

**Mr. Conner Makes a Report,' Chicago Record, September 30, 1899.**

Following is a copy of the report forwarded by Mr. Washington Conner after he had labored for a month with the Kakyak family of the island of Luzon:

"To the Bureau of Benevolent Assimilation, War Department, Washington, D. C., United States of America: I have the honor to submit herewith my first report as special instructor and pioneer missionary in the department of benevolent assimilation.

"One month ago I arrived in the island of Luzon to begin the noble work of civilizing the Tagalos by example and precept. For experimental purposes I selected a family residing in a by-valley only a few miles from Manila. This is within the pacified district. The name of the family is Kakyak. The head of the family is Bulolo Kakyak, a well-to-do agriculturist, who seems kindly disposed toward American sovereignty, although he has a lingering desire that his country should be given a chance to govern itself. I have used all the arguments you so kindly forwarded to me. I have assured him that the Tagalos are a tribe, and not a nation, and that he will be happier as a colonial subject than as an independent citizen. Of late he pretends to accept my view of the situation, but I suspect that he is in secret sympathy with his countrymen who are still opposing our humane intentions. If this is the case I can well believe that the Tagalos are as treacherous and unreliable as they have been painted.

"Only the other day he said to me: 'Don't you think that a man who is ready to die for the right of self-government is entitled to a chance to govern himself?' This question might indicate an incendiary state of mind. I have told him that such sentiments were treasonable and un-American. He has promised to be more careful in the future.

"Mrs. Kakyak, wife of Bulolo, is a woman of shrewish temperament and all the spiteful prejudices of her sex. In spite of my best endeavors I cannot compel her to wear a corset more than an hour or two each day, and she positively refuses to appear in public wearing an American hat with a heron's feather in it. I have talked to her by the hour in regard to our social customs' home etiquette, household decoration, rules for entertaining, etc. She listens with slack patience and then declares that it is all a mess of foolishness. She is the most stubborn of my pupils, and I fear it will be a difficult job to assimilate her.

"There are three children. The daughter, Eulalie, is a remarkably bright and spirited young woman to whom I have been devoting a great deal of time. She evinces a decided interest in all the institutions and customs of our great republic, but when I explain them to her in detail she seems to be intensely amused. I attribute this lack of gravity to her extreme youth. It may be that with further labor I shall be able to convince her that she will be happier after she has embraced our complicated civilization.

"Of the two sons one is approaching manhood and the other is of tender years and is a pupil in the parish school. I regret to say that the entire family can read and write. Truly enough, 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.' The Kakyaks have obtained a smattering of information by reading, and they ask many troublesome questions when I try to convince them that the Tagalos should yield themselves willingly into our hands and trust implicitly in the piety of our intentions.

"For instance, Francisco, the elder son, asked me the other day if the American Indians had become completely 'assimilated.' I could not enter into a discussion of the Indian question with a mere youth, so I told him, in guarded language, that the Indians were not yet totally 'assimilated,' but would be in another generation or two.

"This question, propounded by the elder son, will give you some idea of what I have to contend with every day. I understand that in the islands south of here, where the natives can neither read nor write, the emissaries of our beloved country have no difficulty in making peace treaties.

"I understand also that the leaders of the Tagalo rebellion are educated men and that 70 percent of the members of the Filipino congress are university graduates. It is a deplorable and unexplainable fact that these educated men should not perceive the folly of wishing for an independent government.

"So long as the war for the suppression of the rebellion is being carried forward I fear that the work of benevolent assimilation will be sadly hindered. For some reason or other these Tagalos have an affection for their countrymen in arms, and it annoys and irritates them to hear every day or two of a few hundred of these misguided wretches being shot down in the trenches. They are a simple-minded people, a people that are not capable of drawing just conclusions. Therefore they fail to understand that any Tagalo who takes up arms in support of an independent government deserves to be shot. They do not seem to take our view of the matter at all.

"There must be something essentially wrong with the reasoning faculties of these Tagalos. I find that 95 percent of them want to have a government of their own. We can no longer trust any of them. All the mayors we installed with such hopeful ceremony have gone over to the enemy. Now, as I have said before, while the natives are in this sullen and unreceptive mood it will be rather difficult to command their love and respect or carry forward the commendable plans for their 'benevolent assimilation.'

"I have attempted to soften the Kakyak family by appealing to the Christian sentiment of the members. You know the Tagalos are a very pious people and have a profound reverence for the scriptures. Therefore, when they have shown resentment at our military operations here in the island or have spoken with some show of bitterness over the death of a few male relatives I have quoted to them passages on the order of the following: 'Love your enemies,' 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters,' 'Pray for them which despitefully use you,' 'Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other, and him, that taken away thy cloak forbid him not to take thy coat also.

"Instead of being pacified by these injunctions they have retaliated by quoting to me 'And as ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise.' I have explained to them that the golden rule cannot possibly be applied to the present situation in the Philippines, but what are you going to do with a stubborn people who have become inflamed by false hopes?

"In answer to their inquiries as to the privileges they will enjoy under American rule I have followed instructions and told them that they will be allowed to participate. Then they have asked, 'To what extent will we participate?' My reply has been, 'You must

leave that to us.' They have not been fully satisfied with this reply, but I can't think of anything else to say. If you can figure out a more diplomatic reply, please forward it to me at once.

"In conclusion I may say that the Kakyak family is not greatly changed from what it was when I arrived here, one month ago. This leads me to believe that the process of benevolent assimilation will be very slow. It may require a century or so to transform the Tagalos into good Americans. The quickest method would be to encourage immigration from the United States. If we could fill all parts of Luzon with Americans, intent on developing the resources of the island, the natives would naturally adopt our progressive methods as a measure of self-preservation. If they failed to do so, however, it wouldn't make so much difference, because with a sufficient number of enterprising Americans over here the Tagalos would not have much to do with the conduct of affairs. But [ suppose Americans will be slow to immigrate in large numbers on account of the enervating climate. So that, after all, it may not be practicable to educate the Tagalos by contact. Perhaps it would be better to continue the policy of benevolent assimilation by cable. In this way we can avoid the climate.

"Now that I am here, I will continue my labors as instructor, but at this writing I cannot report with unqualified hopefulness. "I am, very respectfully,

"WASHINGTON CONNER."

After the missionary had completed his report he read it over and said to himself: 'It isn't very definite, that's a fact. But then the situation isn't very definite, either.'

