will be able to pay at least the salaries of male and female teachers whom I will send as soon as the towns are established, according to your Reverence's instructions. It is very probable that after a year, with God's grace, almost all will have been instructed and baptized. Well, then, inspire generous souls, and let it rain down alms for the conversion of the Mandayas. Open, if necessary, a subscription, and I will be responsible for the results. Meantime, your Reverence and those good Fathers and Brothers, do not forget to pray. The Governor and the Commander aid me extensively in this enterprise with their prompt and constant help. Eight of the first ten towns I mentioned are now being constructed; the other two, San José and Santa Fé, will be built after the feast of the Three Kings, and the rest during the months of January and February.

I am enclosing a Mandaya catechism translated for the instruction of this race. I shall send you by different mail the

Mandaya census list. Please have 2,000 copies of the Mandaya catechism printed.

4

Caraga, 2 February 1877

I arrive at Cateel and leave for Mayo. Fifteen towns are being constructed. Difficulties are not lacking; and I do what I can to multiply myself and solve them. The newly founded towns this past month are: San Manuel in Baysan; San Victor in Dapnan, an hour and a half toward the river; San Juan in Cabuyauan between Dapnan and Quinablangan at the mouth of that river; and San Nicolas in Magongong, a league from Cateel. A party of 20 bandits is stopping me from forming San Manuel; but despite them, the town will go ahead, God willing. My trip to Mayo gulf is to attempt the reduction of the Moslems of that side and form three towns with them.

The Christian towns are totally renovated with churches and conventos, according to your Reverence's plan. Batiano and Baysan are merging. Quinablangan has been invited by the Governor for incorporation with Dapnan, but they refused, preferring to transfer to a point newly chosen by them where they have good anchorage, fertile land, fresh water, *balate*, shells and *carey* in abundance. The people of Cateel have given me the deed of transfer to Dacong-Banua, with their petition and the gobernadorcillo's official endorsement . . . . By June when we go, they will start work. Meantime, with the people of Linguit, they are joining the road as far as Bislig. Official communiqués have been received regarding the fields. I think they will grant me two daily *polistas*<sup>16</sup> because I am in the *cabecera*. At our request, ordinances have been sent to bring together the pagans.

Send me a bell and the statue for each pagan town, for a total of 18 bells and as many saints.

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<sup>16</sup> *Polo*: the Philippine equivalent for the Peruvian *mita*. Besides the tribute, adult males had to serve a certain number of days in the public works. The *polistas*, then, are the men who fulfill their turn at the public works.

Caraga, 4 March 1877

I have visited all the towns of Christians and pagans and the sites for future towns. Starting with the pagan towns: by the mouth of Manat beside the Sibajai river, the sacopes of Capitanes Caton and Ambalon are working. They have already cleared the site of the town of Santo Domingo and built a *caramin*. In Magongong, the men of Capitan Mandabon have already felled the *harigues* [wooden posts] and are building the town of San Nicolas. In Caboayan, San Juan, Capitan Ignacio is hewing posts with his men. In Dapnan, Capitanes Japitan and Salilong are building the town of San Victor. And in Baysan, Capitanes Panaliqui and Cagutum are building the town of San Manuel. Likewise, Capitan Atog in Lamiauuan is building Carmelo, Duque and Basilio in Baogo, San Luis. In Capanaan, Capitan Alimbung is founding the town of Santa Fé, in Cabagoan, Baotto and Simente, San Pedro, and in Dauan, Capitanes Mandabon and Moncaas, the town of San José. Capitanes Manucasi and Lumbung are finishing Santiago near Tubud, and in Calatagan, Capitanes Benabe and Tibug are far ahead in the construction of San Ignacio, having finished its town hall. Capitan Mapayo has already begun the town of Santa Maria in Buauan. San Francisco also has its wooden town hall and the ruler there is Capitan Diuyan. In Manlumbang the men of Capitan Bung are now opening the land to form the town of San Vicente de Paul. Near Mampanon, Capitan Manaytay is in charge of finishing the work on San Estanislao. I have already given the order that the Datu and Pandita Komkom, together with the Principales Tamai, Bantasan and Cuyangas build a town in Baguan which shall be called San Francisco de Asis. In Miliit, if those Moslems obey me, Datus Butay, Tanpan and Guibo, also called Ladiamuda, will immediately form the town of San Agustin. I was unable to see the Mandayan capitanes Obsup and Puay who should form the town of San Benito in Mayo. If the men of Capitan Vicentino, with whom I visited Lauigan, come down from Mati, as we all hope, the Tagacaolos will build the town of Inmaculada Concepción in Lauigan. In truth, I wish my jurisdiction

extended to Cape San Agustin in order to expand my work for the love of God; for the harvest is really great . . . . Five ranches of Tagacaolos, one of Bilanes, and seven of Manobos: the first are located in Hamiguitan, Bato-Bato, Cabitangan, Uangon and Luban, whose capitanes now are: Monsad, Lingayao, Tabacanon, Mangayao and Danoc; the second live in Bacsal, captained by Magunda; and the last dwell in Tibamban, Magdung, Cabitangan, Nangan, Tagabili and Pasapauan, their capitanes being, respectively, Tamayao, Lacsicon Batuyud, Fausto, Sagbali and Leon. Besides these, who, God willing, could be reduced and formed into towns, there are very many other recent escapees to the mountains who could be brought back into the fold of Jesus Christ.

In my calculation, there would be around 30,000 pagans from Cape San Agustin to Cateel, 20,000 from Cateel to Mati, and 10,000 from Mati to the Cape. My calculation is not unfounded because from Miliit to Cateel, I have already registered around 2,000 married people, to which I would add another thousand . . . . Polygamy and slavery are practiced among them, and I am sure that my count is much lower. There are very many slaves, and I know a Mandaya who has as many as 10 wives.

Many difficulties have to be solved for their complete reduction . . . they are so far apart and dispersed; they are so needy of everything, starting with the most indispensable of food, clothing and work tools; they resist reduction into towns because of their natural sloth and strong attachment to life in the forest. Above all, they are afraid to come because of the influence and the oppression which the professional assassins, the baganis, spread in various places. And idolatry and superstition is deeply rooted in many of them.

Regarding the assassins, the towns most oppressed are Our Lady of Carmel, San Manuel, San Nicolas, Santo Domingo and San Agustin. In the first four towns, Bilito and Macusang are now the terror of the Mandayas. If things are not remedied promptly and effectively with a severe punishment, they will soon be a terror even for the Christians. In about two months,

the killings in the mission of Caraga and Cateel have numbered more than ten. I have lost count of the kidnappings. This very night that I am writing, I received an urgent notice from the gobernadorcillo of Cateel, giving me an account of the fresh killing of Gambong and two other Mandayas by Bilto, who had also kidnapped the rest of the companions of the victim. And according to the reports of the Mandayas, Bilto and Macusang plan to assassinate even the Christians. By their instigation, two ranches have rebelled, one of Capitan Manguinlang, and some 180 families obstinately refuse to form a town.

I repeat, if these crimes of these bandit leaders are not stopped at once, Bilto and Macusang will quickly grow into a small battalion of robbers which will make their presence felt among pagan and Christian towns. As far as I am concerned, I have only one life and I will gladly sacrifice it for the salvation of my neighbor. Still my obligation is to ward dangers off my brothers, the pagans, and my children, the Christians, and strive to prevent the sickness with a possible cure. I therefore am giving notice of the events to the person who by law is charged with preventing and remedying them, not asking the criminal's death, but protection for the innocent. Twenty assassins, at least, live in Cateel, fifteen also in Mayo; they have surrounded with trenches the ranches of Capitanes Ubsub and Puay. They are the ones who attacked the Moslems and Christians of Mati the year before, whose leaders had fled from the garrison at Davao.

Another difficulty, greater than the first, is their attachment to idolatry. They adore an idol they themselves make from the wood of Bayog, which they use exclusively for their statuettes. For eyes, they insert the fruit of the *magobahay*. This is the Mandaya *manang*<sup>17</sup> to whom they offer sacrifices accompanied by the sound of the *guimbao*<sup>18</sup> of the frenzied and trembling *baylans*.<sup>19</sup> From the Mandayas' report, there is in Bungadon a fat little boy, about six years old, whose face is of

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<sup>17</sup> Most probably, a corruption of the Spanish *hermana* (sister), now a title of respect in the dialects used of elderly women.

<sup>18</sup> A native drum.

<sup>19</sup> The native priestesses, also called *babaylans*, or *bailanes*.

a distinct race and he is quite a player of the guimbao. The baylans must have certainly exploited him, for now he deceives the people saying he is God, and, in virtue of his divinity, gives orders to the Mandayas not to form towns in Carmelo and San Luís, or to send their children to the school founded by the *Padre*, but instead all ought to join in the worship of the *diwatas*.<sup>20</sup> Well, not a single one has come to the meeting. And they say that if soldiers come up, they would descend after the soldiers had gone, to destroy Carmelo, San Luís and Manurigao. All of this would be mere empty promises if there were in the towns Christians and pagans newly organized in squads with good rifles, but precisely this is what they do not have. The best guns that the towns boast of, and these are still very few, need a *cuadrillero*<sup>21</sup> to aim it properly, and another to light the fuse to fire it. Let us see if we can dispose of about 100 or 150 guns at least for the defense of these towns, which is not much for the security of 20 or 30 towns in these places so frequently attacked by pagan rebels and assassins or moslem pirates. The Military Commander, Don Manuel Fernandez Barrenas, has promised to obtain them from the government.

Both this gentleman and the Civil and Military Governor of this district, Don Victor Ruiz del Valle de Lanzarote, deserve our eternal gratitude. The former has given every kind of help with regards to the material and spiritual welfare of the mission. The latter, after having issued timely measures of good government for the Christian towns, after having ordered and successfully completed the construction of more than 2,000 houses in this district only, and that in the short time of one year; after having implemented exactly the ordinances of good government regarding the harvest of each individual, has just ordered the aforesaid Military Commander of Bislig to provide me with full protection in the discharge of my duties. The towns of San Manuel and San Victor will be perpetual monuments to the memory of those who aided, by every kind of vigilance, in the reduction of these unfortunate Mandayas, whose

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<sup>20</sup> A term used of local deities.

<sup>21</sup> Native militia.

spiritual administration has fallen to me by the mysterious designs of Providence.

I believe I have already said enough regarding the intellectual and moral upliftment of these unfortunate people. In their ignorance, they do not want education and many abhor it. But little by little, all the boys and girls will go to the schools, for which reason it is necessary to name a male and a female teacher for each town. These have to be paid, however; who will assume the cost? Your Reverence will provide; the missionary should not stop because of these discouragements. Primers and catechisms are needed, for, caring preferably for the children, we shall radically transform the character of the future generation and, with this change, their inveterate love for their disgraceful customs. The boys and girls walk around as if they were not completely naked, until the former are 16 years old, the latter, 12. Polygamy is widespread. Perhaps that is why God's work is obstructed. Both obstacles will be removed through education, the frequent visits of the priest to their towns, the increase of the prices of the articles they sell and the lowering of that of the things they eat and use, establishing markets in the Christian towns to facilitate mutual exchange, forbidding the Christians to go up to the pagans, and imposing on one or the other, as well as on the rest, just weights and measures for the public service. These measures are now being carried out, thank God, and one hopes that they will produce good results.

Four lines and no more concerning the towns of Christians. Caraga is constructing 150 houses, a *tribunal*, schools, church and convento. The town hall is now finished; almost half of the houses are finished, after which the other half will begin their construction; the church and convento have already been started and the new edifices which have to serve as schools are about to be constructed: but the harigues are now cut. The boys go to the tribunal; the girls have a provisional school. For the church and convento, I count on 20 workers for whom I provide the daily meals: 10 volunteers and 10 *polistas*. Everything is according to your Reverence's plan with very little change where the wing of the mart is equally as wide as

that which forms the right corner, and both are 9 yards wide. When we return to Caraga, we will be able to live in our own house. A foundation of stone, walls of stone, 2 varas thick and 2 varas high; above the stone walls, boards. More than the bread we eat, there is need for a Brother . . . .

## 6

Baganga, 2 May 1877

For two months now I have not taken up the pen to write your Reverence. Certainly, it was not for lack of news, but for an excess of work. I left Caraga for the visitation and . . . for the past one and a half months we have been giving missions: a daily sermon, baptisms, confessions, communions, marriages of those who through God's inspiration and grace answer His call. In the middle of our trip, the confessions now reach 1400, marriages 34, around 120 baptisms of pagans, among whom are several Mandaya capitanes past and present.

Christian towns continue being constructed.

I left Cateel in peace . . . . All the Mandayas from the surrounding area live inside the town. Such is the terror inspired by Tavit, Bilto, Macusang and about 30 other notorious criminals and bandits throughout these regions, that no one dares to live in the ilayas of Cateel. There are now too many victims who have fallen by the thrust of these bandits' spears or balaraos; just as many have been kidnapped. Lately, they have killed a boy about 15 years old for no other motive than that of his being a Christian.

The Military Commander who has gone to Cateel to punish them writes me from that same place as follows: "Bilto is being watched by his irreconcilable enemies; the same with his brother Tavit. . . . Persons of confidence will go with the expedition, experienced guides who know the traps and lairs where Bilto and his brother Tavit hide.

