

The CATHOLIC CHRONICLE...

DEVOTED TO... FOREIGN NEWS

UNITED STATES

BISHOP McFAUL REPLIES TO ARCHBISHOP IRELAND.

Archbishop Ireland is encountering a heavy fire of dignified protest against his recent declarations on the Philippine situation...

At the evening meeting Bishop McFaul was the principal speaker and directed his attention to the treatment of the friars and the school question in the Philippines...

"When the news arrived that the Catholic churches in the Philippines were desecrated and looted, the officers of high rank in the army attempted to refute the charges, yet the desecration and looting of those sacred edifices are now so certain that claims for damages to ecclesiastical property will be accepted by the Government."

"Reports, too, of the frightful spread of drunkenness and immorality after the occupation of Manila by the American army were vigorously assailed. Is there now any one who has the audacity to question their truth? Since then we have all heard of the 'water cure' and the murderous orders issued by an American general. The perpetration of these outrages was unknown for a time; they were, however, so flagrant that it was impossible to keep them from the knowledge of the public. The introduction alone of the public school system was just cause for alarm."

The speaker declared that the federation is deeply interested in obtaining just treatment for the friars, who had suffered, he declared, "so many cruel calumnies."

Bishop McFaul, who was the father of the movement to consolidate the Catholic societies of the United States, congratulated the Federation and other Catholic bodies that had agitated the question from their standpoint for assuming "so determined and courageous a position during the alarm shown by weak-kneed Catholics and advocates of partizan-ship."

"It has been said," he continued, "that as the friar question was in the hands of the Vatican Catholics should have allowed it to rest there. This is very true, and there is certainly no evidence of anything but confidence in the wisdom of the Vatican and just pride in the fact that agitation helped to bring the question where it properly belonged and out of the domain of party politics. We are satisfied that if such a course had been pursued all along in Philippine affairs the Government would now have the islands in much better condition."

"The main trouble with some of our people is that they imagine all problems can be solved with a few strokes of the pen or one or two diplomatic flourishes. It is to be hoped that they have profited by the lessons of experience, and will know better for the future."

"However this may be, the federation proposes to keep up the agitation and invite the assistance of the Catholic press, confident that a strong intelligent public opinion is necessary to point out the way and aid the Administration in the arduous and difficult work demanding attention in our new possessions."

"In response to a protest and a petition addressed to His Excellency, the President of the United States, the War Department sent the Federation two letters containing information as to the total number of teachers employed—the number sent from this country and the institutions whence the teachers came. It was declared therein that proselytism was either committed or existed in the schools."

"There are according to the records of the Philippine teachers, 347 American teachers. The latter num-

ber includes eighteen or nineteen Catholics. In obtaining American teachers only about a half dozen Catholic institutions were asked to propose candidates, whereas over 100 non-Catholic college teachers agencies, etc., furnished the balance at the request of the authorities. Here discrimination against Catholics is evident."

"The impression has gone abroad that America is furnishing educational facilities to the Filipinos for the first time, and that the people were in a state of dense ignorance. This is another calumny. The Filipinos were not civilized and Christianized as we have conferred blessings upon the Indians of America by rifle bullets, which consigned them to quiet habitations beneath the sod. During centuries the friars dwelt with the tribes of the Filipinos, and it is to them that they are indebted for whatever they possess of education and religion. They are a chaste and pure people and were unaware of any of the vices of civilization until American soldiers occupied their soil."

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"In conclusion, let me draw your attention to the position maintained by the federation during the delicate and important negotiations between the Taft commission and the Vatican a position which should convince friend and foe alike that it cannot be swerved from its course or from the prosecution of its high purposes by hostile criticism, and that it is conscious of the value of silence at critical moments. Let it be clearly understood that the federation shall keep up peaceful agitation until all these problems shall be solved in accordance with justice. It is its aim to protect the interests of Catholics, whether at home or abroad, and in effecting this by constitutional methods its members do not doubt that they are exemplifying their loyalty to their church as well as to the flag of the United States."

Bishop Messmer discussed the duty of Catholics from a standpoint entirely different from that which Archbishop Ireland warned Catholics.

Although he did not mention the Archbishop of St. Paul by name, the delegates, who half-filled the Cathedral, saw at once that Bishop Messmer's utterances were inspired by the warning of Archbishop Ireland to Catholics, and by the criticism made by officers of the societies of the Archbishop's declaration.

"Pope Leo XIII," said Bishop Messmer in his sermon, "has advised Catholics to interest themselves in Christian citizenship. He has urged them to advance the cause of Catholicity, and he has also told them to be good citizens of their different countries."

