

Young Bishop Brent: From Boston to Manila (1901-1902)

By

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A PRELIMINARY NOTE

This with projected articles to follow is an ecumenical study of persons and happenings in the Philippines shortly after the turn of the century. The two principal personages involved, Charles Henry Brent and Gregorio Aglipay, were not at that time in Communion with the Holy See. Brent's is an Anglican story. Aglipay's is something else. But it would be bunglesome for the writer and irksome for the reader to give constant clarification as to what sort of ecclesial reality separated from Rome is being referred to in every sentence. Therefore not as a sign of acceptance at the face value or of any other premature evaluation, much less of contempt for any Roman pronouncement from *Apostolicae Curae* onwards, we have thought it best to use Anglican, Old Catholic and Aglipayan designations for Bishops, Priests, rites, sacraments and usages in the terminologies of the separated bodies involved. In the cases of both Brent and Aglipay we wish to see them as they saw themselves and we gladly leave any higher evaluation to canonical and dogmatic expertise beyond both the competence and compass of our historically orientated essay. We have no desire to scandalize Roman Catholics or to flatter Anglicans and Aglipayans. We merely wish to present a problematic in terms of its protagonists and to avoid being either tediously obscure and naively charmed. We hope our readers can bear with this would be moderate stance, taken for reasons of the desire for ecumenical fairness, without finding it unduly quaint.

I. A Light from Deep Shadow

The episcopate in those Churches, Catholic and Orthodox, Anglican and Scandinavian, Western and Eastern, which hold it to be of divine institution and essential to their ecclesial constitutions, is a burden neither lightly taken upon

themselves by those elected to it nor lightly imposed by their designators and consecrators. From the outset of his life as a Bishop-elect through the nearly thirty years of his ministry as a diocesan bishop, first as head of a missionary district, then as Ordinary of a sprawling area of Upstate New York, Charles Henry Brent was never without qualms, misgivings, fears that criticisms might be justified and a deep sense of humility. "Lord, I am not worthy," either in explicit words to such effect or in implicit sentiments of self-abasement, rings through his prayers like a veritable refrain. But it is not a sad refrain. Bishop Brent, young and inexperienced at the outset, more mellowly learned in life's ways as the years go by, was always a man of hope, a man of vision, as well as one of unflagging service. He started in a small, poor, recently founded jurisdiction, progressed to head all the American chaplains of Europe and, crowned with the laurels of his proto-ecumenical triumphs, ruled at last over the very diocese where he had begun his ministry as a deacon in another century and, in many ways, another world.

In this article let us look at Bishop Brent before and after he takes his crozier firmly in hand and as he begins to preside in love over a small, extremely dependent missionary Church. It is a Church that barely exists until he, in effect, founds it on the local scene at Manila. It is from the first a multilingual Church, celebrating its rites in English, Amoy Chinese and Spanish, in Tagalog and Ilocano and, even fairly early on, in dialects of the mountain peoples of Luzon and of the coastal and interior inhabitants of Mindanao and the Jolo Archipelago. For it is from the first a Philippine church, though it will never claim to be the Church of all Filipinos. Brent's Church is a Church of fairly obvious service to a colonial administration and its staff both civilian and military, but it never forgets or excludes the local citizenry who seem often to have been administered to as rather reluctant colonials. They are not thus to be treated by the Episcopal Church, nor is it a Church standing still. It plans for the future. Some of the plans are dreams. They never materialize. But this Philippine Episcopal church is with us still. And this very presence, best known by outsiders in the spheres of medicine and education, is a constant reminder of the foundations laid by Charles Henry Brent some nine decades ago.

The story of Bishop Brent is a story of a rising from obscurity to fame, from a hidden life to one not just subject to public view but formative of the opinions of a multitude. It is, however, no meteoric flash. This life rather rises slowly and surely and is upheld by a Power beyond itself. It is like every human being's life, the life of a single person. It is the life of a man dedicated to God. It is always a life for others but it is so lived that at its end Brent can be called "Everybody's Bishop."

II. Childhood, Youth and Early Ministry

Charles Henry Brent was born on April 9, 1862 in Newcastle, Ontario, Canada.¹ His father was Rector of the local parish of the Church of England in

¹This sketch of Brent's pre-episcopal life and career (and much which follows) is based directly on Ramsen B. Ogilby, "Charles Henry Brent" in Harris E. Starr, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. XXI, Suppl 1 to Dec. 1935, N.Y., Chas. Scribner's sons, 1944, pp. 115a.

Canada and later became an honorary Canon of Toronto Cathedral. Henry Brent, to give his name, was of English background, a moderate High Churchman and clergyman of deep, local roots in Newcastle who lived there most of his life. The mother of the newborn son (third of her ten children, seven of whom survived into adulthood) was born Sophia Frances Cummings. Her background and ancestry were Scottish and she, too, was and remained deeply rooted in the small town provincial Canadian scene which was that of all her children's births and early years.

The Rectory was the home of a cultured little group, literate and given to reading, with good musical ears and much instrumental ability, a group where painting and sculpture, fine but sturdy furniture and modest but well wrought coverings and draperies were all appreciated. The Brents were a family of refinement and good taste but they could neither afford nor did they desire ostentation. Theirs certainly was a fitting nursery for a man whose compassion would one day extend to the whole world, a man who would campaign against drugs and challenge the oppressors, who would defend the poor and neglected and beg unashamedly from the grand ones of this world.

Brent's boyhood was happy and normal. He combined from early years a love for study with a love for sport. This would come in later life to involve a constant but balanced switch from profound, interior grappling with problems to exuberant forays on to the playing field, into the swimming pool or onto a horse's back. As a boy this probably meant ice-hockey, recreational skating and sledding in the winter and swimming, "rounders" (a form of baseball) and soccer at other, warmer times with his beloved horseback riding all year long. As a man it was to mean golf and polo and swimming and (less for recreation than from its necessity for work in most cases) trekking over rough terrain on foot and on horseback. Brent was always a firm believer in the Aristotelian adage: *mens sana in corpore sano*, and long before the world had heard of "wholistics" he made his Christian philosophy of the body the subject of a book.²

In 1879, having studied at home and in the municipal elementary school at Newcastle, Brent now eighteen years of age set out for Port Hope, northeast of Newcastle on Lake Ontario, where at Trinity College School he prepared for the course at Trinity College, Toronto where he graduated Bachelor of Arts with honors in Classics in 1884. At that point Brent returned to Port Hope where he taught at the School for two years while "reading" (studying privately and with tutors) for Anglican Orders.

While Bishop Sweetman of Toronto willingly ordained Brent deacon in 1886 and priest in 1887, this Canadian prelate could find no vacancy for the young cleric in his diocese. So it was that Brent made the traumatic move of crossing the border into the United States of America. It was a move that would involve an eventual change of citizenship but never a change of loyalties for Anglicanism, the

²C.H. Brent, *The Splendor of the Human Body*, New York, Logmans, Green & Co., 1904.

