

# Commoner Comment.

Extracts From W. J. Bryan's Paper.

## Mr. Watterson's Cartoon.

Editor Watterson of the Courier-Journal has devoted so much space to me that no apology is necessary for another comment upon his views. Relying upon his age, experience and more extended observation, he has on several occasions outlined what he regards as the proper course for me to pursue. Without questioning his good intent or his wisdom on subjects in general, I find it is impossible to follow his advice without abandoning all that I have been taught to hold sacred. In the first editorial on this subject Mr. Watterson's position was criticised as an immoral one. The editorials with which he has attempted to support his position has more and more clearly demonstrated the weakness of his argument.

No advocate of imperialism has placed his defense upon lower ground. No one who has attempted to defend the administration has shown more complete disregard for the principles and motives that should actuate men, parties and nations. He says: "In abandoning them (the Philippines) we yield our vantage ground in the far East, which is already become the center of the strife of the powers for commercial supremacy. We make what the world and the ages will hold an ignominious and a short-sighted surrender: for we are entering upon a cycle of pure commercialism, whose end will witness the survival of the fittest, and since when was any spirited people insensible either to money or empire? Wrong, morally wrong, says Mr. Bryan? Why, on that line, all effort, which has gain for its object is wrong. Out of line with American traditions, says Mr. Bryan? Why, every important movement from the Louisiana purchase to the abolition of slavery, might be so described. But, right or wrong, facts; and, as organized body, what shall the democratic party do about them?"

This is Mr. Watterson's argument. He first assumes that we are entering "upon a cycle of pure commercialism." Second, he assumes that it is impossible to combat this spirit and, third, he argues that (assuming his two prophecies to be true) it is better for the democratic party to do wrong and prosper than to do right and suffer. He attempts to disclose what is destiny and then criticizes those who refuse to accept him as an ordained prophet. All through Mr. Watterson's argument runs the theory that wrong is not wrong if it is successful, and that right is not right if it fails. His argument ignores entirely the fixed moral principles which should guide the individual, the party and the nation, and he also ignores the fact that retribution always follows wrongdoing. He tells me how I can be a Warwick, if not a king. He does me scant honor when he assumes that I am willing to purchase either position at the expense of moral or political principles.

It is not my present purpose, however, to discuss his views, for when two men differ as to a moral question, argumentation is of little value. Morals are matters of heart rather than head. If argument would keep men from stealing or from taking human life there would be neither larceny nor murder, but when a man really wants to steal or to kill, or to apply the principles to the present case, wants nothing but immediate victory, and cares not for the necessary but remote consequences, the case is almost hopeless. The object of this editorial is to call attention to a picture which illustrates Mr. Watterson's views better than his pen or mine can do. Judge, the illustrated paper, asked Mr. Watterson to suggest an idea for a cartoon. In reply he wrote: "Draw a picture of baby Jonathan in his cradle asleep. About him are his playthings—a toy kettle drum, marked 'Independence,' a toy cannon marked 'Freedom,' and dangling by a string from his clutched hand a child's balloon, marked 'The Future.' Above him hover the spirits of Washington and Franklin. Beyond, in the clouds, a vision of domes and spires, spanned by a rainbow of red, white and blue. Beneath, the words out of the old song, 'Asleep, I Dream of Love.'"

"Draw another picture of a richly furnished apartment and a party at a card table; England and Germany at the right and left of Uncle Sam, who, with calm self-confidence sits in a rocker. Russia, France, China and Japan ranged about. Some exposed cards marked 'Peace,' 'Order,' 'Religion,' 'Humanity,' 'Behind Uncle Sam on the wall appear portraits of Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln, and on the floor a great mastiff, eager and alert and ready to spring, marked 'Popular Sovereignty.' Beneath this portrait Uncle Sam is made to say 'Gentlemen, I bank this game.' Under the first picture write 1891, under the other 1901."

It would be difficult to illustrate more forcibly the change that has taken place within the last two years. It is hard to conceive of a more scathing condemnation of the innovation wrought by the republican administration. From the child dreaming of love to the successful gambler is a transition, indeed!