ROME

THE PHILIPPINE COMMISSION. Mr P. L. Connellan, one of the best informed of the Rome correspondents, writes on July 21: The work of the commission appointed to negotiate at Rome for the removal of the Spanish Friars from the Philippines is concluded. The members of this Commission—Mr William Taft, Civil Governor of the Philippines; Judge Smith, of the Supreme Court, who is a Catholic, Major Bidde-Porter, of the United States Army, and

the Right Rev. Dr. O'Gorman, Bishop of Sioux City—were received this morning in special farewell audience by His Holiness Leo XIII. This evening they leave for Naples, with the exception of Bishop O'Gorman, who stays in Rome till the end of the week, and from that port they will sail on 24th July for New York.

The members of this Commission seem jubilant over the success they have achieved. In a conversation with one of its members the other evening, regarding a telegram which came from Washington announcing the abrupt cessation of negotiations and the immediate recall of the Commission, I was told that this was a baseless fabrication, and that the exact contrary was true. All which could be concluded in Rome had been brought to a most satisfactory end. The Commission was highly satisfied with the whole course and outcome of the deliberations.

The audience of this morning would seem to confirm this statement. The official Osservatore Romano of this evening has a report of its proceedings in these terms: "This morning His Holiness has received in private audience His Excellency Mr. William Taft, Governor of the Philippines, together with the members of the American Commission presided over by him. His Holiness, in order to show his personal satisfaction at the result of the negotiations carried on by this same commission, was pleased to give a personal souvenir to His Excellency the Governor and to each of the members of the Commission. After the Pontifical audience the Commission went to take leave of His Eminence Cardinal Rampolla, Secretary of State." It is reported further that the gifts bestowed upon the members of the Commission have, besides the precious memory attached to them, a considerable intrinsic value. This condition of things completely disposes of the wild rumors which have been spread abroad announcing the failure of the mission, and other similar stories. Details concerning the awards to be made to the religious authorities in the Philippines for property damaged, the prices to be paid for transfers of property, and such like matters, will be arranged on the spot between Governor Taft and the Apostolic Delegation to the Philippines when that office is filled. It was felt that such questions could be settled more satisfactorily there than they could at Rome. With this work ahead, the political and ecclesiastical authorities seem satisfied with what has been concluded here.

The Osservatore Romano devotes a leading article this evening to the question of "The Holy See and the United States." It observes that in spite of the categorical contradiction it gave on Friday evening to the statements then issued a series of equivocations and malevolent reports are circulated concerning a pretended or imagined failure of negotiations between the Holy See and the United States in regard to the Philippines, this journal deems it opportune to add to the views already given regarding the development of these negotiations, opposing to the empty rumors and fantastic reports of adversaries the invincible language of fact.

"The Government of the United States," continues the Osservatore: "In sending to Rome a Special Commission charged to treat with the Holy See on some points having relation with the religious interests of the Philippine Islands, gave to Mr. Taft, Civil Governor of these Islands, who had been selected to preside over it, the opportune instructions in which were expressed the views and the desires of the Government itself in regard to such questions. 'Mr. Taft, as soon as he had reached Rome, hastened to communicate such instructions to the Holy See, which responded immediately, manifesting that its ideas were concerning this question, and tracing itself the grand lines which in its judgment should serve to the definition of the points in controversy. 'A few days after this reply had been received, the Government of the United States formulated a concrete project of Convention and submitted it to the Holy See, which, after having examined it, in its turn drew up a counter-project and communicated it to that Government."

"To this second communication of the Holy See the Government of the United States hastened to reply, making known how it would accept the lines traced in the first proposals formulated by the Holy See itself, which, therefore, as has been said, served as a base to the future negotiations which should be continued and completed at Manila."

"And in giving this reply the Government of the United States employed the most friendly and most courteous terms, rejecting in declaring that, a complete understanding of the ecclesiastical authorities of Rome being established between the American authorities of the Philippines and every danger of future difficulties and opposition was eliminated. Mr. Taft was then charged to assure the Holy See that the American Government would always do all that was possible in order to continue the harmony which was reached and to come to an understanding concerning what should be done for the general advantage, manifesting at the same time its own satisfaction for the consideration and courtesy which was made evident in its regard."

"This is the faithful exposition of the facts, and after this," says the Osservatore, "there only remains the question: Where are the pretended suspensions or ruptures of negotiations, where are the failures dreamt of, and all the other vague phantoms invented by malevolence and malignity, which have been created by the adversaries of the Holy See in virtue of the intolerable situation created to the Pontiff in Rome?"

This, or most of it, constituted the theme of conversation on the part of the Commission to those who called upon its members. The anti-Papal and anti-Catholic spirit of certain newspapers here has given a false impression of the issues at stake in the Philippine question. That the Spanish Friars are to be gradually removed from the position they now hold is what the American Government desires, that sequestration of their properties will follow is not in the design of the Government, but that their places shall be supplied by members of the same Order belonging to other countries is contemplated in the new arrangement. The suspicion of the United States Government arises only from the fact that the Friars are Spaniards, and, therefore, likely to be antagonistic to the new Government, as they are to certain people in the Philippines.

