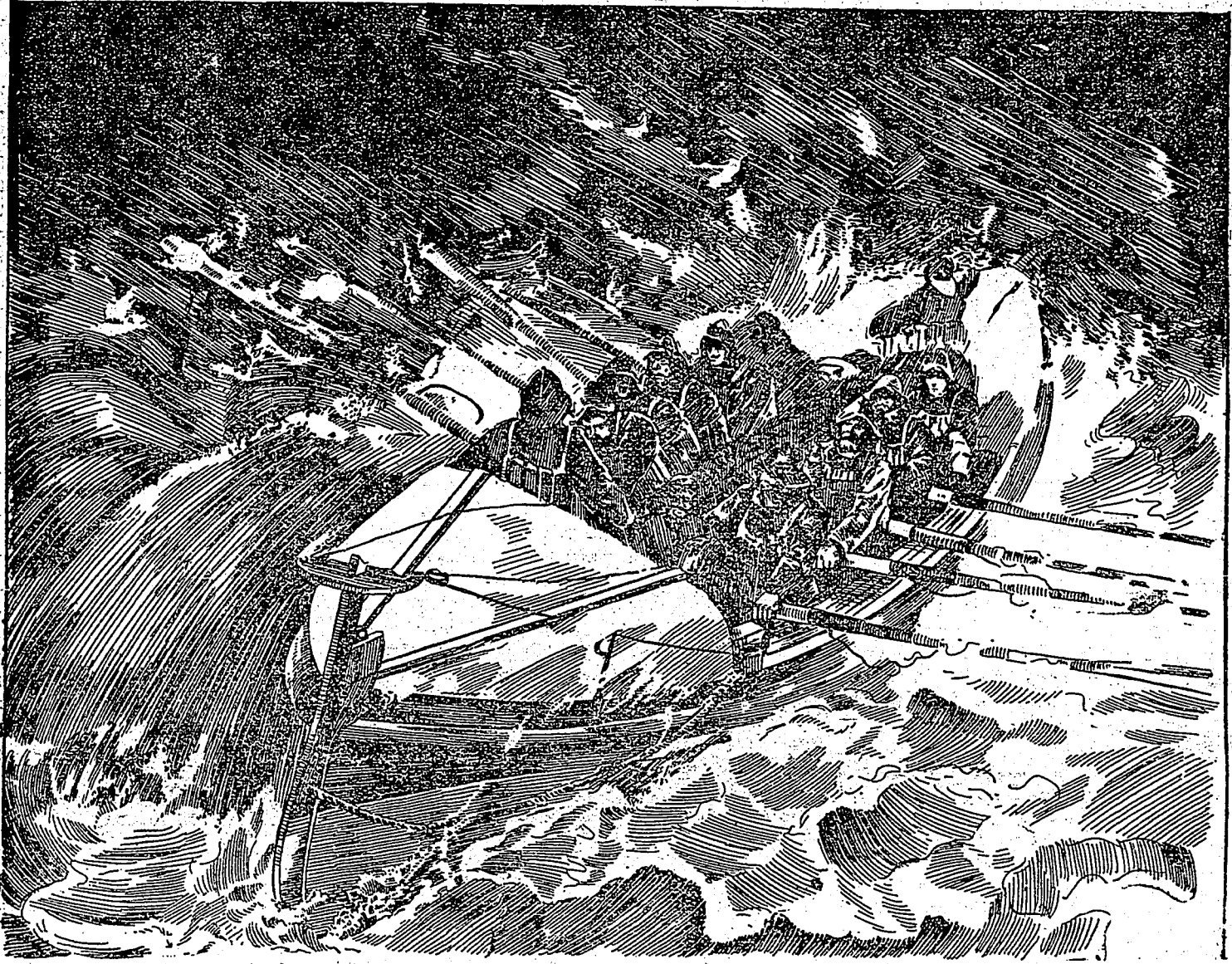


Northern Messenger

VOLUME XXXVI., No. 11.

MONTREAL, MARCH 15, 1901.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid



OUR COAST FISHERMEN TO THE RESCUE.

The Bible in the Philippines.

'The reception of the Scriptures by the Filipinos has been with an eagerness on every hand that is only to be explained by the preparation and power of the Holy Spirit,' writes the Rev. Jay C. Goodrich in a recent letter to the American Bible Society, of which he is an agent. 'They are not satisfied with buying and reading the Bible, but keep asking for books on Bible study, and choose Bibles with references and maps. They are thoroughly prepared for the word and buy readily. The people who are here from other islands and other parts of Luzon are anxious to have copies to send to their friends and relatives, and will often sacrifice in order to purchase them. We have only in a few cases met the work of the priests in poisoning the minds of the people against the Protestant Bible, and compelling their burning under threat of excommunication; it is not common, and we hope that as the government of the islands becomes settled that all persecution will disappear.

'A Chinese pedler came to the door of our office the other day to offer for sale some notions. We did not need his wares, but thought he could use ours, so showed

him a gospel. His face lighted up as he took it and asked, "No mass?" We showed him others, and before he bade us a polite "adios" he had purchased the gospels and a Testament. He went his way happy in his new possessions. The people are hungry for the Word.

'Our hearts have been chilled and our righteous indignation aroused by the uncovered crimes of compulsory ignorance and religious bigotry and oppression in these most beautiful islands, crimes for the most part against a people as teachable and apt to learn as any in the world. It is not our purpose to lay these crimes at any door, but to point out the fact that these outrages on the name of Christianity would not have been possible had there been an open Bible, and to the plain duty devolving upon Protestantism to give as speedily as possible to these missions so providentially brought to our notice and under our care, God's message. To the great multitude who cannot read the Bible, it is a closed book. Our first missionary duty is to enlighten.

It will be advisable to establish a Bible Society depository in the principal city of each island as rapidly as reliable men can be found to sell the books on commission.

On both Panay and Negros the Spanish-speaking natives are very anxious for Protestant work and the Bible. For all kinds of Christian work, and especially the distribution of the Scriptures, the prospect is very bright.

'A very interesting feature of duties here will be the work among the Chinese. There is said to be about one hundred thousand in and about Manilla.

'The Chinese are coming into Manilla rapidly, and will hold their place as the chief commercial people of the city. The figures given as the present Chinese population is far below the actual.

'We are finding many remarkable cases of conversion by reading the Scriptures.'

The American Bible Society has authorized its agent in Manilla to proceed at once to engage suitable men to prepare tentative versions of the gospels in Pampanga, Visayan, Cebuan, Zambal, and Ilocano. The emergency is said to be such that it is not deemed advisable to wait till men learned in Greek become competent to undertake this important work, and the versions must at first be made, not from the original, but from the society's modern version of the Spanish.