Britannic monarch and the "Old Country" (England) would always be nearest and dearest to Brent's heart. However, for the moment the move southward was from sheer necessity. Brent needed a source of income, however meagre. He found one at St. John's Church, Buffalo in the Diocese of Western New York of the Protestant Episcopal Church. There the young deacon began his work as organist and curate. Later he dropped the organ playing and took charge of St. Andrew's Mission Church where he was beloved and successful parish priest for a few months. Here he met the first trial of his ecclesial life, one that would have ceaseless repercussions in years to come.

The Bishop of Western New York, Dr. Arthur C. Coxe, was like many high ranking Episcopalians and Anglicans at the time, little short of paranoid on questions of ritual. The slightest "advance" (as it was referred to then) in restoring anything of pre-Reformation splendor or even simple decorum was looked upon as incipient "Romanism." After all, the Oxford Movement to which the neo-ritualists succeeded had involved Newman and Manning who became Cardinals and scores of ex-Anglican clergymen and laymen who by 1890 had long since "gone over to Rome." Ritual, however mild, was held by Dr. Coxe to be dangerous. And Brent was a ritualist, "guilty" of lighting two candles on his Communion Table which thus became an "altar"! Brent rightly pointed out to his superior that many churches under his jurisdiction had lighted candles on their altars. The Bishop was adamant. The churches involved were full-fledged parishes whose Rectors could innovate in ceremonial (up to a point, no doubt) according to their own whims or pleasures. Brent's was a mission church directly subject to the Bishop. Either the candles or Brent must go. Brent went. He returned, of course, as Bishop of Western New York thirty years later, and he then pontificated clothed in vestments and using ceremonial that no doubt could have made Bishop Coxe turn over in his grave were he able so to do. By then much of the Victorian silliness of the episcopal power clique was dead and gone forever, and Anglicans everywhere had begun to recover both in signs and symbols as well as in their truths and realities much of their Catholic heritage.

III. The Boston Years

Buffalo's loss was Boston's gain. In 1888 Brent went to Boston in search of a guru and found one in the person of Fr. Arthur Hall, Provincial Superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist and priest-in-charge of the Mission Church of the same dedication in Bowdoin St. on Beacon Hill. The "Cowley Fathers" as the religious community over whose American work Fr. Hall presided was called had been founded in Cowley St. John, Oxford, in 1865. The founder was Fr. Richard Meaux Benson, student of Christ Church and a wellknown spiritual writer and preacher. Their rule and usages were an amalgam of monastic and post-Tridentine elements (some Benedictine, some Carmelite, not a few Jesuit and even some Vincentian in origin and flavor) all adapted to an Anglican milieu. The Fathers (affectionately called "Dads" by generation of Oxford dons and undergraduates) and their lay Brothers lived an ordered, austere life with a fair amount of deep spirituality, mental discipline and corporal penance. They took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, after a fairly long probation, for life. They wore

even on the street and at public meetings other than church services a long black (gray for the Brothers) Anglican cassock bound at the waist by a thick, three-fold, knotted black cord. For head gear each donned a "shovel" hat not unlike the Spanish *teja*. In winter a thick woolen cape of ankle length was worn over the "habit." These religious certainly made an impressive and unforgettable sight on the streets of Boston (staid old Puritan "hub of the universe" by then well-invaded by Catholic Irishmen, Italians and others) in the 1890's and, indeed, up until the 1970's or longer.

Fr. Hall was, like the majority of the Cowley community, an Englishman. But there had been some Americans from the start and before long there would be Indians and South Africans as well. But Fr. Hall had come to make America his home. He was a good scholar, a sincere and convincing preacher but most of all a man of unique and almost irresistible "charm in the spirit." Today we should call him "charismatic." At the time he was simply very popular, highly respected and, indeed, much loved man. He could win over with a few words people who found his "monkish" dress outlandish and his title of "Father" ridiculous. Tall in stature, spare in frame, his eyes were piercing and even his aristocratic meign and manners had the unexpected effect of putting men and women of all classes at immediate ease. The youth and the children adored him.

That such a man should become the mentor, confessor and life-long friend of the Rev. Charles Henry Brent, still fairly fresh from provincial, rural Canada and stinging from the unjust rebuffs of the Bishop in Buffalo is, in itself, no great wonder. More telling, however, is that both men shared ideals of prayer, of meditation and of contemplative life. And they shared these ideals and found this life in community with their brethren. Very few of these had, like Hall, made final vows. Many were postulants and novices and so their commitment to the Society and its absent English Superior General was not firm. In fact, Brent probably never really understood the commitment involved in religious life, much as he admired and even, for a while at least, desired it. The real and abiding attraction was Fr. Hall, both the man and his method. The ways of prayer both liturgical and mystical which Brent learned in his three years of residence in the Tremont Street Mission House behind the Mission Church of St. John the Evangelist in Bowdoin Street stayed with him all his life. Fr. Hall, like Brent, later became a bishop and retained until his death in the thirties a love for the old Cowley ways. Inevitably, after they left it their former community developed in steadily more post-Tridentine Catholic ways to Hall's consternation and Brent's disapproving but mild amusement.

In time due to the internal controversy within the Society caused by the election of Dr. Phillips Brooks as Bishop of Massachusetts and the rigidity of the far off English Superior General, Fr. Page, Benson's first successor, Fr. Hall was recalled to Oxford. Brent went with him to protest, but his protest fell on unsympathetic if not deaf ears. This was Brent's first skirmish with ecclesiastical politics. Fr. Page and his Council were irate with Hall over the election of Brooks who was theologically liberal, oratorically famous (for good reason) and very popular in the Low Church ambience of the Massachusetts Episcopalians. Hall, though of very different "Churchmanship" and theological stance, was Brooks's

friend. Hall did not vote for Brooks, but as an elected and responsible assessor of the acts of the election he officially signed the result of the ballot. The rumor in England was that Brooks had never been validly baptized. And so Hall was charged, in effect, of conspiring with the enemies of the High Church movement in raising a pagan to the episcopate. Hall humbly obeyed his fellow countryman and stayed on in England. Brent left the postulancy and with an ex-novice, Fr. Henry M. Torbert, he returned to America.

Shortly after his arrival in Boston in 1891 Brent became a citizen of the United States of America where he now expected to "settle down" for the rest of his life. Dr. Brooks assigned Fr. Torbert and "Father" Brent as he now came to be called to the poor Mission Church of St. Stephen in the South End of Boston. The two estranged priests drew away from their former community's church in Bowdoin Street a large proportion of the choir and the flock who had loved Fr. Hall and found English interference with American affairs intolerable. The tale is a sad one and "right" was probably on neither side.³ It is a pleasant aspect of a curiously providential denouement not atypical in things ecclesial that at the time of this writing a principal aide to the apostolate of St. Stephen's Church (now in Shawmut Avenue) comes from the resources of men and materiel of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (now in Cambridge).