For two reasons, I believe it is also convenient that two expeditions march from here: first, it might be possible to pursue the famous bagani of this area, a relative of Bilto, whose

name I do not now recall; and, second, to see if the people of Manlubuan had escaped to the *ilayas* of that town." Until here the Commander; but I fear lest the bandits may take notice and the expedition like the others be frustrated. And if this happens? We can then prepare ourselves because I fear that this will occasion another series of killings of Mandayas and even Christians, no less interminable than what had happened prior to the previous expedition.

These murderers are the ones who undo with their lies and threats the plans I hope to carry out regarding the organization of the town of the Mandayas. These people were unceasingly going on with their work when an apparition was concocted of an old lady descended from heaven, who ordered the people to go back to the mountains, after laying waste their fields and killing their domestic animals, for in the mountain they would pass a year without eating, after which they would all, body and soul, go up with her to heaven. If they did not obey her orders and abandon their towns, there was already a boat in Davao, another in Surigao, loaded with soldiers who would cut off their heads and bring their children to Manila to give them as hostages to the sultan of Jolo. This malicious falsehood has produced such a fear in this timid people so easily led by their superstitious beliefs, that the majority of them, literally obedient to the orders of this supposed *diwata*, have gone back to the mountains. It has cost me much labor to make them reflect and convince themselves of their error. But seeing that the territory evangelized by us is some 50 leagues in extent, evil men take advantage of our absence to spread their propaganda. If I could divide myself into a hundred pieces, multiplying myself at the same time in all the towns . . . .

Several towns have already finished their wooden town halls; others have put up roofs over their schools; others their house tops; and a great part of the people are returning to work. Everything will be finished with God's grace. The poor Mandayas of San Juan have all fallen sick. I attribute it to the fact that they went to cut the *harigues* in the mangrove, under a burning sun, with their bare feet buried in hot clay. If there were pious people in Manila to help me with their alms . . .

a missionary priest in Mindanao would beg alms . . . not for himself, since he is now used to go without bread or wine or oil or butter; but for his poor pagans, Moslems and Mandayas, who suffer from hunger; for their sick, the lepers, their consumptive, who have no medication or pharmacy other than the priest; and for their children, completely naked, who have no teacher or godfather other than the missionary who has come to preach to them the faith of Jesus Christ the Savior.

Capitan Monico who was bringing us a full supply and provisions for the year has suffered shipwreck in Tandag river itself. He lost all his cargo, but the people and the banca were saved. God be praised. *The Lord gave, the Lord took it away . . . blessed be the name of the Lord.*

The Commission has now arrived to study the advantages and the feasibility of aggregating Davao, until Cateel or Tandag, to Caraga. They have asked my opinion on several questions.

Supposing a royal order for the Government to form there a Junta to study the best means to carry out an order to reduce the pagan races all over the Archipelago of the Philippines, I beg your Reverence from the bottom of my soul to let them know Father Luengo's . . . well thought-out plan, the child of long experience. Above all, let them stress especially . . . paragraph 21 regarding tribute, personal service and the fifths, namely: let the Government issue a definite disposition for the newly reduced pagans, exempting them from the tribute and personal service for a time designated in the wise Royal Pragmatics of 1756 and 1758. Let such a disposition be sent to the Superior of the Missions, so that the missionaries can explain it to the pagans and the newly reduced, and keep it in the archives of the reductions in case they will have to make use of it. The same should be observed regarding the fifths, by declaring that from then on, the pagans and the newly reduced are free of this obligation. We all know what happened in Samar for not having observed this. Here we have the finger applied to the wound. The day that this is carried out, the pagan converts in Mindanao will total millions through the years.

The royal treasury will benefit from this. For the advantage is not in collecting some temporary tributes, which are later lost; but in keeping them for the future.

P.S. After sealing this letter with wax, I reopen it to inform you of the death of 15 Mandayas barbarously killed by Bilto and his 30 followers. Three houses have been burned, men, women and children have been killed by their swords. The judge Benito who saw the mutilated and scattered members of the unhappy victims is the one who has reported the deed to the commandant, who has just informed me.

## 7

Caraga, 14 June 1877

In the past months . . . twenty-eight victims have fallen by the tip of the *balaraos* (daggers) and spears of the assassins. But this is not the saddest, for it is no more than a dark forecast of the very many killings being planned, which will finish off even the Christian towns of Batiano, Baysan, Baganga, Quinablangan and Cateel, unless a quick and efficacious solution is applied. Does Your Reverence recall how I wrote . . . that, unless a stop is put to the bandits' abuses, they would organize and form a small roving battalion? I said the same thing to the Commander and to the Governor. It is too late now, the small army has been raised, organized, and is in operation. From two to three hundred are said to have gathered in the *ilayas* of Baganga, causing panic to those inhabitants. Nine of those 28 victims are Christians, the rest Mandayas. Mothers have been found burned to cinders with infants in their arms. A Mandaya was found cut into four pieces. They say that the entrails of some victims have been gouged out, and they have taken the heart and the liver for an offering to their *diwata* during their feast afterwards. Four of the killers have been caught. We will try to send them to Surigao as soon as preliminary investigations are made.

Because of these apprehensions and expeditions, Macusang said at a reunion he had with Bilto and others that he wanted to cut off my head and dry it under the sun to preserve it, and

that this would be very easy by preparing an ambush for me when in my visitation of the towns, I pass from one to the other. *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

...we baptized around 300 Mandayas, among whom 43 marriages were solemnized after their baptism. But there is an open field to double or triple the figure until the year's end. Pray God to have pity on us, shorten our days of suffering, if it is for His greater glory.

If things do not stop, I shall go to Surigao to get forces from the Governor. Not only are individual lives threatened but entire towns. People have abandoned the harvest, and about 5 or 6 thousand sacks of palay will have been lost until the present. Since the force we can now deploy is negligible, the day that these Mandayas feel an urge to raze a town, unless a force comes from Surigao, at least 100 guns with their corresponding amunition, they will not hesitate to knife us all and reduce all these towns to ashes. These cannibals can do anything, for they feed on the entrails of their victims in their feasts.

## 8

Cateel, 14 June 1877

With the erection of the garrisons in Cateel and after three months of continued missionary expeditions, I am pleased to say that, despite the devil, God our Lord has deigned to glorify Himself. In step with our advance into the missions, the fruits have increased. In the time of visitation alone, 15 pagans were baptized in Manay, 15 in San Ignacio, 5 in Santiago, 17 in Caraga, 35 in Manurigao, 23 in Baculin, 1 in Baganga, 43 in Batiano and Baysan, 69 in Dapnan, 29 in Quinablangan, 20 now in Cateel: total of 262, which with the 18 we have baptized outside of the visitation, makes 270 [*sic*]. Besides Manay has had 4 weddings after baptism, San Ignacio 2, Santiago 1, Manurigao 7, Baculin 3, Batiano and Baysan 9, Dapnan 13 and Quinablangan 4. A door is wide open, I shall return alone to celebrate the feast in Caraga and bring the bells to the towns. We will see if, with God's grace, I baptize just

as many. The feast of Caraga will be celebrated in the new church. This very afternoon the teniente of Quinablangan has just come to tell me that two *governadorcillos* of the two towns, with their *principales* and magistrates are asking to be baptized.

Your Reverence will soon know the result of the expedition led by the Commander against the *bagani* Bilto and the catastrophe of Saguinsin in which 16 unbaptized Mandayas perished. After the expedition, there have been seven more assassinations, four of them victimizing four Christian women. The day before yesterday there was news that five Christians had been killed in Baysan; fortunately the story was not true. They say that in the *ilayas* of Baganga all the *baganis* have gathered near Tilot's house, together with all the *sacopes* they could summon, to surprise possibly a Christian town. Mangisland has also gone there with men from his ranch. Fortunately, I had gone to Bislig myself in search of an armed force, and it has come on time. Don Manuel Menéndez has already set out with 14 guns, a revolver, and around 150 men recruited from Baganga, Batiano and Baysan, to surprise them in their plot. We will see what will happen. I await details of the result of this expedition. This is the way we are and we will continue until we finish them; otherwise they will finish us.

Since the expedition of the Commander, all the towns have been shaking with fear. For after the assassins had separated to check if there are soldiers in the towns, their spies have become so insolent and daring that they enter under our noses through the very town gates themselves. While celebrating the feast of Dapnan, four of them appeared. The people, on a suspicion, notified me. I advised the deputy to apprehend them, find out who they were, from where and why they had come. They turned out to be four bandits and fellow criminals of Bilto and Macusang, sent to Bislig. Naturally, the people concerned learned about it, among them Tilot, the uncle and accomplice of Bilto and Macusang. Here was Troy! The first dispatch that they sent to the people of Dapnan was "Prepare yourselves, for it will happen that the river will overflow with blood from the *ilaya* to its very mouth, without distinction of Mandaya or Christian. There are 200 Mandayas now uniting,

Tilot and all his followers, to war on you." I was in Quinabangan when the notice was received, and at dawn, I sailed for Hinatuan where the Commander was staying, and conferred with him. When he returned to Liangan, I came back with Señor Serra and Don Manuel who had recently arrived. The situation in Baganga and Baysan was becoming more critical and unbearable by the hour. Even Don Manuel's house had been pierced with holes by the enemies, to see if he was there, lining the holes red with blood. Around twenty had hidden themselves in his own farm, I know not why. I also brought along twelve soldiers . . . from Bislig: eight I left with Don Manuel and four have remained in Cateel to guard with greater security the four notorious prisoners, until, after the preliminary investigation, they can be sent to the Court in Surigao.

From a certain Cagutum who heard the conversation, it was learned that in one of the talks between Bilto and Mancusang in the ilayas of Baganga, the baganis wanted to assassinate all who had firearms in Baganga, the *cachila* (Spaniard) in the first place. For once this was done, it would be easy to dispose of the rest. It would be easy to surprise the priest, as he went from one town to the other, cut off his head, and dry it under the sun to preserve his memory.

This is the news until now. Have no doubt that they are brave. Already last year they finished off an entire ranch of Manobos in Agusan, as your Reverence knows well. After their crimes, they hold a banquet and kill a hog; and when they went to Saguinsin, they sarcastically told that miserable hero that the victim had died after having reported some of those who were preparing the pig to celebrate that same banquet there. They are also wont to eat the entrails of their enemies after killing them, in order to be more daring or harden themselves in cruelty.

The Governor has just dispatched two detachments to actively persecute these criminals. But if the towns lack good weapons and ammunition, twelve soldiers are not enough. I shall endeavor with all my might to urge the towns to hunt them out; let the military men, however, realize that it is not the missionary priest's task to direct an expedition: period!

For it is necessary to talk of other matters: 1) Can the Chinese in Cateel be baptized, as I have asked...some time ago? 2) Will Father Superior come to visit us? 3) Can they send us a Brother carpenter? 4) What should be asked from these miserable towns for their bells? 5) A million thanks for all that your Reverence has kindly sent us. What would become of us were it not for your Reverence's charity?

## 9

Caraga, 8 December 1877

The last time I wrote...from Surigao, where I returned after I had made the spiritual exercises in Butuan, passing through Mainit. When I finished, I went to Bunauan; I left the next day to visit some ranches of Manobos along the Argauan, Agusan and Simulao rivers. By the first river, we laid, so to speak, the first stone for three towns which will be called Santa Teresa, Concepción and Benito. There is already in Santa Teresa a church and convento and we baptized 45 Manobos, old and young. Two of them are present capitanes, one a Mandaya chief of a ranch bordering the old Surigao, the other a Manobo. We also baptized the famous Aylas, a bagani of long history and one of the more celebrated in Agusan. Decrees were issued for the formation of many other small towns, while we destroyed all the idols we found along the way up until the source of Simulao in the last ranch there which belongs to Capitan Uyamang, the famous bagani who also wants to be baptized and whose church is now being built. In front of each house there was a smaller one for the *manaug*.<sup>22</sup> We ordered the seizure of the *manaug*, making it the object of all the derision throughout the ranch. At the priest's insinuation Uyamang began, and then every one followed in wounding it until it was completely destroyed.

I took possession of the parish of Bislig on 19 November, marching out the next day towards Cateel, which is now being transferred to Dacong-Banua, according to the decree of the Superior Civil Government of this archipelago. We were almost

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<sup>22</sup> See below, letter dated 8 June 1878.

lost when we decided to leave Sibajay for Quinablangan. The entrance or outlet of the harbor was closed, but the pilot wanted to follow the boat of the Capitan of Caraga and this almost caused the accident. For the capitan who knew how to time his approach when the waves went down, continued on with perfect balance; but those of us from behind, following his manuevers, were surprised by the successive swells of the waves, which paralyzed the rudder and filled the boat with water. By God's mercy and by cheering on the crew, we were able, without a rudder, to turn the boat against the current until a point where they could jump to the sea which reached to their necks and guide the boat to a safe anchorage. We had to throw away the provisions in the boat, losing the cargo in some insignificant way for it was well packed and we were able to spread it later under the sun, as well as the clothes I took with me. Amid rivers, seas, roads, earthquakes and assassinations we pass life in the arms of divine providence.

I left the banca in Cateel and continued by land to Caraga, in the company of the cuadrilleros who were returning from their expedition against Bilito and his companions in crime. Eleven houses of the bandits have been put to the flames by the soldiers, rendering their fields useless, and this has caused such terror among the killers of Christians that there is now none of them who lives in his own house. The virgin forest is their abode during the amihan, where they suffer the inevitable consequences of a frightful hunger which I believe must follow from such atrocities.

