THE ACAPULCO MASSACRE

Details of the Assassination of the Protestants.

Liberalism and Reform Struggling with Bigotry and Intolerance.

HUTCHINSON CHURCH DESCRIBED.

The Assassins Congregated—Murderous Assault on the Missionaries.

Names of the Killed and Wounded—The Scene of Slaughter.

The Surviving Protestants Deported to the United States.

ACAPULCO, Mexico, Feb. 20, 1875.

The readers of the HERALD have doubtless been already informed of the principal facts connected with the religious massacre which, on the night of the 26th ult., disgraced this generally pacific town and sent a thrill of horror through the whole Republic. It now becomes my duty to place before the American people an impartial statement of the whole case, so that they may be able to form their own unbiassed opinion of this most deplorable event.

THE STRUGGLE AT ACAPULCO.

This well known port, the late scene of another St. Bartholomew's Night, is situated on the beautiful and nearly land-locked bay which bears its name. The town of Acapulco itself is built close to the water's edge, at the foot of a chain of high hills of volcanic origin, rising back in toward the country on the east and north. These hills, which almost deserve to be classed as mountains, are generally clothed with verdure and covered by patches of light woodland, giving them a pleasing, picturesque appearance. The place contains a population of about 5,000, is extremely hot—as many of our California fellow citizens and others who have visited it can testify—and to mend matters, occasionally suffers from earthquakes. The old fortress of San Diego Castle, built by the Spaniards, but now of little value as a defensive work, is situated on an eminence at about half a mile to the east of the plaza, and on the street leading from the public square to the fortress, called Tercera Halle de San Diego. At the outskirts of the houses and just above the sea is situated the old, recently unoccupied church of San José, where the religious murders, of which I am about to speak, took place. The parish church, situated in the plaza, and which until within three months ago bore sad evidence of abandonment and neglect, is the only other place of worship in the town. It has received a new coat of whitewash and undergone a series of minor repairs that augured a revival of religious zeal on the part of priest and parishioners. These repairs were made soon after the arrival of a Catholic missionary, who reached Acapulco some time in last November.

THE CHURCH OF SAN JOSE

itself, lately leased by the Protestant congregation, of which the Rev. Mr. M. N. Hutchinson was pastor, had also been whitewashed and otherwise put in order by the new converts to Calvinism, who appeared anxious to imitate the notable example set on the side of Rome. It is a pity that the rival churches could not obliterate or at least whitewash inborn sectarian prejudices as easily as they transferred a new coat of unstained hue upon the walls of their respective temples.

REV. MR. HUTCHINSON

was the pastor of the Presbyterian congregation of the city of Mexico, where it seems that for a considerable period he had exercised his ministerial functions without let or hindrance of any sort. He was invited last year by a lawyer of this place called Procopio Diaz, a man named Herrera and others to come here and organize a new congregation, a nucleus for which had already existed for nearly a year back. Hutchinson, finding no one suitable to send as a substitute, determined to come down himself (which he did in last December) and take temporary charge of the new church. He is believed to have found altogether, between men, women and children, some eighty or ninety souls who were desirous of embracing the new doctrine. A portion of these he addressed on several occasions at prayer meetings, in the house of Diaz and one or two others. The old vacant Catholic church was rented at the reasonable figure of $17 a month, and preparations made to have regular service there. A pulpit was put up, chairs and benches ranged in order, and a small organ purchased and set in its allotted place. In the mean while, between the time of Hutchinson's arrival on the 18th of December and that of the massacre on the 26th of January, ominous warnings and deeply muttered threats had been thrown out by the adherents of Catholicity as to what was soon about to happen to their religious opponents. Whether the idea was entertained or not, that violence would be resorted to, does not appear; neither is it clear if the respective pastors participated in the denunciations of each other's preachings, that were bandied about among both sects. The Catholics allege that they were systematically insulted by the Protestants, who, however, had a small organ in the shape of a local sheet published by somebody on their side of the question. The Protestants energetically deny having done anything more than enter into a fair discussion of sectarian dogmas. On the 24th of January the new church was opened in form. Service was had in it twice that day, and Hutchinson preached both times. It is admitted that pretty fair audiences, composed of converts and spectators, greeted the new Protestant divine. Monday evening, January the 25th, a prayer meeting, at which Hutchinson was present, took place, and a similar gathering was agreed upon for Tuesday evening. On Tuesday during the day Hutchinson felt unwell from the effects of medicine, and, luckily for himself, was unable to attend the meeting planned for that night. Had he been present another victim to the fury of fanaticism would have swelled the number of those who met their date on that terrible night.

THE ASSASSINS CONGREGATED.

