

more. The roofs let in rain, the walls and floor were a cage for wandering winds. It is cold in the mountain nights, here at three thousand feet high; the people suffer from chest troubles of many kinds, and often die of pleurisy and pneumonia, but they never think of migrating into the empty lands lower down, where they could built comfortable houses, and enjoy good hunting grounds, and get out of the eternal mist and rain. The Papuan is of all savages the most conservative.

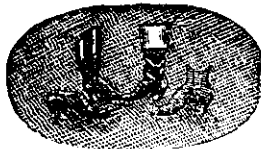
We gave the children some tobacco (they all smoke, at any age) and handed out a little also to the few old people who had been squatting monkey fashion on the ground, stupidly watching us, their simian small faces resting on their tiny wrinkled knees. They addressed a few grunts and snarls of the Oba-Oba tongue to the Father, and then seemed to go to sleep again. Little can be done with the old folk in the way of actual mission work, but they owe much to the Fathers in the way of comfort and kind treatment. The lot of the worn-out savage is not a happy one, away from Mission influence; he is fortunate if his poor condition saves him from the cooking oven, when he is too old to work or to hunt any more. But the grandmothers and grand-

fathers of Oba-Oba are fed and housed, and get their share of salt and tobacco; and what can a native want more, at fifty or so, which is equivalent to eighty among the whites? Strange and far-away and isolated is

The Mission Life at Dilava,

almost, one thinks, like life in a lighthouse set upon some lonely ocean rock. Above the world, above the rolling clouds, barred off by torrents, shut in by mountain walls, the little station hangs upon its peak between earth and heaven, with the long, long road of the famous and perilous track, and the uncharted Coral Sea, and the wide stretches of the equatorial Pacific, one upon another, between itself and all the interests, possessions, pleasures of civilisation. Of the work done in these lonely and dangerous places by the Catholic Mission, one may speak freely. Of the lives led by its members the outside visitor must say but little. There are things too sacred for the cold light of print, even if those into whose hands the record may stray could always and everywhere understand. Yet in these far-away mountain fastnesses of Dilava and Mafulu, the light shines very clear, from a heaven that seems close at hand.

(To be continued.)



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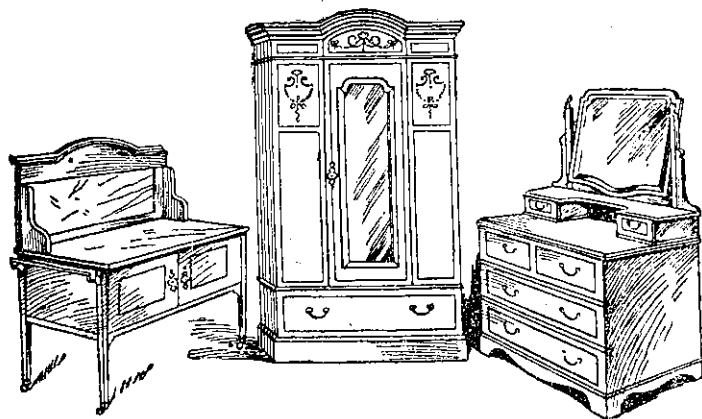
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