Before arriving in Surigao to give notice of the dangers from the baganis that threatened the Christians of Batiano and Baysan, already 70 of the former had killed the Christian gobernadorcillo of this town and 6 others at the very entrance to the town, some 100 brazas away, at 9 o'clock in the morning. Later, they put the town of San Manuel to the flames, completely reducing it to ashes, including its church and tribunal.

On the other hand, if there are sorrows, there is no lack of consolations, for the baptisms now total 100 since my trip to Surigao, with 25 marriages solemnized after baptism. The pagans baptized in the residence of Bislig now count more than

700 this year. I hope to God that they will reach 800 before the year is over. Thank God and may everything serve for His greater glory.

10

Caraga, 1 January 1878

At the end of the year, I believe it will be proper to give your Reverence an account of the labors we have undertaken. . . . On 4 October 1876, Father Gregorio Parache and I left Surigao, arriving at Bislig on the feast of Saint Theresa of Jesus and at Cateel on All Saints' Day. We left for Caraga the next day, visiting along the way Quinablangan, Dapnan, Baganga, Baculin and Manurigao. On arrival at Caraga, we were received by the people *en masse* outside the town. In the few days that Father Parache stayed here, he arranged the house which had to serve as provisional rectory, and put in writing the instructions he had received as Superior of the Residence of Caraga and Bislig from your Reverence. In the middle of November, Father Parache left Caraga for Bislig, ordering on the way the laying down of roads, which was followed exactly from Caraga to Dacong-Banua. In the time that I have remained alone in Caraga, awaiting the arrival of Father Terricabras, who was in Hinatuan as interim pastor of Bislig, I preached and heard confessions. . . . I was visited by the past and present capitanes of the ranches of the pagan Mandayas, and I went on a visit to the town of Manay. Consequently, having obtained information of the attitude of those pagans regarding the formation of towns, I set them a deadline, entrusting them with what they call *balentos*,<sup>23</sup> so that together with the gobernadorcillo and the principales of Caraga they might consider all the circumstances and look for the best site to form the towns and in this way gather together this race scattered over the forests and mountains. Dauan was visited in December, where it was planned to call together the sacopes of Capitanes Mandabon, Tibug, Limente and Baotto. They met in that place which is a quarter of

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<sup>23</sup> I have been unable to discover what the word means.

an hour away from Caraga; accompanied by the *gobnadorcillo* and the *principales* of Caraga, I went to meet them. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the committee retired after they had marked the perimeter and lined the streets of the projected town, scheduling a day to assign the respective residential lots to each of their *sacopes*. The same thing was done in Capanaan for the *sacopes* of Capitan Alimbung two or three days after. But the place chosen was a virgin forest which necessitated levelling the ground for its correct alignment. On 6 December, I left to visit the people of Manay with whom I had already left the image of Saint Francis Xavier, their new patron; the result of this trip was that the *sacopes* of Capitan Manucasi would form a town near Tubud; that the newly reduced of Bonga and the *sacopes* of Capitan Benave form a town in Calatagan; at the same time, they decided that the *sacopes* of Capitan Diuyan would form their town on the *ilayas* of Manay near the Mahanub river. I left orders for Capitan Dadom to come so that his *sacopes* might be separated from those of Capitan Baotto. Then I returned to Caraga where I found Father Terricabras, assigned by the Superiors to be my companion in the ministry, especially in preaching and hearing confessions, which he has done without stopping so that within the space of eleven months, he totalled 4750 confessions, catechized 144 children, 59 of them in town, prepared 121 children of both sexes for first communion, preached 26 festal sermons and 80 during missions, assisted 59 sick, and gave 7 missions in three months.<sup>24</sup> After Father's arrival, I went to Manurigao and, when Capitanes Duque and Mangislang came with their *principales*, I suggested that they form towns.

The first chose the *ilayas* of Manurigao and the second, Lamiauan. In Manurigao I was visited by Capitanes Dadom, Sabio, Quinang and Aguimut, who also received an order like that of their co-religionists. On my return from Manurigao,

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<sup>24</sup> A simple averaging of these statistics would show how fully occupied a missionary priest in Mindanao was. These figures do not include the time and effort expended in travelling by horse or boat, at times on foot, from one mission station to another.

I met in Caraga Capitan Manatyay, from the ilayas of Mampanon. He asked that the newly reduced should stay there, begging to form a town jointly with them, which was granted immediately. Meantime a list of married people was ordered drawn up, listing names in their respective residences in the different towns. Inspectors were appointed before whom the plan of the towns was laid. In the beginning, there was need for great prudence, mixed with great firmness and a certain strength to overcome the many difficulties raised by the passive resistance of many and the excuses of all, born of the fear that they would be forcibly baptized and give tribute. Despite all, not much was effected of the missionary's wishes, for, on the one hand, the *amihan* (north wind) with its continued rain, and, on the other, the ordinary tasks of the field plus hunger which was oppressing all, frustrated a good part of his projects. However, the first step has been taken, and others with the help and blessing of heaven can finish the work begun for the greater glory of God and the salvation of the souls of the Mandaya pagans. Work started by levelling the ground and burning the fallen trees; then, the camarines and tribunals were constructed, to a great extent with wood. The first town that was raised was San José, located in Dauan, five minutes from the mouth of Caraga river; then, San Ignacio followed in a place called Calatagan near Bonga; San Francisco was next, a quarter of an hour from Manay, at the bank of Mahanub river. Santa Fé was started afterwards, between Caraga and Manurigao, followed by San Luis near Baogo river in the ilayas of Manurigao, San Pedro near Tigbauan, three quarters of an hour from Caraga, in a place called Cabagoan. Then came San Estanislao which was joined to Mampanon. Santiago was added, which merged with Tubud, and immediately followed Carmelo situated in Lamianan of Manurigao, around three leagues away. Finally, Santa Maria, which it is doubtful would be finished because of the sacopes of Capitan Dadom who are still quite uncivilized. Those trees recently planted needed frequent watering, and no week passed when two or three towns were not visited by the missionary priest, becoming an overseer for the good

of those souls, encouraging them by word and example, and helping them in their work with palay from the convento.

In the middle of January, the Fathers decided that one of them should visit the coastal towns down to Cateel, visiting the Mandayas on the way to see if their reduction could be effected. I made the visits, and in the four weeks that my excursion lasted during the amihan season, I was able to convince that those of Baculin be reduced, a ranch of Baganga, two in Dapnan, two in Quinablangan, and two in Cateel. Capitan Ignacio's ranch was joined to the town of Baculin, Capitan Manuel's to Batian and Baysan, and these two towns into one in a place named Limento in the ilayas of Baganga itself. In the ilayas of Dapnan the barrio of San Victor was founded; in Quinablangan that of San Isidro and San Juan; and in Cateel that of San Nicolas. During this time was signed the Act transferring Cateel to Dacong-Banua, approved much later by a Decree of the Superior Government in Manila. The Fathers' plan is not only to unify the scattered Mandayas in towns no matter how small, but also to continue merging the Christian towns to facilitate their administration. For their good, Lingitig should be merged with Dacong-Banua; Baculin, Batiano, Baysan, Dapnan and Quinablangan ought to pass to Baganga or to Paypay point and Lambajon; Manurigao, Tubud, Bonga, Manay and Mampanon to Caraga.

Returning to Caraga after Candlemass, I went on to visit the southern barrios until Mati which are under the jurisdiction of Davao parish. I visited the Moslems of Banajauan, Bagnan, Lucatan, Miliit and Guang-Guang. I also went afterwards with a Tagacaolo to visit Lauigan. It was decided that the Moslems in Miliit and Bagauan would form a town; the Tagacaolos, in Lauigan, but they refused. I was unable to visit the Mandayas of Mayo gulf, nor the ranches of Ubsub and Puay because I was hurrying and the terrain was new to me. I returned to Caraga after celebrating the feast of Mati. Mean-time, in my absence, Father Juan Terricabras had erected the harigues of the church and the convento of Caraga, as the town inaugurated the construction of the church and convento with a formal banquet. Lent came in time and during it, a con-

tinual mission, with a daily sermon; the duties connected with the ministry of souls also began. The first three weeks and a part of the fourth and Holy Week were set aside for the fulfillment of the Easter duty of the Caragueños; the fourth and Passion Week, for that of the people of Manay, San Ignacio and Santiago.

The effects of the previous arrangements for the formation of the towns of the Mandayas were really first felt on 15 March. Every day new candidates for baptism came. The fight for the return to Christianity of some apostates who had been privately baptized by the fiscals of various towns when these had no priests also began to be won. Then in the town of San Ignacio 15 Mandayas were baptized, a few in Santiago. They prepared to celebrate Holy Week, and 16 others made ready and were able to receive holy baptism on the great feast of Holy Saturday. Easter Monday, 2 April, two Fathers went to the visita next to Manurigao. Besides all the Christians fulfilling their Easter duty, 36 Mandayas from San Luis and Sant Fé entered the Church. The spiritual mission in Baculin also produced equal results among the Christians: 33 Mandayas were baptized, and so on, successively in the other towns which they visited. In Batiano and Baysan, 44 pagans became Christmas, 69 in Dapnan, 29 in Quinablangan and 50 in Cateel. This was nothing else but a happy prelude of what ought to take place later.

The main difficulty against reduction is the tribute. The royal order of 1864, abrogating that of 1860 and the royal cedula of 1758, obliges them to pay it after 10 years in the reduction. Always respecting the good intentions of the legislator, it is certain that, at least speaking practically, the law of '64 is an impediment to the conservation and the spread of Christianity, the social and civil organization, and the solid progress of a truly civilized society. It prejudices the royal treasury, because it deprives it of the tributes of future generations of the present pagans who without doubt reach half a million. The tributes of the newly reduced who have finished 10 years in the reduction and have not yet reached the age of 60 will total 4,000 pesos at least in Mindanao. Let these be

kept in the hands of these same people and we still need not fear the disappearance of the royal funds. In 25 years, we will have collected 100,000 pesos but we will have expedited the missionary task which in 25 years will have reduced 100,000 pagans, making sure of the future generations for the good of religion, of the motherland and of the royal treasury.

This year has been a great trial for the poor Mandayas, as you might have noted in my previous letters. However, as divine providence knows how to draw great good from the worst evils, it has allowed hunger, nakedness, sickness and wars to chastize them, in order to make them realize through the thorny ways of justice the extent of its mercy. Thus, finding no other support in their needs than the missionary priest, who gave them food, clothes and medicine, settled their quarrels with fairness and without any pay, and who defended them from the ferocity of the baganis or parties of notorious bandits, they might trust him entirely, blindly relying on the prudence of his decisions.

In the ilayas of Cateel and Baganga, there are two big groups of robbers, headed by the notorious baganis Bilto and Macusang. Sometimes they are as many as 150. Three years ago, they went to a ranch in Agusan, farther down its confluence with Manat, burning all the houses. They killed the old men who escaped the flames and captured the women and children. In two years their victims reached the number of 120, both dead and enslaved. This year, likewise, the assassinations perpetrated in the ilayas of Cateel and Baganga reached 50; among the victims are 11 Christians. They have, besides, burned the new reduction of San Manuel. Several expeditions have been undertaken in order to come to terms with them, if that could be possible. But neither the commander of the *Tercio*<sup>25</sup> nor the Spanish lieutenant of the Fort has succeeded. Reprisals have been made, which served no other end than to fester the wound, as the death of Bilto's pregnant wife caused by Ayaon, the bagani's brother, who served as a guide during the expeditions, and that of defense-

<sup>25</sup> A unit of the Guardia Civil in nineteenth-century Philippines.

less children by vengeful Mandayas. What a responsibility! Let us cover up everything; if we had to explain the origin of these two parties, the ugliest stains would appear, which charity for one's neighbor obliges us to conceal.

Meantime, in Dapnan, four suspected Mandayas were apprehended. Two of them escaped after a month to join their parties, and the other two are still in jail in Surigao while their case is pending in the district court. Because of this feverish and unsettled situation of the towns, one of the Fathers went to Surigao and arranged that the towns in greater danger should be provided with some rifles, and that two small detachments of soldiers be stationed, one in Cateel and the other in Baganga, at least to ease the minds of the people, so that they could more peacefully dedicate themselves to planting, for they had abandoned two thirds of the harvest.