The Protestant church has only two doors, both opening on the street. One was closed, and the other, that nearer to the town, open. In front of the door, between it and the street, an umbrageous tree grows. It was under the shade of this tree, and at either side of the door, watching the proceedings within the church, that the assassins, numbering some thirty-five or forty men, took their stand. Procopio Diaz was engaged in the service. He had addressed the congregation in place of their absent minister, and they were singing a hymn, when eight or ten of the cutthroats outside entered, and, dividing among themselves, occupied stands near either side of the pulpit. Without any sign of warning whatever these incarnate devils bared their

MURDEROUS MACHETES,

and commenced an indiscriminate slaughter of the peaceful inmates of the church—not entirely indiscriminate, for the leader of the murderers and one of his men marked out Diaz as their special victim. A couple of machete blows were aimed at his head, which if received in their full force must have terminated his existence at once. As it happened, he had sufficient presence of mind to dodge his head behind the pulpit, and a portion of the board was cut through before the weapon reached its mark. He drew a pistol and tried to fire, but the assailants were too quick for him, and the leader inflicted a ghastly gash on his pistol hand.

A HEROINE.

While this was passing the heroic wife of Diaz picked up a chair, rushed upon one of her husband's would-be murderers, pinned him to the wall, and, by main force, wrenched the machete from his bloody hands. With this she defended herself like a heroine and hastened to the aid of Diaz. Perceiving a favorable opportunity she said to her husband, "Now fire!" he did so, and fatally shot the leader through the mouth and side of the face. Within the church a bloody and murderous hand-to-hand fight was waged for the space of six or eight minutes. The deadly machete was wielded with fearful effect, human flesh cut and gashed like bullock meat. While blood streamed in torrents over the gory floor, now encumbered by dying or wounded men and women.

THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.

Ten or a dozen shots were fired, a few from the assailed, some of whom had revolvers with them. At the commencement of the onslaught those who were near the door attempted to escape. This was a fatal mistake, for as the affrighted worshippers gained the street they were deliberately cut down by the ambushed ruffians stationed on both sides of the door outside.

HENRY MORRIS.

In this way the American citizen Henry Morris met his death. His head was nearly severed from the body by a machete blow and his chest was cut open at a single stroke, deep into the ribs. He and two other men and a woman were killed outright and eleven wounded, more or less severely, of whom several have since died. Morris was a colored man, from Boston. He leaves a wife and several children. He had been in Acapulco some eighteen years or more, having come to this town in the capacity of body servant to Mr. Van Brunt, formerly agent of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

DURATION OF THE MASSACRE.

The massacre commenced about ten minutes after eight o'clock, and, as already stated, lasted only six or eight minutes. The first news which the authorities had of it was from a wounded man, called Juan el Negro, who made his way to the plaza, and at the drug store there, was met by Major Francisco Mejia, commander of the few federal troops stationed about Acapulco. Mejia at once started on a run to the scene of action, some 400 yards off, and a few minutes later the town police, followed soon after by the federal troops from the castle, were on the ground. More than five minutes could not have elapsed from the closing of the battle to the time when the authorities reached their posts. As usual in such cases the police and their allies came too late; they got to the fatal field only in time to pick up the dead and wounded, but not early enough to arrest upon the spot, or follow up any one who could be immediately recognized as a participant in this dreadful tragedy.

ARRESTS.

Incidentally it may be mentioned that one of the assassins, who was desperately wounded and could not get out of the way, was taken into custody and placed in close confinement (incommunicado). His deposition has been taken, in which, of course, it appears that he figured as a spectator only. A couple of other wounded men were apprehended, but as nobody has appeared to implicate them, the prosecution may be looked upon as abandoned.

ACTION OF THE MILITARY.

The federal troops in garrison, about eighty men (a commissioned officer of whom is one of the wounded), were eager to follow and track the assassins. Major Mejia would not consent to this energetic measure. He argued that with the handful of men at his disposal nothing could thus be done and that if they pursued them the whole number might be slain in an ambush and the town thus left without any protection. Mejia telegraphed the main facts to his government, asking 300 additional troops, and the Minister of War, without delay, transmitted the message to General Alvarez, Governor of this State, who without loss of time put himself at the head of 250 men, and arrived in Acapulco about a day and a half after the fearful affair had passed. On the way down from La Providencia here, one of the soldiers under Alvarez, meeting a chance traveller, asked him if he were a Protestant. The interrogated party, as if to humor the joke, laughingly replied that he was; whereupon the representative of law and order levelled his rifle at the unfortunate man and shot him dead! This fine specimen of the troops who were sent down by the government to protect the Protestants in the free exercise of their undoubted right to practise their religion is now a prisoner awaiting trial for murder. From this incident the friends of the American Foreign Mission can judge for themselves how safe it is for enterprising missionaries to pioneer their way in the land of God and liberty.

CHARGES AGAINST A CATHOLIC CLERGYMAN.

