

CALL EX-PRIEST IMPOSTOR

Russian Church Authorities De- nounce Father Ustvolsky.

Styled Himself "Seraphim, Metropoli-
tan of America," and Performed
Rites of Baptism, Marriage,
and Ordination.

Recent revelations concerning the practices of an ex-Russian priest, Father Stephen Ustvolsky, who, representing himself in New York and Canada as "Seraphim, Metropolitan of America," has ordained young men for the ministry and performed the ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, and marriage, led the Russian Church Government to send out yesterday a condemnation of the ex-priest, in which it is declared that his every act was invalid. This official communication was made public last night by the Russian Consul General de Lodygonsky. The document states that Ustvolsky has been misleading a certain wing of the Russian Orthodox and the Eastern Orthodox Churches in this country by claiming that he was consecrated an Orthodox Bishop of the Russian rite.

Ustvolsky came to New York last year, and for several months caused much worry to the Russian Bishop Tchou, who resides on Ninety-sixth Street, near St. Nicholas's Church, by his adventures in the Russian colony. St. Nicholas's Church has not a large congregation at any time, and it is claimed Ustvolsky, because Bishop Tchou refused to recognize him, began to branch out for himself. He gathered a few men around him, and found some who had studied in Russian seminaries. These he ordained and sent out to establish Russian parishes in the West. The next move was to organize a "financial school" for the purpose of establishing a great Russian Monastery and church in New York, and to bring here Monks from the ancient monasteries of Russia. For want of financial support Ustvolsky's schemes fell through. He transferred his work to Canada, and is said to have made some small town in that country his headquarters.

Ustvolsky's operations assumed such proportions that Bishop Tchou, the legitimate head of the Russian Church in this country, went to St. Petersburg, where he now is, to make inquiries about Ustvolsky. The official communication received yesterday is the result. The Rev. Zotishoff, assistant of St. Nicholas's, said last night that Ustvolsky had married several couples, but he did not know how many.

"He is no good man," Father Zotishoff said. "He has no powers to say mass, baptize, or perform any other religious rite."

The official document, it is explained, is not to be taken as the document of excommunication, as Ustvolsky "excommunicated himself by his own acts several years ago in Russia." The document concludes:

Neither the Russian Government nor the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs recognize in Seraphim the ecclesiastical status which he ascribes to himself as an Orthodox Bishop and Metropolitan of America. In view of this, said Seraphim, as well as all persons ordained by him, are to be considered as impostors and pseudo-clergymen, and all the religious acts performed by them, (consecrations, baptisms, weddings, &c.,) are void and without legal power.

The document is to be read to-morrow in all the Russian churches in this country.

It is claimed that Ustvolsky retired from the ministry in 1882 of his own free will, and was relieved of his vows by the authorities of the Church that he might once more become a layman.