

## The Commoner.

### The Love of Liberty.

The letter written by Sixto Lopez, the representative of the Filipinos, and addressed to Robert Treat Paine, was a dignified protest in behalf of a people struggling for liberty.

In that letter Senor Lopez says:

We plead for peace, but the plea is in the interests of those who suffer and die by sword and starvation; not because of fear. We can fight long, even if we have to suffer much, for we are fighting for hearth and home, and in a righteous cause. We are ready for peace; we hold out the olive branch. But on that branch is written, with the blood of brave men, the word "liberty." For that we are willing to suffer; for that we are prepared to die. But we will never submit to have liberty conferred upon us by the "charity" or "benevolence" of any man or nation; it is ours by right and not by bounty.

For one hundred and twenty-five years American school children have been taught to stand uncovered in the presence of just such sentiments as these. Every school book designed for the purpose of imparting a desirable lesson, as well as of giving the child practice in the art of reading, has been filled with sentiments similar to those uttered by this representative of the Filipino people. No other country than ours has so carefully treasured sentiments of liberty or been more partial to the history of men who were willing to die for freedom.

How does it happen then that this lofty sentiment uttered by the representative of an unfortunate people has met with sneers in this country today?

It was our own Jefferson who declared: "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time." And the Americans of Jefferson's period subscribed to that sentiment in a solemn declaration of independence. For more than one hundred years, the people of this country have acted in the belief that the men of Jefferson's time wrote the truth.

The men who have written our books, the orators who have sought to stir up the best impulses in the American heart, the poets, who have courted the muse for our instruction and entertainment have acted on the theory that the way to make the American heart beat faster, the way to arouse American enthusiasm to its depths was to play upon the harp of liberty. Every song that may lay claim to being a national hymn emphasizes this fact, and contains the same sentiment to which this humble Filipino gave utterance.

How often has the American heart been stirred by these words from Hail Columbia:

Let independence be your boast,  
Ever mindful what it cost,  
Ever grateful for the prize,  
Let its altar reach the skies.

How often has the American pulse quickened at the words from our national hymn:

Oh thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,  
Between their loved homes and war's desolation,  
Blest with victory and peace: may the Heaven rescued  
land  
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us  
a nation.

How often have American school boys recited Webster's speech wherein he declared, "God grants liberty to those who love it and are always ready to guard and defend it."

How often have they repeated those lines from Pope:

Give me again my hollow tree,  
A crust of bread and liberty.

How often have they been told of the story of Nathan Hale, that American patriot, who went to his death declaring, "My only regret is that I have but one life to give for my country."

How often have they read the words of Patrick Henry, who exclaimed, "Give me liberty or give me death."

How often have they listened to the song of the Greeks:

Again to the battle Achaians!  
Our hearts bid the tyrants defiance!  
Our land, the first guardian of Liberty's tree,  
It has been and shall yet be the land of the free.

Nor is there a school boy in the land who has not been thrilled by the heroism of Arnold Winkelried. "There sounds not to the trump of fame, the echo of a nobler name," than that of Arnold Winkelried.

Make way for liberty he cried;  
The keen points met from side to side;  
He bowed amongst them like a tree,  
And thus made way for liberty.

For more than a hundred years in this nation of freemen, these stories have been told, and these songs have been sung, and the song and the story have inspired the little men and women of America to that reverence for free institutions upon which the permanency of free government must depend.

"In liberty's unclouded blaze" the children of America have learned of the sacrifices of the pioneers in liberty's cause. The sentiments they have applauded are identically the sentiments expressed by this brown man of the Orient in behalf of the people whom we are now seeking to subjugate; and yet today some have nothing but sneers for this sentiment when it comes from a representative of this people.

Can it be true that for more than a hundred years the children of America have been taught to reverence falsehood? Can it be true that the cardinal principle of all their lessons has been a lie? Can it be true that for more than a century in our Declaration of Independence, in our Constitution, in our laws, in our histories, in our story and in our song we have been saying homage to false gods? Some one has said, "Let me make the songs of a nation and I care not who makes its laws." This was on the theory that men are dominated more by their ballads than by their laws. The fact is that the ballads are the index to the sentiments of the nation. Our ballads indicate our devotion to liberty, our admiration for sacrifices in liberty's behalf, wherever, or by whom those sacrifices may be made. But if such sentiments as were uttered by Sixto Lopez are to be met by sneers simply because that sentiment is uttered in protest against our own crimes against liberty, then our ballads must be rewritten, our stories must be expurgated, our songs must be remodeled.

Let any American citizen devote a few hours to the preparation of a page by which he will be brought to realize the present situation.

In one column let him put down the laws, the patriotic songs, the stories and the orations that have made and kept this nation free; let him record the many instances in the world's history where men have fought and died in freedom's

holy cause—incidents which we have treasured as sacredly as any occurring in our own national life.

In another column let him set down a few laws, speeches and songs consistent with an empire, with wars of conquest and with a blood-bought commerce. Let him compare the two columns and then ask himself whether this nation can afford to revolutionize its policy and its ideals—whether it can afford to pay the price of such a change.

### An Indefensible Appropriation.

Although Congressman Richardson, of Tennessee, exposed the iniquity of the proposed appropriation for the Standard Oil Bank in New York city, that appropriation was made by the Republican House. The vote on the proposed appropriation was evenly divided, standing 92 for and 92 against. Under the rules of the house, the appropriation was passed by this vote. It will be remembered that after Congressman Richardson had made his statement to the House, Congressman Moody, a republican member of the appropriation committee, stated that he appreciated the force of Mr. Richardson's statement and that he would not attempt to reply to it. In spite of the fact that the proposed appropriation was indefensible, and admitted by republican leaders to be indefensible, still it was made. It was made in response to the suggestion of the bank that the large contributions this bank had made to the Hanna slush fund, deserved some recompense.

### A Man's a Man For A' That.

By Robert Burns.

Is there for honest poverty,  
That hangs his head, and a' that?  
The coward slave, we pass him by,  
We dare be poor for a' that!  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Our toil's obscure, and a' that;  
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,  
Wear hoddin gray, and a' that?  
Gi'e fools their silks, and knaves their wine,  
A man's a man for a' that;  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Their tinsel show, and a' that—  
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,  
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,  
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;  
Though hundreds worship at his word,  
He's but a coof for a' that;  
For a' that, and a' that,  
His riband, star, and a' that—  
The man of independent mind,  
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak' a belted knight,  
A marquis, duke and a' that,  
But an honest man's aboon his might—  
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that!  
For a' that, and a' that,  
Their dignities, and a' that,  
The pith o' sense and pride o' worth  
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may—  
As come it will for a' that—  
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,  
May bear the gree and a' that.  
For a' that, and a' that,  
It's comin' yet, for a' that—  
That man to man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a' that.