Brent had in his Cowley days ministered at St. Augustine's Mission to a congregation of black Americans. Now at St. Stephen's he and Torbert were faced with a low income, interracial and clingingly dependent (because largely alienated in a social sense) congregation. There were, it is true, a few members of the upper and wealthier classes who came from afar to attend St. Stephen's and supported the church in great part. There were also Harvard undergraduates who came across the Charles River Sunday after Sunday as voluntary help. But the day to day life and its expenses fell rather heavily on the shoulders of Torbert and Brent. It was life among the poor, a school of suffering and compassion. It killed Torbert, but it strengthened the gangling, athletic young Brent for a life of missionary, military and far-flung shared service that would keep him busy and available for a quarter of a century beyond his time at St. Stephen's. The harsh obscurity of St. Stephen's ended, as we have just noted in death for the Rev. H.M. Torbert who fell asleep in the Lord on September 30, 1901.⁴ On October sixth Brent preached Torbert's eulogy: "In Whom Was No Guile."⁵ Brent was thus left in full charge of St. Stephen's but within days he was notified of his election as Bishop and before the year was out he was consecrated. The ten years at St. Stephen's, poor and demanding as was the work, were not spent in total obscurity. Brent gradually gained fame as a preacher and counsellor. He was especially sought out

³The Cowley side of the affair is told at length and not without a certain nostalgic pathos by Robert Cheney Smith in two short works: *The Cowley Fathers in America - The Early Years*, Cambridge, MA, S.S.J.E., nd., vid. praes. p. 51; and *The Shrine on Bowdoin Street, 1883-1958*, Cambridge, MA, S.S.J.E., 1958, praes. pp. 20 et sq.

⁴Brent Papers, Library of Congress (henceforth: BPLC), Box 1, Diary 30.ix.01.

⁵BPLC, Box 42, Scrapbook material, privately published sermon of 6.x.01.

by the leaders in education at private preparatory schools nearby and by the professors and students of Harvard University. He mixed well in society in his well-mannered if somewhat shy way. Little by little he went forward in the esteem of the people of Boston from being someone well-thought of to being someone truly beloved. And Brent was already in print as an author read far and wide.⁶

IV. The Call to the Episcopate

The General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church was meeting at this time in San Francisco. Bishop H.C. Potter of New York sent a telegram to Brent "sounding him out" on the possibility of Brent's acceptance of the "Bishopric of the Philippine Islands" if elected. Brent wrote in his diary on October 8, 1901:

"Something within me holds me back... whatever tomorrow may bring forth. I can best prepare for it by doing today's duty."⁷

On October 11, Bishop William Lawrence of Massachusetts and the former Fr. Hall, now Bishop of Vermont, sent telegrams announcing the election by the House of Bishops and expected ratification by the lower House of Clerical and Lay Deputies. Brent's immediate comment shows how pleased, in fact, he was:

"The first feeling is one of exhilaration. The trust is glorious one and the Church bids me accept it. The call is to lay foundations. What a company it is I am asked to join: St. Paul, St. Augustine of Canterbury, St. Francis Xavier, Steare, the Selwyns" [Steare and the Selwyns were pioneer Anglican missionaries].⁸

The election was confirmed by the Lower House on October 22.⁹ By November 15 Brent was ready to accept the election by letter and did so, writing in his diary:

"I feel singularly peaceful and hopeful. May God make me the means of doing good to the nation and the Church."¹⁰

The very next day he started making arrangements for his consecration to the Anglican episcopate according to the rite of the Book of Common Prayer.

Why did Brent hesitate at all? He was at first reluctant to accept the *onus* of a Bishop not so much from sheer humility as from a lack of immediate discernment as to God's will. He sought the advice of Bishop Lawrence, his canonical superior, and of Bishop Hall, his spiritual director. Their advice was

⁶His first book was *With God in the World*, N.Y., Longmans, Green 1899.

⁷BPLC, Box 1, Diary 8.x.01.

⁸BPLC, Box 1, Diary 11.x.01.

⁹BPLC, Box 1, Diary 22.x.01.

¹⁰BPLC, Box 1, Diary 15.xi.01.

conflicting. Lawrence saw the opportunity as great and thought Brent the obvious man to meet its challenge. Hall, on the other hand, knew that Brent's services, too long limited to the Boston slums, were much in demand elsewhere. He knew that General Theological Seminary in New York City had a professorial chair vacant and waiting for Brent. Brent himself, like most Americans in 1901, hardly knew where the Philippine Islands were. He had no experience of administering anything other than small Episcopalian missions in the Eastern United States. The Missionary District of the Philippines had been carved out of the Bishop of Shanghai's spiritual domains and had only four resident priests, two of them being U.S. Army chaplains. As a "missionary district" the area was not a self-supporting diocese but something analogous to a Catholic Vicariate Apostolic, directly dependent as it was financially, personnel wise and to a large extent even jurisdictionally on Church Headquarters in New York.

The spirituality Brent had imbibed at the Cowley Mission House in Boston led him to make the choice he made. Though it was a choice involving the highest ecclesiastical honor his Church could bestow, it was still a choice of the more difficult and more perfect thing. To leave the familiar scene, to serve an unknown and reputedly poor, dependent people, to inaugurate new works for Christ, these were the stimulating incentives which Brent sincerely held to be set before him by the Spirit of God. Once practical matters were arranged for his consecration Brent left for Fernwood in Vermont to spend a quiet period with Bishop Hall whose residence in those days was practically a monastery.¹¹ Brent could have picked no better guide for bringing out the true spiritual implications of what was about to befall him and what was he about to be and do.

St. Stephen's was too small a venue for the proposed rites which in the end came to involve eleven bishops, dozens of priests and hundreds of lay guests. So fashionable Emmanuel Church was offered for the event and proved adequate and suitable. The principal consecrator was the strong High Churchman, Dr. William Coswell Doane, Bishop of Albany, New York, and the co-consecrators were Bishop Lawrence of Massachusetts and Bishop Henry V. Slaterry of Washington, D.C. whose biographer Brent would later be. Bishops Lawrence and Henry Codman Potter of New York presented the candidate and Bishop Hall preached. Seven other bishops laid on hands. Among the presbyters in procession were the principal attendants, the Rev. Messrs. H. Russell Talbot and Thatcher R. Kimball, fellow workers with Brent at St. Stephen's.¹² But the groups also included a number of Cowley Fathers including the Provincial, F. E. Powell, and the future Bishop of Springfield, Illinois, Edward Osborne.¹³ Brent was very pleased with the ceremony and comments as follows in his diary:

"The day of my consecration. It has been wonderful throughout. The service was stately and inspiring, Bishop Hall's sermon grand; and everyone overwhelmed me by their kindness."¹⁴

¹¹BPLC, Box 1, Diary 16.xii.01.

¹²BPLC, Box 1, Diary, 16.xii.01.

¹³BPLC, Box 37, Clippings from *Boston Globe*, 19.xii.01.

¹⁴BPLC, Box 1, Diary 19.xii.01.