The remarkable thing about it all is that men who, like Mr. Watterson, recognize the change, should attempt to defend it or should counsel democrats to accept it as final. The question that must occur to every reader is: Is this change necessary? And if not necessary, why should it be submitted to as a matter of destiny? Is freedom only a toy common, and independence a noisy drum? Is there no other future for baby Jonathan than the career of a fortunate gambler? Is it not possible to conceive of a republic developing and expanding without the abandonment of ideals or principles?

This doctrine, that virtue and morality are good enough for a child but out of place in a man is a monstrous one, and one unworthy of the great brain and big heart of the man who seems to have fallen into the advocacy of it. It is impossible to exaggerate the demoralizing influence of such a doctrine; it paralyzes all attempts to instruct or restrain youth. When you say to a young man that a nation when full grown must throw off restraint, ignore well-settled principles, and plunge into the exciting but uncertain career of a gambler, you cannot blame him if he tells you that the same doctrine applied to him would lead him to discard all the good advice given him in his boyhood.

The imperialistic doctrine lays the axe at the root of the tree and attacks every vital tenet of our government and of our religion, and we already begin to see the evil effect of it. The embezzlement at Havana and the crookedness at Manila are only illustrations of what may be expected under a colonial system. If this nation adopts the principle that helpless races can be exploited because we are strong, carpet-bag officials will not be slow to adopt the same principle and appropriate everything within their reach. Mr. Watterson knows something of the corruption that developed under the carpet-bag reign which followed the civil war, and ought to be able to make some estimate of the malfeasance and misfeasance which can be expected when this nation denies self-evident truths and encourages infidelity to moral precepts.

As an individual can better afford to retain his character rather than grow rich by dishonorable means, so the democratic party can better afford to appeal to the conscience of the people, even though it remains out of power, than to enjoy power at the expense of its principles. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" What shall it profit the democratic party if it gain power and lose the spirit that has made it indestructible? What shall it profit a nation if its flag floats over every sea and its garrisons terrify every land, if in the language of Lincoln, it loses "the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all people in all lands everywhere?"

## Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech.

As the survivors of the Mexican, civil and other wars prepare for the solemn services of Memorial day they will find both pleasure and profit in rereading Lincoln's Gettysburg speech. To the veteran it is an expression of lofty patriotism, to the student of oratory it is a model of brevity, beauty, simplicity and strength, and to all it is an inspiration.

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

At no time within the past quarter of a century has there been more necessity than there is now for the lovers of liberty to exert themselves to preserve "a government of the people, by the people and for the people."

It is noticeable that all of the republican tariff reformers do their best work while congress is not in session. A respectable neighborhood would be shy of putting on its district council in this country—that is to say, there is nothing to distinguish him from an uncultivated, slightly brutal, ignorantly forcible and hard-headed vulgarian. Self-confidence and energy rule him, as they should rule a politician; but, knowing all the world of business, he can think of nothing higher. No tradition makes him bow to men whose institutions are of more practical value than the whole of his experience or teaches him to recognize that the government of a nation is a field for qualities of sympathy and imagination and sane idealism.

## "STOP TINKERING."

IS THE MANDATE OF THE REPUBLICAN DICTATOR.

So Perfect and Scientific It Is Tender—What Hanna Says About It—The Tariff Must Not Be "Monkeyed" with, Says He.

The evident difference of opinion amongst Republicans and Republican newspapers on the necessity of tinkering the tariff to down the trusts or to preserve it intact in the interest of those combines, is rather remarkable in view of the fact that the tariff pirates have hitherto all stood together, only clamoring that their particular trust or interest might be especially favored. Some of the Republican brethren have evidently since the adjournment of congress discovered that their constituents are "against the trusts" and favor the repeal of the schedules that give them special privileges. Congressman Babcock of Wisconsin, who is chairman of the Republican congressional committee, seems to have heard the voice of the people in his district and probably elsewhere. President McKinley wants to dodge the difficulty by reciprocity treaties which, while favoring the trusts, will allow the foreigners to come in and compete with our producers of fruits, oils and wines, etc., and still protect the manufacturer. This was the arrangement in the reciprocity treaty with France which was rejected by the senate.