It is generally believed in impartial circles that the priest of the parish, if not directly concerned in the massacre, knew that something of the kind was being planned, and that if desirous of doing so could have prevented its perpetration. At any rate a most significant fact is that in his sermon delivered on the Sunday following he never even remotely alluded to what had happened, so that in the presence of a heartrending calamity, which had been wrought wholly and solely under pretext of religious zeal, he uttered not a word condemnatory of the deplorable act, nor gave a sentence of advice counselling moderation or toleration. Comment upon conduct of this kind seems unnecessary. But Padre Justo Pastor Nava is not the man to care much for the opinions of the civilized or, indeed, any other portion of mankind, provided he can serve God even by offering up hecatombs of martyrs in the name of religion. In 1859 His Reverence was taken prisoner by Don Juan Alvarez in a battle fought against the liberals at Casta Chica. Pastor Nava had then earned for himself such an unenviable reputation that Alvarez had him tried and sentenced to be shot. The interference of some influential friends saved his life and he was banished the country. He took up his abode in California, where, it is to be supposed, he made himself useful in teaching holy religion to the young Americans of San Francisco. The temporary establishment of Maximilian's Empire brought this noted ecclesiastic back again to Mexico, where the great liberal party, since their final triumph, have allowed him to remain upon his good behavior. Behold the fruits which his presence in Acapulco has brought forth.

THE STORY STATED.

When General Don Diego Alvarez came here after the mournful scenes above faintly described, a sort of public procession, composed of about 150 women and nearly as many men, went to see him. They stated their entire approval of the Padre's course since he came to the parish and asserted that if he were made prisoner they and the people of the town would stand up and defend him. Subsequently, a petition was presented to the Governor, in which over 200 signers demanded that all Protestants be at once expelled from the State, no action taken against the priest and summary proceedings on account of the late outrage at once suspended. To this extraordinary demand the Governor is expected to reply to-day or to-morrow. Those best posted in local politics say that while Alvarez cannot, in an open and undisguised manner, grant the conditions of this remarkable petition, yet he will substantially comply with the request contained in the document. Those whom I have interviewed on the subject, but whose names are for obvious reasons withheld, have assured me that to compromise matters Alvarez will probably soon offer money and means for a few prominent and obnoxious Protestants to depart for parts unknown. Anything of this kind would certainly be humiliating to a liberal government and disgraceful for a civilized community.

A PAINFUL INCIDENT.

Another remarkable incident occurs to me. The wounded prisoner who gave his deposition (already mentioned) expressed a desire to receive the rites of the Church, and the priest was sent for, but the officer of the prison guard at once expressed his determination not to allow Padre Nova inside the walls of the jail, saying to the District Judge, "You can't play that game off on me. You want to put the priest in prison, and if he is arrested we, as well as the people of the town, will de end him to the last." The wounded man was, therefore, taken to the pastoral residence, where spiritual consolation was administered to him. This shows upon what stud the federal authorities can rely to back them in executing the laws and punishing crime.

THE BAYONET AS A MEANS OF CURE.

The truth is that neither the national nor State governments are sufficiently strong to carry out the laws of reform. At the present moment it would require not less than 3,000 additional federal bayonets in Guerrero to arrest the perpetrators, aiders and abettors of the late massacre. These the government cannot spare, and this crying out sin will probably remain unchastised unless the United States press matters very warmly with the President of Mexico. And, speaking of the United States, let me suggest that an occasional visit of an American man-of-war would be very acceptable to our citizens in this part of the world. People with whom I have conversed express the belief that if Judge Bonilla and Major Mejia had such forces at their command as could enable them to act, they would do so efficiently. I was confidentially informed that if the District Judge had troops to back him he would arrest about eighty persons, nearly one-third of whom there is no doubt could be convicted of being concerned in this terrible act; but under present circumstances nothing can be done.

CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

In justice to the Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, it must be recorded that upon hearing of the cruel butchery he at once went to the house of Procopio Diaz, who is very dangerously wounded, and gave all the aid that lay in his power to assuage the poor man's sufferings. From the complexion of affairs next day it was thought well for the minister to go on board the Ida Lilly, which he did, and remained there until the 31st ult., when he went to San Francisco on the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's steamer Montana.

OFFICIAL ACTION—PROTESTANTS DEPORTED FOR CALIFORNIA.

The American Consul in Acapulco has been in constant communication with Minister Foster, and doubtless our representative in Mexico has ere now received full statements of all the material facts in the case. Like many other international matters of equal, if not greater importance, it will be deposited in some diplomatic pigeon hole and allowed to rest there. On yesterday's steamer, the Carolina, Consul Sutter sent up to San Francisco the following named Mexican Protestants, who either voluntarily had presented themselves or been sent to him for protection, viz.:—Faustin Davalos, Pascual Sotelo, Soledad Silva (a woman), Benigno Reyes Galindo, C. Franco and Francisco Galeano, the last named a boy of about fifteen years old. The Consul assumed the power of sending them to the United States, a country which none of them had ever seen, in the character of destitute seamen. This official if not officious action he reported to Minister Foster, but I have been unable to ascertain if this functionary has approved of the act. Certainly it is the duty of all Americans to extend a protecting hand to the oppressed of any country. We should always be humane and liberal. At the same time it becomes a question of very different complexion when our consular agent takes upon himself the somewhat weighty responsibility of sending upon a long voyage, at the expense of his government, a number of people who have no more right to such treatment than any other portion of the 9,000,000 of inhabitants who make up this Republic. In a pecuniary sense the outlay is not worth talking about; but if our consuls are to throw the egis of American protection over the citizens of those countries to which they may be accredited, just because their own governments are unable to protect them, then the United States will soon find enough such business to do. In our great Republic we have no State religion; every church, very properly, takes care of its own followers. Certainly Mr. Hutchinson, being an American, had every right to protection under the flag, and the death of poor Henry Morris is a case which our government must have investigated; but it by no means follows that the coreligionists of Hutchinson or Morris, being the citizens of another Power, had any claim which would entitle them to American protection from the wrath of their own countrymen. Mr. Sutter has greatly exceeded his duties as a consul, and I am very much mistaken if the Mexican government does not very soon tell Minister Foster so.

