

"DANGER ON THE LEE."

There is one strikingly conspicuous feature of Mr. McKinley's policy which seems not yet to have impressed the public mind in general; but which the more thoughtful portion of our citizens have long observed with anxiety, especially as in this direction his conduct is decidedly autocratic, while his motive is unmistakably selfish. This feature is a tendency to use religion as a factor in politics, and it shows itself in various forms and ways. The memorable speech at Ocean Grove is one instance. The president of the United States had no right to appear at a public religious meeting as champion of "imperialism" advocate of party plans respecting the fate of the Filipinos. Apart from the monstrous incongruity of his speech with the occasion, his being there at all in his official capacity was treason to the conditions of his position, and ought to have been resented as such by the whole country. Nor does he, apparently, confine his propensity to meddle in this direction to the denomination which claims him as a devout member. The whole matter may be summed up in the familiar newspaper heading which has occurred so frequently as to have passed into a proverb, "Ireland Sees McKinley," which, being interpreted, means that Mr. McKinley wishes to secure the Irish-American votes for next November, and therefore yields to the demands of Archbishop Ireland in behalf of the Catholic church.

The question is not what Archbishop Ireland is doing, or trying to do. The Catholic church in the United States stands on an equal footing with all other religious organizations and has as much right as any other to government recognition and assistance; as much and no more, and that much is absolutely nothing at all.

The constitution forbids any meddling with religion on the part of the government, the object of the prohibition being to prevent the establishment of a state church and to secure complete religious liberty to every citizen. This wise and just regulation has long been transgressed in the exemption of church property from taxation, and there is at present an increasing disposition to subvert the original intention by introducing a constitutional amendment expressive of the national acceptance of Christianity as the only true religion for mankind; while the manifestly necessary exclusion of religious exercises from the public schools is opposed and eluded and disobeyed by zealous protestants in every quarter of the land.

The accomplished and the threatened infringements are sure to make trouble if the interested parties persist in such endeavors. The exemption of church property from taxation is an outrage upon the rights of the people; because there are numerous sects too small and

too poor to acquire land and houses for their worship; while a large and rapidly increasing proportion of the population ignores churches altogether and has no formulated system of belief, and yet all these are forced indirectly to pay their share of the profit lost to the general public through the accumulation of untaxed wealth by the churches. To insert an amendment to the constitution implying coercive belief in Christianity would be also an outrage upon the equal rights of all citizens, seeing that the population contains not only nominal Christians, but also Jews, Mohammedans, heathen, infidels, believers and disbelievers and unbelievers of all sorts and shades of opinion, whose claims upon the protection of the government are incontrovertible and equal.

These questions must and will eventually be settled by the community at large, the existing evils not being due to any one responsible person. The case is somewhat different when the head of the government, upon his own authority, disobeys the law by favoring certain religious sects, and by using the public funds for sectarian purposes in order to further his own ambitious designs.

This is what Mr. McKinley is accused of having done in granting large tracts of the public lands to the Catholic church at the request of Archbishop Ireland, whose demand was doubtless founded and fortified upon his knowledge of similar favors already granted by Mr. McKinley to the Methodists. If these charges are a slander they ought to be denied and refuted without delay; if they are true, they ought to be investigated; also without delay. Among the other statements in the published summing-up of the results of "Ireland Sees McKinley," are the appointment of Judge McKenna as attorney general and later as a judge of the supreme court, the nomination of Bellamy Storer for assistant secretary of the interior, and his later appointment as United States minister to Belgium (both of these men being prominent Romanists); the suggestion of the Pope as mediator between the United States and Spain; the protection granted to church property in Cuba and the Philippines; the payment by the United States government of high rents for the use of church property in Manila and for the continuance of Catholic worship in the churches of that city; the appointment of General Otis to command in the Philippines, and his official relations with the Spanish Archbishop; the declaration of Spanish newspapers respecting "a new political power of great influence," naming Archbishop Ireland as the representative of that power; the frequent appointment of Catholic priests as chaplains by land and by sea; the payment of Catholic school teachers by the government in the Philippines; the government contract for five thousand rosaries for Catholic soldiers; the government order for the

Jesuit-Marquette stamp; the appointment of the designer of that stamp as postmaster at Washington with a salary of six thousand dollars; the choice of Archbishop Ireland as representative of the United States at the peace convention at The Hague (the said choice being annulled by the Pope); the sentence against General Eagan changed to a six years' vacation, with pay at \$5,500 per year; government contracts with papal Indian schools renewed in spite of protests; the contract for carrying Spanish prisoners home given to a line of steamers owned by the Jesuits; Judge White, a Jesuit, named for the Paris peace commission, but obliged to resign on account of public opposition; twenty papal saints' days made public holidays in the Philippines by order of General Otis; Henderson, "the champion in congress of papal schemes for looting the public treasury," elected as successor of Reed for speaker; permission granted to build a Catholic chapel on West Point grounds.

These charges are not all of equal importance, and some of them sound as though prompted by that spirit of ignorance and intolerance which animates the sayings and doings of the "A. P. A." society and other affiliations whose object is to oppose the Catholics on account of their religion. If McKenna and Storer are suitable men for the offices to which they were appointed, their religion has nothing to do with the matter; so, too (if such a functionary is needed at all), it is proper to appoint Catholic priests as chaplains to ships or garrisons where the soldiers and sailors are mostly Catholics; if a protestant chapel is allowed upon West Point grounds there is no reason why a Catholic chapel should not be allowed there too; a line of steamers owned by Jesuits may be just as suitable for the transportation of Spanish prisoners as though the owners were Wesleyan Methodists; the work of Marquette in America certainly deserves commemoration; if the government makes contracts with protestant schools there is no reason for refusing contracts with Catholic schools; that Judge White is a Jesuit was no reason for making "a public outcry" against his membership of the Paris peace commission. There is prevalent in America an ignorant and unjust prejudice against Roman Catholics in general and the Jesuits in particular, a prejudice in which the Methodists have a full share, which makes Mr. McKinley's apparent subservience only the more conspicuous. As missionaries (supposing missionaries necessary) the Jesuits have always shown more wisdom and tact and sympathetic kindness than the emissaries of all the other sects together, and it must not be forgotten that in all the troubles between the Spanish monastic orders and the Filipinos, the natives exempted the