The echo of the downfall of the bell-tower at Venice a week ago continues still to resound throughout the length and breadth of the land, and even in many counties of Europe. The disaster, which is the outcome of Government carelessness, has been followed by the dissolution of certain Governmental associations or bureaux appointed to safeguard such monuments of art and history. The grand principle of how not to do it is the principle which is achieved in a hundred ways in modern Italy. In this the new Italy notably takes precedence of most other countries.

The outburst of emotion which has gushed forth on the fall of the Campanile of St. Mark's, at Venice, was most ample and varied. Tears, historical reminiscences, popular phrases, and scientific pronouncements on modes of building and strength of foundations—all come together. In a day or two from now the whole event will be forgotten everywhere else except in Venice. In other cities people are beginning to discover that the grand and monumental buildings that make the renown of the land are in danger of falling. The Basilica of Vicenza is in peril, the spires of the Cathedral of Milan are said to be shaky, and, as the architect who announces that is Beltrami, who holds a high position in his profession, it is likely to be true, the ancient Church of Saint Zeno, at Verona, is also requiring repairs; and, if we may believe a most anti-Catholic authority in Rome, the fine Renaissance ceiling of St. John Lateran, formed of carved cedarwood, most highly gilded and painted, is in such a condition of decay that large portions of it may at any time fall down on the heads of worshippers, or pilgrims, or tourists. For several years past the ceiling of this church has been in need of repair, and it is now proposed that a portion of the offerings which will be given to Leo XIII on the occasion of his Jubilee, by the Tertiaries of St. Francis, will be applied to this necessary work in the Cathedral Church of Rome—the mother and the head of all the churches of the city and the world. The re-building of the bell-tower of Venice is determined upon; the cost of such work is estimated at six millions of Italian lire.

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THE BIBLE

Significance of a Recent Suggestion That It Be Studied in the Public Schools Simply as 'A Literary Work.'

(From The New York Sun.) Because of the passing away of the old time 'familiarity with the English Bible,' the National Educational Association, in session at Minneapolis last week, passed a resolution expressive of its 'hope' and 'wish' that public sentiment would permit the Bible 'to be read and studied' in the public schools generally, but simply 'as a literary work and side by side with the poetry and prose which it had inspired and in large part furnished.'

This association would not have the Bible treated as a 'theological book merely' of supreme religious authority, but only as 'a masterpiece of literature.' For that very reason, however, the study it advises would be without avail even for the secular purpose of giving purely literary instruction, and its introduction would be opposed not less earnestly than was the purely perfunctory reading of passages from the Bible with which the daily sessions of State schools usually were once opened. Of course, children gave little heed to the readings, yet even that slight attention to the Bible provoked both religious and infidel opposition. An attempt now to introduce the formal and categorical study of the Bible, thought as 'a literature' only, would arouse still more violent resistance from both these camps.

The very suggestion that now the Bible should be read and taught simply as 'a masterpiece of literature,' wholly apart from any religious character, put forth as it is from a nominally Christian and Protestant source, is significant of a change of spirit which cannot be called less revolutionary from its significance. A suggestion from a Christian source that the Bible be degraded from its place of supreme elevation as 'the book,' and the 'word of God,' to the category of the human words of Milton and Shakespeare as merely a masterpiece of the literary expression at a single glance would once have aroused the whole English-speaking world, believing and infidel, as a momentary surrender of pivotal religious position. Now it is taken as a matter of course.

In a baccalaureate sermon preached long ago to college students in this city, a preacher of a Church whose sole foundation is supernatural Biblical authority spoke of the Bible as a book 'through which runs a thread of myth and legend.' And no one in his very orthodox audience seemed surprised. The Bible is practically a fairy book in this modern pulpit conception, and under one guise or another of evasive language and illogical conclusion the teaching of a large part of our theological schools leads to that conception; but the popular taste prefers to get its myths and legends from other and more amusing sources. If people do not go to the Bible for their religion, they will not go to it at all.

That the old familiarity with the Bible has been lost by this generation is very apparent in both current speech and writing. Quotations which formerly came to the tongue of every speaker, whether religious believer or unbeliever, because embalmed in their memory by early study of the Scriptures, are heard no longer, and their source and application are not understood by contemporary audiences. Sunday schools, according to official statistics, continue to include a great part of the children of Protestants, but actually, in New York at least, they are not flourishing institutions they once were, unless it be as philanthropic enterprises among the poor as 'mission' schools. How large is the part of the children of Fifth Avenue and of the districts of New York generally where fashion resides who attend Sunday schools and are drilled in the Bible? People hear passages of the Scripture read as lessons in the churches on Sunday, but they listen to them only perfunctorily. The aestheticism of the services appeals to them more powerfully than Protestant churches which have always rejected forms of appeal in the sense as a pagan superstition are now importing robed choirs and musical Italianes into their services, as a cover behind which to hide poverty of belief in the Bible as the sole authority for their faith.

The mere adoption of the Bible as a text book in schools, on the ground that it is 'a masterpiece of literature' will be powerless to check this revolutionary tendency, the most remarkable in the whole history of Christianity.

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