Brent fails to mention that Hall, whose sentiments were never very pro-Roman, slated the decadence of the Spanish Mission to the Philippines as a negative factor and praised American separation of Church and State as a positive one in the area of the new bishop's work.¹⁵

Brent himself had already worked out an ideological program for his mission. Unlike Hall, he had always been and never ceased to be a great admirer of the Roman Catholic Church in matters of dogma and liturgy. He had his reservations (and sometimes a stance of sheer negativity) about the morality, tactics, and policy of the Holy See and her subordinates. Today we should probably call Brent's pull towards and repulsion from Roman Catholics and their ways a "love-hate relationship." Only as a bishop would he find any real contact with persons and situations involving communion with Rome to have much personal impact on his life and that of his flock. He always retained, therefore, something of the awe of things aesthetic, doctrinal and canonically efficient connected in his memory (and sometimes in his imagination) with a theoretically sublime Church of Rome. In practice he questioned whether we are to be reckoned a Church of the "righteous" and, sadly, he often found us wanting as regards the Good. Nonetheless, he never wavered in acknowledging authentic Roman claims to catholicity and apostolicity or the fact of the heroic sanctity displayed by some persons, at least, in communion with the Holy See down through the ages.

From the outset of his episcopate Brent decided and announced a program of two basic points from which he (unlike some of his subordinates and successors) never swerved in his ministry in the Philippines. First, he felt a direct and primary spiritual and social concern for the Americans and other mostly English-speaking foreigners both military and civilian who had come to live in the Islands under the new colonial regime. He would be "their" bishop to the extent that they accepted him as such. A cathedral and hospital in Manila and a school in Baguio were early direct results of this concern, as were clubs and organizations sponsoring sporting and wholesome recreational activities. The second point regarded the indigenous population of the land. The great majority of these people, many of mixed blood (Spanish, Chinese, Malay and other), many descendants of pure Malay or pre-Malay ancestral enclaves, lived largely in clusters, isolated by geographic, linguistic and cultural barriers. They were then, as now nearly all Roman Catholics. Brent had not the slightest desire to "convert" them. Protestant attempts to proselytize these people Brent found repugnant. Like most High Churchmen of his period he held a modified "branch theory" which maintained in effect that Anglicans, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics and, indeed, any groups with "apostolic faith and order," formed "branches" of the once undivided Catholic Church. Thus for Brent Filipino Catholics were simply what they claimed to be. Their hierarchy was as legitimate as his. Their liturgy, dogma, morality, though different enough from his own, were likewise lawfully Catholic and sometimes quite admirable.

¹⁵BPLC, Box 55, R.B. Ogilby, Biographic Draft, p. 89.

Thus on the Feast of St. Thomas Apostle, December 21, 1901 just two days after his consecration, Brent could write in a letter to his future helpers:

"We must avoid conflict as far as in us lies with the Roman Catholic Church. We are in a special sense the Church of Reconciliation, and peace must be written on our hearts. No doubt we shall meet with persecution of a subtle kind. But in quiet and confidence is our strength. We must prove our catholicity not by the might of controversial weapons but by the forces of stability and righteousness. PROSELYTING I ABHOR, it is a negative and dangerous method of Christian work."¹⁶

If Brent was going to minister to foreign whites and leave Filipinos of whatever race and color alone, why should he be a bishop? Could not a sort of "chief of chaplains" in presbyter's orders serve the Episcopal Church just as well? Integrated into the second point of his programmed stance we find the reply to these questions. Large parts of the Philippines had never been evangelized by Christians of any sort. Brent looked to the Igorots of Northern Luzon and the adherents of Islam in Mindanao and Jolo as just such persons. To them he would limit his missionary outreach. He would never join Protestant attempts (which in time proved as fruitless as they were ridiculous) to "portion out" the country to various denominations as if variants and faith and practices were indifferent.¹⁷ In fact, despite the official title of the Church he represented, like most Anglicans of his ilk Brent hardly considered himself a "Protestant" at all. Needless to say, this might have led (as very occasionally it did) to strained relationships with his own clergy and those of other non-Roman groups. That it seldom did in fact is token of a characteristic Brent had in common with Hall and later utilized to great ecumenical advantage. It was this: Brent loved people as and for themselves and made friends easily because of his openness and sincerity which frequently evoked an unexpectedly positive response from others. This will and ability to make most unlikely friends was based on a subtle combination of profound Christian charity learned in prayer and service of the poor, exquisite manners which acknowledged the basic goodness present in others, and a real desire for human solidarity wherever and whenever it could be effected. It is true that Brent was to have his enemies. It is also true that, even if they were not all scoundrels (though some of them obviously were), their enmity usually resulted from their inability to cope with or their genuine fear of Brent's unquestionable moral worth, his standards and his unwavering stance.

By the end of 1901 Brent could write in his diary:

"Here ends a year of strange things, things stranger than fiction. Love has swept and garnished my life. Death has robbed it. And a voice bids me to the uttermost parts of the earth."¹⁸

¹⁶BPLC, Box 49, Letter to Missionaries, 21.xii.01.

¹⁷For a reasonably objective account of "comity" (as the Protestants called their parcelling out) and of Brent's reaction to it vid. P. G. Gowing, *Islands Under the Cross*, Manila, National Council of Churches in the Philippines, 1967, praes. pp. 126-129.

¹⁸BPLC, Box 1, Diary 31.xii.01.

Before he could hearken to that voice (God's own) there was much painful preparation in store for the young bishop. Nearly every day of the next eight months would be one in which Robert Front's line would be an apt description of his plight: "And miles to go before I sleep." His life was to be a life of worries. He had a necessary concern for financial arrangements which were never quite adequate. He had even greater concern about the suitability of his lieutenants clerical and lay of both sexes (and, as we shall see, like many generous spirits Brent was not the best judge of character). He had a pressing concern for and about American policy and the white man's role in a still very colonial and not well colonized world. Most of all he cared about and for the Church as he both knew it then and envisioned it for the future. Would faith be found on earth at the Second Coming? If so, what thanks for this would be due to Charles Henry Brent? These were his worries, but not real (much less useless) anxieties. For Brent was upheld by prayer every day of his life. He devoutly celebrated the Eucharist at least three times a week. He never neglected his "office" of daily morning and evening prayer from the Book of Common Prayer with the ample psalmody and four lengthy readings from the Old and New Testaments which this involved. From Cowley days he had learned to spend an hour or more each day in quiet contemplation of God. And his diaries are filled with prayers and pious aspirations. Without these exercises, without this depth of spirituality, Brent might well have succumbed to the temptation to resign his see before he ever laid eyes on it.