There is another advantage seen by the President in tinkering the tariff by means of reciprocity treaties. It prevents the matter coming before the house of representatives, where all matters of revenue constitutionally belong, and delegates it to the executive sessions of the senate, which are held with closed doors. Thus the people and their representatives know nothing about the matter until it is settled. The Czar of Russia and his executive council arrange tariffs and taxes in this way and its initiation by President McKinley and the Republicans is one of the strong indications of our near approach to imperialism. Senator Hanna evidently agrees with the reciprocity program, and it is singular that on the same day that President McKinley announced it, on his tour of triumph through the South, Senator Hanna makes a more extended statement of the intentions of the administration in another part of the country. In an interview at Washington, Pa., he said: "I am not cheeky enough to endeavor to speak for the Republican party, but I can speak for myself, and as far as I am concerned there will be no tinkering with the tariff. Congressman Babcock's position does not merit serious consideration."

"Although, perhaps, it would make but little difference to take off the metal schedule, do you suppose we are going to do that and allow the Nova Scotia Steel company, for instance, to dump her products into New England? Not much. We may not need the tariff so much any more as far as foreign countries are concerned, but we must protect ourselves against the big institutions which are springing up on our border. "The Dingley tariff is a most perfect work of human ingenuity, balanced on scientific principles. It must not be disturbed nor must there be any changes in our tariff except on a basis of reciprocity."

The pretended modesty of Hanna is evidently intended as another hit at Babcock for having dared to interfere in a matter that only McKinley, Hanna and the Trusts have any business to meddle with. The balance of the Republican party, including the Republican members of Congress, are evidently expected to ratify any action that they may desire, reciprocity or otherwise.

Hanna tells one great truth in his interview when he intimates that the tariff is so ingeniously balanced that it is dangerous to disturb it in the slightest manner or it may fall to pieces. All this tempest may, however, be allayed when the major returns from his free trip and takes Babcock and his following in hand backed up by the persuasive eloquence of the steel and other trusts. There is plenty of time to arrange matters; congress does not meet until December.

## THE RICHEST TRUST.

The original trust is so far ahead of its imitators in interest-paying capacity and is piling up millions for its shrewd owners to invest in other monopolies. The Standard Oil company yesterday, says the New York World of May 8, declared a dividend of 12 per cent, which means a distribution of \$12,000,000. This dividend is payable on June 15 next. Last year at this time the great Oil Trust declared a 10 per cent dividend, or \$2,000,000 less than the one decided upon yesterday. Since January the trust has declared a previous dividend of 20 per cent, a distribution of \$20,000,000. In four months the Oil Trust has earned \$32,000,000 in profits for its stockholders, an average of \$8,000,000 a month, or at the yearly rate of \$96,000,000. Yesterday it was stated in Wall street that the trust would probably pay in all 7 1/2 per cent in dividends during 1901, or \$75,000,000. Stock in the company yesterday, on the curb, sold up to \$58 a share, the highest price on record. The trust is capitalized at \$100,000,000 and yesterday's price makes the market value of its stock \$842,000,000. John D. Rockefeller owns 31 per cent of the capital stock of the trust. Based on yesterday's price, his holdings are worth \$261,020,000. His share of yesterday's dividend will be \$3,720,000. This vast sum pays

no tax towards the support of the United States for the tariff tax paid by Rockefeller when he uses a pound of tea or his cigars or his tobacco is no more than the tax paid by our poorest citizen that uses these or other necessities or luxuries. The income tax was intended to reach these enormous incomes, and it must before long be imposed, or all the wealth of the country will concentrate into the coffers of these millionaires.

