

P. O. BOX 1320
San Juan, Porto Rico

April 24, 1918

Rev. Arthur R. Gray, D.D.
Sec'y for Latin America,
281 Fourth Ave.,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Doctor Gray:

My promised Leviathan has not progressed very far toward completion since I wrote to you last, and I feel that I must send you some kind of apology. It is a shame to have to acknowledge that I have not got sufficiently settled to my work to dispose of routine work easily. But that is the case. However, in time I hope to complete the letter I began so long ago.

Lent was disappointing to me. Our people at St. John's made no apparent effort to take advantage of the privileges offered to them. Except for a faithful few, who, always may be depended upon to attend services whenever the Church gives them the opportunity, our additional services were very poorly attended. Mrs. Colmore, as you know, was kept at home during the whole of Lent caring for five cases of measles in her own family. She was wonderful! The children emerged from their ordeal apparently as well as ever. - But I missed her presence very much. Easter Day, however, was a day of joy. Bishop Colmore preached for me and Celebrated at the 10:30 o'clock Celebration. The Church was completely filled and a large number communicated. Another large audience filled the church on the evening of Maundy Thursday, when our augmented choir sang Steiner's Crucifixion. I had to borrow fifty additional chairs from the Y.M.C.A. for that evening and for Easter Day.

Bishop Colmore is to visit us at both St. John's and St. Luke's for confirmation on Sunday, May 5th. I am expecting to present six at St. John's and three at St. Luke's. But one never knows until the event how many will actually come for confirmation.

A wonderful opportunity for work among our army officers has been presented this winter. A training camp for officers is now being held at the Infantry Barracks and at El Morro. About 400 are there under instruction. St. John's is most conveniently located for work among these men. Not many of them have much knowledge of English, however, and we have no Spanish-speaking priest, except Mr. Walter, here, and Mr. Walter has as much as he is able to attend to in the three centers of his work. I have written to Bishop Perry of our War Commission asking for the services of a man for this work. I think Bishop Colmore also has recommended the man whom he thinks suitable for it. But men are very hard to get, as you well know. A large cantonment is now being built at Saboruco, a suburb of San Juan. It is planned to call there the more than 14,000 Porto Rican troops for training. We ought to have a man, a priest, to work ^{among them} ~~there~~. Every facility would be given him by the authorities. I do wish you could find time to talk over the matter with Bishop Perry or Bishop Lawrence. Incidentally let me say that Porto Rico ^{gave} twice as much as was asked of us for the work of our War Commission.

Bishop Colmore said something startling to me the other day. He said that he wanted some day to talk over the disposition of the recently acquired property in Condado; for if he kept the old Episcopal Residence at Rio Piedras and used

it in training our future native priests, he would not be able to carry into effect his plans for a Condado center of work, - Church, residences, and school, etc. I do hope that it will not be necessary to make this sacrifice. I am in full sympathy with the Bishop's educational scheme. We cannot hope to do very much in the way of church extension until we have developed a native clergy. We are only working at the edge of the problem. At the same time, if the "Americanos" are to be looked after, they can better be cared for in the Condado than in any down-town site. There is only one thing in Bishop Colmore's plan with which I am unable to sympathize. I think that it would be a calamity to give up St. John's Church in San Juan. Let the work for our English-speaking Churchmen be transferred elsewhere, but the fact remains that St. John's is in the center of the best residence section of the old city. Why work among Spanish-speaking Porto Ricans has been allowed to die out altogether at St. John's, I have never sought to know. No doubt it is difficult. But I happen to know that a very large number of the finest Porto Rican men - San Juan men - have definitely broken off with the Roman Church and are Masons. There are hundreds of them here. They are without any church. Few of them are attracted by services in English. But give them the liturgy in Spanish, and good Spanish preaching and I believe that they can be won to the Church. This is the opinion also of Major Lippitt who has been in Porto Rico almost as long as ^{it} has been American. Mr. Waymouth also tells me that he will never consent to the sale of St. John's, that it represents too many sacrifices of the Church to be given up lightly, and that it is greatly needed where it is. If, instead of considering the sale of St. John's, we were definitely to decide

to put more into it, not for our "Americanos," but for the Puertorriqueños, such as a larger and better equipped parochial school, services in Spanish on Sunday both morning and evening, etc, etc, -many things will suggest themselves to you, -I think we would be doing the right thing. If we get out now, our brethren of the Roman Church will think that they have us on the run. We may have been guilty of bad manners in locating St. John's were it is, -I am not so sure of this, however, -but Good Manners will not be appreciated by our neighbors. They will only misinterpret us. And there is absolutely no question about the good effect the presence of our Church has produced upon them.

I have not ventured to say all this to Bishop Colmore. The project of having a Bishop's Church in the Condado has been so near his heart that I have not cared to tell him all I am thinking about it. If his plan in regard to the new church could be carried into effect, with the exception of the sale of old St. John's and the abandonment of the work in the old city, I should be most heartily in favor of it. Work among the Americans here has but a doubtful future, as you must know. The same conditions politically as caused the retirement of Bishop Brent from the Phillipines obtain here also. And unless we are prepared to remain an exotic, a foreign Church, and a sect, we must raise up a native clergy and go after the natives.

There is much more that I should like to discuss with you, but time will not permit me just now to say more.

With kindest regards, believe me

Faithfully yours,

George V. Dickey.

I am sending in separate envelopes a copy of the "Puerto Rico Evangelist" in which you will be