V. Proximate Preparation for Work

The first year of Brent's episcopate, save the last few days of December, was 1902. It was a very busy year and ran at whirlwind pace. By May Brent was in Europe with Governor Taft, nearly all of June and the first week of July were spent in Italy and, after some time in Switzerland, the voyage eastward was resumed on July 23. Port Said, Aden, Penang, Singapore and Hong Kong were duly touched but the most joyful entry in Brent's diary comes on August 24, 1902, when he exclaims "Manila, Home!"¹⁹

It is worthwhile looking at what Brent did with his time from January 1 to August 24, 1902 for investigating this period throws much light both on the man and his vision. The first entry for 1902 on New Year's Day quotes Brent's favorite phrase from Dante "*In la tua volontà é nostra pace*" which could be taken as a motto and a motif for his life. He spent the whole month of January traveling and preaching and trying to catch up with his correspondence. At this point Brent had no secretary and painstakingly did all his own writing in longhand. Well could he complain on January 23: "I am becoming a preaching machine and a canvasser for money" and the very next day: "My correspondence will kill me." But the pace did not slacken in February, though by March he enjoyed a fortnight's relative repose as guest of Bp. Saterlee and the latter's wife. A personal note is struck when

¹⁹BPLC, Box 1, Diary entries 1902.

we find him celebrating a Requiem Eucharist for his mother who had died a year previously on March 2. He writes:

"The first anniversary of my dear mother's death. Celebrated the Holy Communion in the Bishop's oratory."²⁰

His mother died in Denver while staying with Brent's unmarried sisters, Edith, Helen and Margaret. Brent was present at the funeral conducted by the Rev. Mr. Marshall and Dean Hart of the Denver Cathedral on March 7, 1901.

By mid-March of 1902 the whirlwind tour began again. Brent was an indefatigable train passenger and put up with all of the inconvenience of the steam engines and the relative slowness of travel in that bygone age with hardly a comment let alone a murmur of annoyance. Occasionally he missed a train which did annoy him. In Washington on March 3 he had met the Ohio judge, William Howard Taft, President of the Second Philippine Commission and Civil Governor of the Islands. Two days later Brent had the first of many audiences with President Theodore Roosevelt. Both Taft and Roosevelt were to play key roles in Brent's life and work, and their exalted positions never kept them from the same warmhearted reception on Brent's part that he would have given the poorest squatter in the Boston South End or in Tondo, Manila. Having visited New York, Cincinnati, Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago, Brent returned early in Holy Week to Boston. On Good Friday he preached the *tre ore* at St. Stephen's where he spent his last Sunday, Easter Day, March 30.

Early in April he left for New York and Washington and was back in New York on the eighth. That day he was able to receive \$22,000 from the Mission Board at the Episcopal Church National Headquarters and book a passage to Manila via Brindisi. By the tenth he was in Chicago and the twelfth in Denver with the "dear girls," his sisters. On the twentieth he confirmed a class of candidates at St. Mary's, San Francisco where the Anglo-Roman "extremes" were too much for him and he declined an invitation to stay on for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, a rite he always found distasteful. Like most Anglicans of his age and upbringing he believed that Holy Communion was instituted to be eaten and drunk not gazed upon, carried about or "reserved" for adoration. He did, however, have a very firm belief in Christ's Real Presence in the Sacrament and never forbade adoration of the Elements. On April 21, 1902 he spoke to the San Francisco clericus of the Episcopal Diocese of California, as he notes:

"on our Church establishing herself in the Philippine Islands. I said that my first step on arriving would be to offer to work with the Roman Catholic Archbishop wherever I could."²¹

The promise was not literally carried out but its intention remained and Brent was never averse to any possible gesture of good will to bishops and priests

²⁰BPLC, Box 1, Diary 2.iii.02.

²¹BPLC, Box 1, Diary 21.iv.02.

in communion with the Holy See, even when they were blocking his projected work.

On May 1 Brent was in Los Angeles and on the fourth eastward bound for Chicago via Los Angeles. He celebrated Ascension Day, May 8 that year, in the Windy City and went on to Philadelphia the next day and to Boston on the 12th. There on May 15 he confirmed Mary B. Spague who gave \$100,000 for the building of a Cathedral to be dedicated to Saints Mary and John in Manila. It is hard to think that mere coincidence would dictate a dedication evocative of the profound Cowley devotion to Our Lady and the Beloved Disciple Brent had acquired in his earliest days in Boston. May 16 was Brent's last full day in the United States. He spent it in New York. The next day he sailed from Brooklyn on the *Trave*. Governor Taft was also on board.

Transatlantic travel was leisurely in 1902. It took from May 18 to May 26 to sail under steam from Brooklyn to Gibraltar. Brent saw Taft everyday. Their chats were not just on official and Church related subjects. They came to know each other man-to-man and became lifelong friends. After a short call of less than three hours in Gibraltar the ship sailed for Naples where it arrived on May 29. By June 3 the party was in Rome. That day they visited St. Peter's Basilica and, after seeing what Brent describes as "a wonderful place indeed," Taft was closeted with Mariano Cardinal Rampolla del Tindaro, the Secretary of State, who would be chief spokesman for the Holy See on the vexed question of Friar-lands and Brent providentially met with Bp. Thomas O'Gorman of Sioux Falls, S. Dakota, the chief American ecclesiastical participant in the Commission's discussions. The meeting was providential in that while Brent had met socially and discussed parallel difficulties with Boston Irish Catholic clergy, their exchanges although cordial were far from free given the nature of Boston society and Roman Catholic reticence on anything approaching what would come to be called "ecumenism." O'Gorman, a learned intellectual, experienced administrator and skillful diplomat, was openness itself. He had no fear Anglicans and, as a Church historian, knew just where a bishop like Brent would be likely to stand. O'Gorman was born in Boston but had gone west to Chicago and St. Paul, Minnesota, as a boy.²² A good part of his education had been under the Marist Fathers in France. At one time he had been a Paulist Father in New York, but he later returned to the Twin Cities. He was the virtual founder and first president in 1885 of the Seminary of St. Thomas (part of which became the College of St. Thomas in 1894). From 1890, until his nomination as Bishop of Sioux Falls, O'Gorman was Professor of Church History at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. His promoter was the renowned Archbishop John Ireland who had been his schoolmate in childhood, his Ordinary in Minneapolis—St. Paul and was now his Metropolitan. O'Gorman was progressive, anti-routinary, highly imaginative and hard working. At the time of their meeting he was fifty-nine years old, and Brent was forty. O'Gorman had been a bishop in his Church for eight years, working under trying

²²This sketch is based on C. Barry "Thomas O'Gorman" in Ed. Staff C.U. of A. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, N.Y., McGraw Hill Book Co., 1967, Vol. X, pp. 659b-660b.

conditions in an isolated, slowly expanding area largely inhabited by Amerindians. Brent had been an Episcopalian Bishop for less than a year and had not yet laid eyes on his diocese. O'Gorman was intimately knowledgeable about the *stylus et praxis Romanae curiae* and, thus, able to explain much about Rome and its workings to Brent. Unfortunately, Brent was not as impressed by the actual workings of the curia as he was by O'Gorman's introductory explanation.

