

The Commoner.

that he fails to pay and the creditor will thereupon take the debtor's child—son or daughter—or his sister or brother as a slave. These are the usual methods of converting free people into slaves, but not the only ones.

"When a slave is obtained in any way he is simply the property of the owner. The owner will find him and otherwise take care of him. It is to his interest to do so, for the same reason that it is to his interest to take care of a horse or a carabao that belongs to him—i. e., because he is his and is property that has a value.

"The master has the same right to sell him that he would have to sell a horse, and they are constantly being bought and sold everywhere on the island, except among the Zamboangians in the Zamboanga district.

"The offspring of slaves belong to the masters of the parents. Generally in this island the father and mother belong to the same person, and in cases where they do not it is the rule among some of the peoples for the offspring to belong to the owner of the father, while with others they belong to the owner of the mother.

"Among the Christian Visayans on this island slaves over twenty-one years old who become Christians are liberated by direction of the Catholic priests after they shall have been baptized by them.

"As was also the case in the former slave states of the United States, owners do not have the right to kill slaves because they belong to them. I am not quite sure that this is the case everywhere here, but the opinion I have formed from what I have learned is that it is. Moros enslave Moros, as well as pagans, and pagans enslave other pagans. But I do not think that there are any pagans who enslave people of their own tribe, except in cases where bad men steal the children of others of their own tribe and run them off and sell them to Moros or Christians, or to pagans of other tribes.

"Among the people newly enslaved the young boys and girls sell for more than men and women do, unless the women have children that are enslaved, and which they will not run away from and leave in slavery. The men are very apt to escape, and therefore will sell for very little.

"Twenty-five Mexican dollars (worth \$12.50 in American gold) is about the average price for a good boy or girl, according to my information. Men are of so little value that I am told that those who fall into the hands of slave-takers along with the women and children are apt to be killed rather than taken."

A Voice From Porto Rico.

When Mr. Allen, Governor of Porto Rico, recently arrived in Boston he was interviewed by a reporter from the Boston Herald. In that interview Mr. Allen declared that Porto Rico is a happy island, that it has no public debt, that its expenses are covered by its taxes, that for him (Mr. Allen) it entertains the most cordial feelings, and that the federal party, the only one which before opposed the government, has now repented, and through the voice of its leaders confesses itself humbled.

The Porto Rico Herald, commenting upon these statements by Mr. Allen, says:

"To the first assertions we will answer:

"1st.—That Porto Rico is a happy island, in which the people are dying of starvation, and from which, in order not to die, hundreds of families are emigrating to Cuba, to Ecuador, to Santo Domingo and the Hawaiian Islands.

"2nd.—That Porto Rico has no public debt now and has never had one; and this is a serious evil, for, being able to do so, she does not utilize her credit to increase her monetary circulation and give an impulse to her agriculture.

"3rd.—That Porto Rico covers her expenses

with her taxes because these are levied without any consideration whatever, as if it were a question of laying waste another's cornfields, or rather the cornfields of an enemy, whose ruin is of no consequence to anyone.

"4th.—That Mr. Allen has warm partisans among the republicans, who, thanks to his direct and unjust assistance, have acquired in the country a fictitious preponderance, which they would never have acquired through the votes of the people.

"5th.—That the federal party changed its policy of opposition, softening it, weakening it, and carrying it to the utmost extreme of mildness, because its leader considered that no other conduct was possible, to avoid the ferocious attacks of which the federals were made the victims.

"And at this point we will stop. It is absolutely necessary to determine precisely what value and what meaning are to be attached to the attitude of any body which it adopts through force, through the pressure of events, because it can resist no longer the systematic revenge of which its helpless and defenceless members are the objects. From the time when the two federal representatives withdrew from the executive council, the governor had only one purpose—to destroy the federal party, since it was difficult to reduce it to a servile respect for the acts of injustice committed by the administration.

"To attain this end no means were stopped at."

The Herald then proceeds to itemize its complaint. It prints a long list of injuries it claims the people of Porto Rico have been subjected to at the hands of the authorities. The Herald's reply to Mr. Allen is entitled "Satisfied, No; Subdued, Yes."

