

LESSONS
FROM THE
PHILIPPINES.

THE American troops have learned a few lessons in the Philippines, but they are not just the lessons that the jingo pulpits and newspaper offices anticipated. One lesson is this, that the conquest of the Philippines is about the knottiest problem Uncle Sam ever set his brain and hands to solve. In fact, he is heartily sick of the whole affair. Another is, a wholesome respect for the Spaniard, who succeeded, by peaceable means—and chiefly by aid of the Catholic clergy—in turning those beautiful eastern islands into centres of Christianity and civilisation. The third lesson is one of respect for the dusky-skinned Filipino: a respect extorted from his invaders after they had seen the white of his eye look coldly some hundreds of times upon them along the levelled barrel of a well-aimed rifle. And last, but not least, the American Protestant pulpit is beginning to realise that the Filipinos are not pining for 'an open Bible' and for amalgamation with any of the thousand warring Christian sects of the United States, but are satisfied to hold fast by the one true Fold of which the vast bulk of the population of the islands has for so long been devoted adherents. So much is told by the Rev. Peter McQueen, a Protestant clergyman now in the Philippines, in an interesting review of the religious situation in the islands published in a recent issue of the *Congregationalist*. In the course of an interview, General Otis said to him:—

In regard to the establishment of Protestant missions in these islands at the present time, they will have a hard and stony time. The Filipinos are all earnest Catholics, and any attempt at proselytising them would stir up their anger against America, whom they accuse of trying to take away their religion as well as their liberty.

The Rev. Mr. McQueen expresses his own opinion in the following fair, set terms:—

I believe the masses in the Philippines are more intelligent and progressive than we thought they were, and I assure you that, while I have great hope of Protestant missions here in the future, yet I think, as General Otis does, that they will have hard, stony ground. I do hope that the whole Protestant Church in America will aid them instead of starting rival sects and competing missions, which will only tend to emphasise the unhappy differences that exist among sectarians and which would certainly lead to complications among the natives. The heathen in his blindness cannot possibly understand why there should be so many different kinds of Protestants, and a series of theological discussions would certainly not conduce to his forsaking his idols.

Mr. McQueen had also an interview with General Lawton. It gives a pleasant insight into the bravery and intelligence of the native population that was reclaimed from barbarism through the beneficent action of the Catholic missionaries, who established schools so successfully throughout their missions that, even at a time when the education of the masses was sorely neglected in Europe and America, nearly every Filipino could read and write. General Lawton spoke as follows of the Filipinos:—

Taking everything into consideration, the few facilities they have, the many drawbacks, they are a very ingenious and artistic race. And, taking into account the disadvantages they have to fight against in arms, equipment, and military discipline, without artillery, short of ammunition, powder inferior, shells reloaded until they are defective, inferior in every particular of equipment and supplies, they are the bravest men I have ever seen. The Filipinos are not military by nature. They are rather domestic in tastes and habits, peace loving and industrious. Nine-tenths of the people of the island will strongly favour peace, even at the expense of some of their theories, wishes, and hopes. I believe that with a liberal government, such as the United States can and will establish, they will be a peaceable, thrifty, happy people. I believe that it was a great misfortune that we were not able to give them a chance to sample our government before hostilities opened. The only thing we have to fear is from ambitious youths, who want to obtain control for financial reasons, that they may practice what the Spanish have taught them. Among the Filipinos there are many cultured people who would ornament society anywhere in the world—ladies who have studied and travelled, men who have a good education and a fine brain. Take them as a class, there can as many of them read and write as the inhabitants in many places in America. As for their treachery, you would not have to come so far as this to find that. There is plenty of it in North America. All nations are treacherous more or less. Some men and nations have treachery trained out of them more than others. What we want is to stop this accursed war. It is time for diplomacy, time for mutual understandings. These men are indomitable. At Bacoar Bridge they waited till the Americans brought their cannon to within 35 yards of their trenches. Such men have the right to be heard. All they want is a little justice. I established a civil government at Belinag, with the government entirely in the hands of the natives. It worked to perfection. All these people need for self-government is the protection of our troops till affairs have quieted, and then they will, I have no doubt, advance as rapidly as the Japanese, perhaps more rapidly. I am very well impressed with the Filipinos.

If thou canst not make thyself as good and as clever as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking? Bear then with thy enemies and friends.

PROHIBITION.

INTERESTING PRONOUNCEMENT BY FATHER REGNAULT, S.M.