## THE STEAMSHIP TRUST.

The International Navigation Company is also to be absorbed by the Morgan ship trust, and adding the twenty-one steamers of this company to those of the Leyland and Atlantic Transport lines, already absorbed by the Morgan syndicate, the combination will have a fleet of ninety-seven ships. This total does not include seven ships building for the Leylands, four for the Atlantic Transport and four for the Red Star line.

John D. Rockefeller, says the New York World, who is heavily interested in the International Navigation company, is said to be behind Mr. Morgan in the absorption of the latter. The steamship combine will be utilized, it is declared, for the joint benefit of the Steel, Copper and Oil Trusts and other industrial combinations controlled by the Morgan-Rockefeller syndicate.

The combination is being perfected, shipping men say, chiefly to allow the Steel Trust to figure with certainty on foreign contracts. Knowing what future freights will cost, the trust can consider them as known instead of an unknown quantity in bidding on bridge and railroad construction in any part of the world.

It was stated that the Morgan-Rockefeller syndicate organized the Steamship Trust on the understanding that next winter a bill can be pushed through Congress which will enable the foreign-built vessels to come in under the American flag.

This will be the means of augmenting the American merchant marine by a wholesale and ready-made process, beating the slow increase that comes by building in domestic shipyards. The ship-subsidy scheme may also enter into the syndicate calculations.

## AMERICAN AND ENGLISH SECURITIES.

Some of the daily newspapers seem to take an especial delight in befuddling or deceiving their readers on the financial question. Speaking of the sale of bonds in this country and England, one of them lately says:

"England offers to sell consols at 94 1/2. They pay 2 1/2 per cent on par now, which is 2.91 per cent on the selling price; they will pay 2 1/2 per cent after two years, and in twenty-one years they will be redeemable at par. A month's extra interest is to be paid as a bonus. United States 2 per cent bonds sell at 106 3/4."

Now, that is a very misleading statement and was intended to show that the finances of this country are in much better shape than England's are.

There is a vast difference between an English consol and a United States bond. If a man buys an English consol he gets his interest and that is all and in addition the government deducts the income tax of 6 per cent.

If he buys a United States bond he can use it for banking and the government will give him the full face value in national bank notes, which he can loan to his neighbors at the governing rate of interest and receive the interest on his bonds at the same time. Then, again, if he is one of the large favored bankers he can deposit his bonds at Washington for security and get gold for its full face value. The national banks have over \$90,000,000 loaned to them in that way without interest.

Is it any wonder that our bonds are worth more than English consols with

## IMPERIALISM COMES HIGH.

High salaries are paid the members and officers of the Philippine commission and the officers of the provisional governments established in the Philippines, says the Washington Star. The secretary of the commission has a salary of \$7,500 and the members of the commission are supposed to receive a salary of at least \$10,000 each per annum and expenses. The treasurer of the Philippines receives \$6,000 a year; the auditor, \$6,000; the deputy auditor, \$4,000; the collector of customs at Manila, \$6,000, and the deputy collectors, \$4,000 each. The director general of posts has a salary of \$5,000 and the postmaster at Manila gets \$3,500 and his assistant \$2,250. The general superintendent of public instruction receives compensation at the rate of \$6,000 a year, and the other principal officers of the archipelago are also liberally compensated. Each of the principal officers is well supplied with clerical assistance. There are forty-eight clerks in the office of the military governor, fourteen in the office of the Philippine commission, thirty-two in the auditor's office and a large force in the customs, internal revenue and postal services.

## Census Frauds.

Indictments have been found by the United States grand jury against five men who carried out the census frauds in Maryland, but the instigators of the scheme have not yet been arrested and never will be. It is quite unlikely that even these small fry will be convicted. A new census is being taken by the state for the purpose of correcting the frauds and allowing a fair legislative apportionment.

## Demand for Money.

What is this? Money 25 per cent in Wall street and 5 per cent in Chicago. What's wrong? Help, Gage! Help! Buy more bonds; don't haggle for a cent or two, but buy and buy quickly!

## MCKINLEY FALLACY.

THAT TRADE FOLLOWS OUR BELOVED FLAG

Into Dark and God-forsaken Places—Long on Patriotism and Short on Economics—Disappointment Noted on Every Hand.