On June 4 Brent joined Taft's party at a General Audience. As the aged Pope Leo XIII was carried by in the *sede gestatoria*, Brent held up his pectoral cross for the Pontiff to bless. The next day with the others Brent met the Pope who blessed the cross and some medals Brent had brought in *manu*. Brent's impression of the Holy Father was of someone who had "penetrating eyes and vivacity that does not belong to a man of 93."²³

His tourism of Rome evoked the comment: "History piles on history," and gazing on June 6 at Rafael's "Transfiguration" in the halls of the Vatican Brent exclaimed, "glory is for the service of human life." He saw the Sistine Chapel that day and dined at the American Embassy that evening. On the next day he was invited by Taft and Mr. Porter, another member of the Commission, to discuss the early terms of negotiations. At this point Brent could write to Hall giving a rather glowing description of Rome in general and of his talks with O'Gorman. Later, partially under Taft's influence, he would modify his views.²⁴

On Sunday at 8:39 a.m. Brent celebrated the Eucharist at the American Episcopal Church of St. Paul in the center of Rome. The next day he attended a Public Consistory at which Cardinal Martinelli received the Red Hat. On June 11 and 12 Brent had long talks with Bishop O'Gorman on "conscience" and was pleased by their mutual agreement. On the fifteenth he celebrated and preached again at St. Paul's and the next day began his tours beyond Rome which took him to various sites in the Campagna, to Perugia, Assisi, Florence, Venice (where he preached on the 29th in the English Church) and Milan where he prayed before Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper in the Dominican refectory:

"I can conceive how a look can convert a man... Oh Christ, convert me to Thyself and to righteousness."²⁵

Brent went on to Switzerland where he celebrated the Eucharist and preached in Geneva on July 13. By the twenty-second he was in Genoa whence he sailed on the *Princess Irene* which met Taft's party at Naples the next day.

As they sailed onward to Port Said and through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea Taft and Brent had many tête-à-têtes. Taft gave Brent a resumé of the Roman talks and the still unresolved problem of the Friar-lands. It is rather

²³BPLC, Box 1, Diary 4.vi.02.

²⁴BPLC, Box 5, Letter Brent to Hall, 7.vi.02.

²⁵BPLC, Box 1, Diary 8.vii.02.

incredible how little Brent seems to have known about the true nature of religious life, the vow of poverty, and the rightful claims of the Spanish friars to their property or just compensation for it, despite his years at Cowley. He was always an idealist. Just as he misjudged Fr. Page on the subject of obedience the case being that of a somewhat dull-witted and rather tactless superior being, despite personal drawbacks, bound in justice to receive the acquiescence of a subject on the question of assignment of duties and place of work, so now he failed to realize that no institution, religious or secular, can be expected to change its field of work and abandon its financial and other material resources overnight merely because political upheavals have made it less popular than it once was. The friars considered their task an answer to divine call. They could no more turn their backs on the Philippines than they could give up their hope for salvation, for their work and its geographical sphere were intimately connected in their vision.

Neither the United States of America nor the Holy See were at their best advantage during the discussions. Indeed this power was for the American government did not recognize the Holy See's claims for temporal power. In face of the virtual loss through Italian seizure of all Papal territory. So the negotiations could not be state-to-state. Taft had to pretend he was a "business negotiator" merely talking about property when in effect he was the direct representative of the American President. Rampolla had to pretend he represented the spiritual interests of the largest Church in the Philippines when *de facto* he had to represent the material interests of Orders now bereft of the protection of the Spanish Crown and so needing his representation as Secretary of State of what was albeit (next to perhaps Tibet) in theory the most theocratic and in fact the most theoretical state on earth. No wonder there were difficulties. Presuppositions and approaches on both sides were all too different. It is, however, a bit startling to find Brent writing to Hall in this disillusioned tone from Naples on July 23:

"...the defense of Christianity is not logic, it is righteousness"²⁶

In a context of admitting the Roman authorities to be theoretically consistent but implying they are morally wrong. We should think that even the most benign contemporary ecumenist would take umbrage at being accused of immorality for defending the property rights of corporations in communion with himself. But we must remember Brent was more a child of the English Reformation (which arose in a context of the suppression of religious Orders and the violent confiscation of their lands) than often appears when his High Churchmanship in externals immediately impresses us. Also we cannot help but reiterate that his own experience of religious life in an Anglican context was rather transient, and he seems never to have appreciated the juridical character of the vows which he never took.

Just what Brent discussed with Taft as they steamed eastward to the Suez, south to Aden and eastward again on the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean need

²⁶BPLC, Box 5, Letter to Hall, 23.vii.02.

not give us pause here, except for one topic valuable in assessing both the character and stance of the young bishop. This topic is celibacy.²⁷ There is no evidence in his letters or his diaries or in any bibliographical material edited or unedited that Brent made a vow, whether temporary or lifelong, in the matter of chastity. On the other hand there is no evidence of anything but a high standard of purity as regards all things sexual in both his teaching and his conduct. *De facto* he remained a bachelor all his life long. Hall, his mentor, was bound by a vow of chastity which he never revoked or rejected, as were the other American bishops, Grafton and Osbourne, who had made their profession at Cowley. Because his own chastity was voluntary and unvowed Brent saw it in light of divine command and apostolic teaching as of great utility for the Kingdom. But he did not (and, evidently, as in the matters of poverty and obedience alluded to above, *could* not) look at it juridically. In this again he is more an heir of the Reformers (especially of Luther) than a cursory reading of his life and works would make us believe. Brent was startled and shocked (and his sense of scandal was sincere and never pharisaical) by instances of concubinage and profligate life to be found in the local secular priesthood in communion with Rome in the Philippines. Perhaps his being startled can be written off as manifesting a typically Victorian fastidiousness and an admirable lack of brash worldliness. Both qualities were part of Brent's charm. But his shock or scandal cannot be so easily dealt with, as its basis is a profoundly Christian moral sense. What cannot be admitted from a Roman Catholic point of view is his repeated "solution" for the problem of habitually broken vows of celibacy: a dispensation to marry. For there is nothing to indicate much less guarantee that persons who have become profligate and promiscuous in the single or celibate state will be anything else in the married one. And it is probably right to say that the Churches of the Reformation and of the East have as many problems regarding broken marriage vows as have the Roman Catholic Church, the same Eastern Churches and large segments of Anglicanism over broken vows of celibacy.

Two days ashore in Hong Kong from September 19 to 21 where a happy respite for Brent and all of Taft's party. Brent was able to meet with the local Anglican Bishop and to begin to get a feel of the "Orient." The party set sail for Manila having changed ship to the *Diamante* and they arrived there, as already indicated on August 24.

Manila in 1902 was a very different place from Manila today. It was a clean, well-painted and well swept city. Its people lived at a calm pace and went to and fro on foot, on horseback or in simple carriages (*calesas*) most of the time, only the extremely rich or important using more sumptuous but equally horse-drawn vehicles. All that was to begin to change even in Brent's dozen years of residence with the advent of the motor car, which has since polluted Manila and most big cities beyond repair.

Brent settled in a spacious house in the Ermita district and took up his work. By now he had four military chaplains of the Episcopal Church and three priests

²⁷Diary 26.vii.02, Box 2, BP, MDLCW.

of his district under his jurisdiction. One of these, the Rev. Hugh Nethercott, would soon leave the scene, but the other two would become such "fixtures" of Philippine Episcopalianism that they deserve our brief attention. These loyal, hardworking and unashamedly Anglo-Catholic lieutenants were the Rev. Walter Clayton Clapp and the Rev. John Armitage Staunton, Jr., always referred to as Father Clapp and Father Staunton by their own people.