DECIDEDLY the best and ablest nut-shell pronouncement we have recently seen upon the tangled question of Prohibition, is the following letter written by Father Regnault, S.M., of Waimate (South Canterbury). The occasion which led to the inditing of it is sufficiently explained in the opening paragraph. Through the courtesy of a local correspondent we are favoured with the full text of Father Regnault's communication, and have procured the permission both of the writer and the recipients for its publication in our columns. The letter runs as follows:—

The Presbytery, Waimate,
October 17, 1899.

G. H. GRAHAM ESQ.,

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your communication of the 12th inst. informing me that Mr. Thomas Brown and yourself had been appointed by the Waimate Temperance Reform Union to wait on me for the purpose of asking me to help in the Prohibition movement at the next triennial poll of New Zealanders on the question of License in the traffic of intoxicants, I beg to say that, although I should be very glad to see you at any time, I think that an interview on the above subject would be very little use. But, since you have done me the honour to write to me, I owe it to you and to the community, to state as briefly as may be, my reasons for declining to aid you in the Prohibition campaign. Hence, I object firstly to the principle of Prohibition, and secondly, to the methods employed by many leading Prohibitionists. As to

THE PRINCIPLE

1. I cannot adhere to the principle of Prohibition. In the controversies on the above subject, I notice that strong drink is frequently stated to be an evil in itself, a creation of the devil, etc. This is the Gnostic doctrine, to which I cannot adhere. Wine, indeed, like all creatures, is a gift of God, for there is but one Creator of all things—the one eternal God. 'And God saw all the things that He had made and they were very good.' (*Gen. I., c. 1.*) St. John Chrysostom, the great light of the Christian Church at the end of the fourth century, speaks to the point when he says: 'I hear men say when these excesses happen: "Would there were no wine." O folly! When men sin in other ways, dost thou find fault with the gifts of God? But what madness is this? Did the wine produce this evil? Not the wine, but the intemperance of such as take an evil delight in it. Say then: "Would there were no drunkenness, no luxury"; but if thou sayest: "Would there were no wine," thou wilt by degrees go on to say: "Would there were no steel, because of the murderers; no night, because of the thieves." In a word thou wilt destroy all things, since they may all be abused.'

2. Neither can I, in the face of the most recent scientific investigations into the subject, hold that alcohol is, in moderate doses,

A POISON.

This idea was based chiefly on certain unsatisfactory experiments made a number of years ago by Lallemin, Duroy, Perrin, and others. Their finding on this point has been completely upset by the recent series of experiments made under the most stringent scientific conditions by Professor Atwater, of the Wesleyan University (United States), under the auspices of the Committee of Fifty for the investigation of the drink problem. This distinguished scientist has conclusively shown that, in its proper place and measure, alcohol exercises important functions of nutrition.

3. I cannot, on moral grounds, condemn as absolutely wrong and sinful the strictly moderate and well regulated use of alcoholic drinks by the proper persons. Did I do so, I should set myself up against the Saviour of the world and His apostles, all of whom took wine in moderation, and none of whom were in this sense Prohibitionists. Neither, by the way, were any of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and least of all the most notable of their number, Dr. Martin Luther. I would then—and do—insist in every case on moderation as a bounden duty, for excess in drink, as well as in speech, is against all laws, human and divine. I would—and do—recommend

TOTAL ABSTINENCE

as a matter of course! (not of precept), yet I would—and do—insist upon it as a moral obligation, binding in conscience on some—inebriates, for instance, and certain classes of persons who have either lost or not acquired the habit of self-control in the matter of strong drink. These are not, however, typical members of the community in New Zealand. Hence I should not feel justified, for their sake, to make total abstinence compulsory on all.

4. I deplore the evils of drunkenness as much as anyone. I deplore and reprobate, and that, too, in a practical way, and I believe not altogether without success, not the well-regulated use, but the abuse of alcoholic drinks—whether that abuse arises from the sole culpability of the consumer, or whether it is contributed to ever so remotely by the 'trade.' I am ready and willing to give my cordial support to any movement which will provide a real remedy for the undoubted evils that cluster around the traffic in intoxicating drinks. My personal opinion, however, is that a suitable remedy may be found, not in total prohibition, but in its better regulation, and a better administration of the existing laws. Above all, a system of education which would impart to the young people of New Zealand a better knowledge of God's holy law, and teach them the means of grace which our Blessed Saviour has placed at our disposal, and would prove a very efficacious remedy against the evils of drink.

The more direct reasons which incline me to think Prohibition

AN UNSUITABLE REMEDY

are: (a) That it is an extreme and radical measure which interferes intimately with individual liberty and vested rights. On this