Later, they discussed in Surigao the plan of organization for the new towns, giving them Christian justices, besides Mandayas, both with the proper titles. The same priest returned by way of Agusan after making the spiritual exercises in Butuan, travelled along the rivers Adgauan and Simulao, preparing the Manobos for reduction. He reached Bislig where he received the title of missionary parish priest of that parish. Because the moonsoon was already far advanced, he marched immediately for Caraga. . . . Arriving at Sibajay, the Padre was shipwrecked. . . but, although the outrigger had been broken, the boat was able only through the divine mercy, to go back, with the banca almost filled with water, until a point in the same harbor where, with water up to their neck, the crew handled the boat to safety. The cargo was thrown overboard and the provisions were lost; for which reason, when he resumed his trip to Caraga by land, he was carried on a hammock to Quinablangan because the wounds on his leg, foot and ankle caused by leeches when he hiked through Bunauan mountain from Misda Falls to Tebay, had festered. On his arrival at Caraga, the work on the church and convento was resumed and a renewed effort to reduce the pagans was begun. . . . This is how the year of the Lord 1877 ended, during which 900 pagan Mandayas had been baptized since March in the

parish of Bislig and the following small towns had been organized: Loyola, located an hour away from Hinatuan this side of Bislig, its Capitanes being the Christian Hilarion and the Mandaya Aguiam, and the inspector, Capitan Atanasio; San Nicolas, its Capitanes, Gregorio Anauan (a Christian) and Masodo (Mandaya), the inspector, Don Luis Enriquez; San Juan, its Capitan, a Christian, Vicente Agloman, the inspector, Don Pedro Ibañez; San Isidro, its Capitan, a Christian, Isidro Malentad, its inspector, Don Celestino Ibañez; San Victor, its present Capitanes, Victor Ruiz and Jorge Morlan; San Luis, its Christian Capitan, Amadeo Sumambut, its Mandaya Capitan, Atog, and the inspector of these two towns, Don León Palmagil; Santa Fé, its Christian Capitan, Geronimo Alimbung, its Mandaya Capitanes, Colas and Tanlion, the inspector, Don Fruto Dominguez; San José, its Mandaya Capitanes, Luntad and Balas, the inspector Don Monico Aguilar; San Pedro, its Christian Capitan, Jacinto Mocan, its Mandaya Capitanes, Mabandos and Bantayan, the inspector Don Ciriaco Aguilar; Santiago, its Christian Capitanes, Fausto Aguilar and Venancio Tipudan, the inspector, Isabelo Ramillete; San Ignacio, its Christian Capitan, Benito Bernabe, its Mandaya Capitanes Sagpan, Inodioan and Tipayan, the inspector, Don Inocencio Ronquillo; Santa Maria, its Mandaya Capitan, Mapayo, the inspector Don Gregorio Moralizon; San Francisco, its Mandaya Capitan, Evaristo, the inspector, Don Onofre Silveron; San Estanislao, its Christian Capitan, Pedro Aguilar, its Mandaya Capitan, Maming, the inspector, Don Monico Aguilar. This town is not prospering because of vexations from the Moslem datus Taupan and Silatan. The former collects tribute from the Mandayas in the ranches of Capitanes Ubsud, Puay and Maming, the first two dwelling in Mayo gulf, the last in the ilayas of Mampanon. The tribute consists of a lance, a *sundang*, a *jabol* and 20 gantas of palay. Note that in organizing a new town, the same were named Christian gobernadorcillos who had been already such when they were still unbaptized. In grouping together various ranches into one town, it was not considered prudent to centralize immediately the authorities, without acknowledging their autonomy. Past principales or Capitanes enjoyed as Christians the rank they had before.

God prosper these reductions for His greater glory and the salvation of souls.

## 11

Cateel, 8 June 1878

The first missionary who evangelized these shores was Saint Francis Xavier. According to tradition, he departed shaking the dust off his feet near Cape San Agustin. This is not unusual, for he met the treacherous and obstinate race of Moslems recently arrived from the Moluccas who had installed themselves in the southern coasts of Mindanao island, forcing the natives to retire towards the interior of the forests and the heights of the mountains.

Much later, the mission of Caraga was in the charge of the Recollects who fertilized it frequently with the precious blood of martyrdom.

In 1873, by civil, ecclesiastical and religious arrangement, it fell to the priests of the Society of Jesus to administer it. The priest in Bislig is charged with its spiritual administration. From 1873, the following have ministered in the Caraga mission: Fathers Domingo Bové, Francisco Luengo, Saturnino Urios, Gregorio Parache, Marcelino Vivero, who drowned with 12 natives on rounding Punzan Point in front of Caraga, Santiago Puntas, Juan Terricabras and Pablo Pastells.

The Christians of this mission live along the shores. They are docile, accomodating and gentle. Their customs show Mandaya influence, which explains why their language is Mandaya; they are hard-working, although they lack foresight and work tools. They cultivate palay, sugar, abaca, coffee, cacao and tobacco. From the sea, they get *balate*, *nacar* shell, and *carey*: from the land, *almaciga*, resin, *biao* oil, *balao*, and coconut. They also gather plenty of wax. Their commerce is rather minimal. Their industry and shopwork is quite retarded. The women are engaged in weaving abaca cloth, *piña*, *saba* and *tindoc*.

Except Caraga, where cows and horses are plentiful, there is an almost total lack of these animals in the other towns. However, wild cattle abound in Cateel, although rarely do the natives hunt them. The same thing is true with the deer in the promontories of Caraga, Manay and Mampanon. Mountain goats are especially plentiful.

Usury, gambling, drunkenness and lust have been greatly cut down, because the laws have exercised their indispensable sanction. Those living in public sin are separated the moment their guilt is publicized, and this year, of the 200 baptized children of Christians in the mission, only four of them are natural sons.

They have also succeeded in lessening, if not in totally ending, slavery and the mountain trade with pagans, besides normalizing into one just and legal standard the weights and measures. The moral influence of the missionary over them is very strong. Wherever he is, his oral judgements are of great weight before the local officials, for in his presence all the litigations from that of the *gobnadorcillo* to the last *sacop* are amicably settled, except criminal cases, for which preliminary investigations are always required before forwarding them to the district court of first instance. But this last year we have not had to lament a death, wounding or any notable robbery committed by a Christian in the mission. This does not mean that there have been no deaths or woundings; but these are due to the ferocity of the unbaptized *baganis*. The pages of history will always be deeply colored with the blood of Christians and unreduced pagans, assassinated in a particularly horrifying way by those *baganis*, whose only ambition is to win personal renown by killing their equals. I am quite certain that if the statistics are taken of the victims felled by the thrust of the *balarao*, or the lance, the *sundang*, and *kris*, or by the arrows of the *baganis* in Mindanao, they would average 200 every year, besides women and children enslaved on similar occasions. Of my mission, I know that the victims killed every year average 60, with around 100 slaves kidnapped from their homes and deprived of their personal freedom.

The Mandayas are an honorable people, peace-loving, respectful, obsequious, docile, submissive and patient. Many have thick beards whose hairs they pull with pincers or with their fingers. Their nose is tall, even aquiline. Their complexion is brown, sometimes white, even ruddy. They let their hair grow like women. They have a clear mind, generally lucid among the children, for which reason, I believe, they are quite capable of any kind of education. They are hospitable and love social intercourse. They are governed by *governadorcillos*, *principales*, *tenientes*, judges and magistrates. The most outstanding in the ranch because of wealth is wont to be the *Hari-hari* (Kinglet) or *Tigulang* (old man). They obey him, consult him, including the *governadorcillo* or the *principales*. He declares war on the others, he demands satisfaction for insults to his ranch, and he is the arbiter and last appeal, after hearing the opinions of the *principales* in the trials of his subordinates. Each principal is usually the master of a definite number of *sacopes* in his ranch. In general, relatives seek to live always together, and this is the reason why traditions are so deeply rooted. They have a legal code and penal customs, from which it is not allowed to depart. I say the same thing with regards to their beliefs and religious rites. And beginning from these last, they are also so attached to them that they believe they will die if they abandon them and become Christians. Idolatry, polygamy and slavery are the rule among them. Their *diwata* or *manuag*, a piece of the *bayog*, the wood used exclusively for their idols, is painted with narra juice, to give it the figure of a human being from the chest up. Instead of eyes, they put lifelike fruits of the *magubajay*. The arms are removed for elegance. The male *manuag* is distinct from the female *manuag* by taking off the comb. The baylanes or priestesses dedicate themselves fully to maintain its cult, motivated by the benefits they receive.

The religious functions are divided into sacrifices and purely ceremonial observances. The sacrifices can be human or simply animal. Human sacrifices exist only among the Bagobos, who do not belong to our mission, and among the baganis. The latter, when they want to gloat over a victim, especially

if he is a Christian, are wont to dig a hole, push the victim down, such that, buried only up to the waist, they can dance around him, after which all in the ranch including the last child, fix their spear or balarao in his body. At times during the banquet, they are served the raw entrails of the human victim as a delicacy. Such repulsive scenes are not seen except among those savages; and ordinarily the sacrificial victims are animals.

But before describing them, let us note that the Mandayas believe in two principles of good, Mansilatan and Badla, father and son, and in two principles of evil, Pundaugnon and Malimbong, husband and wife. Among them, Busao is merely a virtue which depends on Mansilatan and is shared with the baganis to grant them courage. When one suffers a headache, he believes that if he invokes Mansilatan and Badla it will be relieved; the same is true when they seek to cure other sicknesses especially epilepsy and paralysis. Then the bailanes propitiate the good gods, wounding the idols of the evil gods while their bodies shake as they sing these verses: *Miminsad si Mansilatan* (Mansilatan will descend from heaven); *Opud si Badla gna magadayao nangdunia* (then Badla will save the earth).<sup>26</sup>

Their first and most solemn sacrifice is the *Balilic*. Ten, twelve or more bailanes come together according to the splendor they want to give to the feast. A small altar of the diwata is previously erected in front of the house of the man who spends for the ceremony: the owner comes out with a huge hog and presents it to the bailanes in the presence of 100 or 200 invited guests. The hog is set on the altar and the bailanes, dressed meticulously for the occasion, immediately gather around it. The Mandayas next sound with *gumbao* music consecrated to the diwatas, as the bailanes keep time with their feet, dancing around the hog and altar,

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<sup>26</sup> The full couplet reads = "*Miminsad si Mansilatan/Opud si Badla nga magadayao nang dunia/Bailan managun sayao/Bailan managun liguid*: (Mansilatan will come down/Then Badla, who will save the earth/Dance you priestesses/Dance in a circle). See Pastells, *Misión*, I, 239.

singing *Miminsad* etc. Shaking from head to foot and swaying from one side to the other, they form several semi-circles with their movements. They raise the right arm to the sun or the moon, depending on whether it is day or night, praying for the intention of the patron who has organized the celebration of that Balilic. All at once, the chief bailan separates from the others and pierces with her balarao the victim on the altar. She is the first to share in the sacrifice, putting her lips to the wound to suck and drink the blood of the animal still quivering with life. The others follow and do the same after her. If this performance succeeds in nauseating one of the ladies, she is immediately branded as a bad bailan. They then return to their place, repeat the dance, shake their bodies, utter cries, seat themselves afterwards, converse with Mansilatan who they say has come to them from heaven to inspire in them what they later prophesy and this is usually an announcement of a good harvest, the cure of some sickness, or some victory over the enemies. Thus ends the Balilic. The pig is cleaned, part is offered to the idol, and the ceremony is crowned with getting drunk.

Another sacrifice is the *Talibung*. To celebrate this, they raise four rectangular altars, each corner of the altar being decorated with flowers. In the midst of these four altars, they place a heavy cane, with leaves. The ceremony begins with the beating of the guimbao. Three or four well dressed bailanes come out and start to dance around the altars. After three or four turns, they sit down at the same time, shake their bodies and utter a long cry. A sepulchral silence follows, during which they pretend Mansilatan is descending to converse with them and breathe the prophetic spirit into them. They then adore him, and each one offers him an open roast chicken, together with some shrimps which they mix with buyo, a mixture of tobacco, lime, fruit and bonga leaf. After the offering, they repeat their dance, take their seats, shake their bodies, utter cries, listen to their god, announce a good harvest, the cure of a sickness, a prosperous voyage. Next follows the festal thansgiving and the traditional drunkenness.

The *Pagcayag* is celebrated this way. They take the *bobo* (a fishing instrument), cover it with leaves from a tree, put seven prepared buyos, a vase of *tubá* and seven crabs inside it. Set in the middle of the house, they leave it there for three days and nights. On rising at dawn of the fourth day, they all begin with great confusion and shouting to destroy it with their *sundang*, kicking the remnants out of the house. Through this they believe they are warding off the diseases that threaten them, especially epilepsy.

To hold the *Cayag*, the people are called to a noisy gathering around 10 o'clock in the morning. They plant a fresh and heavy cane and hang a thick cluster of *bonga* in it. Immediately three bailanes appear, each with a chicken. The chief priestess carries a *balarao*, and they sing, dance, etc. They offer the three chickens to the sun with handfuls of rice which they cast into the air. The bailan with a *balarao* stays close to the cane and hacks the *bonga* fruit with her dagger, while the others twist the neck of the chickens, suck their blood, skin and roast them. Afterwards, they offer a small portion to their gods and eat the rest, drinking tuba until they are drunk.

They also believe and practice *palmomançia* and *palomançia* through their bailanes. In the first, they measure their brass arms, which are the *sundang*, *balarao* and spear. If they measure more than a palmo, it is good sign; but if less, it is a bad omen. In the second, they measure according to a fixed number of oscillations; if these exceed a certain count it is good; if less, misfortune is waiting for them. They believe, besides, in the movement of visceral fumes emanating from their victims when the wind does not blow. And in the *Pagtali*, which consists of a stick from which a string hangs at the end of which is a small firebrand. According as it moves perpendicular or parallel to the one who has moved it in a circle, an action will be either successful or a failure.

With regards to the omens of the *Limoco*, a specie of a forest dove, these are what they believe; 1) if the *Limoco*

sings on the left side of a person facing it, this one will obtain what he wants; 2) if it sings on the right side, he ought to prepare well to defend himself from his enemies; 3) if at the right back side, he will soon be sick; 4) if exactly before his chest, he must retreat at once, for danger is imminent; 5) if it sings when a man is under the shadow of the door of a house, a dangerous animal will bite him; 6) if the Limoco sings while one is under a shed, he must flee because danger is immediate; 7) if it sings while one is between two trees, his enemies are readying an ambush for him. When they come across a dead animal on the road, they retrace their steps immediately to avoid death. In all of these instance of bad omens of the Limoco, they return to their place of departure, stamp their right foot on ashes, in order to bury forever those evils which threaten them. When a solar or lunar eclipse takes place, they believe that a *tarantula* or serpent will eat it. To avoid it and in order not to prolong the darkness, they slash at the trees with canes, or else, with loud cries of men, women and children, they gather and shoot arrows at the animal, encouraging the sun or the moon with these words: *Pagcabaton cay ompo* (Old man, show yourself). When there is an earthquake, they believe that a huge boar, called Baybulan, has reclined against the earth's trunks; by its movement, the boar causes the earth to shake. Then the whole settlement stoops to the earth and with repeated *buus* seeks to quiet Baybulan and make him rest. Others believe that there is a crocodile in the center of the earth and, on stretching, shakes the earth.

