

Copy

The Rev. C. B. Colmore, D.D.
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Lusitana Simons
March 28, 1927

My dear Bishop -

Your letter of March 14th has been received and duly considered.

I shall have to ask you to be more explicit as to just what is implied by the terms "spiritual direction" and "sole authority". Do they mean a renewal of the charge you gave me a few years ago? If they have for you no more meaning now than has been attached to them in the past, I fear I may not be able to accept the charge.

You claim I am "misinformed"; you refer to my "supposed difficulties". I earnestly wish that what I see and know might really be the incredible nightmare that it seems! No one could be happier than I, if I could convince myself that my own senses lie. But there are things, Bishop, that cry to heaven, and keep me sleepless, night after night.

Eliminate imagination, exaggeration, distortion, misunderstandings because of the language, - give all the expenses and explanations possible, - and there still remain cold facts to deal with that cannot be ignored.

Perhaps you think I can witness with calmness and unconcern the destruction of what cost more than anything material could ever repay. Perhaps you see nothing amiss. I see a policy unjust, heartless, un-Christian, and destructive, - more so than I ever dreamed could exist on a Mission field.

These people are poor and ignorant, but they know how to discriminate better than you think, and they have had little to learn from the example set before them. I cannot blame them if they feel outraged and betrayed.

As for the native workers, it is not their fault that they have not had

the opportunities others have had. For all their deficiencies, they are better adapted for the work they have to do than you or I would be.

Anyone with a sense of proportion can understand this. Without the help of the natives, I never could have carried on the work I did, and I shall never fail to give them credit for it. And, aside from every other consideration, their fidelity, through thick and thin, entitles them to different treatment than that they have received.

You criticize my action in writing to Dr. Wood. I consider him the only authority to whom I could appeal in this case. I could not go to you as judge, being a party. The taking down of the archives I consider an affront to me and my office. Even the surest courtesy would demand that, owing to my

position as Suffragan, the Episcopal jurisdiction you gave me of Quebrada Limón and Branch Stations, and the recognition due to the whole past history of the work here, a thing like this, (which is the climax of a series.) should not have been permitted without asking my consent or opinion.

Before it was done, if it had been proposed to me, I might have appealed to you; but after it was an accomplished fact, and when, on the two occasions you were in Quebrada Limón and talked with me, you neither made any apology, explanation or even mention of it, I have a right to conclude it was done with your consent, if not by your orders.

Your Supreme authority may be alleged, but if the Canons are silent, common sense and right feeling cry aloud in my defense.

I should like to know what Mr.

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Saylor, or any of the other Missionaries on the Island, would say, if in his absence (even if he were in the States — much more, on the Island) and without his knowledge or consent, anything should be altered in the Church he built, with infinitely less effort and difficulty than the Church here has cost.

And why was the order not given openly, instead of making use, behind my back, of a man who had already taken passage to leave the Island?

Hence, it is evident why I could not go to the Bishop as his Suffragan, as his friend, or as a plaintiff for his judgement.

Even your letter makes me feel that, were it not for the steps I have taken, you would have done nothing.

Besides, I had to appeal to Dr. Wood on account of his position. Morally,

I considered that the property belonged to the Board of Missions, because we acted in perfect good faith, but there were still legal transactions to be carried out, before the Board of Trustees of the Church of Jesus could be relieved of their charge. Meanwhile, the use of the property by the Board of Missions involved a responsibility as to its upkeep, but did not imply the power to destroy or alter, without consent.

You speak of repairs having been made. I maintain that none have been made to keep up the value of the property. The only things done, as far as I can see, have been for the personal comfort of the Edmunds, (which of course, is perfectly all right, and does not amount to anything) while no attempt has been made to repair the leaks in the roof of the Church, or in the tower-room, where the Rev. H. Maldonado lives. The rain pours in on them every time there is

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a shower. It is coming down in torrents as I write, and I wonder how they are managing. These repairs could have been attended to willingly, and with almost no expense, long ago, had not the access to the roof been closed to the natives.

Rooms formerly used for school and Church purposes are used for farm purposes. The school benches have been allowed to be broken to pieces beyond repair, etc. etc. The whole place shows neglect.

As to the way we were treated personally on our arrival, - and many other things, - I do not care to discuss them, but one would have to be either blind or a fool not to understand that our presence was not only unlooked for, but disturbing.

That is why I have left everything as far as possible in statu quo, until my position is clearly defined. We are still living in the house, which (foreseeing just what has happened) Galois

again built, with the hope that we might
use it, and to show us that at least
some of those we have benefitted will
always be ready to receive us, and
count it a privilege.

God knows with what sincerity and
good-will, and with what high hopes
for the future I offered you my
hearty co-operation, and He alone
knows the pain and bitter disappoint-
ment in which I write this letter.

Committing my cause to Him

Dear, Sincerely yours

(Signed) Manuel Ferrando
Bishop Suff.