## THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLACK HAND

ONE OF THE TERRORS OF LIFE IN PORTO RICO.

Masked Marauders Who Execute at Night Their Rude Conceptions of Justice-One of the Transition Features in the History of a Beautiful Island.

John H. Thacher in Harper's Weekly. When you have observed in the New York papers that a town in Porto Rico has been burned by bandits, and, later, have seen the mail-coaches between San Juan and Ponce travelling for a large part of their journey under an armed guard, you will no doubt form your idea of the character of the country accordingly, and straightway wish to protest against the removal of troops from such a lawless and disorganized When you also hear rumors of a dreaded secret brotherhood, with the name and insignia of the Black Hand," holding under a reign of terror the mountain towns of Adjuntas and Utuado, you will perhaps consider the expediency of returning to its former owner territory so unrestful and unpacified.

This, it will be understood, is your conception of the situation as a result of your broad observation from the Hotel Inglaterra in San Juan and the Plaza Cafe in Ponce. Your experience with the shopkeepers, moreover, may tend to confirm your conviction that all Borinquens are lineal descendants of the buccaneers.

This deduction, however, will be modified when you come to know the Puertoriquenos of the mountains. They are not, you will find, bandits by profession and law-breakers by choice, but a docile and gentle folk, whose kindly ways make your ponderous army "Colt" seem as useful and appropriate for travel in their country as would be a dress waist-coat or a silk hat. The friendly "bueno" dia," from the door of every cocoa-thatched hut, is not merely a greeting, but a frank expression of good-will. The hospitality of the native of the mountains is as exuberant as the foliage that surrounds his door, The ready offering of fragrant coffee and aguacates or bananas is as spontaneous as it is acceptable. Outside of Ponce or San Juan, where, by-the-way, the shopkeepers are largely Spanish by birth or sympathy, one finds the native not only honest and law-abiding, but peaceable to a degree that is surprising, when one considers the fiery sugar-cane rum which is their daily

### A CONTRAST.

A chance stranger is somewhat puzzled, having this knowledge of the kindly nature of the Borinquen, to see in the town of Adjuntas and the surrounding country a more sinister spirit, evidenced by the smoking ruins of plantation-houses and acres of coffeebushes cut close to the ground; by cattle hamstrung and left to die by the way-side, and families fleeing with their household goods to places of safety. On an occasional door or store front appears a single black print of a human hand. If the native be questioned, he responds with a sidelong glance and finger on his lip.
"El Mano negro." he whispers.

A photograph of the grim symbol is obtained only after much diplomatic regotiations with the owner of the house, who is not eager to appear in the light of one bearing evidence against the shadowy Presense. One learns that the dreaded token on the door is the precursor of a masked band coming by night to leave a record of its visit with torch and machete He hears of a woman and child hacked with knives and left for dead on the Lares Road; of a plantation owner, aged and infirm, beaten and tortured, his ears cut off, and finally, n the presence of his son, hanged from a rafter in the house. He sees traces of pillage and arson. All these signs of violence, though dispiriting change his estimate of the people formed in his first ride over the mountains. These crimes will later assume their proper place in the perspective of history. Some of them are a part of the outlawry that must needs attend the close of the war. In most cases, however, what he sees is merely a rude unbalancing of accounts. The items on one side have been accumulating for some four centuries, and it is not surprising that the lower class of Fuertoriquenos should wish to make a few additional entries before the United States closes the ledger per-

## A DIFFICULT TASK.

It has been the business of the Sixth Massachusetts regiment to suppress this persecution of the Spanish residents, and the task has been by no means an easy one. By the terms of the protocol only such territory could be occupied by the Americans as was de facto in their possession at the time hostilities ceased. practical result of the agreement was that a hazy boundary line was drawn between the American and Spanish outposts. This uncertainty left a strip of country some eight miles broad entirely without protection. It is in this district that most of the outrages have occurred. Alhough these have been committed to a large extent by irresponsible negroes and the lower class of natives, there has been some evidence of an organized effort to drive Spanish sympathizers from the island. The secret society called-for its picturesque method of warning its victims-the "Black Hand," is a political organization known to have existed in the island before the beginning of the American war with Spain. It had guilty of no such record as had the its origin, as did the Mafia and Ca- Ku-Klux in Louisiana and Georgia.