In the more superstitious ranches, one finds in front of each house an altar with its idol and filled with offerings. They construct their little boats in the rivers, with oars and meals respectively for the idol. They bury their dead within the forest inside the holes of rocks. Sometimes, they build camarins where they deposit the cadaver. Beside the cadaver, they bury the dead man's arms and shield, with a pot of rice, so that he might have means to defend himself and something to eat during the voyage. The Monobos build a new house when someone has died in the old. If there is an

epidemic, they abandon the ranch and go to relocate themselves in a new place.

Inside their houses, they set their idols at a proper height under a colored canopy, surrounded by the bonga fruit, and around the idol's neck hangs a small bag of rice. Every day when night comes, while supper is prepared, music is usually played for the diwata, and a well-dressed priestess comes out accompanied by her disciples to begin the *Lovena*. This consists of turning three or four times around the sala, while singing their prayers: "Placed between good and evil, we pray the Saviour to come down from heaven this great day for our good. Dance, you priestesses, dance in a circle." Then they take their seats, shake all over, and utter a prolonged cry. The same process is repeated until the supper is ready. These *Lovenas* last for three or four months during a season of famine, until they have a good harvest. During their night vigils, the parents tell their children many curious tales about the *aswang* (witch), the *tagamalim* (giant), the *cucu* (dwarf), and recite the sayings of the ancients, all of which pertain to another lengthy letter perhaps.

The Mandaya is not accustomed to dress their male children until they are of the age to aid in their work. The girls they usually clothe before or when they reach the age of reason. Their names, given at four years of age, are either a nickname or the name of a Christian saint given to them, v.g., Osman for Guzman, Osto for Justo, Talion for Pantalion, Col-las for Nicolas, etc.

The men wear a kind of breeches and an open shirt reaching down to the waist. Both pieces of clothing are usually bordered by a red cotton band. The hat is made of the bark of a tree, similar to that of the military medics, adorned from behind with rooster's feathers. The women wear the jabol as their skirt, and a shirt like the men's. All adorn themselves with beads, bracelets around the ankles, bells and coins, etc. The baylanes are distinguished by their red jackets. When they wear gala dress, they hang from their belts bells, the teeth of pigs, crocodiles and small clusters of

fragrant herbs; they adorn the neck and chest with strings of beads, a golden collar of silver coins they themselves have formed and designed. They adorn the torso and feet with heavy rings of copper and shells of a certain species called *damas* and a certain dark plant grown also in the sea, called *sagaysay*.

When they take a journey to accompany their wives, they go armed with spears, sundang and balaraos, and shields. In their houses, they also usually keep bows and arrows to defend themselves against the baganis or professional killers.

The baganis are distinguished in their dress by the number of their killings. After five to ten assassinations, they wear a red kerchief around their head; from ten to twenty, a red kerchief and shirt; from twenty on, a red kerchief, shirt and trousers. After they consummate their crime, they cut off a lock of the victim's hair to adorn the rim of their shield. They count the number of victims by the number of locks of hair. They use a double or triple cuirass of split rattan with which they protect their chest and shoulders. When pursued, they block the advance of their enemies by fixing on the ground pointed stakes of different lengths and fix snares with arrows set in their bows; when released by those who step on these snares, they cause death by piercing the side of the victim. They build their houses in strategic and almost inaccessible spots, on the peaks of hills, and in the foliage of trees.

They attack normally at dawn. but by means of spies they make sure of the probability or certainty of success. They prepare ambushes in thickly planted areas or deep thickets beside the road. When they cannot satisfy their revenge on the enemy, the object of their hatred, they vent their ire on their close or immediate relatives whose blood they shed, or on their friends or the people they find in their ranch. Among the baganis there are some who eat men, who pull out the quivering entrails of their victims and eat them with chicken meat or pork, or camote, or simply rice. The baganis must be well conditioned to dare to risk the life of the missionary

priest. As yet, they have not given up plans to make his flesh into *tapa* or dried meat. But until now, their words have not been translated into action.

Almost all the deaths among the Mandayas are traceable to debts or to women. The husband must first buy his wife from her parents, serving them for a period of four or six years. From this originates the similar custom among the Christians of this country and which missionaries are strongly fighting, namely, the groom working and living in the house of the parents of his future wife. If the spouse is one of those they call *dacung-tao* (honorable man) he gives for his wife six slaves, one being the minimum of this bride price. In case of inability to pay, he surrenders his own person and that of his future children. The sons, grandsons, etc. of a slave belong to the lord as the fruit of the tree. Besides the slaves, the suitor presents every now and then pigs, tubá, rice, plates, bolos and spears to the parents of the bride. The man who breaks off the engagement loses by this mere fact all he had given; the woman who break it off is obliged to return what her parents have received, besides giving a slave as a substitute for her person. Marriage among the Mandayas is solemnized when the spouses in turn give each other a handful of rice as a sign that they must mutually support each other. This is done with all the brides that they take. If the parents who had sold the bride die, the oldest brother, as the heir, takes their place to prosecute their rights. The oldest sons are always charged with the duties and rights of their parents, and they are the tutors of their younger brothers during the latters' minority.

The Mandaya does not recognize money and if he accepts silver, it is to fabricate them into coins and other luxury items for his personal adornment and to embellish his weapons. Instead of money, they are used to barter things among themselves. A slave is worth 15, 20 or 30 pesos, according to the age and health of the individual. They believe it is a duty to avenge injuries, even with the death of the culprit. But before this, they always appeal to the judgment and decision of a peace officer. Vengeance is usually carried on

through several generations. The Mandaya who seriously murmurs against another and does not produce proof when summoned to their court, incurs the fine of 15 pesos. He who lightly wounds another, 5 pesos and must give up the weapon; if the wound is serious, 15 pesos and the weapon. If the wounded person dies, the aggressor must give three slaves; if he was an important person, six slaves. An insult costs 5 pesos; stealing one peso costs the thief 30 pesos and a slave, failing to pay which, he is enslaved. He who deflowers a maiden, pays her parents 30 pesos and a slave, or he is put to death; an adulterer must pay the husband 60 pesos and two slaves or he dies.

The debtor who refuses to pay when first sentenced is condemned to pay double the amount at the second sentencing; if despite this, he still refuses, he pays either by becoming a slave or by being put to death, as the equivalent is so rated. A deadline is set by marking a split rattan as often as days or pesos are signified. The guilty after a trial is charged with the costs of the trial. The Visayan advocates charged two *reales* for each trial, and for every case settled, 5 pesos.

The Mandayas dearly love *buyo*. They love to chew tobacco, and mixing it with *among*, a kind of vine named *balagun*, they make *limutacan*. They also mix the *buyo* with *caningag*, a kind of inferior cinnamon juice abundant in this country. The teeth are blackened like jet with *among*, the only paint with which they adorn themselves. The Manobos, besides, paint their chests, shoulders, arms and legs.

The Moslems of this country are of a character extremely cunning, hypocritical, treacherous, swindlers, wary, cowardly, least helpful, and beggars to the last degree. In words they are very obsequious, but never carry them out in deeds. They are for this reason a big drag in the reduction of this region. They show themselves so hard before God's grace, so nailed to their beliefs, that their conversion to Christianity is morally almost impossible.

The men wear an open shirt, wide trousers, a white or colored kerchief around the head. They go barefoot like the

*Indios*. They carry a *kris* in their belt, spear in the hand and their tobacco pouch on their shoulders. The women dress in white. The *Datus* have buttons on their shirt and a handkerchief which they keep holding. Those who can read are called *panditas* and the teacher of *panditas* is called *Guru*. The *panditas* act as fiscals among them. A priest is called *Sarip*; when the *panditas* pray, they dress in a very long shirt. The *canduli* serves as rosary beads among them. During the time of *sambayang* when they celebrate their "easter," they are all obliged to continue fasting rigorously for seven days, eating only once at midnight, the hour when they surprise their god in his sleep. After seven days, they all purify themselves in a common bath, after which they celebrate their paschal feast, eating *poniam* and *sindo* (kinds of soup) boiled in coconut oil. They observe this *sambayang* in their *langa*, which is a mosque or *camarin* for performing religious acts. They mark time, not like the *Mandayas* by months, but like the Christians, by the days of the week. Thus, Monday they call *Sapto*; Tuesday, *Ahat*; and so on successively until Sunday, *Isnin*, *Sarasa*, *Arobaja*, *Cammis* and *Diammat*.

They baptize their children with water and prayers according to their rites, and after the baptism, they celebrate a feast. They also have their *novenas*, which last 9 days. In practice, they sound the *agung*, and the *Pandita* cuts off the head of a chicken, while offering prayers to their god that he save them from calamities and diseases, reciting at the moment of eating these words: "*bismilla herrac — man herra — him.*" Placing the head of the chicken on a small altar under a lighted canopy, they adore their god.

They are strictly forbidden, I do not say, to eat but even to smell pork meat. The moment they smell it, they believe they are going to die. For this reason, when they have to cook their *camote* or rice in a kettle, they first purify it lest pork meat or oil may have entered it, murmuring as they purify it the following words. "*Al-la omo saling mohammad.*" They are also forbidden to eat turtle meat, but not the eggs, which they take to be fruits of the beach.

Marriage among the Moslems is observed the same way as among the Mandayas each time they take wives; for polygamy is also the rule among them. They have a cemetery where they bury their dead; and over the grave, after exhuming the corpse, they place a burning ember over the head of a rooster. They pay tribute, or *pagdato*, to their respective Datus. The latter also demand it at times from the Mandayas themselves, and this tribute consists of a jabol, a bolo and 20 gantas of palay for every married person. Among the Moslems, the Datu settles the disputes of his sacopes, exacting for his service a real for every peso. When the case includes datus of separate jurisdictions, these are settled by the ambassadors, or *Tumangun*, of the two Datus. When the parties cannot agree, and the case warrants it, they resort to war.

Usury is practiced in an incredible way among them. Their traditional way of settling disputes is more or less that of the Mandayas. We can say the same thing regarding *balate*, *carey*, *almaciga*, *petates* and *biao*. They accept money, but barter is quite favored. Their writing, similar to Arabic, is exclusive of their ritual. The men and women among them are circumcized, even the slaves and the other people from another ranch, whoever they happen to be, if they live with them. Their authorities are the *Tuan*, or Gobernadorcillo, whose wife is the *Dayandayan*; the *Cuano*, or Deputy; *Ladiamuda*, or First Justice; *Sangalia*, or *Alguacil* (Magistrate); *Baguadato*, or principal, cabeza; and *Marad-diadinda*, or First-Born of the cabeza.

These, reverend Father, are the data which I have been able to collect until now. If they are incomplete and there is something inexact, I shall try to correct them in due time.

12

Ginatuan, 6 July 1879

I arrived in Caraga on my return from Manila on Good Friday. . . . The chief of the assassins called Bildo has in turn been killed by Juanay. After Easter, we visited the towns and baptized 265 pagan Mandayas. Father Urios writes that he

baptized in Simulao only, a tributary of Agusan, 771 Manobos. Tebay will be rejoined to Bislig. We have carefully examined the lands which the people of Hinatuan have offered us: Loyola, Tagasaca or Luha and Burungan. With respect to Dugmanon, the question is now settled; for the river this year has gone down, which at low tide, leaves scarcely 5 palmos of water. The big boats cannot come up, much less the *faluas* and sailboats. The disposable area in Loyola measures on the average only 255 brazas long and 100 brazas wide, in which only 200 houses fit, even without a plaza and the public buildings. Tagasaca or Luha is very big, but it has no anchorage. In times of calm, the boats and bancas of shallow draft can dock; but in times when the sea is usually menacing, the entrance is highly dangerous, if not impossible. There is still the plan of uniting Loyola and Luha by means of a wide street. But in this case, besides physically dividing the town in two, we find this inconvenience, namely, that the sea has eaten away in a year and a half two brazas of land and the land traversed by the road is only 25 brazas wide. And so in my humble opinion, there is no other place to build the 400 houses of Hinatuan than the sitio named Burungan. This place starts from the town cemetery, a half of a quarter of an hour distant, located on the left bank of the Hinatuan river. To reconnoiter and level the terrain properly, two general *pin-takasis* have already been held. Afterwards, having cleared the lots by burning, we will evaluate them better and we shall order a survey and a complete review of the situation.

The church of Baganga is going steadily ahead, materials for the church of Cateel are being gathered, and soon a provisional church will be started for Hinatuan. I intend to celebrate the feast of Saint Augustine in it. In three weeks, 101 Mandayyas of Loyola have been baptized.

