

P.C. Box 1586.

*Drexel & Co. Bankers.*

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*J. P. Morgan & Co.*  
Broad and Wall Streets, New York.  
*Morgan, Harjes & Co.*  
N° 51 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris.

*Philadelphia*

August 19th, 1903.

Rt. Rev. James H. Van Buren, D.D.,  
281 Fourth Avenue,  
New York.

My Dear Bishops:

Your letter of yesterday's date is at hand. At the top you say address 281 Fourth Avenue, New York, and at the foot of your letter 261 Orange St., New Haven, Conn., so I am writing in duplicate and sending a copy to each place.

As far as I am concerned, and as a contributor to the Fund for the erection of a Church in Porto Rico, I beg to say that the plans meet my **approval**. I say this, however, entirely in a personal way, and without reference to the Board or the General Secretary. I note and appreciate all that you say, and as I stated in my former letter I am quite willing to leave all these matters in your hands and those of the Vestry; as, being on the ground, you are more competent to judge regarding them than I could be at a distance; but as you desire me to express myself, I say as above that, after looking over the plans I have nothing against them, and hence give my approval of the same.

I know nothing whatever respecting any opinion Dr. Nelson may have expressed, and I never heard thereof. The subject was never brought before the Board at any meeting which I attended, and Mr. Kimber tells me that the only record respecting the same is in the report of the Committee on Other Missions, submitted to the Board of Managers April 14th, as follows:

"Under date of March 17th, the Bishop forwarded blue prints of the Architects designs for the new Church at San Juan, and a pencil sketch of the possible extension if it should become necessary in the future to make an enlargement.

Would be glad of criticisms or suggestions."

After speaking of a memorial window and of the altar, he resumes to say: "The Church will be seated with Cathedral chairs. On March 23rd the Building Committee awarded the contract for the new Church to the lowest bidder, F.B.Hatch, for \$15,150, or \$14,950 in case a certain wall in the basement does not have to be rebuilt."

No action was proposed to the Board or taken by it."

I can readily understand the necessity of prompt action, and am not only entirely willing; but as a contributor, prefer to abide by your judgment under the conditions in which you find yourself regarding the work in San Juan. I did say that I did not particularly like the Church to follow the Romanesque lines, but the plans of this type have been dropped. As far as I am personally concerned I see no reason why you should not go ahead, especially in view of the fact that there has already been considerable delay. I note what you say about the cost of the building, and that you have the amount in hand, &c. I appreciate the careful attention you have given to this matter, and to the work which you have in hand.

I have read Mr. Luce's letter and your reply thereto, and can understand exactly how he feels. The whole question, it seems to me, comes back to this point. We have a Bishop in Porto Rico, who has our entire confidence. He is on the ground and surrounds himself with the best men he can get. He takes their views, and, his own judgment conforming thereto, he acts accordingly. I having given the largest amount of the money towards the erection of the Building, leave the entire matter in his hands, acting with them, and am perfectly satisfied respecting the result. I return both letters herewith.

I appreciate the courtesy of having the plans submitted to me, and see no reason why they should not be adopted.

Yours very sincerely,

(Sig) Geo.C.Thomas.