

The Commoner.

since the Spanish war, and now endorsed by so great an editor as Mr. Watterson, is not only dangerous, but it is immoral. It is politically dangerous because it encourages the republican party to shirk responsibility for its sins and shield itself behind the pretense that it is working out the will of the Almighty; and it is immoral because it obliterates the distinction between right and wrong. The republican argument is built upon the theory that wrong done upon a large scale loses its evil character, and becomes an integral part of God's plan. It is in keeping with the tendency to call an embezzler a Napoleon of finance, provided the amount embezzled is large.

Mr. Watterson has not in the past been in the habit of defending his position with the philosophy which he now employs. In former years he was known as the special champion of "the star-eyed Goddess of Reform." When the democratic party went down to defeat, as it often did, he did not say: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. He made protection and the republican party, and, therefore, we must bow to both." On the contrary, he raised the democratic banner aloft and appealed time and again to the intelligence of the American people. Neither has he been in the habit of excusing the crimes of individuals by attributing them to divine inspiration. When Gov. Goebel was assassinated Mr. Watterson did not say: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform; He prompted the assassin to kill! We cannot understand His all-wise purpose, but there we were, and here we are, and there is nothing to be done about it."

Instead, he insisted that a murder had been committed and that the guilty should be brought to justice.

When the Louisville and Nashville Railroad entered the arena of politics, and began its work of corruption and intimidation, Mr. Watterson did not say: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. This Railroad Company has sprung into existence and must be carrying out the purposes of an all-wise Ruler."

Far from it! He insisted that the railroad should keep out of politics, and attend to the business for which it was organized.

There is no more reason for throwing upon the Almighty the responsibility for a war of conquest, and for an imperial policy which burdens our nation with a large army and suppresses the aspirations of distant peoples for self-government, than there is to blame Him because one individual chooses to kill another, or because a great corporation attempts to control a state government.

Questions must be decided by the application of fixed and immutable principles. Jefferson said: "I know of but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively"; and Franklin expressed the same idea, only in different language, when he said: "Justice is as strictly due between neighbor nations as between neighbor citizens. The highwayman is as much a robber where he plunders in a gang as when single, and the nation that wages an unjust war is only a great gang."

If Jefferson and Franklin were right, how

can we delude ourselves with the doctrine of destiny which is being developed now?

Yielding to a bad principle because it seems triumphant is simply an easy method of avoiding labor and sacrifice. It is a complacent but unsound philosophy, which teaches compromise with wrong merely because the enemy is strongly entrenched.

No one has a right to assume that error will be permanently victorious. If some of our citizens condemn small crimes but seem inclined to condone grand larceny and killing on a large scale, Mr. Watterson should remember his lecture on morals and point out to the deluded ones that a nation can, no more than an individual, avoid the consequences of transgression. If he believed the authors of the Constitution and "the wisest of our statesmen" wrong he would be justified in repudiating their counsels, but believing them right it is surprising that he should be carried away by the brutal and barbarous doctrine upon which empires are built. His influence might help to restore American ideals; he cannot afford to aid in their overthrow.

The position of Mr. Watterson would be untenable, even if the issue of imperialism had been the only issue presented last fall and the people had deliberately endorsed the republican policy. Suppose the campaign of 1900 had been fought with no other question before the people, even then it would still be the duty of those who are conscientiously opposed to imperialism to continue the discussion, with the hope of convincing a majority of the people. But, as a matter of fact, there were a number of issues in the campaign. While imperialism was declared by the democratic convention to be paramount, every one knows that other questions entered into the contest, and it is also well known that the republican party constantly denied that it had any thought of attacking fundamental principles, or of converting a republic into an empire. The indictment brought against the republican party was so severe that a great many refused to believe the party capable of such intentions as were charged.

Then, too, the republicans sought cover behind the fact that a war was in progress. They circulated misleading reports from the Philippine islands, and declared that the lives of American soldiers were imperiled by the fact that the democrats were criticising the administration.

What the democratic party needs is not advice to surrender, but courage to resist the attacks which are being made upon American doctrines and democratic principles.

The campaign of 1896 was the first one in recent years when there was a radical issue between the parties. The republican party pretended to want international bimetallicism, when it really wanted the gold standard. It won its victory under the cover of international bimetallicism and as soon as the election was over, threw off the mask and came out for the gold standard. Many of the democratic papers which had supported the ticket, and all of the democratic papers which had deserted the party in that year, counseled the party to accept a de-

cision, won by fraud, as conclusive of the question. And for four years the leading democratic dailies gave no assistance whatever to the democratic party in its fight against the money power.

In the campaign of 1900 the republican party practiced another fraud upon the people on the subject of imperialism, and now Mr. Watterson and a few other democratic editors advise the acceptance of the republican position on that question.

On the trust question the republican party also practiced deception, and some of our democratic papers seem willing to concede the triumph of the trust principle.

Nothing is to be gained from a party standpoint, and everything is to be lost from the standpoint of principle by Mr. Watterson's method of dealing with the questions at issue. He expects the democratic party to endorse the colonial system, and then promise to send better carpet-baggers to Manila than the republicans have sent. Such a course would make our party a laughing stock.

No party is good enough to administer a colonial system honestly and for the benefit of the subjects. A nation that is selfish enough to want a colony is too selfish to do justice by it, and a party demoralized enough to endorse a colonial system would be impotent to administer it satisfactorily.

THE COMMONER is pained to see so able and brilliant an editor as Mr. Watterson, unconsciously lend his influence to the republican party. Far better that his voice should command a charge upon the republican strongholds than that it should call a retreat in the midst of a battle which must determine, not only the fate of this republic, but the fate of all republics for years to come.



Hanna For 1904.

Several weeks ago a paper printed at Lancaster, Ohio, and called the Fairfield County Republican, had this to say:

While in Washington, attending the inaugural, we were much impressed with the greatness of Senator Hanna. He has been an important factor in the first term of William McKinley, and his wisdom will be more apparent to the American people in the second. He possesses the presence and wisdom that are absolutely necessary in the management and solution of the momentous questions of the day. The best citizens of the country are beginning to regard him as the greatest man in the land, next to the president. He is a safe and conservative gentleman, and would make as safe a president as William McKinley.

When the people come to know him they will esteem him as highly as the president. He is for the whole people, the masses as well as the classes. The country has nothing to fear from the brainy, wise and conservative Senator Marcus A. Hanna.

If Senator Hanna were not an Ohio man, he would be, without a doubt, the next president of the United States. The candidate nominated for president in 1904 by the republican party will not be an Ohio man. If it could be so, it would be the Hon. Marcus A. Hanna.

Senator Scott of Virginia has recently come out boldly in favor of the selection of Mark Hanna as the standard bearer of the republican party in 1904. Senator Scott says:

There is no greater leader in the republican