Fr. Clapp had studied at Amherst and Nashota House (the "highest" seminary in the Episcopal Church). He had worked in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Toledo in some of the best known Anglo-Catholic parishes of America and had taught for two years at Nashota. Fr. Staunton, one of the most colorful and controversial Anglicans in Philippine history, started his academic life as a mechanical engineer at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, but later graduated from Harvard. His early work was mostly in Philadelphia, Cleveland, Ohio and Springfield, Massachusetts, but it included two notable assignments: the small town mission of Wallace, Idaho, from 1892-1893 and the curacy of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Manhattan, New York City's acme of Anglo-Catholic doctrine and life. Both Fr. Clapp and Fr. Staunton brought to the Philippines a standard of Anglicanism almost totally devoid of Protestant elements. In faith and in practice their Catholicism was nearly identical with that of the Holy Roman Church and in their evangelization of pagans their tactics, devotions and general *modus vivendi* were to raise many Anglican eyebrows. If they raised Brent's they did not raise them very high. He never fully conformed with their "advanced" theology and ceremonial but he always upheld and defended them as persons and gave them ample, tolerant leeway to say and to do what they thought best.

As the months went by before the first anniversary of his consecration Brent began traveling far and wide though his first priorities were in Manila: establishing a Cathedral in Ermita, a Chinese parish in Trozo, an outreach to the poor in Tondo, a church in Makati. He kept up contact with Gov. Taft. He met General Aguinaldo. He rejected the ultra-Protestant overtures of the Evangelical Alliance in a meeting at Dagupan as he could agree neither with their denominational parcelling out of Philippine territory nor with their aggressively anti-Roman stance.²⁸ On September 27, having returned from Pangasinan, Brent set foot in the Roman Catholic Cathedral for the first time to attend the Requiem Mass and Funeral rites for Fr. McKinnon whom he had known briefly. That same day he elaborated a long, discouraged and basically anti-Roman entry which Ogilby saw fit to copy out in full in his projected biography. Brent's unaccustomed statement reads:

"I am not sure whether the argument 'that we do not wish to break the Church unity in the Islands' has any weight with me or not. The preservation of unity at all costs is a dear price for a unity that does not go more than skin deep. If I do not try to win adherents from the Roman Church it will not be because I wish to preserve Roman unity which is political, superficial and mechanical,

²⁸BCLC, Box 1, Diary 15.ix.02 at Dagupan.

but because I am averse to disturbing what religious faith the natives have, unless I am sure we can give them something richer and fuller. What is the capacity of these children for the mystical? Their ears are purer than the lips of their pastors. Their lives are touched. Time alone will show what our duty is out here."²⁹

What caused this anti-Roman outburst? Incredible as it may seem, the funeral liturgy Brent had attended that morning seems to have caused it. The *rites* not "Roman unity" seemed to Brent "political, superficial and mechanical." He seems always to have reacted negatively to ceremonies presided over by Americans and Filipinos and positively to those in which celebrant, assistants and choir were Spanish or Italian or under their direction. Well, can we ask "why"? The answer seems to be that the Latin liturgy was seen by Brent, as by many Anglicans, as appropriate to and for Mediterranean peoples but a bungle-some murmurey of rubrical stiffness, lending itself to careless lip service, when attempted by Anglo-Saxons and non-Europeans. Of course there is a deeper issue than the ecclesiological implications of bad liturgy involved in what Brent writes. He is not a racist. He does not really "look down" upon Filipinos. But he is part of the new American colonial establishment and his attitudes, largely molded by military contacts, could at times be perilously close to patronizing.³⁰

By mid-October Brent took his first day off since his arrival in the Philippines. He played golf all afternoon. On the twenty-sixth he celebrated the Eucharist for the first time in Spanish.³¹ It is wrong to think, as some authors state, that Brent knew no Spanish. It is true that his attempts to study Spanish and Tagalog never brought him to any usable conversational skill. But he could "stumble through" a Spanish liturgy and he *understood* a great deal of Spanish in conversation and just about everything in writing. He was thoroughly familiar with Latin and Greek and with both French and Italian. It is doubtful that he could *speak* any of them very well. Brent seems to have lacked the "ear" necessary for the initial, imitative process in acquiring a new "tongue." He also lacked the time needed for the tedious concentration and memory work new languages always require. However, he was a very astute listener, and it is hard to think he missed much in Spanish though he did use translators for the sake of precision and to clarify the nuance of technical content.

VI. First Encounters with Aglipayanism

The man we are about to discuss will play a nagging if somewhat peripheral role in Brent's life and the history of Philippine Anglicanism. Don Gregorio Aglipay was in life and remains though long dead, an enigmatic person.³² It is

²⁹BCLC, Box 53, Ogilby typescript, p. 90.

³⁰For an analysis of this possibility of accounting for Brents' posture regarding native Filipinos, cf. L.B. Whittemore, *Struggle for Freedom*, Greenwich, CN, Seabury Press 1961, praes. p. 195.

³¹BPLC, Diary 18.ix. and 26.ix.02.

not surprising that a standard favorable analysis of him should bear the title *Gregorio Aglipay, Hero or Villain*.³³ He seems to have been exclusively neither, as hardly anyone is. But he was a bit of both. The tendency of nearly all authors who treat of him is either to praise him to the skies or damn him to the depths. We shall try to be more objective, given our sources (some of which are only mildly prejudiced one way or the other, but most of which are overly laudatory or almost grossly pejorative). The founder and First Obispo Maximo of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente lived a long life, from 1860-1940, of just over eighty years, forty in the nineteenth century and forty in the twentieth.³⁴ He was ordained a priest at the old Sto. Domingo Church in Intramuros on December 21, 1889. After that, Aglipay was a frequently moved secular priest in completely good standing in the Archdiocese of Manila from the time of his ordination until his major excommunication by declaratory sentence of the diocesan tribunal of the diocese (Manila) in which he was incardinated ten years later. Meanwhile he had unjustly usurped ecclesiastical jurisdiction (said later to have been gained from an Ordinary not his own, under duress)³⁵ and taken on a military commission. He was an ardent nationalist and brilliant tactician but finally forced to surrender to the Americans, which he did with good grace. He seems to have been too much influenced by people around him and may have been the victim of their flattery as well as the tool of their interests.

In the course of time Aglipay drifted from a fairly standard Roman Catholic position to turn-of-the-century Modernism, Liberal Christianity, specifically Unitarianism, and to what seems to have been "fairly blatant" agnosticism. He played fast and loose with ecclesiastical polity and seemed to suffer from a sort of "Topsy-turvy Syndrome" of sheer illogic. He is, for instance, probably the only "Bishop" in history to be "consecrated" by persons whom he himself had previously "consecrated"! There is no reason to think he was insincere or any more grossly "immoral" than many of his fellow clerics. But he did show a combination of opportunism, avarice and selfimportance that shows a dark side of his character. He seems to have been incapable of distinguishing nationalism from religiosity, but there is no evidence, again, that he did not believe what he said, preposterous though his detractors might find it. As we shall see, Brent developed a marked antipathy towards Aglipay and his Movement.

