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Dr. HJ Woodhouse
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A recent press dispatch from Manila shows that the American censor is still at work there. One sentence in the dispatch is cut off with this explanation: "Suppressed by the censor." If we are at peace in the Philippines, may we not ask of what use is a censor? There can be no military secrets in time of peace. Is he there, then, to protect political secrets from getting to the American people?

Col. Hall, for several months stationed in Puerto Rico, thinks it will take a generation to bring the Puerto Ricans around to the American way of managing public affairs, because "they believe that a public office should be administered for the financial benefit of the incumbent." And pray when did the Americans stop believing that "public office is a private snap?" What manner of men are these Americans, anyhow, that they assume to teach the Puerto Ricans in so delicate a matter? Ask the Cubans, who are looking on in amazement at the kindergarten study in postal fund ethics which the Americans are now exhibiting at Havana for their enlightenment.

Violent labor strikes are again called to general attention by events of the past few days in St. Louis. Complete operation of the street car system there has been suspended for want of men to take the place of strikers, and such partial operation as might have been possible has been prevented by mobs. The violence of the mobs has in turn been met with violence by the authorities. And

properly so. Rioting cannot be tolerated, however great the aggravation. We may sympathize with rioters—and as a rule the rioter, angered beyond endurance by some vague sense of wrong, deserves our sympathy more than the cool and calculating person who angers him—but rioting must be stopped. Thus far we are in agreement with those who clamor for "law and order." There must be law and there must be order.

But we are not blind to the fact that labor riots are not deliberately criminal. They are spontaneous outbursts of lawlessness and disorder in reckless protest against more subtle disorder and more infamous lawlessness. It is doubtful if in the world's history there is a single exception. It is not the riots, therefore, that should command our attention beyond the necessity of putting them down. It is the provocation. That "peace and order" man whose indignation at lawlessness and disorder spends its force upon labor rioters, and finds no object of virtuous wrath in the legalized industrial conditions that breed labor riots as a bog breeds mosquitoes, is morally more responsible for labor riots than the rioters themselves.

It appears that the state of California does not exempt church property from taxation. This fact having been brought to the attention of the Methodist general conference now in session at Chicago, that body has adopted a resolution favoring an amendment to the California constitution exempting buildings and sites used exclusively for religious worship. If the resolution had favored exemption of church buildings, it would be above criticism. To tax church buildings is to tax church worship. But an exemption of sites would have the effect

of favoring the congregations that secure the more valuable locations.

There is a difference, let it be noted, between a church building and a church site. The building is erected by the congregation. No one else has any right whatever in it or to it. It would never have existed but for the energy of the congregation which causes it to be erected. To tax the church building, therefore, is to put a burden upon church building. It is to discourage the erection of churches. And if the tax be in proportion to the value of the building it has a tendency to discourage the erection of good buildings. Unpainted sheds will come to be used for churches where handsome church buildings would be erected if it were not for the tax. It is different with church sites. These are not made by the congregation. The veriest atheist in a community has as much moral right as the holiest church man to the site of a church and the profit it will yield. Both have an equal right to share in the value not only of church sites, but of all other sites. For sites upon the earth were made for neither Jew nor Gentile, Christian nor heretic, but for all. It does not burden any congregation, therefore, to tax the site it has appropriated to itself. On the contrary, such a tax is only compensation to the rest of the community, in greater or less degree, for being excluded from that particular part of the common inheritance. So it is that exemption from taxes on church sites enables the churches to rob the rest of the community, while taxes upon church buildings enable the rest of the community to rob the churches. The obvious moral of which is clear. Out of respect for the eighth commandment, tax all church sites and exempt all church buildings.