CITIZEN OPINION.

Some respectable foreigners have intimated to me that Procopio Diaz got up the new congregation, not because he is a religionist of any particular faith, but simply that he might make money out of the speculation. This may be either true or false; but, even if true, it does not alter the case at all. The sincerity of a man's faith lies with his own conscience; the practice of his creed is a right guaranteed him by all the laws that bind society together; and it is, therefore, of the most vital importance that the liberal government of Mexico should now put forth the most strenuous efforts to bring to justice the murderers of Henry Morris and his fellow victims.

When the fight had nearly ended the Protestants were able to shut the church door, and kept it closed until the soldiers, to the number of twenty, arrived.

THE PROTESTANTS KILLED

are named as follows:—

Eusebio Zavala, Henry Morris, Encarnacion de la Cruz and Maria Margarita Abarcon, killed upon the spot.

Feliciano Basilio died on January 28.

ASSASSINS KILLED.

Of the assassins the following named persons were killed:—

Augustin Calvoz, fell in the church, died on the way to town prison; Memecio Jacinto and Francisco Pielago died since—making altogether a total of seven men and women, and ten wounded on both sides, who have fallen victims to the fury of religious fanaticism.

FIRST IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES.

Judge Bonilla will probably get the federal reinforcements he has asked for, and then energetic measures will be adopted enabling him to prosecute vigorously suspected persons; of whom there are many here. It is thought that if a sufficient number of federal soldiers were present numbers of persons who now hold their peace would make depositions against the parish priest of this place.

Bishop Serrano, of the Diocese of Chilapa, embracing the territory of Guerrero, died in Puebla on the 7th inst. at the age of fifty-five years. Zealous Catholics of this district will probably ask for the appointment of Padre Pastor Nava, but those of contrary opinion think this clergyman will be removed through governmental influence from Acapulco.

I have just seen a piece of the spinal column of Henry Morris. One of the joints just below the neck was struck out by a machete blow. I also saw one of the literally blood-stained machetes used in the onslaught. Its tough blade is twisted and warped from the force of the strokes inflicted by it. The blade is covered with drops and clots of blood. The edge is still almost sharp enough to shave a man. The scene of the massacre I have visited in company with Judge Bonilla and Consul Sutter.

On the street in front of the church dark clotted pools of blood, hard dried in a hot sun, mark the places where the several victims fell covered with their gore.

THE CHURCH AS SEEN AFTER THE SLAUGHTER—IMPORTANT INTERVIEWS ON THE MATTER—BLOODY STRUGGLES IN THE COUNTRY DISTRICTS.

ACAPULCO, Mexico, Feb. 22, 1875.

The machete, when wielded by the hands of a powerful Mexican, is just as much to be dreaded in this country as the Spaniards have found it in Cuba. It is like the Irishman's sublellah—an arm that never misses fire. And then, the multiplicity of uses to which the Mexican dedicates his machete are something wonderful to the uninitiated. It serves as his weapon offensive and defensive; it clears the ground of brush wood and the forests of timber for him; in the streams, rivers and arms of the sea he fishes with it; it helps to build his *jacal*, or hut; aids him in numerous details of his duties as a muleteer, serves in the capacity of a universal tool in carpentering about the houses; cuts his umbilical cord when he is ushered into the world; occasionally shaves him when his razor (if he has one) is dull, and is his closest companion at all hours of the day and night. How that machete, with its sabre-like curve, horn handle, broad blade and keen edge is hugged by the owner can only be understood by those who for years have seen the terrible instrument of many purposes wielded in every imaginable way! Some of the people manifest a good deal of taste in the manner of keeping their favorite machete. The blade is frequently well polished and inlaid with initials or designs in gold and silver; the leathern sheath and belt are ornamented with quaint chasings or embroidered in threads of the precious metals; while the buckle fastening it to the waist is usually of massive silver. But the more numerous portion of the men, being those who cannot reach the elegancies just mentioned, are content to sheathe their machetes in a home-made scabbard or let it rest, bare, with the hilt in their hand and the blade embraced in the hollow of the arm. Over the steely surface of the sharp and trusty cleaver a wing of the omnipresent serape is thrown, and your Mexican gentleman of the unpolished classes is ready for anything from cock-fighting to manslaughter. The tough worsted folds of his well-worn serape afford an excellent substitute for a shield; and thus armed the half Indian peasant of Mexico is as tough a customer as one would wish to encounter. His machete and serape remind me strongly of the targe and claymore that once made old Scotland famous.

