In attempting to give an account of the spiritual condition of this island, I must not forget that it is a very early thing for one to make many mistakes who is not only a stranger on the island, but to whom the language, customs, and manners of the people are all new. So that I am relying upon my own impressions only when my observations do not deceive me and am guided by the testimony of those who, on account of long residence and thorough acquaintance with the language, are well qualified to judge.

For one is so ignorant as to suppose that the task of a missionary is to teach...
Of course I do not mean that the Porto Ricans are all uncivilized or barbarous. I do not mean that they are all crude or unpolished in their manners and mode of living, but I do mean that their spiritual condition is deplorable in the extreme. Poor deluded ones! what conception could be more miserable and wretched? If they were only aware of the penalty awaiting them, from such home to which we appeal more than the carnal mistresses. There is a God and a future life of rewards and punishments. Every Nation or tribe, however ignorant or depraved, knows that much the work of the Christian missionary is to give the poor deluded ones a correct idea of the One true God, how he should be worshipped and to carry to them the comfort and consolation of the gospel of the blessed Lord delivereth whom we love. According to this definition of a missionary's work the need of the people of Porto Rico be great now as that of any people. From the idolatries of the superstition.
The Alcalde (Mayor) sent a police man to summon a prominent business man to his court. When the man

teach. In the city, you will see at the first glance the evidences of a depraved & unscrupulous populace: great stone walls topped with broken glass or high lion fencing surrounded by hedges with gates locked by day as well as by night & whenever possible a fierce watchdog guards the premises, but even this does not prevent much theft & other crime. I am told by those who

sin, immorality &c., is just as prevalent. With mon
purely a man of the world, living for the world and conforming to the world in all things. But what better could be expected? The church which has been established here for generations does not attract him to her worship—only a few women gather there, the men may give a passing glance and then, but to be interested, to take any part in the service, so even attend a service is as foreign to their thoughts as a foreigner in Japan. Friends and relations attend the funeral of their departed once or twice the family of the deceased

were delivered the gentleman, who once lived in this city, replied, "Tell the Alcalde that I am not here. I have gone to the Bay for a bath and will not be back for two or three hours. The messenger insists but the gentleman insisted that such an answer should be returned as he had no time to obey the armymono and when the policeman was induced to return with such a report the busy merchant went on with his work not giving a second thought to the falsehood which he had been told. Controlled by jealousy and the customs of society with some of these a little natural kind-heartedness we find the Porto Rican

...
so the Protestant Missionary will not reject any established faith nor lean the people with no religion at all. What the laws will be to supply so far as his efforts are successful a faith where none there is known.

That our God is the Ruler of Nations and governs them has been known since the days of Nebuchadnezzar and yet how slow we are to consider the Government a part of His agency for evangelizing the world, shown him in Porto Rico.

is wealthy I can afford to pay for the services of the Clergy, they may go to the Church and be known as the burial service is performed only given through with, but more than the Church, does and gain their attendance;

that respect can they have for an institution which is only known if spoke to by the takes in seeking from purchase immunity from future evil day.

So far as the country districts are concerned, outside the towns, I am sure the people are as much strangers to the Gospel as the most ignorant of any
of the State, Schools of all grades, from the Primary to the High School, together with Manual and Industrial training, are in operation or about to begin. If you, my reader, could attend one of the public exercises such as I attended on the 22nd of last, and see the bright eyes and interest of the children, listen to their recitations, sing and note the wonderful improvement that must have been made by them during the past two years, you would have been overflowed with gratitude.

It is my manifest, known that the government is at work to roll back the tide of ignorance and depravity and sin. Thousands of dollars are spent each year to support a Civil government by which law, order and maintained, life and property protected while the while of commerce and trade more smoothly forward. Thousands of dollars are spent to maintain the troops. Thousands of dollars the government have been invested in educating the children.
feel that surely God is using this great government of ours in His own work, and if you could see the noble unselfish devotion that is manifested by the American young women who have come to teach in these schools I think you would feel that God's Holy Spirit is surely moving them to do His work which they have undertaken. And then too, these capitalists are busy, millions of dollars are invested, developing the

to God that He is doing so much through the American Government for the uplifting of humanity. If you could have listened to the speeches of Dr. Lindsay the newly appointed Commissioner of Education for the Island, Dr. James E. Russell of New York, and Dr. C. Kendall of Philadelphia. At the conference they addressed the "Church and State" in which they addressed the "Conference for Educators" a few days since and heard them tell what noble ideals are held and magnificent plans foreseen for the progress of the Island. I think you too would have
rising upon the scene
of the present disgrace
and in all things a new
life covering the whole
land.

But as I behold this
vision, as I note with
pleasure what is being
done for the material, the
physical and the mental
improvement of the Island
another scene comes before
my view.

The policy of our Government
must have been from the
beginning, rigidly to separate
the State from the Church
to have nothing to do with
men's religious views but
to leave them to worship
God according to the dictates
of his own conscience

Natural resources of this
exceptionally fertile land
and the wheels of machinery
are humming with their
busy roar. What a
decade will bring forth
does not require the wisdom
of a sage or the inspiration
of a prophet to foretell.

In grass or jungle a
little farm or Porto Rico
will be a garden spot on
Earth; the children educated;
her laborers skilled, her
lands giving forth of its
richness; graduates by the
hundred fold enough to
take care of the coffee, maize,
over with increased revenue
which other lands shall pour
into her lap, homew
Time has proven the wisdom of this policy at home and is strictly observed in Porto Rico today. The teachers are not allowed even to teach school with religious exercises, no work of religion training (save of course, the Christian lady who this noble woman giving this slight through her that being done) is given in the schools or will be. The Government in none of its departments undertakes this task. The capitalists can not be expected through their operations to do it. What then? Educate the children, teach them to learn to think for themselves, give them no other remun-
the few military roads, the 169 miles of R.R. and the steam boats, which only touch a few coast towns, the only way of travel is on horse back as the roads are impassable for vehicles, yet if the American school teacher can encounter the lonely path or mountain trail on her journey, surely the soldier of the Cruse will not shrink from the midwinter snows. With a band of sister earnest, energetic and unselfish men, inspired by a burning desire to serve God and filled with the responsibility laid upon us, we must be up and doing, and while the body and mind are being trained we must see to it that the heart is right—the soul converted. That time awaits the missionary a cordial welcome. I am convinced that the progress of his work will be rapid, but that can not doubt but that grand opportunities are passing us only too true. Allowing to the size of the Island, the work of evangelizing can be done with facility, all is true that aspired from
Booke, the great silvics missionary distributed whenever they could be read or were appreciated from such a source an harvest would inevitabley fort forth and some churches & chapels would spring up, & congregations be formed & a Diocese added to our American Church. But best of all these kind hearted people would have the glowing love of God filling their hearts as they rejoiced in a life hidden to unknown and from among them will the

The Holy Ghost, led by a big hearted wise & definite self-sacrificing Bishop the whole land could be reached & the sound of the gospel heard, directly or indirectly by every one. If such a system were inaugurated, as was used by the itinerant Methodist in the early days of America and the seed of the gospel scattered in every place of the island, flourishing in every town & places in every home & hamlet visited at least once each month by either Priest or Bishop, Pray-
Master find the own in that day when He comes to make up His jewels.

E. Stebbings Commons

Ponce, Porto Rico.
March 22nd 1907.