

Carpenter Among Our Mohammedans

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ZAMBOANGA, April 2.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—I have just had an interview with Datto Mandi. He is one of the most powerful of the Moro chiefs and has more strength of character than the sultan of Jolo. He controls the Moros of the western part of Mindanao and has hundreds of fighting men who will wage war for him at a nod of the head. He is, moreover, a friend of the Americans and was the first of the Mohammedans to espouse our cause in this part of the world. He fought for us against the insurgents; and as soon as our gunboat, the Castine, arrived he got an American flag and raised it over his town. He flew it at the mastheads of his boats and offered his services to us. He sold supplies to our gunboats and when General Bates came to Jolo in August he sent word to him that if so desired he would take his warriors and wipe the insurgents from the face of the island. General Bates did not like to authorize Mohammedans to kill Christians and for this reason refused his permission.

no telling when one may go into a state of Juramentadoism, or, as the Malays say, "run amok." There is one advantage the Juramentado fanatic has over the average murderer. He is like a rattlesnake in that he gives warning before he strikes. He informs his people before he goes into this state. He has his eyebrows shaved, takes a bath and puts on his best clothes, usually dressing in white. He then goes to a priest and takes an oath before him that he will die killing the ungodly. He then arms himself with one of these terrible bolos or kris, and starts out, killing every Christian he meets until he is himself killed. As he goes on through his path of death he often disregards the religious character of his victims and kills every one he meets, being insane in his endeavors to add another and still another death to his list. Cases are cited where the Juramentado, being chased by a soldier with gun and bayonet, has turned, and seizing the bayonet, forced it into his body in order that



THE HOUSES ARE ON POSTS.

Mandi's town are not so secluded as the women of Turkey and other Mohammedan countries. This is so throughout these islands. The females go about with unveiled faces, and although one dare not touch a woman for fear of death from her owner, he may look at her as he pleases with out offense. My visit to Datto Mandi was in company with Colonel Webb Hayes, and it was together that we explored the village and made photographs of the people. We even entered a number of the houses and took snapshots of the ladies of the harem. The average house has no separate apartment for women. There is usually but one room, and all sleep on the floor together, the different wives gathering their respective children about them and the common husband, I suppose, lying next to his favorite. The floors are of bamboo poles. They are covered with mats at night. The women were sitting on the floors of the houses we visited, for there were no chairs, and, with the exception of a few boxes, no furniture whatever. The clothing of the family was hung from the rafters of the hut, and at one side, fastened to the wall, was usually a collection of barongs and kris, ready for use in case of an affray. In one house we found a little yellow-skinned baby swinging in a hammock slung from the roof and it was on the plea of making a photograph of it that I was able to photograph the four wives and the female slaves of the establishment.

Datto Mandi at Home.

It was in a house like this that I found Datto Mandi. His town was burned last summer during his fight with the insurgents and his present quarters are but temporary. He is, however, building what among the Moros would be called a palace, nearby. It is a house about fifty feet square and perhaps sixty feet high, with living rooms upon posts at least ten feet above the ground. The house is chiefly of bamboo and it will be roofed and walled with the Nipa palm thatch, the common roof of the country.

When Colonel Hayes and myself first arrived we were told that the datto was taking his siesta and that as they did not dare to disturb him we had better wait about until he got through with his nap. This we did and within a quarter of an hour were rewarded by his coming out and bidding us welcome. Through our interpreter he made us at home and chatted with us about himself and his people.

Datto Mandi is by far the finest looking Mohammedan I have seen in the Philippines. He is a dark-faced, sober looking man of perhaps fifty years, as straight as the tall coconut trees which wave their fan-like leaves over his village. He has bright, piercing black eyes, a nose which is almost Roman in shape and a broad forehead. His mouth shows determination and his teeth are of the black varnish hue so much desired by the Moro.

Sends a Message to United States. During our conversation I asked him to

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DATTO MANDI, HIS FAVORITE WIFE AND SON AND THE BEE CORRESPONDENT.

he might thus get close to and kill the man at the other end of the gun.

The Sultan on Killing Americans.