THE PROTESTANTS HACKED TO PIECES.

With these hints before the reader, it will be easy for him to imagine the dreadful scene of havoc and bloodshed that must result when a number of machete-armed Mexicans meet in conflict, or when they surprise their enemy and literally "smite him with the edge of the sword." It was, therefore, not so much to be wondered at that the people who perished in the massacre of the 26th ult. were hacked, hewed and cut to pieces. The body of Henry Morris presented a sight frightful to behold. His head was split by a single blow; another stroke divided the arteries on the right side of the neck and chipped out a joint of the spinal column, clean as the carpenter's adze would a knot of timber. This joint of bone, devoid of flesh, sinew or muscle, was shown to me by District Judge Bonilla. Either of the wounds above indicated would have been fatal; but the unfortunate Morris received a machete cut across the breast, which went through a portion of his ribs and penetrated the lungs and heart. Another such stroke delivered in the same place would have sufficed to divide the body in two. Morris was found lying dead in the street, about one hundred yards from the Protestant church, sweltering in blood. The pavement and adjacent walls are red with the blood of the victim, which flowed or was dashed from his wounds. At a short distance from Morris lay the body of the lad Encarnacion de la Cruz, servant of Procopio Diaz, macheted and shot to death. Between the body of Morris and the church the remains of E. Zanala were found. The unfortunate man received ten machete and gunshot wounds. His left hand had been struck off by a blow, and was found at a distance of five yards from the body. The pools of blood which marked the spot where these bodies were found had been partially covered with sand to conceal the horrid sight when I visited the place. Around the door of the church itself, under the tree in front of it, everywhere, blood, blood is to be seen.

INSIDE THE PLACE OF WORSHIP

the scene is perfectly appalling. The interior of the edifice consists of a single long, lofty-ceiled room, which had been lately whitewashed. The place could contain 600 or 800 worshippers. At one end of the room was a low platform upon which a plain, unpainted cedarwood pulpit had been placed, and to the right of this was a little organ. There were some eight or ten benches and a dozen or so of rush-bottomed chairs for the accommodation of the congregation. Seven common kerosene oil lamps, with reflectors, were placed on either side wall, and an attempt at a chandelier appeared suspended above the pulpit. On the evening when I saw the place, in company with the District Judge, United States Consul Sutter, Mr. Gerecke, German Consul, Counsellor Gonzalez and a number of other gentlemen, it was in precisely the condition in which it was found after the massacre. The door, marked with several bullet holes and machete cuts, readily yielded to the key, and a dank smell was felt, while a low echo vibrated on the ear as we entered upon the eventful scene. Entering into the body of the room we found ourselves about a dozen feet in front of the pulpit, and close upon a dark, dried up pool of blood more than a yard wide, over which the never-dying worm had begun to trace his loathsome way.

It was in this spot where the dead woman, Maria Margarita Abarcan, was found in that repulsive lake of gore, with her brains scattered about by the murderous machete. Near where she lay broken chairs that had been wielded in the terrible fray and upset benches marked the desperateness of the fight. Wading through blood marks—which also disfigured the walls in many parts—over the debris of chairs and benches that blocked the floor, we reached another sea of blood, about thirty feet from the pulpit. It marked the place where the reputed leader of the assassins, Augustin Calvo, lay. This worthy met a richly merited fate at the hands of the officiating minister, Procopio Diaz. He was shot through the head, and received other injuries that caused the hemorrhage which of itself would have been fatal. The man died while being conveyed from the church to the town prison. Upon finding themselves assaulted the Protestants

ATTEMPTED TO BARRICADE THEIR CHURCH DOORS.

One of these was most efficiently shut by three or four benches thrust against its cross bars in a very effective way. These benches, the floor under and walls about them were marked by a shower of blood drops, which testified to the wounded condition of those who barricaded this entrance. An old broad brimmed felt hat was found on one of the benches, and a straw sombrero is still to be seen held, as if in a vice, between the door and doorsteps. The pulpit was standing where it originally had been placed, but the reader's desk was knocked to pieces. The left side of the pulpit showed a couple of desperate machete cuts, which had been aimed at the preacher, Diaz, but fell short of their mark. One of them cleft into the partially green cedar inch and a half plank, three or four inches, leaving the impression that it had been struck by a woodman's axe. Another stroke caught the return wing of the pulpit, toward the preacher's person, and shaved the heavy board down for a distance of five or six inches, leaving a smooth edge as though the cut had been passed over by a carpenter's plane.