morra, of Sicily and Naples, in the necessity for the existence of individual action against the evils of oppressive foreign government. It is known that members of the prevailing political party belong to it, but it is of course difficult to ascertain whether it was actively identified with either side of the question of autonomy which came before the people at their last election. It is certain, however, that its energies are at present devoted to the business of making the island an unprofitable place for the residence of plantation owners and small merchants who have been associated with Spanish misrule in the past. The plantations and stores that have been attacked in and about Utuado have all belonged to Spaniards, but one Puertoriqueno having so far requested protection. In the district around Isabelia and Quebradillas there have been attacks made on both native and Spanjard, but it is supposed that these are not attributable to the"Black Hand." being beyond the mountainous region which appears to constitute its juris-

#### WELL ADAPTED.

The country between Adjuntas and Utuado is admirably adapted to the purposes of brigandage. Beyond Adjuntas the roads are little more than mountain trails, and it is said that a man can start on foot from the latter town and arrive at t'tuago before a well-mounted rider can make the same distance. This fact, together with the existence everywhere of dense tropical foliage reaching to the summits of the mountains, renders pursuit of the outaws impracticable for American troops, Some twenty-seven details, each consisting of from two to ten men, have been sent out from Utuado to guard plantations and make arrests. Only two of these have had firing to do, in each of which cases the bandits were in the distance and offered no resistance. These details are sent out when requests are made of Colonel Rice for protection and horses are furnished to enable the men to reach the plantations threatened. The conditions prevailing have made it necessary to in-stitute a system of "sweating," by which suspected members of the band are confined separately and examined as to their connection with the organization. Up to the 30th of September, thirty-three suspects have been conarge number of native prisoners have been held for trial before the alcalde of the town since; so far as possible there has been no interference with the civil laws of the community. The American officers have found these preliminary examinations before the municipal judiciaries to be significantly enjent. It is thought probable that the influence of the 'Black Hand' 'has filtered into the civil administration and courts of justice of the island, so that in many cases the alcaide, and even his common council, are members of the

In addition to the more violent methods of harassing the Spanish residents, a process of isolation or boycott is used against them, by which they are prevented from procuring a sufficient number of laborers to work their planta tions. As the present month is the season for picking coffee, the dearth of plantation-workers is severely feit. How effectively a native boycott is may be understood from the fact that a steam laundry erected by the British consul in Arecibo is now a rusting pile of neglected machinery as a result of this form of organized opposition on the part of the natives. In some cases the persecution takes the form of blackmail, demanded by letters written under the seal of the "Black Hand."

When the town of Utuado was first occupied by our troops the order was issued, as usual, that all arms should be taken from the citizens of the town and from the inhabitants of the surrounding country wherever weapons were encountered. It was found necessary to modify this order, as the Spanish residen; would be without the means of defending their lives and property from the attacks of the outlaws, momentarily expected, Arms were therefore allowed in the possession of those citizens whom the American officers had reason to believe were in need of protection. To those was to the solitary traveller, need not also given the security which the presence of American soldiers always in-

### THE YANKEE WAY. The ability of a handful of Ameri-

cans to care for two hundred or more outlaws has been frequently demonstrated. Notably so in the case of Private Edwards, of the First Kentucky regiment. He was assigned to the duty of guarding a plantation house alone, and proved himself amply capable of doing so. A party of some hundred armed men approached the house and was met in the road by the American, who, after an unnoticed challenge, setiled the matter quietly and expeditously, and without unnecessary waste of time or ammunition. When the 'Black Hand' representatives withdrew, they left three of their number on the ground pierced with bullets, and one, with a bayonet-thrust in the neck received in a hand-to-hand encounter. There was no need thereafter for guards at that particular plantation

it is to be hoped that Private Edwards received his chevrons. Since the withdrawal of the Spanish troops from the island, and the assumption by the American forces of the entire responsibility of maintaining order, it is reasonably to be expected that further acts of violence on the part of the "Black Hand" will not be attempted. Considering the fact that the country presents a combination of geographical and moral circum. stances highly favorable to lawless pursuits, there has been, on the whole, a remarkable freedom from those conditions which are naturally to be expected at the close of a war. The "Black Hand," with a spirit behind it as bitter as any that existed in the South at the close of the war, has been

Sunday School Lesson for January 1.