Long on patriotism and short on economics, would be a fair criticism of President McKinley's speeches, for his idea that trade follows the flag will not bear investigation. "We want to send the products of our farms, our factories and our mines into every market of the world, to make the foreign peoples familiar with our products and the way to do that is to make them familiar with our flag." That is what the president said at McComb, Miss. It is possible that he wished to convey the idea to his Southern hearers that men and guns were to accompany the flag and shoot American goods down the throats of foreigners. It is to be hoped he did not mean that, for besides its barbarity and cruelty, it has not been a success where tried by other nations. But perhaps the president was thinking of the ship subsidy bill and thus forcing the flag to the front. Hanna thinks that way and it is known that they agree on political matters.

The fact is that trade does not follow the flag, our greatest trade is with England and Europe and there outside of our legations the flag is rarely seen. We have had the flag raised over Cuba for some time, two years or more, and we are losing ground instead of gaining.

American manufacturers who looked for a large increase in their trade with Cuba upon the expulsion of the Spaniards, says the Chicago Chronicle, are disappointed and looking around for explanations. The events of 1899 led them to believe that their expectations would be realized. The value of cotton goods, for instance, exported to the islands, increased considerably and reached over \$90,000. In 1900 there was a sudden drop to \$297,800, a decrease of more than two-thirds. This was not due to falling off in demand, for importations from other countries increased far more than those from the United States diminished. The like is true in a greater or less degree as to various lines of goods.

An explanation which is offered is that Spanish officials collected full duties on goods from all countries except Spain, but passed Spanish goods practically free when they were sufficiently "seen." When American officials took hold importers expected American goods to be similarly favored. Finding themselves mistaken in that respect, they bought less in the United States and more elsewhere, for reasons which are not clearly stated. Probably, however, the reasons were various, such as more satisfactory credit, lower prices and goods better suited to the Cuban demand.

As a result we may expect certain classes of manufacturers to appear in Washington lobbying for either legislation or some sort of reciprocity treaty which will give them an artificial advantage in Cuban markets, but they are surely to be met by sugar and tobacco protectees protesting against any concessions in exchange for the special favors desired by these American manufacturers in Cuba. Our Cuban relations are not settled yet by any means.

From this it will be seen that the fallacy of the dogma preached by the president that trade will follow the flag is equal to that other illusion, protection, of which the president has long been the high priest.

## LOOTING IN CHINA.

That business missionary, Rev. W. S. Ament, has arrived from China and calls upon Mark Twain to recant his charge of looting, for he says the missionaries did not loot, but he explains what they did, which, according to his own showing, looks much like it.

"The abandoned palace of Prince Hsi Ling," says Missionary Ament, "was close to the part of the city where the allied troops were quartered, and, therefore, was comparatively safe from the attack of the 'boxers.' For that reason we took possession of the abandoned property."

"The prince, who had fled, was a gambler and a prominent boxer leader. He had left nearly all his personal belongings and the house was filled with curios. On the advice of judicious friends we took absolute possession of the property, selling the curios and clothing to raise money with which to feed and clothe our charges. We realized \$2,500 for our people."

"Another feature of the times that Mr. Twain criticizes is our rade in furs. We considered the venture a perfectly legitimate speculation. Some of the native Christians went to rich men of their acquaintance and bought up furs, in order that they might not fall into the hands of looting soldiers. These furs we bought in turn and sold at an advance."

"In reply to Mr. Twain's statement that the one-third added to the damages was nothing short of extortion and robbery, I want to say that Mr. Twain was not conversant with the facts when he wrote his article. The plan was first broached to Chang Yen Liao the commissioner appointed by Li Hung Chang to settle the claims of the native Christians. Our idea was to give the Christians exactly what they had lost and the extra third was collected for the benefit of the widows and orphans."

"In all we collected about \$30,000 in a territory 125 miles long by from fifteen to twenty miles wide, and the

collections were made through the Chinese magistrates. There was no objection filed by anyone, official or otherwise, and we could have collected twice as much, but on my own initiative, the amount was cut in half. That is all that Mr. Twain's charge amounts to."