So far no Americans have been killed by Juramentados. General Bates guarded against such a possibility to some extent by telling the sultan and datto that if a Juramentado killed an American he would kill not only the murderer, but also the priest who swore the oath and every one else who had a hand in the crime. He impressed this so firmly upon the mind of the sultan of Sulu that his majesty issued a proclamation telling his people that: "They must not kill Americans, because they are like a bunch of matches, and if you touch one, the whole bunch will go off. Besides," he added, "there is really no reason why Mohammedans should kill Americans, because they are not Christians."

I have just heard of a Juramentado case which occurred last week on the island of Basilan, and which was indirectly caused by our troops. The fanatic in this case was the servant of a man named Yaqui, who was being used to some extent by the Americans as an interpreter. The other day when some of our soldiers called at Yaqui's house all of the servants with the exception of this fanatic stood up and did them honor. The fanatic sat sullenly in one corner and would not obey his master's call. As a result, when the Americans left he was given a scolding and a whipping. He at once resolved to kill his master and then go to the garrison and kill as many soldiers as he could.

He went to the priest and took the oath of the Juramentado. He had washed himself and shaved his eyebrows and was about to start forth when the datto, who had heard of his taking the oath, ordered his warriors to kill him. They did this at once, cutting his head from his shoulders and leaving his body lying on the ground for the boys and men to try their knives upon. After the man was killed, the datto reported his death to the commander, saying that the Spaniards required him to report to them whenever they killed a Juramentado.

Datto Mandi's Village.

But come with me and take a walk through the village in which Datto Mandi lives. It adjoins the garrison town of Zamboanga, being separated from it only by a river, over which is a bridge. Imagine hundreds of yellow and gray thatched huts, each from fifteen to twenty feet square, built high up on piles and scattered for a mile or more along the seashore under the tallest of coconut trees. Let the huts be from four to six feet from the ground, and let them be reached by wide ladders with round bamboo rungs. Let each of the huts have a lean-to, or a shed extending out at its front or side, and you have some idea of a Moro village.

You cannot see it, however, without you fill it with people, forming the queerest conglomeration of features and colors you can imagine. You must place here and there scores of barefooted, brown-faced men, wearing bright turbans, loose jackets and skin-tight trousers of red, yellow, blue and, in fact, all colors of stripes. You must have scores of brown-skinned, half-naked boys and altogether naked children moving about. At the waist of every boy who is

over fifteen, and of every man, you must put a great knife in a wooden sheath. You must now and then add one with a spear or a lance, and scatter through the whole men with helmet-like straw hats, which end in a cone at the crown, adorned with a piece of white tin, which shines like silver under the rays of the sun. You must mix with the crowd scores of dark-faced women and girls, only a few of whom hide their faces after Mohammedan fashion, and some of whom show a great deal more of their bodies than our customs allow. This is so also of the men; not a few wear nothing but breech cloths and big hats; but all have their swords.

Their Teeth Are Hollow-ground.

Stop a moment and look at their features. What fierce-looking people they are and how different from the Tagals and Visayans. Their faces are dark chocolate, their cheek bones are high and they make us think somewhat of the American Indian. They have black eyes and rather thick noses. There is just a trace of the negro in some of the features, although some have the straight nose of the Caucasian. Notice the blood-red lips and black teeth. These Moros all chew the betel and, strange to say, both women and men think black teeth are prettier than white ones.

Take a closer look at the teeth of that woman who stands over there! What is the matter with her? Her teeth seem to be hollowed out at the front, and they are indeed hollow-ground. This custom is common among the Mohammedan women and men. By means of a round stone or a rat-tail file, they cut their teeth so that they curve outward, and the deeper the curve the greater the beauty.

I heard the other day how the custom arose. It dates back, it is said, to the days of Mohammed. When the prophet took a second wife his first wife was jealous. She was afraid No. 2 would be loved more than she, so she decided to destroy her rival's attractiveness. She first cut off her hair at the front, but this only made her more beautiful than ever. The other women straightway banged their hair, and today all Moro girls do the same.

