

mens to read the Dakota catechism. Mr. Riggs must not use as a textbook the version of the Bible which his father prepared with so much patience and scholarship. Mr. Williamson must not write on the black-board the Ten Commandments expressed in any words his Indian boys have ever heard in their wigwams or on the playground. The book, the printed page, the written words, are under the ban of the United States Government. Its edict is, 'Thou shalt not teach an Indian boy to read a word in his own tongue.' 'No person,' says the Commissioner, in his order, dated Jan. 18, 1888, 'other than a native Indian teacher, will be permitted to teach in any Indian vernacular; and these native teachers will only be allowed in schools not supported in whole or in part by the government, at remote points where there are no government or contract schools where the English language is taught.'"

That this high-handed and impertinent action on the part of a government official will be acquiesced in by the religious public, especially by our missionary societies, we do not for one moment believe. The position taken by the conference at Mohonk Lake last summer is the only correct one, and our presumptuous Indian Office will be forced to see it:

"No policy can be endured which forbids Christian men and women to teach Christian truth, or to prepare instruction in it in any way they deem right, in any part of this commonwealth, that is consistent with that civil and religious liberty which is unhampered in every other part of our land, and must hereafter be unhampered within all Indian reservations."

The Christian Union well says:

"It is monstrous that there should be a square mile of territory in the United States in which the National Government should be able by despotic decree to determine the conditions under which a free religious society which asks no support and no favors from the government may carry on its work. We should be glad to have religious societies appeal to the President to have this order rescinded, not because they wish to use the Indian vernacular, but because they demand liberty to make their own rules and regulations without let or hindrance of any kind from the Indian Bureau."

Says *The Congregationalist*:

"The simple facts are that the order of the Indian Commissioner, which has been modified, was absurd and unjust to begin with, and that whoever has attempted to modify it has bungled his task so that the result is not much more satisfactory to intelligent and patriotic people—although it

perhaps is a little more—than the original was. It is a great pity that so important a matter should not be managed more sensibly."

For ourselves we are amazed at this "rebuff from the U. S. Government." Our worthy President cannot afford to have this action of his subordinate stand. It is a grievous indignity to the missionary sentiment of the age and directly contravenes a fundamental principle of our institutions. It is quite bad enough for our politicians, in national, state and municipal legislation, to show marked partiality to the Roman Catholic Church for the sake of political influence; but when a government officer arbitrarily interposes and forbids our missionary societies, in schools established and wholly supported by them, from conducting them as their wisdom dictates, it is quite time a halt were called and the pulse of the people felt. The order excluding the Dakota Bible from every school where its reading can do any good is only paralleled by the recent attempt of the Turkish Government to suppress American schools in the Ottoman Empire—an attempt against which our Department of State through Mr. Straus, our minister, so earnestly protested as to defeat the attempt. No less earnest should be the protest of the American people against an arbitrary order which dictates to their missionary societies the methods which they must pursue as a condition of being allowed to work for the conversion of the Indian race. So long as this order stands the Department of the Interior will be in a position of direct antagonism to the Christian sentiment of our land.—J. M. S.

THE INDIAN BUREAU AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE American Protestant Church has another serious matter to settle with this same secretary. Something is evidently wrong in his department, and it is quite time some light was let in upon it. We quote the follow-