# Introduction to John's Gospel.

JOHN I. 1-14.

BY J. E. GILBERT, D. D., LL. D.,

Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

carded, as being improper. It covers only the ninth verse and is inadequate to express the thought of the entire passage. These fourteen verses constitute the introduction to the fourth gospel, and they have been so considered by all scholars. Matthew, Mark and Luke presented brief outlines of the life of Christ, giving most prominence to the events of His Galileean ministry, and leaving their readers to infer from the narratives what their purposes were. But John, who wrote near the close of the first century, began with a statement of what was then believed in the church concerning the nature of Christ, and he selected his materials, chiefly from the words of the Judean ministry, to confirm and it. ness (v. 8). lustrate that view, The introduction should therefore be studied in its entirety, that the interdependence of the parts may be seen, and the force of the whole may be felt,

DIVINE.-The first thought of Christ here presented (Verses 1 to 3) is his essential Deity, the starting point and dominating truth of the book. He is called the Word (Greek, Logos), a term used in the literature of that time to denote the absolute Reason, quite the same as wisdom found in ancient writings (Prov. ix. 1). John affirms the existence of the Logos from the beginning of time (Gen. i. 1), declares his presence with Ged and asserts that he was God. These statements are intelligible only in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity (I John v. 5), the three persons of the Godhead being each divine and all associated in unity. To give a clearer view of the Logos, one person of the fined in the carcel in Utuado, and a Deity. John declares that He was the sole maker of all things (Ps. xxxiii, 6). This corresponds with the account of creation by Moses (Gen. i. 9), where the philosophy of all religions. the word of God is employed, and with the assertions made by Paul (Col. i. 16).

> HUMAN,-Christ, just as shown, was a Divine person, associated with other | life in himself, whose life was the light Divine persons, existing before the mas of men, coming from another world existence. John next desires his readers to know the relation of Christ to all through its history, engaged in his humanity (Vs. 4 and 5). "In Him was benevolent mission, but unknown by life," that is, the source of life was in the masses of men (v. 10). The light Him, so that every form of life on the which had been received by them had globe proceeded from Him as a life-giv- been misunderstood and misapplied ing force (John v. 26). The life of man (Rom. ), 19-25), resulting in all the abwas derived from Christ at the beginning (Gen. ii. 7), and is to be con- for the purpose of making a fuller distinued through Him (1 John v. 11), closure of Himself He entered into a Here is a solution of the chief probem of science, the origin and development of life. Moreover, John continues, this life in Christ furnishes to intimacy (v. 11). He was rejected men that illumination which enables again and again (Luke xiz. 10). Here them to discern the realities and sig- we have presented the deplorable connificance of things. What the sun is dition of the human family-the larger to the material world, Jesus, the Logos, the Life, is to the moral world. And which lights up the pathway, the other clared that a man was sent in advance yet so great was the effulgence protrated the darkness of the pre-Chris- (Prov. ii. 13). tian ages it was not comprehended by the benighted people (John III, 19).

> the light of Life eminating from the living in deep darkness knew Him who at the beginning, and see whether he

open to us to obtain our aspirations

A STRIKING CONTRAST.

Country's Situation Today as Com-

A comparison of the territorial area

and the national influence of the United

States with those of 1798 will show the

vast material and moral advance with

this country has made in 100 years.