INSIDE THE PULPIT,

keyboard downward and utterly wrecked, was found the little organ that had been purchased for the use of the church. Up against the wall, at the pulpit's right hand, near where the instrument must have stood, we found the bellows and pedals that had communicated music-giving air to the Protestants' simple choir. The whole scene within the church presents more the appearance of a charnel house than anything else, and the entire party, who, through the kindness of Judge Bonilla, had visited the sad temple were glad to get away from it.

Leaving the church we proceeded across the street in front of it, over through a narrow passage way between two houses, on to a vacant lot, where an umbrageous sycamore tree spreads its leafy arms to the azure heavens. Localities were pointed out as those where the assassins met, canvassed their bloody crime, organized for its perpetration and marched to execute it.

VIEWS OF THE GOVERNOR AND OTHERS.

I have had interviews on the subject of the massacre with General Don Diego Alvarez, Governor of this State; the District Judge, Don Augustin Diaz de Bonilla; Mr. J. Sutter, United States Consul for Acapulco; Mr. Gerecke, Consul for Germany; Mr. N. Lennox, agent of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, and a number of other notable gentlemen living here. I need not say that all unite in condemning the sanguinary act; while, at the same time, much difference of opinion is manifested as to the means by which it was carried out; the popular opinion (however erroneously), inclining to the idea that his reverence, Pastor J. Nava, is at the bottom of the plot. Be this as it may, the fact remains undisputed that up to this writing no one has come forward to accuse him of the crime. In my letter of the 20th inst. I mentioned the fact that Padre Nava had not even alluded to the massacre in his sermon delivered the next Sunday after the fatal 26th of January. It is, perhaps, unjust to construe his silence into any presumption of guilt; but at the same time it is a very remarkable circumstance. I tried yesterday to see Padre Nava, but he declined being interviewed, saying that the public knew all about what had happened, and he could throw no additional light upon the catastrophe.

GOVERNOR ALVAREZ ON THE MASSACRE.

Governor Alvarez looks upon the recent religious murders rather in the light of a local feud emanating from the inflamed passions of personal partisans than a hostile attempt to put down Protestantism. The advocates of this new faith had been provoking, insolent and insulting. They had used indecent language coupled with the most sacred things known to Catholics; had published shameful articles in the newspapers and otherwise enraged the followers of the old faith. There could be no doubt that a plot for vengeance had been laid, and, unfortunately, executed before the authorities could intervene to protect the Protestants. But the thing was done now and could not be remedied. The last of the aggressors had died in prison, and no one remained to say who had been concerned in the murders. Rumor had been busy with the priest's (Nava) name, and even he (the Governor) had entertained suspicions—perhaps unjust—against him. But a more careful study of the case had convinced him that such suspicions were not well founded. The deed must be looked upon as a thing of the past, an event to be lamented, but which cannot now be helped. A petition for the expulsion of the Protestants had been sent to the State government, but he (the Governor) had, of course, replied that such a demand could not be complied with. He had also spoken privately to some of those who had sent the petition, telling them how impossible it was to accede to their views, and they appeared to acquiesce in his decision. Many of the obnoxious Protestants had taken themselves out of the way, and the practice of their particular tenets having ceased, there would no longer be any danger of a repetition of past outrages. The government thought that the enforcement of the new constitutional amendments, whereby the Sisters of Charity, among other religious orders, had been expelled the republic, might lead to serious uprisings and even armed rebellion; but the supreme government is strong and amply able to put down all such disorders, no matter what might be their origin. And as for the State of Guerrero, it at all events is on the high road to prosperity, being now in the enjoyment of an octavian peace.

JUDGE BONILLA'S STATEMENT.

In an interview had with the District Judge, Mr. Bonilla informed me that if there were more federal troops about Acapulco no doubt people would come up and give their depositions against certain parties who, he had no doubt, were concerned in the late murders. He had heard people express pretty decided opinions as to who the guilty parties are, but no one dared to come forward and make a sworn statement of what they said. He applied to the municipal authorities, the foreign consuls and others for information upon which to base further proceedings, but had not succeeded in getting any. The Judge thought that it is well known who instigated the grave assassinations which have horrified this town, but without the protection of a greatly increased number of federal troops, those who do know and would come forward will keep their mouths closed. He thought government would soon send new detachments of troops to strengthen present garrisons, when, doubtless, light might be thrown upon the mystery and the guilty brought to justice. Judge Bonilla looks upon the mournful event as the first, but by no means the last, of its kind that may put Acapulco into mourning for the best blood of her children. His Honor fears that in the future, if one man entertains a grudge against another, all that is necessary to bring down the vengeance of mob law upon him will be to denounce the hated party as a Protestant. This will suffice to have his house pelted with stones or himself riddled by bullets—and all, too, for the honor of God and the glory of Christ. It is a singular religion, this Christian doctrine of ours, that requires so much bloodshed to make its dogmas clear, even among believers themselves.

THE ALVO TROUBLE.