How wonderful that the clothes gathered as alms in Manila have arrived! We have given to each one baptized a whole suit. Father Urios has also come to Bislig for his share. More than 500 pieces have already been distributed. But these are not enough, for this year a terrible calamity befell us because it has rained, as they say, cats and dogs. After the frightful

famine of the previous year, as a kind of after-effect of the locusts, have followed the plagues of *tasig*, *duppag* and *ambao*,<sup>27</sup> Fearing therefore the many deaths which from hunger would occur during the northern moonsoon, we have arranged to build a huge granary with the money we were able to collect to satisfy our pressing needs and obtain relief from them for the good of souls. Please continue, then, to send alms for the good of the pagans of Mindanao. Your Reverence now sees that in only two missions of Agusan and of the Pacific coast, a thousand pagans, Mandayas and Manobos, have been baptized in two months. . . . I intend to stay in Hinatuan until the feast of Saint Augustine. Meantime, I shall see if I can reunite the town of Tebay with Bislig. All Fathers. . . have been sick with fever; but they have recovered, thanks to good doses of quinine which I have prescribed for them.

I wish your Reverence sends me another good Brother carpenter. Every time the people volunteer for the works of Baganga, Cateel and Bislig, it is important to have them well supervised. Your Reverence knows well that I have no talent for matters of carpentry.

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Please send the money assigned this year to the pagans of Bislig and Caraga, and the goods, well packed and labeled. Put on the label: Surigao, Bislig and Caraga. The goods, more concretely, should be gingham, hemp, black cotton cloth, coco negro, coco blanco, muslim cloth, handkerchiefs, needles, buttons, mirrors. . . the more the better.

13

Caraga, 25 January 1880

In order not to break the custom of sending you at the beginning of each year a resumé of all our ministers, I am making use of the departure of the mail to satisfy my duty. . . . I shall prescind from the first third of the calendar year; others will report on it.

<sup>27</sup> I have been unable to find an English equivalent for *tasig* or *duppag*, but *ambao* is probably an old form of the Visayan *ambo* or *ilaga* (rat, mouse).

Three weeks after my arrival here, I heard that the fierce and bloodthirsty bagani Bilto had been killed at the point of Juanay's balarao. The terror of pagans and Christians, assassinations by the hundreds had been attributed to him. Macusang, who succeeded him in the command of his gang, avenged his cousin's death with that of four innocent victims in Juanay's ranch. Since then, a system of ambushades has been set up by both sides for the period of 5 months, at the end of which Juanay died a natural death.

In the interview I had with Macusang, he gave me his shield and balarao as a pledge that he was giving it all up, if the government would grant an indult. It has not come, and my good man continues in his ways. However, this year we did not have to lament more than 12 assassinations in the mission, namely, the killing of Bilto, of the four of Macusang, three Manobos of Agusan residing in Casauman, two Manguangas of Cateel, and of two Mandayas over a girl.

The visitation was begun in Mampanon in the beginning of May. Later, the missions of Santa Fé, Manurigao, Carmelo and San Luis, with more than about 130 Mandaya baptisms in these places. In Manay, the pagans pointed out to me a star at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon, perfectly visible to the naked eye; by its distance from the sun, I believe it could be the planet Venus. The sky was very clear without any cloud. The pagans asked me if it signified some storm or great famine. I answered that this meant nothing at all and that it was merely an effect when the air was so clean that it did not block the light of the star from reaching us on that occasion. I suppose Venus is at its full moon. But I have no almanaque to verify it.

When Father Terricabras was baptizing in San Luis, two of them who were crippled, in virtue of their holy baptism, suddenly rose up and walked away on their own feet. And in that same town a strange thing happened the past year to a woman who was baptized at the hour of death. All thought that she had died and, after having shrouded her, left her in the tribunal to go to the church to pray for her. At 2:00 o'clock, a terrified Indio comes out of the town hall an-

nouncing her coming back to life. Everyone goes to verify the news, and sitting up, the woman says that when she left the world, she found herself before a road covered with huge flames, amid which she saw some terribly frightful beings. Confused, she discovered high above on a shining cloud her brother (baptized like her in his last sickness, with all the signs of predestination), whiter and more brilliant than burnished silver. He ordered her not to pass on, that she should turn back to life on earth and that next day she would meet the holy Christ and she would find no difficulty on the way. She also says that her brother had accompanied her till the steps of the tribunal, at the same hour that she arrived. Then, turning to all the pagans around her, she says, "Be baptized. Abandon your idols and adore only the one true God, adore Jesus Christ only, who will reward the good and punish the bad." She asks for the crucifix and she never lets it go. The following day she died, as her brother had announced, after inspiring the Christians and pagans with her fervent acts of adoration and love for God.

We celebrated the feast of Saint Ignatius in Loyola with all possible splendor. Pealing of bells, vespers, sung mass with a full orchestra, lights throughout the night, a long procession, and a long contest in which the school boys and girls of Loyola and Hinatuan took part and pitted their intellectual forces. After the contest there was a formal distribution of prizes. Almost all of Hinatuan came to the fiesta and many from Bislig and San Juan. In Hinatuan I received a letter from Father Urios who told me of the great effects God's grace had worked in the hearts of his Manobos, such that in less than a half-year, he had already baptized more than 1500, besides founding the towns of Patrocinio and Jativa in upper Agusan, Novele in Surigao, Loreto in Jumayan, La Paz in Arguan and Tudela in Simulao. He invited me to visit him and to bless a church, but I could not go.

Returning from Surigao, it fell to me to accompany the Inspector General of the mines, Señor Centeno, on his trip to Magdiuta, accompanied by a young and well trained lieutenant of the navy. Back in the mission, the felling of solid

timber was resumed with enthusiasm for the churches and conventos of Hinatuan, Bislig, Cateel and Baganga.

We need more clothes. Does your Reverence know that, between skirmishes, misfortunes, baptisms and the rest, the supply from Manila has been consumed this past winter? Let us undeceive ourselves; if one wants to reduce people, their needs have to be satisfied. The expenses of the catechists have also gone up. Let your Reverence awaken the piety of the faithful for the two sister missions, Agusan and the Pacific coast. Knock on the doors of their hearts, for there are many generous souls in Manila. I know this from experience. Here there is much promise if there is protection, and let this serve as another example, as they say: 4000 pagans were converted and baptized in three years in the lone district of Surigao. This is just the beginning. Let them hurry, then, who make promises and wish to save souls. Those who till now have contributed with their alms, God our Lord will thank in my stead on the day of universal judgement. . . .

Send me at least the equivalent of 500 pesos of clothes for the many pagans who come almost totally naked for baptism.

I close this letter with a final lamentation. We have had a storm which has been part of a typhoon. The rivers have overflowed as never before. A hurricane blowing for half an hour has destroyed almost all the houses in Santa Fé. The whole town took refuge in the church. In Manay, San Francisco and Manurigao, almost all the camote and corn fields are lost. Immediate effect, frightful hunger in these places. No notices have yet been received of the other towns. May the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary have pity on this mission.

14

Caraga, 11 April 1880

. . . a dirty piece of rags given with good intention for a poor man in Mindanao is paper money or, better, a title of nobility of the first rank in heaven.

A thousand acknowledgements to the worthy sons of the Church in Manila who have despoiled themselves of their

own clothes to cover the naked and give food to the hungry. How many victims have been snatched from misery and even from crime by such spoliation! God knows. This same day, not to draw water from another source, I have been able to hold back, with just a piece of gingham cloth, a chain of several assassinations between two ranches.

Already 40 or 50 bandits had twice surrounded six houses inhabited by about 50 people. I have them here in my house, disarmed and now friendly. Their balaraos, made of steel, their double blade appearing like razors for shaving, I keep in my room. Actually, the picture which Señor Racaj, capable Politico-Military Governor of this district, has sent was useful to me. They were really going to exterminate themselves. Three hours the comedy lasted. The finale is due, after God and the Governor's picture, to a piece of gingham. They signed the peace in my presence: the two leaders who instigated the trouble took hold of both ends of a piece of rattan which the captain of the ranch broke, saying with all solemnity these words, "just as I divide with the knife this rattan, so let him be broken who among you first breaks this alliance." After this, I joined their hands and they embraced each other as inseparable friends. I gave them a bunch of bananas and some coconuts from the garden and they took supper together at the tribunal. At this time of writing I have dismissed them with gifts of needles, buttons (from those donated by Señor Guinart) and another bunch of bananas. I am keeping for your Reverence the balarao of Vangayoba, a principal among them. Who then will say that 5 pesos, the price of a piece of clothing, are uselessly spent, knowing that with them crime has saved on its numberless victims!

Please thank in my name and in those of the Indios of this mission all the kind souls who have contributed with their alms to ease the load of our misfortunes in this region.

15

Surigao, 2 February 1881

The plan of the missionaries is one of slow and gradual simplification of so many little towns or barrios into big and

independent towns made up of several of them. This plan has resulted in the incorporation of San Manuel, Batiano and Baysan with Baganga two years ago; Tebay with Bislig the past year; Linguig with Bislig the present year; the refoundation as one town of San Luís, Baculin, Carmelo and Manurigao in the place called San Luís del Quila; and a plan to reunify Quinablangan and Dapnan with the new foundation of San Isidro, San Juan and San Victor in the harbor of Quinablangan or Nonocan, according as it will be decided later; the assimilation of San Estanislao into Zaragoza; and, finally, that of San Nicolás with the new Cateel, or Dacong-Banua.

The fathers in the north initiated at that time the preparatory work for the churches of Bislig and Hinatuan and the provisional convento of the latter, and speeded the reduction of about 100 old Christian fugitives to the mountains of Lianga and the slopes of Agusan. With this class of people, ignorance, weakness or habit more than malice can effect things. And so, to my way of thinking, God will have great mercy on them at their death despite so much sliding back. The fulfillment of the annual and paschal precepts was a consolation in all the towns, as it had been in the preceding years.

Meanwhile, we in the south dedicated ourselves to the reduction of the pagan Mandayas, successfully bringing around 500 into the fold of Christ through the door of holy baptism.

But the devil which does not sleep instigated trouble for us in Santa Fé. Hardly settled in the way I described to Father Heras in my letter of 11 April, he reappeared in a similar way, but with renewed energy in the town of Santa Maria. A Mandaya captain named Magolendas, overwhelmed by his debts and pursued by his creditors, decided to flee with his wife and children towards Agusan. His brother-in-law, Eustapa, had opposed such idea. One day, after supper, they chewed betel nut together, which is the sign of great friendship among them. Suddenly, Magolendas treacherously attacked him with his spear, leaving his weapon in his brother's heart. Eustapa's unfortunate sister, seeing how cowardly her brother had been killed, throws herself as a fury against her husband, bitterly denouncing him. That hyena, still thirsting

for fresh blood, decides on that of his own spouse whom, in his blind fury, he ends up sacrificing. The news of the crime spreads with the speed of light, the relatives of the victims are aroused, and they prepare to take vengeance. In a few days the lifeless body of the unhappy Magolendas is found putrefying in the forest. The baganis, then, by the law of spoils, meet to divide as their slaves the seven children who have been orphaned by such a tragic development. Who will help them in such a crisis? It has occurred to the oldest of them, as a most natural thing, to appeal to the missionary priest for protection. The latter finally was able to abate the new storm with his timely intervention, so that they promised to be baptized when he would come to their town to visit them, abandoned in such a bad hour by their father.

At that time the new town of Zaragoza had already been founded near the shore at the mouth of Casamuan river, scarcely a league away from the visita of Manay. There the zeal of Father Gisbert shone in a special way, reaping the first fruits of his apostolate in Mindanao. The principalia consists of Capitanes Espada, Dinday, Inodioan, Manobo, Tipayan and Buuc, the first three baptized with the names of Ignacio, Gregorio and Celedonio. After presenting the act of foundation and assigning the titles of the principales, they surveyed the place, lined up the streets, distributed the residential lots, etc. Father Gisbert as former Secretary of the College of the Savior of Zaragoza [Spain], promised to obtain for this town a small statue of our Lady of the Pillar, that it might serve as the titular patron saint of the new town of Zaragoza. . . .<sup>28</sup>

Because of the ceaseless vexations and demands by the mountain pagans of Bungadon and Manlubuan, the people of San Luis decided to move closer to the shore to a place called Quila, with its excellent location, because of its terrain, its anchorage, the river and its extension. A town of 20,000 souls can comfortably settle there. In the same place the people also of Baculin and Carmelo will reside; even those of Manu-

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<sup>28</sup> An example of how new Christian towns or settlements received their names from the Christian missionaries.

rigao will have to agree in the end to transfer their domicile, harrassed by the invincible force of necessity.

For the first time, the Christian authorities in both towns of San José and San Francisco were assigned at the same date, both of whom were beyond the reach of the graces of holy baptism. And that the spiritual and temporal graces might run together, a nursery of their plantations was set up, so that with the stimulus of their territorial possession, the foundations might dig deeper roots. We will see if, in time, we can popularize the plough in the manner of the more civilized countries.

Engulfed in this way in the most thankless of our labors, we soon began to gather with joy what we sowed in tears, going and coming from one town to another, carrying our bundles as fruits of grace. All of a sudden, our celebration was stopped completely. A letter was received by which holy obedience arranged that Father Gisbert should go to take charge of the mission of Davao gulf in place of Father Moré, sick with fever for a long time now.

... I had to leave to give missions, all by myself, in the towns of San José, San Pedro and Santa Fé, where I preached, heard confessions, catechized, baptized and solemnized marriages—and even fell sick. In Santa Fé, I went to the harbor to welcome Father Peruga, coming out of the confessional with a small cross of fever on my shoulders.