In the historical books 1798 does not

figure with any prominence, but in

reality it is an important landmark in

the country's expansion. It was just a

hundred years ago that the provisions

of the treaty of peace with England

in 1783 were fully and finally carried

the United States, in its endeavors to

secure the boundaries guaranteed in that agreement, was obstructed by two

nations, England and Spain, The Brit-

ish held possession of posts at Oswego,

Niagara, Detroit and other places in

United States territory on the northern

frontier, until Jay's treaty, which

among other things, provided for their

evacuation, went into operation in 1796

and even then the work of abandon-

ment was carried on with a slowness

which was exceedingly exasperating to

With Spain, however, the United

States had much more trouble in se-

curing its treaty rights under the

agreement of 1783 than it had with

England, Then, as now, Spain was slow

in grasping the justice of any demand

by any other nation, and in that par-

ticular crisis the situation for this

country was rendered doubly embar-

rassing by the fact that Spain was

still one of the great powers of the earth, while the United States was only

an insignificant spot on the map and

had no rights which any of the great nations felt bound to respect. Spain

which she gained from England during

the war of the American revolution.

and which extended west to the Miss-

issippi, went as far north as the mouth

of the Yazoo, about the parallel of 32

degree north latitude, which would

make the southerly line of the United

States on the Mississippi end at that Both England and the United States,

on the other hand, insisted that this

down to latitude 31 degrees. At last the protests and threats of the United States and Spain's dangers in the

Napoleonic wars then under way compelled the latter to accede to the American demands. Spain did this in the treaty of San Lorenzo in 1795, which

southern boundary went

contended that the Florida

the people of the United States.

out. For fifte n years after that date

pared With That of 1798.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

for liberty and justice."

this lesson by the International com-mittee, "Christ, the True Light," is dis-the Baptist), was sent from God v. 6). As many as received Him, whether This statement accords with history (Matt iii, 1) and with prophecy (Mal. ili. 1). The Paptists had no other errand-he came only to be a witness (v. 7) to that light, his one desire being to lead men to believe in that Light (John 1. 36). It is true that his zent was so great, his life so holy, and his popularity so general, that many of his contemporaries thought the Baptist preached concerning himself, and the rulers at Jerusalem (v. 19) sent a delc. gation to inquire whether that was the case, but he pave them a decided negative (Vs. 21 to 23). So here the apostle calls attention to the fact and asserts that John was not the Light about which he preached, but merely a wit-

> DESCRIBED.-To distinguish the light of Life that was in the Logos from the perceived light that was in the Baptist, the apostle describes the former by three particulars (v. 9). First, it was a true light, not in the sense we use that word, as opposed to false, but original, underived and unfalling (so the Greek signifies), shining on forever by its own power, though all other luminaries perish. Second, it comes into the world-it did not originate here, but in another sphere and entered this from without (Such is the meaning of the clause which modifies Light and not man, as many supose). Third, it lighteth every man, in every age and hind, of every dispensation. The light of the Logos sheds His benign rays over the entire race. By these three items-its derivation, its entrance into this world, its extended influence-we see that John has an exalted conception of the Person of whom he wrote. Moreover, he gives in this verse teachings that meet

REJECTED,-There was to the Divine-human Person, who had erial universe, calling all things into to this to enlighten all men. This Persen, the Logos, had been in the world ominations of heathendom. And when, covenant with one family of the race (Gen. xii. 1-3), calling them His own people and visiting them in peculiar portion opposing the influence and to prepare the way, and that after ceding from Him, that while it penes turning away into darkness and death | ward the Logos came in the form of

WITNESSED.-The inability of men. | versal. Some of the great body of bu- | together for six months let us rememugh their deprayity, to comprehend manity, outside the covenant, though

INTRODUCTION .- The title given to | of introduction and explanation. For | the chosen people, to whom He came of the stock of Abraham or of the general family of man obtained through Him power, (or rather privilege) to "become the sons of God." Thus was built up a household upon the one principle of faith, (v. 12) the members divided under various names, (John x:16) yet recognizing a common Father. They all received a new birth, (v.13) the birth not of the flesh, but of the Spirit (John iii: 5). This presentation of the doctrine of regeneration is unique. Standing in such close relation with the exercise of faith in a name it is plainly evangelical, and yet, preceding all reference to the crucifixion and even the advent of Christ, it is th plain statement of the doctrine as held under the old dispensation. The sons of God in any age are regenerate. (Rom,

