

COPY

Box 20, Ponce, P. R. Feb. 10/05

"I beg to hand you the following report of my visit to Maya-quez, from which I have just returned-

On inquiry there I find that there are about 40 to 60 Americans resident in Mayaquiz, for whom there is no religious provision except an evening English service (occasionally) in the Presbyterian church. There are, among them, members of our Church, sufficient, I think, to warrant a mission for them; and, I am creditably informed, there are others scattered through the town, who probably would respond and attend our services. As the result of personal visits I paid I am, I think, safe in saying that we can count on a congregation of about twenty to start with, as all with whom I talked seemed pleased at the idea of a mission. Of course, whatever members we may begin with, will diminish to a very small figure by June, and continue so until the teachers return; but then the Church would be there to meet them and new arrivals in September, with the prospect of good work before it. It would, I believe, be wise to spend a Sunday there early- it would be a magnificent start if you could come- and, by invitation, get together as many as possible at the service, have an open meeting and discuss the project. That would awaken keen interest, and, perhaps, result in the organization of a pledged, although small, congregation as the nucleus of a church.

I can get the use of a very nice, large, cool room in the _____ of a home, in a central spot for the purpose, with the sole expense of

renting a few chairs and preparing the room. This same room I may, in a few weeks, be able to permanently rent, as the present occupiers are going North. The house is a large one, and, by renting the whole, if possible, for Church and clergyman's residence, for which it is admirably suited, the rent of the portion for church purposes may be but a small advance on my personal allowance.

Chairs can be purchased at about the same cost as in San Juan. If not, they can be shipped from there at small cost. And the expense of fitting up- altar, lights, desk, etc.- would not be great. We would need, at once, about 25 each, hymn and prayer books: and, should you have a spare cross and other things that would render the service churchly, they would be useful. Miss Woods of the Industrial School, who is very enthusiastic and promises to be a great help, will receive the books, etc., which can be sent by steamer, under bill of lading, to her. We may be able to rent a piano or organ, until we could purchase one.

This English work started, branching out to ards the natives would follow. The Presbyterians have a well organized work among them with several assistants- American s and Puertorican,- and a medican mission- to Mt. Caldwell, and, I understand, four preaching places. There is, however, plenty of room for us in the environs as well as in the town itself; and between there and Ponce, there are several towns that might be occupied- Enanica and Yanco (?) have lately been occupied by the Baptists, who are about to erect buildings in both places; (they have also sent a missionary to Cosmo within the last month), but so far as I know there is no Protestant body at San German, or at the other
 _____ on the line. What are the opportunities on the other side of Mayaquiz I do not know, as yet; nor can I report regarding the

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prospects of school work until I learn the ground better. The Romanists, who have American priests here, are establishing schools, but how far that would affect any effort of ours, I cannot yet judge.

Altogether, I have returned from my visit with the impression that the outlook is hopeful. At first, progress will be slow, but once started, the Church will, I believe, _____ in Mayaquiz. The Presbyterians are doing well, but at the same time we must remember that what they have gained is the result of nearly five years' work. Just so, our beginning may be small, but there is much to be done, but time will show, perhaps, equally good results.

My expenses to Mayaquiz were \$8.⁰⁰

(Signed) David W. Bland

To Bishop Van Buren.