It is very evident that the American people have not yet learned one-half the truth concerning our dealing with "our new possessions."

Dr. Lambert Defends Jefferson.

On another page will be found a strong defence of Jeffersonian doctrines by Rev. L. A. Lambert.

Father J. F. Sheehan of Pocantico Hills, New York, wrote a letter to the Freeman's Journal, criticising Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence. In the course of the letter he said, "The equality of men is a creation of our minds; outside of our minds it does not exist either on earth, in Heaven or in hell. Jefferson's preamble contains the principles of anarchy, the principles of the Reign of Terror; it has never been taken seriously by Americans, not even by those who signed the Declaration of Independence, for whilst they spoke of man's equality they held their fellow men as slaves, but nevertheless these principles are at work, at the bottom of all social discontent and disorder."

Dr. Lambert, the able and scholarly editor of the Freeman's Journal, replies in a lengthy article which is published in full by the Irish World. The extract given in this issue discusses the meaning of the word "equal" as used in the Declaration of Independence and effectively disposes of Father Sheehan's criticism. He also shows by numerous quotations that the doctrine that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed is not a new one. His argument is a valuable contribution to anti-imperialistic literature.

Desecration of the Flag.

The attempt of the Boston authorities to suppress the Irish World for publishing a picture of the flag with a caustic criticism of the

Supreme Court decision has served at least one useful purpose—it has shown that nearly all the papers, Republican as well as Democratic, resent any interference with the freedom of the press. The World did not violate any law and if its act had constituted a violation of the law, the law ought to be repealed at once. Some of the Republicans who object to a caricature of the flag endorse the policy of imperialism which entirely changes the character and meaning of our flag. They are actually desecrating the flag themselves while they express great solicitude lest others should show it disrespect.

Bingen on the Rhine.

By Mrs. NORTON.

A soldier of the Legion, lay dying in Algiers,
There was lack of woman's nursing, there was
dearth of woman's tears.
But a comrade stood beside him, while his life-
blood ebbed away,
And bent with pitying glances, to hear what he
might say.
The dying soldier faltered, as took that comrade's
hand,
And he said: "I never more shall see my own,
my native land.
Take a message and a token to some distant friends
of mine,
For I was born at Bingen, at Bingen on the
Rhine."

"Tell my brothers and companions, when they
meet and crowd around
To hear my mournful story, in the pleasant vine-
yard ground,
That we fought the battle bravely, and when the
day was done,
Full many a corpse lay ghastly pale, beneath the
setting sun,
And 'mid the dead and dying, were some grown
old in wars,
The death wound on their gallant breasts, the last
of many scars,
But some were young, and suddenly beheld life's
morn decline,
And one had come from Bingen, fair Bingen on
the Rhine."

"Tell my mother that her other sons shall com-
fort her old age,
For I was aye a truant bird, that thought his
home a cage;
For my father was a soldier, and even as a child,
My heart leaped forth to hear him tell of struggles
fierce and wild,
And when he died, and left us to divide his scanty
hoard,
I let them take what'er they would, but kept my
father's sword,
And with loyal love, I hung it where the bright
light used to shine,
On the cottage wall at Bingen, calm Bingen on
the Rhine."

"Tell my sister not to weep for me, and sob with
weeping head,
When the troops are marching home again with
gay and gallant tread,
But to look upon them proudly with calm and
steadfast eye,
For her brother was a soldier, too, and not afraid
to die.
And if a comrade seeks her love, I ask her in my
name,
To listen to him kindly without regret or shame,
And to hang the old sword in its place (my
father's sword and mine)
For the honor of old Bingen, dear Bingen on the
Rhine."

His voice grew faint and hoarser, his grasp was
childish weak,
His eyes put on a dying look, he sighed—and
ceased to speak.
His comrade bent to lift him, but the spark of life
was fled,
A soldier of the Legion, in a foreign land was
dead.
And the soft moon rose up slowly, and calmly she
looked down,
On the red sands of the battle field with bloody
corpses strewn.
Yea, calmly, on that dreadful scene, her pale light
seemed to shine,
At it shone on distant Bingen, fair Bingen on the
Rhine.