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Church Wins Again!

Another legal victory is to be recorded in favor of the Catholic Church in our insular possessions. This time it is Porto Rico.

In the case of the municipality of Ponce, the United States Supreme Court has decided that the Catholic Church is entitled to exercise complete ownership of the church buildings occupied by that denomination in the city of Ponce.

It appeared from the record that the buildings had been constructed by the municipality, and that, notwithstanding they had been kept in repair by the parishioners, they were inventoried as city property. In order to obtain from the city an acknowledgment of its ownership, the Church brought suit in the Supreme court of Porto Rico, and there obtained a verdict enjoining the city from setting up any claim whatever to the building. The city appealed to the Supreme court of the United States with the result that the judgment of the lower court was affirmed.

In this opinion, Chief Justice Fuller said:
 "All the public funds employed in church buildings and other property were appropriated for that purpose without any reservation or restriction whatever, being approved according to law by the representatives of the nation in the Cortes or by those of the towns in the common councils. Therefore the application of funds thus appropriated and voted by the legitimate mandatories of the nation or of the municipalities constituted, from the standpoint of law as of justice, a perfect, irrevocable gift."

The general conclusions of the court were announced as follows:
 1. The Legislative Assembly of Porto Rico had the power to confer jurisdiction on the Supreme Court of the islands of this special class of controversies. Such legislation was not contrary to the constitution and was in conformity with the power conferred by Congress upon the Legislative Assembly to regulate the jurisdiction of the court.

2. The Roman Catholic Church has been recognized as possessing legal personality by the Treaty of Paris and its property rights have been solemnly safeguarded. In so doing the treaty has merely followed the recognized rule of international law, which would have protected the property of the Church in Porto Rico subsequent to the cession. This juristic personality and the Church's ownership of property had been recognized in the most formal way by the concordats between Spain and the Papacy and by the Spanish laws from the beginning of settlements in the Indies. Such recognition has also been accorded the Church by all systems of European law from the fourth century of the Christian era.

funds were thus irrevocably donated and by whom these temples were erected and dedicated to religious uses.

Time To Change.

When the A. P. A. and kindred organizations hoodwinked the State Legislature into passing the law that the American flag must be displayed on all school buildings every school-day in the year the "Catholic Journal" expressed the opinion that the effect of the new law would be to cheapen the flag and lessen the esteem in which it is held.

Time has proven the truth of our assertion. From all parts of the state comes the wail that the young folk do not seem to have the proper respect for the national emblem. Mr. Larned, of Buffalo, quotes a deceased school principal of that city as follows:
 "Now, unfortunately, the sight of the flag wakens no interest whatever among the children. In fact, it makes no impression on their sight. Being seen every day, as a matter of course, it is not in reality seen at all. The possibility of associating it with anything in their minds seems lost, and I cannot interest them as I used to do on anniversary days, because the expectant curiosity has not been stirred. I regret the law more and more. I am sure it was a great mistake."

It appears that previous to the passage of the law making the hoisting of the flag compulsory, Mr. Smith's custom was to raise the school flag on the mornings of a good many historical anniversaries; not merely on the public holidays, but on the anniversaries of such events as the discovery of America, the landing of the pilgrims, the battle of Lexington, the burning of Buffalo, the signing of the emancipation proclamation, the assassination of Lincoln, and on the birthday of very eminent men.

Under those conditions the flag meant something. It became an object lesson which the teacher elucidated to the interest and instruction of his pupils. Mr. Larned very properly says: "It is to be hoped that a truer conception of patriotism and of the symbolism of the flag will prompt our legislators to an amendment of the law, prescribing anniversary exhibitions of the flag, according to the excellent former practice of Principal Smith."

Our Schools.

Last week reference was made to the work of our Catholic schools and our readers were told that these institutions were fully the equal of the public institutions. Perusal of the programmes of the commencement exercises of our Catholic schools held during the last few days confirms this opinion. The literary character of the exercises is ample proof of the attainments of the pupils while the class averages, the high percentages attained by individual pupils all go to prove that the teachers and methods in the Catholic Schools are superior to those employed in other institutions of learning in our city.

Indeed, it is not necessary to go to the schools. Ask the business houses, ask the commercial colleges whether Catholic school pupils or the public school graduates are the better qualified to enter upon business life. With rare exception, the answer will be in favor of the Catholic school pupil. Pupils from public schools who go to the high schools find, to their dismay, that the Catholic school pupils are so well prepared that advanced work to them is not allowed to say so in public, in private, high school teachers will tell you that the best prepared and best equipped pupils who come to them are from the parochial schools.

It is a noticeable fact that in Catholic schools this year it was not uncommon to see a class average above 90 and this is based on the Regents' examinations prescribed by the State Department of Education. This is official record, therefore, not merely say so or the boast of one friendly to the Catholic Schools. At least two instances were recorded where a pupil stood 100 per cent in all studies, a perfect mark!

Such records represent work on the part of the pupil, to be sure, but they also represent teaching capacity of a high standard on the part of the instructors. Surely, we have no reason to be ashamed of our Catholic schools.

Taft Named.

As has been expected for many weeks, the republican national convention in Chicago last week nominated William Howard Taft for president and Congressman James S. Sherman for vice president.

There is no doubt that the convention was controlled by supporters of President Roosevelt. Federal office holders were much in evidence in the list of delegates, and they took a leading part in the election of the delegates in the several states. President Roosevelt was for Taft. That had much to do with his nomination. Nevertheless, when the field is surveyed it must be confessed that, with President Roosevelt out of the question, the convention has chosen the best candidate who was in the field. Mr. Taft has occupied a seat on the bench, he has been governor-general of the Philippines, he has represented the Government abroad in several delicate and intricate matters and he has filled the important position of secretary of war. None of the other candidates had had any experience in the positions which give to one who is possessed of the requisite mental grasp an insight into the things needed in the president of so great a country as is ours.

To Secretary Taft, as to President Roosevelt, Catholics of the United States and the world at large, owe a debt of gratitude. When this country acquired the Philippines and Cuba—to all intents and purposes—and Porto Rico there were many matters in which the past and future of the Church were bound up. Thanks to President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft, these matters have been adjusted in such a way as to insure to the Church a fair measure of justice.

Without expressing any opinion, politically, it is but fair that expression be given to these things as a matter of simple justice. So far as the republican platform is concerned, it is on a par with most such documents, intended to catch as many votes as possible. Public attention is now turned to Denver, where the democrats meet on July 7th.

An exchange says: Word comes from Syracuse that Bishop Ludden has asked for a coadjutor. For twenty-one years he has ruled wisely and well. He is not an old man, but the work of a bishop in so large a diocese is a laborious undertaking, the work of a man far stronger physically.

Very recently William Jennings Bryan lectured under auspices of a Chicago Catholic women's organization. Net proceeds over \$4,000. Later Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis did likewise, with similar result. We have an idea that no such figure would be realized in the East.

Grover Cleveland, the last of the expresident, died Wednesday at Princeton, N. J.

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\$4.50 Plumes are selling at \$3.49.	\$15.00 Plumes are selling at \$10.98.
\$5.00 Plumes are selling at \$3.98.	\$20.00 Plumes are selling at \$14.98.
\$6.00 Plumes are selling at \$4.98.	\$25.00 Plumes are selling at \$17.49.

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