The *Monitor Republicano*, published in Mexico city, on the 13th inst., contains an official account of the Guavagnate *émeute*, from which I condense the following particulars:—

On the 31st of January some isolated meetings of people took place among those who wished to make hostile demonstrations against Julian Alvo, thinking him to be the owner of two lots (formerly church property), purchased by S. Ortega from the municipality. The police dissolved the meetings. Notice was brought on the 1st of February to the Chief of Police that some people were met in the house of Vicente Zamarripa, with the object of inciting the people to rise against Alvo and the authorities, on account of selling the lots already alluded to. The conspirators would have been apprehended by the police on the same night, but when these went to discharge their duty, news reached the Chief that a crowd of people were on the road outside the town, for the purpose of invading it. The day and night police were then ordered to take possession of the best points around the plaza, so as to resist any attack that might be made. They remained there until three o'clock next morning, when the watchers were allowed to retire, but with orders to be ready when called for. During the day rumors were rife that on the 4th the rising against the law would take place. It must be noted that on the evening of the 1st of February the Chief of Police called a meeting of the principal people living about the place and told them the news which he had received concerning the intended rising, and asked their co-operation in aid of the authorities. They only said that their arms would be employed in case an attack for the purpose of robbery should be attempted.

THE FIGHTING.

At half-past eight o'clock on the morning of February 2, when many people were coming out of church after hearing mass, a number of unknown persons commenced to destroy the stores that were being built upon the lots above named. They shouted, "Long live religion, and death to the Protestants;" and the people in a crowd went to the house of Julian Alvo, applied insulting words to him and stoned the doors of his store. Seeing this, some of the police who were present got upon the top of the City Hall and commenced firing, with the object of scaring away the rioters. At this time a man named Larrinud, in company with two others, approached to tell the Chief of Police that the people only wanted to have two prisoners liberated, who had the day before been sentenced to hard labor on the public works for having shouted "Long live religion." In view of this petition, and seeing that very few of the citizens assisted the authorities in putting down the disturbance, and that possibly these could not protect the life of Avalo, the Chief of Police made out an order for the release of the prisoners asked for. Larrinud went in the direction of the jail; as did also the crowd of people who had congregated in front of Avalo's house. The commander of the prison guard, seeing the crowd approach and thinking that he was about to be attacked, fired among the people. This discharge from the guard sent the people to the right about, but they kept in crowds through other parts of the city. The report goes on to add that had it not been for the energy of the officer of the guard doubtless the town would have suffered "a horrible catastrophe." The volley from the guard killed three men and mortally wounded two, who have since died; and nine men and two women were wounded more or less severely. So that sixteen people have suffered, five losing their lives, by this little affair. Upon finding the town threatened the authorities sent word to Rincan, La Venta and La Gallinero for assistance from the mounted police stationed in these places. The officer at Rincan would give no aid, and he at the Venta made sickness an excuse, while the one in Gallinero would have marched to San Miguel Allende; but the people about him, upon whom he relied, refused to lend any support to the authorities. All this, says the report, makes it apparent that the priests have been working beforehand among the people of the municipality, trying to seduce them from their allegiance to the civil authorities. News had reached the Chief of Police's office that the curate, Don José Maria Gomez, when work was commenced on the stores belonging to Avalo, told him that no building should go up there, for he (the priest) commanded the people, and this fact would soon be proved. From this it must be apparent that the clergy have taken a prominent part in the disorders which have just been witnessed in San Miguel Allende.

To-day being a national holiday we Americans expected to see the old flag given to the breeze; but Consul Sutter has thought well to decline allowing the Stars and Stripes to kiss the sunlight.

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Indignant Protest of a Pious Pastor Against Father Walker's Fanaticism.

INTERVIEW WITH A DISTINGUISHED PRIEST

Father Walker in speaking of the public schools of this city has caused much pain and sorrow among the laity and clergy of the Catholic Church, and has, it is said, done more injury to Catholicity than the combined utterances of all the anti-Catholic preachers could effect. Catholics feel that they and the teachings of their religion have been misrepresented, and the priests of New York condemn Father Walker's fanaticism. The writer, in the interests of the readers of the HERALD, has had several interviews with prominent priests of New York, and, without exception, they have branded Father Walker's sermon as rash, dangerous and bordering on heresy, if not actually heretical. During an interview with a scholarly pastor, who has proved himself a most zealous and consistent advocate of Catholic education, the following conversation took place:—

REPORTER—May I ask you if you have seen the report of Father Walker's sermon, published in the HERALD, and also what you think of it?

FATHER—Yes, I have read it; and never in an experience of many years has any act or speech of a brother priest caused me so much pain. In speaking of the false premises from which Father Walker draws his horrible conclusions I find it difficult to repress my indignation. The editorial comments in the HERALD fully express my opinion of that unfortunate exhibition of ignorance, intolerance and fanaticism. And I may add that the Jesuit Fathers are indignant that a member of their Order should bring discredit on them by advocating the refusal of the sacraments to parents who send their children to the public schools.