In San Pedro they brought me a deed boa five brazas long, which had desperately wrestled the other night with a newly reduced past teniente. Earlier, the capitan and the judge of that same town had reported another boa, which measured a mere nine brazas long and which five persons could hardly carry. The people of Manurigao presented me also in San Pedro and Caraga two enormous heads of a crocodile, which two days before had devoured two men, wounded a ten-year old child with a single bite by one of them, 37 wounds in the buttocks and hip. We are curing him with the oil of *tagulauay*. When I asked the boy how the beast had released him, he answered that while he was between its jaws, he re-

membered an uncle who had once said that the only defense in such cases was to push one's fingers into the eyes of the animal. He did this and was freed. These are the only pests in the whole island: crocodiles and serpents.

Father Puntas joined us in Caraga. . . . Seeing how sick I was. . . I left behind on the advise of the Fathers, Father Puntas with Brother Zumeta. Father Peruga charitably went with me up to Surigao. In Hinatuan Father Mugica joined us; he had left Cantilan with the sole purpose of aiding Father Puntas. . . . On arrival at Cantilan, I was brought in a chair to the convento, where Father Ferrer with the care of a mother busied himself to serve us those three days when it was necessary to stay because the southwest wind made it impossible to round Tugas point. Finally, despite wind and sea, we reached Surigao after fourteen days' navigation. Here I boarded the steamboat **Jorge Juan** for Cebu. I recovered my health there, thanks to the expertise of Señor Elvira, physician of the Naval Division stationed at the port, and to the unceasing solicitude of Brother Navarro, our infirmarian, plus the healthy dry climate of the town.

## 16

Surigao, 8 March 1881

The last time I had the consolation of writing you, I wrote about the complete recovery of my weakened health in Cebu City. The holy old Prelate<sup>29</sup> who governs the diocese came immediately to visit me, as soon as he knew that the only reason for my coming had been my ill health. May the Lord remember his deed of kindness on the day of judgment.

During my stay in the city, I did not want to stay idle while convalescing, for an important matter bothered me. It was the profound and extreme misery to which I had seen subjected my neophytes, the catechumens and pagans in my mission. What kind of charity would that have been, if, seeing my sons and brothers suffering hunger and nakedness, instead

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<sup>29</sup> Bishop Benito Romero de Madridejos y del Rosario, a Franciscan.

of launching out to beg for them, I hardened my heart and did not, by all the means possible to me, seek alms for them? How would I hear a favorable sentence in God's judgment, if I had closed my ears to such a clamor from these poor people imploring mercy? I recalled . . . the collections ordered by the Apostles in Macedonia, Acaia, Galatia, Antioch and Corinth for similar reasons, and of Paul's recommendation of charity to his people in order to merit well before God. Knowing well, on the other hand, that the best resort and the most delicate fiber I could touch in commercial and industrial Cebu was their charity dedicated to the propagation of the faith and the unfolding of true civilization, I blindly threw myself to the enterprise, assured beforehand of its happy result.

The first to give an example was the most reverend bishop, who for Christ generously despoiled himself of his own clothes. He was followed by the Reverend Provisor and Vicar General with all the members of his Chapter, the reverend curate of the cathedral, the members of the different orders of Augustinians, Franciscans and Recollects and the other priests of the secular clergy.

By their cooperation and example, the honorable civil and military officials of the province supported the movement. For their generous donations to this mission, I acknowledge my indebtedness to His Excellency, the Governor of the Visayas, the Brigadier and Count of Cleonar, the Politico-Military Governor and Chief of the Brigade, the Regimental Commander, the Commanders of the Division, the Captain of the Port and many other Spanish officials, merchants and agents of foreign houses.

Not outdone in their generosity were the gobernadorcillos and principales of the Chinese mestizos and natives, and the warden of the Chinese and his sacopes.

For a few days I went around the city and the surrounding towns of San Nicolas, Pardo, Talisay, Mabolo, Mandaue and Opon, where I was greatly helped by the respective curates.

How many incidents worth recording with a golden pen could be inserted here! The multitude of people who followed us around the streets of some towns, the respect with which everyone received and entertained us, the desire of the poorest that we go up their houses to beg alms from them, the enthusiasm with which even the unclothed children showed us their charity, saying, "Go up for they will give you money"—these brought to our eyes tears of pure delight and affection.

A woman selling buyo at the head of a street rose from her place three times to drop an obol in my hands: a copper half-real, her sales for that morning. An old lady approached me and asked in secret if I would accept two cuartos she was carrying in her hands. Seeing that I received them, she went together with her neighbors to collect four reales in double cuartos which she later gave me, completely out of herself with joy at her good deed. In this way I was able to collect, with the help of Señor Vaño and a school teacher, the respectable sum of 700 or 800 pesos in clothing. I sent this. . . . to the fathers in the Pacific coast mission to put to good use according to the mind of the donors.

Ah, my father! the prayers of the poor in Mindanao, like clouds of fragrant incense, will rise in gratitude through the corrupt air of this world up to the very throne of God. There they will liquify in a strong rain, fertile with heaven's rich blessings, which those will receive in their hearts who have had mercy on them without any hope of reward. God grant that someone of generous disposition, feeling his heart burn with desire for God's greater glory, fly to the aid of his Mindanao brothers saved by the same blood of Jesus Christ as the rest, and, using all his influence, take the initiative in the work of redemption! Propaganda and organization are needed to perpetuate good enterprises. For example, start an organization similar to that of the Holy Childhood. In factories and shops, in schools and other organized circles, in parishes and villages, let them be grouped in divisions and subdivisions, under the charge of their respective officers, who will submit the collection to the treasurer of the local unit. He, in turn, will be in charge of forwarding the sum to the

general treasurer of the central board in Barcelona or Madrid, who will be in direct contact with Procurator General of the missions in the Philippines. Print appropriate pictures to excite the devotion and charity of the faithful. Publicize the results of this work in some review, as the excellent **Revista popular** of Barcelona. I shall answer for the success of the undertaking without any further ado. Suffice it to say that, in a very short time, 9,000 pagans have been baptized in the sole region of northern Mindanao. How much could be done with greater means it is not possible to guess. The harvest is white and let no one neglect a good opportunity in affairs of such importance as this.

17

Caraga, 18 December 1882

I received your most welcome [letter] of last month, and in answer to what you graciously request, I shall give you an account in this letter of what has happened in the Mission since my return. I landed on that beautiful beach of Cateel in mid-October last year in the company of Father Moré, and the first news that met us was brought by a courier straight from the new reduction of San Nicolas. It was about the immediate departure of an armed expedition to the Manlubuan mountains to persecute the fierce Malpando and his followers to avenge the killings by this bagani or assassin in Santa Fé, those by Macusang in the ilayas or fields of San Victor, and to free from captivity three Christians held by the former.

The expedition returned right after its departure, since its success was partly frustrated by the betrayal of the experienced guide, son-in-law of Capitan Mayong, who had fled hours before the start of the attack, notifying in this way the pagan bandits of the danger threatening them. And so, these latter warned everybody to escape. But the lieutenant of the *tercio* did not retire without first burning 30 or 40 enemy houses and laying waste as many fields, with which the baganis' war-like ardor was cooled somewhat, despite his several boasts and continued threats of an immediate revenge for that attack, which caused no little apprehension among the timid

Christians, especially in the time of planting and harvesting their palay or rice. I have found out, however, for the sake of the truth, something about Macusang. If this bagani has been guilty of assassinating some Christians in the ilayas of San Victor, it was due to an error, for he thought that the victims of his wrath were still pagans. When he noticed the medals around the necks of the women whom he had captured, he ordered them loose and set free, protesting that it was not his plan to war on Christians, for he wanted to fulfill the word he had given to the Padre to respect them at all times. It is true that about three years ago, I had a conference with him, as he had requested in a house of one of his uncles who lives in the ilayas of Manurigao. He had promised that, beginning that same hour, he would stop persecuting the Christians. As a pledge, he entrusted me with his shield and balarao, or dagger. In return, I gave him two pesos, two plates, a half bottle of anise brandy, which I had taken along expressly as a gift. And so, Macusang was misled in killing the Christians in the ilayas of San Victor.

Every time that an expedition has gone out to reappear in this letter, and Your Reverence asks my opinion regarding how best to carry out easily, quickly and fully the conquest of the different pagan races of Mindanao, I believe it will not be totally inopportune, at the risk of boring you, to add something about it in this letter. In the first place, I believe that the composition of the terrain has to be kept in mind by His Majesty's government in planning the conquest of the Moslem race that resides in the Rio Grande valley, which is different from that of the other pagan races that inhabit this big island of Mindanao. To carry out the conquest of these races, there is certainly no need for large units of soldiers. These races will easily be reduced and organized into a regular system of social, civil and religious life, following a plan of attraction to make them feel the advantages of our paternal domination and the good results of a good administration in all aspects which constitute the social life of civilized Christian races.

This will be possible easily from the beginning by granting exemptions, privileges and prerogatives to pagans who will

be reduced and baptized, and imposing personal service and tribute to those who stubbornly continue in their savagery. This is completely the opposite of what is now being followed. In this way, their rebellious obstinacy will have no imitators. And let it not be said that this is impractical, for this is certainly possible. Two companies of the Tercio Civil in each district are enough, assigned at the proper places according to the condition of the men. Above all, they should cooperate in the work of persuasion of the missionary fathers, who are especially trained for this kind of apostolate which is beneficial, enduring and practical. That no one may resist this common effort, there is no need for a Macedonian phalanx: the sword united to the cross is enough, so that once this is planted no treacherous hand may pull it down. Seven years' experience in the missions of Mindanao, during which around 15,000 pagans received baptism, supports this opinion. And, is there not reason enough to complete the reductions seeing the ranches mutually annihilating one another? Not the tragic spectacle of human sacrifice performed with great pomp and frequency, with such passion and cruelty, for example, among the Bagobos that the unfortunate victim marked for sacrifice is in a minute minced meat? On the other hand, the pagans of the island are so gentle that even the cruellest are easily won over by moral suasion, which has in itself the sanction of law, once this becomes a real force among them. This can be said of the pagan native races of the island, with the exception of the Moslems. To reduce the latter, the planning and the manner of treating them should be different.

That is what in general can be said to reduce them. Going now to the more minute details regarding the mission of Caraga, the first thing that ought to be done should be to construct some crossroads extending from various points in the Pacific littoral to correlative terminals in Agusan, touching along its line the different ranches dispersed throughout the interior. Thus, for example, one road beginning from Manay, can pass by San Francisco, touch various parts of the ranches of Masandlin, Sebio, Madagasang and Anibo, and end at the sources of the Agusan river and the dividing point of the slopes which send their waters to the Davao and Butuan gulfs and to

the Pacific. A second road, forking out by the house of Magdasang and passing through the ranches of Saguidan, Manlucup and Manganon, can end in Batuto, in case the Agusan river may not yet be navigable in those heights. The third, originating from San Luis could go by Libudan, Carmelo, Lucatan, Bungadon and Calatagan, stopping at Gandia, before the mouth of Manat, an important tributary of Agusan, through which any route can lead to Davao through Salug. The fourth, starting from Baganga, might run along its ilayas, and those of Batiano and Baysan, and join the third road in Bungadon and a fifth in Manlubuan. This road, cutting into the territories of the baganis would be of extreme importance for their final reduction. The fifth road starting from San Nicolas towards the ranches of Mayong, Mapandit and Tavit, would cross the Manlubuan mountains, and from there go to various points of Agusan or the sources of Sumilao. The sixth road from Atel would go to Tudela along the ilayas of Lingig. The seventh road goes now from Bislig to Tudela through Miaga, which is the normal trail of these towns to Surigao during the north-east moonsoon. Finally, the eighth road coming from Loyola or Hinatuan could terminate in Novele near Surigao, from where one would go by boat to Talacogon and Butuan. All these roads could be opened by the pagan tribes themselves and guarded, if need be, by some cuadrilleros, or soldiers of the Tercio. Do not think, my reverend father, that all that is said is hard to carry out. God grant that it be a reality as soon as possible.

Since the conquest of the Mandayas along the coast is now nearing its end, for even the smallest of their group scarcely remains for baptism, our efforts will have to be directed necessarily to the Mandayas in the interior. Since I shall be working with them in my own way, I shall later report to your Reverence how our plans unfold.

I do not want to close this letter without telling your Reverence that this winter has been very frightening because of the famine that has affected these towns. In our residence we were reduced to an extreme when we could eat neither rice nor camote. It has been usual for the people in some towns

to pass 24 or even 48 hours without being able to eat more than a few roots from the forest. In San Francisco alone, more than 40 persons perished because of this terrible punishment, and as the crown of this feast, a typhoon struck on Easter Sunday itself. It rolled up everything in its path, ruining houses, roads and fields, and destroying by half the rice harvest in the towns it passed through.

Pray that God may add to these calamities not the rigor of His divine justice, but only the efficacy of His infinite mercy.

18

Caraga, 7 February 1883

God grant you a Happy New Year!

While cholera, that terrible guest of insatiable greed, was swallowing victims by the millions, sowing terror and desolation in the other provinces of the Archipelago,<sup>30</sup> here in the entire, district, by the secret designs of divine mercy, we have been untouched by its deadly contagion so far. God grant that this keen blade of Fate be merciful to us even in the future. Right after your reverence's departure with Fr. Ferrer from Hinatuan, we gave there a series of spiritual exercises in the form of a mission, to prepare them to fulfill the annual Easter precept of our holy mother the Church. The result was what ought to follow in such cases. The town went en masse to confession with clear signs of their excellent disposition. Afterwards, we began the devotion of the Nine Offices of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for which more than three hundred were listed. Today they perform their obligations so faithfully that one can see in them the wonders of grace from the Sacred Heart. This was a good preparation for the diocesan visitation, which Fr. Luengo had to undertake a month later in the name of his Excellency the Bishop of Cebu. By a rescript of His Holiness Pope Leo XIII, Father was empowered to administer the

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<sup>30</sup> See for the effects of this cholera epidemic the letters written to Rizal by his brother Paciano and his other friends or relatives: *Epistolario Rizalino* (ed. Kalaw), I, pp. 33, 41-44, 55-56, 57-58, 62-64.

sacrament of confirmation as a minister extraordinary during the whole period of the visit.