On All Souls' Day, 1902, Brent pertinently notes what for him was a new happening in Philippine Church history:

"Aglipay Church rebellion took shape today. It seems to be a sort of religious insurrection. Several thousand people gathered to hear him."³⁶

Brent's dating is inaccurate in that the event referred to was a Requiem Mass

³³This basic data (but not our evaluation) are taken from P.S. Achute-gui and M.A. Bernad, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

³⁴A.M. Manaligod, *Gregorio Aglipay, Hero or Villain*, Manila, CFA, 1977.

³⁵A.M. Manaligod, *op. cit.*, *passim*. Cf. the commendable resumé of Aglipay's early years in William Henry Scott, *Aglipay before Aglipayanism*, Quezon City, National Priest Organization, 1987.

³⁶A.M. Manaligod, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-109 roundly denies this.

³⁷BPLC, Box 1, Diary 2.xi.02.

and rally to honor the Philippine Heroes. Don Gregorio Aglipay was already Obispo Maximo on September 22 and on October 26 had celebrated the inaugural Mass of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente at the temporary headquarters of the Movement in Tondo. On October 29, Aglipay (long since excommunicated) had been publicly denounced for the second time by Msgr. Martin Garcia Alcocer, Bishop of Cebu and Apostolic Administrator of Manila. Brent is right, however, in emphasizing the public and definitive nature of the All Souls' Day event as the Aglipayans claimed the presence of "thousands" at it and the adherence of "millions" through what it symbolized in terms of the basically nationalistic character of their Movement.³⁷ On the very day of Aglipay's public demonstration Msgr. Giovanni Baptista Guidi arrived from Rome to promulgate and implement the Apostolic Constitution *Quae mari Sinico* which went into effect the following month.³⁸

Brent's first encounter with Aglipay took place just two days later. On November 4 they were together at a reception at the residence of Don Benito Legarda. Brent says:

"Met Aglipay and had quiet and long conversation with him. He is an undersized man with a strong face."³⁹

Neither here nor in any of Brent's own letters or diaries where mention is made of face to face contact with Aglipay does Brent ever complain of the slightest linguistic difficulty. Therefore it is misleading (if not patently absurd) of one of Aglipay's latter day successors to write forty-five years later that "Bishop Brent... knew no Spanish" and use that as a "reason" why Brent could not have understood the self-created Obispo Maximo.⁴⁰ In fact Brent's relations with Aglipay were not vitiated by linguistic or cultural differences but by Brent's piercing evaluation of the man as man, an evaluation we shall have to analyze at greater length in subsequent writing.

Brent's concern about the *sitz-im-leben* and bearing for the future of the Philippines of the Aglipayan movement preoccupied him for several days. He feels little sympathy for what seems to him to be the façade of a novel and fraudulent development. It troubles Brent because he deems it to be rooted in the miasmas of chaos. On November 6, Brent writes:

"The Aglipay trouble seems to be spreading. I wonder if I should try to use my influence. I fear I have not been long enough in the Islands to be able to make any impression."⁴¹

³⁷P.S. de Achutegui and M.A. Bernad, *Religious Revolution in the Philippines: The Life and Church of Gregorio Aglipay 1860-1960*, Manila, Ateneo de Manila, 1960, Vol. I, pp. 192-202. Cf. L.B. Whittemore, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-109.

³⁸P.S. de Achutegui and M.A. Bernad, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

³⁹BPLC, Box 1, Diary 4.xi.02.

⁴⁰Statement of I. de los Reyes, Jr., quoted in N.S. Binstead, *Iglesia Filipina Independiente: Confidential pamphlet for circulation to members of the Lambeth Conference only*, London, S.P.C.K., 1958, p. 15.

⁴¹BPLC, Box 1, Diary 6.xi.02.

And just four days later he says:

"Aglipay issued a manifesto about his so called Filipino Church. There is evidently great religious unrest. How to meet it is the problem."⁴²

The "manifesto" in question is doubtless the "Fourth Fundamental Epistle" of October 29, 1902 on the creation of diocesan committees to secure for Aglipay's schism "church buildings, parish houses and cemeteries" as if they were municipal property and thus free for the taking by a supposed National Church. It also advocates a two-year program for training new priests, takes several swipes at the Spanish friars and makes the rather preposterous statement (certainly nullified by the first three epistles which preceded it) that: "We have the same beliefs as the Roman Christians, except we do not obey the Pope."⁴³ Well could Brent be disturbed. He saw Aglipay at this point as a property hungry fanatic using a strange brand of religious nationalism to cause discord in and play unfairly on the legitimate sentiments of the Philippine nation.

We shall see in later essays how the problems caused by the Aglipayan movement and its various irregularities continued to disturb Brent for years. It is rather incredible that as sober an historian as Bishop Stephen C. Neill could, therefore, (even admitting as he does his lack of sources) write as if Brent knew hardly anything of Aglipay and his movement, and that Brent probably thought of the movement as "temporary and transient."⁴⁴ As to the last statement it is not just "probable" but in fact reflects Brent's judgment as articulated more than once on the matter. However, Aglipay unsettled and annoyed Brent even when Brent tried to be helpful. And it would not be wrong to say Brent's initial judgment [and it became his permanent stance] was that the entire movement was morally untrustworthy and lacked theological credibility. The whys and wherefores of this stance deserve further analysis which we hope to give in due season.

We close this section on the first year of Brent's episcopate with his exercise of his orders as best understood at grass roots. For on December 28, 1902, three days after his first Christmas in these islands, Brent confirmed the first class of Anglican neo-communicants in the history of the Philippines.⁴⁵ Nothing made Brent happier than functioning as a Bishop in a way that he believed would bring the grace and consolation of the Holy Spirit to his flock. Thus 1902 ended in great joy for the young bishop. He had come a long way from the back streets of Boston's South End. But his way was filled with a sense of God's leading and a sense of his own availability to serve both God and man wherever he was led. By March of 1903 he could "write up" his first three months in the Philippines in the

⁴²BPLC, Box 1, Diary 10.xi.02.

⁴³Taken from the summary based on the periodical *La Iglesia Independiente*, Vol. I, no. 1 (1903) as summarized in English by L.B. Whittenmore in *Struggle for Freedom*, Greenwich, CN, Seabury Press, 1961 pp. 118-120.

⁴⁴S.C. Neill "Charles Henry Brent" in *Canadian Journal of Theology*, VII (62). no. 3, pp. 158-159; found in Box 44, Folder 3, BP, MDLCW.

⁴⁵BPLC, Box 1, Diary 28. xii.02.

Manila Times, but as the story was told with a certain sense of retrospect we can leave it for a future article. Here suffice it to say that within a year of his consecration Charles Henry Brent had truly begun his work and the foundations, thus laid, would be built upon, higher and higher, by himself and others. They have neither crumbled nor sagged since. □