I cannot believe that Father Walker is fully alive to the consequences of his teaching. According to the last report of the Superintendent of Common Schools in this city there were last year on the register 215,545 scholars, with an average attendance of 117,239. Of these more than fifty per cent are the children of Catholic parents, and Father Walker would, if he could, refuse the sacraments to those 100,000 Catholic fathers and mothers during life and after death relegate them to "the mansions of the damned." The Catholic parochial schools, according to last year's directory, had on the register 27,000 pupils. The average attendance is not given, but it will be found to be about 15,000. Now, if Father Walker's views are correct, out of 600,000 Catholics whom we claim in this city there are not 100,000 in good standing. This is a

MONSTROUS LIBEL ON THE CATHOLICS

of New York, and I have reason to hope that the Jesuits will punish the libeller, and send him to the gloomy solitude of Sault au Recollet, in Canada, to revise his theology and learn at the feet of the saintly Master of Novices, Father Perron, that humility and charity should be the characteristics of the Catholic priest, and that it is his duty to draw people to the sacraments, not to drive them from them.

REPORTER—But, Father, it is said that Father Walker has only preached what the bishops have taught and the Pope defined.

FATHER—I am aware that some Catholic newspapers are in the habit of asserting that the public school system has been condemned, and I have even heard that a few priests in this city look on it with horror. It is utterly false to say that the public schools have been condemned, for the very simple reason that there is nothing in the system deserving of condemnation. If it be sinful for parents to send their children to the public schools it is either because the system of education is bad in itself, or because they (the schools) are the proximate occasion of sin, or because they are forbidden by the Pope. Now, it is almost an insult to any intelligent man to adduce arguments to show that the public schools are not, as Father Walker gratuitously and falsely asserts "nurseries of vice," that they are not bad in themselves and that they do not prove to be the proximate occasion of sin. The only proof which Father Walker brings forward to sustain his

ATROCIOUS ATTACK

is founded on some information gained as a priest. He alludes, of course, to the knowledge obtained in the confessional at the tribunal of penance. Now, I also have had years of experience in hearing the confessions of children who attend public and parochial schools, and, in the interests of truth, I am compelled to say that the morals of the public school children are of as high—if not of a higher—standard as those of the boys and girls who attend parochial schools.

As a matter of course, in every school and college and seminary—I had almost said family—there is more or less viciousness, and it is the province and duty of educators to eradicate it. Ask the Christian Brothers if there are no vile scribblings and markings on the walls in their schools; ask the Rev. Father Hudon, of Sixteenth street college, if the association of large numbers of boys and young men in the halls of St. Francis Xavier's does not require constant watching; ask the reverend rector of St. John's, Fordham, if there are no "black sheep" in that seat of learning; ask the Mesdames of the Sacred Heart if the young ladies at Manhattanville are, without exception, spotless; ask the Sisters at Mount St. Vincent the same question, and you will get substantially the same answer from every one of these experienced teachers:—"Human nature is prone to evil; there is no flock without a black sheep—no family without a scapegoat." Is it any wonder, then, that out of an average attendance of 117,239 children at the public schools some are found corrupt and vicious? In my parish about 600 public school children come to confession once a month, and I assure you that fully two-thirds of these have never, in thought, word or deed soiled the spotless robe of baptismal innocence. Dear that the same cannot be said of the children who attend the parochial schools. While I strongly advocate Catholic education I would be sorry to see anything done to impair the efficiency of our public schools; and, as far as my experience goes, I have found the moral training of the children all that could be expected, and where the religious education is imperfect the fault lies primarily with the priests, whose duty it is to gather the little ones of his flock on Sundays, and, if possible, on the afternoons of other days, within the sacred precincts of the Church and there provide them with the spiritual food of religious instruction.

FATHER WALKER CONDEMNS CARDINAL M'CLOSKEY.

Father Walker and those who think with him should remember that when they arraign the public schools as being bad in themselves or the proximate occasion of sin, they attack the moral teaching of our beloved and venerable Cardinal, who has never spoken a harsh word against the system, and has to a great extent recruited his priesthood from its scholars. Nay, they go further, and condemn the wisdom of the Fathers of the Baltimore Council, who, recognizing the benefits of the education given in the public schools, exhorts bishops and pastors to be on their guard lest text books of anti-Christian or anti-Catholic tendencies be introduced into the public schools. In a word, if Father Walker did right in denouncing the public school system Cardinal McCloskey and the entire American hierarchy have been grossly remiss in their duties, and are to-day guilty of the enormous crime of suffering "the little ones, for whom Christ died," to enter forbidden pastures, and permitting priests "to administer the sacraments to Catholics who are as little deserving of them as dogs."

A TICKLESOME QUESTION.

REPORTER—It is well known that some priests in this city are hostile to the public schools, because, as they say, they have been condemned by the Pope. May I ask you, Reverend Father, if there has been Papal legislation on the subject of our public schools?

FATHER—Well, sir, the question is rather a ticklesome one, and at first thought I was inclined to give it a general answer in the negative; but I feel that I would be unworthy of my mission