Useless to tell your reverence that, besides the prescribed liturgical reception, a warm spontaneous welcome greeted the lord bishop's representative in all the towns and reductions of the mission. If the tree is known by its fruit, it will suffice us to count those of this one, to see that, thanks to God, it has not been too bad. The confirmations administered throughout the 23 groups into which the people of this extensive Bislig parish is divided reach 12,092. If we add to this number those out of town during the visitation and the sick, we will have more or less the same total as the number of souls listed in this parish.

The pastoral visitation continued for four consecutive months and around 170 Mandayas were baptized. Since the departure of Father Luengo on 21 December until today when I write this letter, 178 have been baptized in Caraga. Together with some 40 baptisms in Hinatuan since your Reverence's departure in July to the arrival of Fr. Luengo in August, the total since that date has been 368 baptized Mandayas.

The conquest of the pagans who live along the shores of this Mission can be said to be morally finished. For from Hinatuan, Loyola, Bislig and Lingig, there is only one family in Loyola, as far as I know, that of a decrepit old monomaniac who alone has not allowed himself to be baptized, despite the urging of all his new Christian relatives. One hopes that Saint Ignatius might interest himself in him before he dies. In Cateel and San Nicolas, only a few of the sacopes remain to be baptized. The rest are either of Manlubuan or his allies. In San Juan, Quinablangan, San Isidro, San Victor, Dapnan and Baganga there are only 22 unreduced Mandayas. Those who live in the jurisdiction of Caraga, from San Luis to Zaragoza, are likewise in decline and are being baptized rapidly.

Now only the Mandayas in the mountains, both friendly and hostile, remain to be reduced. When shall we extend to them the holy ties of Christ's love to embrace them all? *God's love impels us...* I think the time must be now. How? With

what means? I intend to propose them to you in another letter....

## 19

Caraga, 16 February 1883

While I was in San Pedro, preparing the people for the sacrament of confirmation, we received news that Cagutum had assassinated two Christians and kidnapped three others. The worst thing is that those crimes had happened half a year ago while we were in Hinatuan, with no one knowing about them until the day when one of the newly reduced intervened. To better hide his plan, Cagutum had feigned submission and pretended to form a town. Accordingly, the capitan himself of Baganga certified the elections and bestowed the sceptre of justice to one of the sacopes of his ranch. However, nothing was done actually. The reason which motivated the assassin was his desire to complete the required number of victims in order to receive his investiture as bagani. But this time his ambition cost him dearly. Informed about this, Don Prudencio Garcia,<sup>31</sup> lieutenant of the tercios, immediately went to his house and demanded his surrender. Because this was refused, 17 Mandayas died from gun-shot, including the neo-bagani. Only 5 persons were saved, besides women and children who were set at liberty as soon as the expedition returned. Cagutum's brother, Quidao, under whose power are kept the three captives, has invited the men of Bungadon and Manlubuan to join him in the war of reprisals. But wiser after their past reversals, they decided to stay behind, which proves that baganism is now sounding a retreat, and that the bullets of our tercios and cuadrilleros inspire a distaste for that way of life. Finally, during a second reconnaissance trip by the soldiers, they killed the bagani Lupugan and his son Daug, near the house of Quidao. If in the dry season, two detachments of 25 men each spent the summer, one in Manlubuan, the other in

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<sup>31</sup> A revolutionary leader in Surigao. Cf. Leo Cullum, "Notes on the Revolution in Surigao," *Philippine Studies* 9 (1963) 488-494; also his article in an earlier issue, "Francisco de Paula Sanchez, 1849-1928," *Philippine Studies* 8 (1960) 334-361.

Bungadon, I think that without making an attack, but merely impeding the pagans from tilling their fields in the upper regions, and offering an indult of pardon to those who shall present themselves to live in San Nicolas, Baganga or San Luis, they would all come down to the shores without exception. This is the only peaceful and practical way of attracting them, at the same time that irritants and assassinations are avoided, which to the great scandal of the towns and the loss of our good name are daily perpetrated with impunity.

Once these ranches are subjected, the reduction of the others who live in the interior will need very little effort.

Does your Reverence recall the animated conference we had with the tireless and prudent military-political governor of the district, Don Alberto Racaj and Fathers Urios, Moré, Minovés and Bové, about a road to the sources of Agusan river, in cooperation with the Fathers of Davao and Caraga?

This discovery, so important ethnologically and ethnographically, would... also be eminently practical and this what most counts for us. Because in that knot of mountain ranges is found the most powerful of the Manobo, Mandaya and Manguanga races, the key that locks out the way to a return to the mountains and opens civilization to the last savage; the bulwark this side of the island behind which the enemy of souls entrenches himself. And for what have we vowed to fight till death unless we pursue him in his retreat until the last cartridge, to the very end of his redoubts? If only we could dispose of more men and assign two Fathers there who would check-mate their paganism!

We have just received two letters from Davao and Gandia saying that it is little less than impossible to ascend to the source of Agusan River from that direction.

Starting from Manay, I believe it will be more possible. To do this in the near future, I have ordered a road to be opened alongside Casauman, two brazas wide, stopping at Sapinigan, the place of Capitan Sebio, which is midway to the Agusan road. If things go as we have planned them, we will

establish in the interior the towns of Covadonga and Jovellar, Manresa and Monserrat, the last mentioned located in the cradle of the well-known river and the points of separation of the waters that pour into the gulfs of Davao, Butuan and the Pacific.

I shall write your Reverence as soon as this comes true.

## 20

Caraga, 6 November 1883

Thank God, at last the expedition to the house of Capitan Eusebio in Lapinigan is over. What your Reverence needs to know now is that, when it ended, the principales of the basins of Casauman and Manay have unanimously agreed to the foundation of the town of Manresa in a place called Capasacan, the source of Mahanub, about 4 leagues away from Santa Maria, and composed of 402 married couples, according to a census, including the house of Eusebio and finishing with that of Masaudlin. This town will be the key to another, which will be erected around the source of Caraga this coming June, composed of more than 600 married couples. From here it will be easy to move into the separation of the rivers that go to Davao and Butuan gulfs, fixing the cross in the sources of Agusan, Sumlug, Matiao, Quimquim, Caraga, Casauman, Baguan and Mayo. We always have to wait for the best time to undertake similar expeditions; otherwise we are liable to kill our companions with hunger, and even ourselves through fatigue and privation. Because the amihan is right upon us with gigantic strides, we shall suspend this trip for the present until the weather smiles at us again. Nevertheless not giving rest to our hands, we shall try to use the time of our winter in the erection of two small towns along the coast. The first, for the Mandayas, in Dungan, and the second, for the Moslems at the entrance to Baguan. Both follow the identical set-up of the other towns organized until now. I really cannot swallow without getting irritated these titles of **datus** and **panditas**, **nacudas** and **ladianudas** and others of similar style, by which Islamism is heard around our section.

The Mandayas led by the bagani Macusang have killed a Christian, Andrés Bantayan, of San Luís, while they were setting up an ambush for one Aguiadan, Janauy's companion during the well-known assassination of Bilto of Manlubuan. Other killings have taken place in Baganga, Casauman and Lapinigan. I omit their story since I think I have already written your Reverence about them in one of my previous letters.

The mail which conducted the fifths to Surigao has returned. Since its departure from there, three deaths have occurred on board, which I guess were due to cholera, although they claim overeating. Those from San Juan have also had two deaths. They observe quarantine. Pray God for these missions. The banca from Hinatuan bringing us supplies broke in two on rounding Sancap point. The cargo was lost, but the crew were saved. Smallpox in Davao has now partly stopped, according to the lieutenant of Mati. I am going to send a banca which the fathers there have requested.

## 21

Caraga, 15 February 1888

I received your Reverence's most welcome letters, dated 3 and 30 December, for which I am very thankful. At last the much awaited decree has now been published in the *Gazette* of 22 October, by which the pagan converts to the Christian religion in Mindanao, or those still to be converted in the future, will be exempt from all pecuniary taxations or personal obligations throughout their life. The newly erected parish of Caraga, which has at present almost about 5,000 new Christians, is rejoicing at this new decree.

In thanksgiving to God for such a signal favor, we shall hold a special celebration in each of the new reductions, during which the new decree will be announced, for it has opportunely sanctioned what had long ago been legislated on this matter. This provision, besides being just in itself, is useful to the State and essential for the prompt reduction of the pagans. And, indeed, how can we not call it just, unless those who have voluntarily left the wild freedom of the forests should

continue being exempt from the obligations and tributes which they did not have during all their pagan life before they were reduced? And how can an arrangement fail to profit the State which assures it of an income but which, if demanded now, could be collected neither now nor in the future? Tributes and obligations for the new converts within a period more or less long would be the same as putting obstacles before those who are coming out of the forests, or promoting the desertion of those already reduced.

This is also the reason why it was very necessary that the decree be announced in the *Gazette*, namely, that since these tribes newly come from the forest do not understand advantages other than ones they materially see and touch, at present, they would, on feeling the weight of obligations which they had never borne, believe themselves in a worse condition than before and quickly return to their paganism and wilderness. They would not stop to investigate the reasons why the Government had imposed on them a monetary tax and the obligation of personal labor. Thanks, then, to the Government for it has been able to carry out the traditional mercy of the Code of the Indies. Thanks also to General Jovellar who realizing with superior judgment the extreme importance of this matter, has obtained from Madrid the extension requested for such a period and quieted the anxiety of the missionaries who dreaded the approach of the critical deadline of ten years for the majority of the newly reduced Christians, fearing lest in one moment the work of reduction achieved with so much care and perspiration should be ruined.

I read with great pleasure the following paragraph in your last letter of 3 December: of the many things which have come from Barcelona, it was left to Fr. Altamiras, thanks to the merits gained in that mission, to pick the first for Caraga, and he knew what to choose. The people will see it in time. Many pieces of clothing have also been chosen for it. They are now sewing 50 Jackets of merino cloth for the principales. Decidedly, St. Francis Xavier was suggested to your Reverence by the saint himself who wanted to give us gifts on his feast day. Well done, those charitable people of Barcelona! God

reward His Excellency, the most Reverend Bishop of that city, who initiated these alms, and the praiseworthy Catholic Association who encouraged and collected them, and in a very special way, its meritorious Board of Directors and Señor Dodero, its zealous president. God be their reward exceedingly great. May your Reverence convey our gratitude to these honorable gentlemen and to all who have contributed to aid the needy, as a service in the spread of the Faith and the splendor of catholic worship in this island. As an insignificant sign of our sentiments, I have been able to gather some objects of Mandaya culture. These I will try to send . . . as soon as I have a good harvest, that he in turn may forward them to the president of the Catholic Association to serve as a trophy in one of their conference halls. These are various lances, daggers, mats, clothes, skirts, necklaces, bracelets, rings and coins with which the Mandayas arm, clothe and adorn themselves. Besides these, there will be some *agung*s, silver bells confiscated with the idols that were taken away during your Reverence's visit the past year. These will give some idea of who the Mandayas are. For, if I may say so, in these objects are stereotyped the usages, customs, arts, industry, and religion of this race which it has been our fortune to evangelize in the easternmost extremity of the Philippine archipelago.

## 22

Caraga, 14 November 1885

I received your most welcome letter of 8 October. Since the last letter I wrote you<sup>32</sup> there have been no new assassinations, although the town of Santa Fé was surrounded two or three times by around seventy bandits, but without result. The morale of the towns could not be better, despite the continuing alarms. In the September mission trip . . . we had 302 baptisms; in this trip for October and November, they total

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<sup>32</sup> Letter dated 29 September 1885 in which Father Pastells wrote in part: "... in the northern sector, ten Christians were assassinated and two were kidnapped by the pagans. They say that of the assassins three died and three were wounded. Don Luis saw the head of the *bagani* Lantayona cut off by one of the soldiers."

183. I hope in God that before I return to Caraga... the baptisms will reach 250 at least. The present year therefore will end with about 800 baptisms, almost all in the southern sector of the mission. In the north scarcely any are left now, except the ranches of those brigands from Bungadon and Banganga, which cause us so much suffering.

## 23

Caraga, 7 December 1885

I suppose Your Reverence will be filled with anxiety over this mission... nothing unusual has happened since the time I wrote about the 25 assassinations. But tension continues until now, especially since such serious attempts are still unpunished. And yet this is not the most opportune time to punish them, seeing that the *amihan* has passed over us, and the rains will cut down most of the results of whatever mission trip is undertaken. If anything needs to be done, it will be better to wait for the month of May to take up the offensive; meantime, continue on the defensive until that season. This is the question that deserves our special attention, because otherwise we may have to regret the annual repetition of similar tragedies.

The towns are peaceful, thank God, and these attacks have not produced a single runaway from the entire mission. Hunger will produce much.

I have again visited the southern half of the mission, and 232 Mandayas were baptized during the round. The total this year is 650.