

TEA TIME TALK

(BY WILMA J. MARCH)

This week I bring you an article written especially for this column by Professor Williams, who wrote some time ago on "Filipino Superstitions."

Spanish Cruelty

(By Professor Hadwen H. Williams, F. R. G. S.)

Foreign newspaper correspondents in Spain have given to the outside world stories of atrocities which may be hard to believe, yet the Spaniards have long been notorious for their cruelty.

They knew how to acquire colonies; they never learned how to administer them. Beneath the velvet glove of politeness there has always been the iron hand of oppression. Spain gained enormous colonial possessions and was such a severe ruler that she has lost nearly all of them. At present the world watches to see whether this characteristic of absolute indifference to the welfare of others will cause the country to destroy itself.

The cruelty of the Spaniards is well-known to all persons who have lived in Spanish-speaking countries. Latin-Americans have learned, by stories handed down from their ancestors, of the unspeakable tortures committed by the Spaniards in the conquest of Central and South America. It has been about a century since Spain was forced to relinquish her hold on the mainland. She continued to rule part of the West Indies until near the end of the nineteenth century, and there must be many people still living in Cuba who remember cruelties practised by the Spaniards before the island finally threw off the Spanish yoke.

It has been thirty-nine years since Spain was ousted from the Philippines. All the older natives in the Islands remember well the methods the Spaniards used to force the Filipinos into submission. Filipinos residing in the Philippine Islands have given me the following accounts of cruelties practised by the Spaniards during the latter years of the Spanish regime which lasted from 1521 to 1898.

Leopoldo Cruz, whose home is in Navotas near Manila, says that in 1878 a Spanish officer, Captain Tiong, was put in charge of the town, with Padre Mariano as curate. All residents of the town were required to put lighted lanterns in their windows at night. The people were ordered to kneel, take off their hats, and bow whenever the captain and the curate passed. The people had to pay tribute to the officials, and work on roads and bridges. Hundreds of persons failed to bow when the captain passed; they were tied for four hours on ant-hills or whipped with canes made of round rattan. Those who failed to put lighted lamps in the windows were stabbed with knives or pierced with bayonets. Those guilty of not paying tribute on time were fastened in pillories, or tied to posts in front of churches and exposed all day to the heat of the sun. The most severe punishment was reserved for persons who mutilated holy images. Such offenders were made to thrust their hands into boiling water for twenty minutes. Guilty persons who did not confess were shot and killed in the yard in front of the bahay pare (priest's home).

Early in May, 1879, the members of a prominent family in Navotas were tried for heresy. On the fourteenth of the month they were executed in front of the bahay pare.

At last the natives revolted, and organized a secret society to work against the Spaniards. Each native who was suspected of being a member was tied hand and foot and executed in front of the bahay pare. By the end of 1880 about two hundred Filipinos had been killed in Navotas.

"The most important use of the bahay pare", says Iluminado Cruz, "was to house prisoners who were to be tortured. Anighakon, chief of Navotas, the most hated prisoner, was dashed and then tied tightly to a stone post coated with sharp-pointed pieces of glass and nails. A kettle of boiling lead was brought near the poor native, and after many threats and merciless flogging, Anighakon was forced to put out his

tongue and feel the agony of a scorched skin. After a few minutes of suffering the first martyr of Navotas passed away. The remains were thrown into a deep well. After this event the natives were notified that their chief was fairly dealt with, and advised that he was safe in the monastery. Thus the friars in bahay pare continued to rule Navotas."

"From 1878 to 1883," relates Miss Loreta de Guia, "was a sad time in Navotas. The powers of state and church were coupled together, and they could punish or execute you for the slightest offense that you might commit. It is estimated that about five hundred people were executed within one year, and many were entirely ignorant of the crime of which they were accused."

Artemio Victoria of Tagig in Rizal Province says that the life of the people of his town was, in Spanish times, "quite difficult and full of misery."

Miss Fortunata Cruz of Paranaquo writes: "The collectors of tribute often collected at the point of the bayonet. If a man was unable to pay tribute at the stated time he was beaten to death or taken to the forest, where he was tied to a tree. The ants were allowed to bite him all day long. The punishments employed by the Spaniards were unjustifiable and cruel. . . . This was a time of tyranny and cruelty by the Spaniards, a period of ignorance and superstition."

Miss Carmen Alagar describes the atrocities perpetrated by the Spaniards in her home town of Vigan in Ilocos Sur Province on the northwest coast of Luzon. . . . One man who was suspected of robbery was arrested. Without having been given a trial of any kind, he was sentenced to be whipped five times in every block of the town.

Punishments administered to the Filipinos who attended Spanish schools in Davao Province are described by Exequiel Angeles. "Prayers and ritual were memorized," he says, "and this memory work was rigidly enforced. The second time a pupil did not know his lesson he was forced to execute the timba (sit and stand alternately; the right hand holding the left ear and the left hand holding the right ear) for several hours until the teacher told him to stop. There were many kinds of punishment, such as kneeling on shells, on mongo seeds, on small stones, and under the heat of the sun. When a pupil was whipped, if his back was sore, he was beaten on the palms with a leather or board. Often blood flowed from the whipped pupils and the palms swelled."

In a description of the town of Marikina in Spanish times, Felino Reyes states: "Another method of punishing pupils was to tie them on ant-hills."

To Spanish speaking people who live outside of Spain, and there are millions of them, it must seem that justice is at last being done. Instead of forcing their will on other people, with every imaginable cruelty and atrocity, the Spaniards at last are very busily engaged in butchering and torturing each other.

SCHOOL REPORTS

S.S. 19, Euphrasia

V.—Florence Gardner, Gwendolan Thompson.

Sr. III—Audrey McAfee, Jean Risk, Aileen Graham, Lorne Gardner.

Jr. III—Vernon Fawcett.

Pr.—Norma McAfee, Muriel Fawcett, Jackie Gardner, Gordon Clarke, Melville Risk.

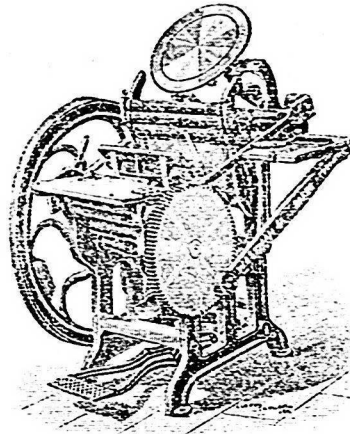
B. Paterson, teacher.

House of Refuge Services

Feb. 5 — Rev. H. S. Warren.
Feb. 19 — Rev. T. O. Miller.
March 5 — Rev. A. Mills.
March 19 — Rev. C. O. Pherrill.
April 2 — Rev. H. S. Warren.
April 16 — Rev. T. O. Miller.
April 30 — Rev. A. Mills.
May 14 — Rev. C. O. Pherrill.
May 28 — Rev. H. S. Warren.
June 4 — Rev. T. O. Miller.
June 18 — Rev. A. Mills.

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