The next day Mohammed's first wife concluded to try the experiment of grinding the teeth, and she hollowed out the grinders of wife No. 2 and painted them black. When Mohammed came home he thought the young woman more charming than ever and, as the story goes, from that day these women have blackened their teeth.

I don't think the custom prevails in Turkey, however, and I have never heard of it in any other Mohammedan country. Here both men and women universally do it, the teeth of the girls being filed just as soon as they reach marriageable age. The operation is so painful that they often faint under the file, but it is the fashion, and every maiden pines for the day when she can change her ugly white teeth for hollow-ground molars of a beautiful black. This day comes here at twelve and thirteen years of age, at which time the girls often have husbands, and it is said a Moro will not take as a wife a girl whose teeth are not black.

A Peep Into a Harem.

From what I have written you may notice that the Mohammedan women of Datto

Our Mohammedan Empire.

Before I describe my audience with Datto Mandi and my visit to his people I must tell you something of our Mohammedan empire. It includes this great island of Mindanao, which, as I have said, is as big as Ohio, and also the numerous islands which spot this southern sea. Mindanao is said to be about two-fifths Christian, two-fifths Mohammedan and one-fifth savage. In the other islands the people are nearly all Moros, but there are probably as many Moros on Mindanao as on all the rest. No accurate census has ever been taken and estimates of the number of Mohammedans vary all the way from 200,000 to 500,000.

The Mohammedans, or Moros, as the Spaniards called them, are made up of different tribes. Each tribe is under its independent chief, or datto, but they all owe a certain allegiance to the sultan of Jolo, and on the island of Mindanao to another sultan, who lives near Cotabato, and whom I expect to visit after I leave Zamboanga. It is not entirely clear as to just what the relation between the sultans and the dattos is. It is semi-religious and semi-feudal, with the dattos often so strong that they apparently pay no attention to the sultan.

I doubt whether Datto Mandi recognizes anyone as his superior. He is far different from the other Mohammedan chiefs and far more civilized. The other dattos give commands to kill and spare not. In their wars they kill as many of the men as they can and capture the women and girls for wives, while they use the boys as slaves. Last September Mandi had a fight with the insurgents near here, during which he captured one of their towns. He killed the most of the men, but held the women and children, to the number of 100, and sent them back to their relatives.

Has Power of Life and Death.

The dattos have absolute power of life and death over their subjects. Whether they have this legally or not under the Spanish laws is a question, but at any rate they exercise it. No one would question Mandi's right to chop off the head of any one of his subjects. A datto of the island of Sulu is said to have fallen out with a blacksmith the other day. I think the blacksmith had been smiling at one of the women of the datto's harem. At any rate the datto—his name is Jokanlime, and a very distinguished datto he is—came to the blacksmith and asked him to show him a barong he was making. The blacksmith unsuspectingly handed it to him, and with one blow Jokanlime cut his head from his shoulders. I hear of other dattos who when they want a man killed merely point out the man to one of their attendants, and with a significant gesture draw the index finger of the right hand around the throat. This is enough, and the man dies.

While calling on the sultan of Jolo, during his visit to the island of Jolo, General Bates lost a knife. It was found to have been stolen, and the sultan was much surprised that the general did not cut off the thief's head.

I am surprised every day at the slight regard the Moros have for life and death. You may have heard something of the Juramentados. These are Moros who have sworn that they will kill Christians and keep on killing until they die in their tracks. Their theory is that the Mohammedan who kills a Christian is sure to go to heaven and the more he kills the higher will be his place upon the steps of the throne. Until lately, when men have taken this oath, the dattos have claimed that they could not control them, or at least that they were not responsible for their acts, but of late they have been ordering such men to be killed on sight. They had a lesson from General Arolas, who was in command of the Spaniards some time ago. Some of the warriors of the datto of Cotabato had killed a number of Spaniards, and when the datto was called to account he replied that he could not restrain his men for they were Juramentados. As an answer General Arolas sent a gunboat and shelled the datto's town, slaughtering 400 people. When the datto complained the Spanish general coolly replied, "Can't help it, my men are Juramentados."

How They Prepare to Kill.

I have kept my eyes open during my walks through Moro villages about here, for, although the people are generally quiet, they are all armed with knives and there is

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