> INCARNATE.-That a greater number of men might know this wonderful Person, and believe in Him and become Sons of God, that He might also more fully display His qualities, He must take on new form, Thus far He had been in the works of nature in the light of life, and in the spiritual approaches to men. Finally He became a man, (v: 14) To insure identity of person John says that the Word, the Logos, the same about which he had been writing, was made flesh; and to convince all that this statement was worthy of acceptance he declares that in fleshly form the Logos dwelt among men who beheld His glory as Divine glory, and that, withal, He was full of grace and truth. Col. i: 19) He speaks as an eye-witness of an accomplished and commonly accepted fact. (I John i:1) This reference to the incarnation s much more delicate than that of the other evangelists who mention Mary (Matt 1: 20) the virgin mother. But John passes over all intermediary matters and records only the sublime truth that reason for John's ministry of witness the Divine was clothed with human nature, and became visible, yet lost none of its glory, (Isa xi:5.)

SUMMARY.-Such is the doctrinal view, the Christological conception, with which the apostle, the beloved discipline, (John xiii, 23) introduces the gospel that bears his name. The progress of his thought is instructive. He began declaring that the Logos existed prior to nature, and that He was the author of nature. He next affirmed that there was life in Him, the source of all living things. He then declared that this life was the illum teating principle among all men, that it had come to all men although many in darkness did not comprehend it, and some who ought to have known it rejected it. chile others receiving #1 were renewed in their natures and be part ignorant of that benign light came sons of God. He finally deman, that He was seen and known by many who testified of his excel-RECEIVED .- The ignorance and re- lence. This is the Jesus of the fourth jection just mentioned were not un- gospel. As we shall study this gospel ber what this inspired man had said Logos, rendered necessary some method is the light of the world, and many of contradics or confirms his words.

The symptoms of violence on the part | was ratified by the Senate in 1796, but | the region west of the river. The popuof the members of this secret society | 1798 arrived before the Spanish flag | lation of the country was about 5.000, are not to be taken as an indication of | went down in Natchez, the most im- | 000. the Puertoriqueno's unfitness for a portant town in the territory in displace in the American body politic. The pute, and the stars and stripes went better class appreciates the truth of up. Then, lifteen years after the treaty tance. Nobody could have foreseen at the observation made by a local paper, that "outrage is a two-edged sword which may deprive us of our right to to all its territory between the Atlan- with the scarcely less dimutive stretch liberty, \* \* \* He is an enemy of tic and the Mississippi and from the of wilderness between those mountains Puerto Rico who today attempts to disturb the civilizing actions of the Amerdefinitely confirmed. ican people, appealing to violence and to illegalities, when all the doors are

and morally, makes a striking contrast | seen then that this country would an with that of 1798. On the day when Gayoso's forces lowered their flag in Natchez and sailed down to New Orleans, the person who stepped below the southerly line of Georgia, into the lower end of what is now the state of Mississippi, or who crossed the Mississippi river, would be in a foreign land. We were surrounded on three sides by powerful nations. England was north of us, as now, and Spain was south and name and a strip westward along the southerly line of what are now the the Mississippi river, and she had all vancement without parallel.

The Louisiana cession and all the

other annexations were still in the disof independence, and just a hundred that time that the narrow strip of popyears ago, the title of the United States | plated area cast of the Alleghenies great lakes to the Florida line was and the Mississippi, would ever reach the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific, America's situation in 1898, materially Much less could anybody have forenex all of Russian America, absorb all of the islands of value in the Guif of Mexico, and acquire possessions scattered through the Pacific extending almost to the continent of Asia. The growth of America from an area of \$27,000 square miles and a population of .000,000 in 1798 to an area of 3,800,000 square miles and a population of 85,-900,000 in 1898, attended as it has been by a rise from a position in which its west of us, as she held Florida, which enmity had no menace for even the comprised the present state of that feeblest of foreign states to one in which its friendship is sought by the most powerful nations of the earth, states of Alabama and Mississippi to represents a physical and mural ad-

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