

The Friars
Why they Must Go

(Mr. Frank Ernest Gannett, the writer of this article, served as secretary to the first United States commission to the Philippine Islands. Because of his experience and a special study he has made of the subject he is particularly well qualified to pass an impartial verdict upon the troubles with the friars in the Philippines. Under the title of "Friars and Filipinos," Mr. Gannett translated Dr. Jose Rizal's great Tagalog novel, "Noli Me Tangere," a work pronounced by President Schurman of Cornell to be the best book ever written on the Filipinos. It has been perused with interest by President Roosevelt at his home at Oyster Bay.)

Although Governor Taft has said farewell to the pope and has left Rome for Manila, the negotiations between this government and the vatican in regard to the friars and friars' lands in the Philippines have not been concluded. The subject will be taken up again from Manila and the probabilities are that for months it will be one of the most important questions before the American people. The fact that religion enters into the problem has aroused the interest of the whole nation.

For the American people it is difficult to appreciate just what is the situation in the islands that our government, through its representative, should request, yes, almost demand, the withdrawal of the priests who are members of religious orders. But when the facts are carefully studied it will be seen that the move, if carried out, will do more to promote peace in our far off possessions than anything that has occurred since Admiral Dewey sailed into Manila bay on the memorable May 1, four years ago.

But at the outset it must be understood by all that the action taken by our government is not intended as a blow at the Catholic church. It is not a step to promote the Protestant religion in the islands. Rather it is a step which will first of all promote Catholicism in the islands and when the members of the Catholic church realize the exact situation they will, it is safe to say, not object to the step taken by President Roosevelt, but will agree that Archbishop Ireland, who has made a careful study of the case, was right when he said this was not a time for criticism.

In the first place the Filipino is a devout Catholic. He loves the Catholic religion; the Catholic service appeals strongly to his nature. It is to his mind not so prosaic as the teachings of the Protestants, and if he can have it from the hands of fathers whom he holds in esteem and regard he will take no other religion.

But the Filipino objects to the Spaniards who now dominate the church in the islands, and it is in deference to the wishes of the native that the United States government has taken decisive steps in the matter. The protest is not against the Dominicans, Augustines, Recoletos and Franciscans as religious organizations; it is not against native priests, it is not against Catholic priests of French, American, German or any other nationality. The protest is against the Spanish priests—the men who are at present in the islands, the last vestige of the cruel and corrupt government which has kept the Filipino from developing apace with the other nations of the globe.

The history in detail of the various orders of the friars in the Philippines would be quite as extensive as the annals of the islands themselves. In 1565 the first missionaries of the Augustines began their work in Manila. Twelve years later the Franciscans arrived in the archipelago. In 1587 the Dominicans followed, while the Recoletos did not come till 1606. The Jesuits landed in Manila in 1581, ahead of the Dominicans, but owing to differences with the government their station was withdrawn in 1768. After an interregnum of ninety years the members of the order were allowed to return to the islands, but their jurisdic-

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Another model of the fete gown so popular for outdoor and other day functions.—Draped cape effect shown in this model in natural pongee. Handsome gown of natural pongee, embroidered brown and white dots, ecru silk insertion joins the seams and forms bands decorating skirt, waist, and sleeves, with tiny black ribbon velvet laced through. A deep draped cape, trimmed with black velvet and applications of lace medallions trim the waist. The chemisette is of tucked mousseline. Girdle of black ribbon velvet. The hat is of ecru straw, with white chiffon underbrim, white plumes and ribbon trimming.

tion was limited to the uncivilized islands and provinces, except that in Manila they were allowed to open schools.

The Capuchins and the Benedictines went to the islands during the last thirty years and are numerically of comparatively little importance. They have a total of fifty members, while the four great orders, the Dominicans, the Augustines, Recoletos and Franciscans, number a total of very nearly 2,000 ordained priests. The Jesuits in the Philippines number about 175. All of the members of the orders wear the flowing gown, with certain characteristic differences in color or feature of the habit to denote their denomination.

Under the Spanish system of government certain provinces were assigned to each of the four principal orders, and according to the wishes of the head of the order at Manila, the friars were distributed among the different parishes to "cure souls."

In the town assigned to him the friar had much authority. Indeed, here lies the secret of a large measure of the hatred entertained for him by the Filipinos. Under the Spanish domination church and state went hand in hand to a remarkable degree, and, although each locality had a local form of government, the reverend parochial priest really controlled all the affairs.

His duties, as laid down by the law, were those of an adviser and overseer, but by reason of his personal authority, influence and training and by reason of the multifarious functions which he discharged he became the most potent factor in all matters of state, whether pertaining to the village, the province or the general government of the island. And so it came about that whenever the Filipinos were oppressed by the government they attributed a large measure of the evils to the friars.

But there is no doubt that the Fili-

pinos were treated harshly by the friars. The trouble had its beginning when the religious orders began to develop the commercial side of their corporations. Gradually they got possession of an immense amount of property, including the very best lands in the islands. These were handled on a

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