Selling the goods of a man, even if he is a gambler and a boxer would be considered here a rather bold performance. Dealing in stolen furs is certainly an unchristian act, but then Rev. Mr. Ament was some thousands of miles away from home and perhaps he thought these trifles would never come to light. The fear that the beautiful furs, for which the Chinese are famous, should fall into the hands of the "looting soldiers" seemed to weigh heavily on the mind of the missionary and as he saw a chance for large profit, possibly to be expended for the widows and orphans, he embarked in the unholy traffic, knowing the goods were stolen.

The looting of soldiers is bad enough but the acts of Rev. W. S. Ament are an outrage and the church who sent him to China should promptly dismiss him and disavow his acts.

## THE COMING REFORM.

Municipal ownership, where it has been tried and honestly administered has proved a success, the danger is that the management would fall into the hands of the professional politicians that infest most cities, who would demand that ward heelers be given positions for which they are unfit and thus make the service worse under the city than under the private corporation. The vast amount of money that would be handled in the larger cities if they owned the street cars and the great chances for stealing the proceeds of such a large undertaking may be seen from the New York state railroad commissioner's report for the year 1900. In it we find that 567,144,099 persons were carried on the surface street cars of the Bronx and Manhattan, 323,229,639 on the surface and "L" roads of Brooklyn, and 184,164,110 on the Manhattan "L" roads. This makes the inconceivably huge total of 1,074,537,848 five-cent fares collected from the people of Greater New York last year. This gives \$53,726,892.40 as the total yearly expenditure for car-fares within the city limits, the great bulk of it by the working people. Three-cent fares all over the city would reduce that expenditure to \$32,236,135.44. And that would leave in the pockets of the people, to be saved or spent for other purposes, the magnificent yearly sum of \$21,490,756.96. And it must not be overlooked that the number of car fares collected in Greater New York grows much larger every year. There was an increase of 113,000,000 fares in 1900 over 1899.

## HAMMER AND ANVIL.

The attempt of President McKinley to arouse the enthusiasm of his audiences by alluding to "the flag," which he did twenty-six times in three days, would indicate that we are soon to be entangled with trouble with some foreign foe. We are hardly over one war yet, Mr. President; better give us a bit of a rest and allow the war taxes we are still paying to be repealed.

The recall of Archbishop Chapelle from the Philippines and his journey to Rome is now explained by a cable from London which says: "The approaching meeting here of Cardinal Gibbons, Mgr. Chapelle and the archbishop of Manila is designed to remove the conflict that has arisen between the Vatican and the United States regarding the sequestration of the property of the monasteries in the Philippines." So there is a conflict between church and state in the Philippines, in spite of the censored reports that everything was lovely there.

If China cannot raise the money indemnity some of the nations will demand territory as security. Then will follow the partition of China and the "open door" will be slammed in our face.

## HOT SHOT.

With Hanna and McKinley for reciprocity, Babcock for free trade in steel, Dick for municipal and government ownership and Grosverner for an income tax, the Republican brethren are able to cater to any taste.

Minister Conger may be a poor diplomat and not sharp enough to carry out the McKinley-Hay Chinese policy, but he will do well enough for governor of Iowa. It does not take much of a statesman for that position, judging by the past.

When the ship subsidy bill was before the late congress the Republican senators asserted that without the subsidy it would be many long years before the supremacy of the American merchant marine would be restored. Morgan's purchase of the Atlantic lines completely refutes their statements and the subsidy grabbers will have to use some other argument in the next Congress.

Some of the newspapers are claiming that the free trip given by the railroads to President McKinley is part of the program to bull stocks. There is no doubt the railroads are interested in the scheme whatever it is.

It is best not to conclude that there is to be a factional fight in the Republican party because they do not agree on the tariff reduction. This is an off year and a certain amount of independence of opinion aids to catch the granger vote.

Slow rivers flow at the rate of three to seven miles an hour.