

Every one recognizes the obligation imposed upon individuals to observe both the human and the moral law, but, as some deny the application of those laws to nations, it may not be out of place to quote the opinions of others. Jefferson, than whom there is no higher political authority, said:

"I know of but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively."

Franklin, whose learning, wisdom and virtue, are a part of the priceless legacy bequeathed to us from the revolutionary days, expressed the same idea in even stronger language when he said:

"JUSTICE IS AS STRICTLY DUE BETWEEN NEIGHBOR NATIONS AS BETWEEN NEIGHBOR CITIZENS. A HIGHWAYMAN IS AS MUCH A ROBBER WHEN HE PLUNDERS IN A GANG AS WHEN SINGLE; AND THE NATION THAT MAKES AN UNJUST WAR IS ONLY A GREAT GANG."

Men may dare to do in crowds what they would not dare to do as individuals, but the moral character of an act is not determined by the number of those who join in it. Force can defend a right, but force has never yet created a right. If it was true, as declared in the resolutions of intervention, that the Cubans "are and of right ought to be free and independent" (language taken from the declaration of independence), it is equally true that the Filipinos "are and of right ought to be free and independent."

The right of the Cubans to freedom was not based upon their proximity to the United States, nor upon the language which they spoke, nor yet upon the race or races to which they belonged. Congress by a practically unanimous vote declared that the principles enunciated at Philadelphia in 1776 were still alive and applicable to the Cubans.

Who will draw a line between the natural right of the Cuban and the Filipino? Who will say that the former has a right to liberty and that the latter has no rights which we are bound to respect? And, if the Filipinos "are and of right ought to be free and independent," what right have we to force our government upon them without their consent?

Before our duty can be ascertained their rights must be determined, and when their rights are once determined it is as much our duty to respect those rights as it was the duty of Spain to respect the rights of the people of Cuba, or the duty of England to respect the rights of the American colonists. Rights never conflict, duties never clash. Can it be our duty to usurp political rights which belong to others? Can it be our duty to kill those who, following the example of our forefathers, love liberty well enough to fight for it?

Some poet has described the terror which overcame a soldier who in the midst of battle discovered that he had slain his brother. It is written: "All ye are brethren." Let us hope for the coming of the day when human life—which when once destroyed cannot be restored—will be so sacred that it will never be taken except when necessary to punish a crime already committed, or to prevent a crime about to be committed.

If it is said that we have assumed before the world obligations which make it necessary for us to permanently maintain a government in the Philippine Islands, I reply, first, that the highest obligation of this nation is to be true to itself. No obligation to any particular nations, or to all nations combined, can require the abandonment of our theory of government and the substitution of doctrines against which our whole national life has been a protest; and, second, that our obligation to the Filipinos, who inhabit the islands, is greater than any obligation which we owe to foreigners who have a temporary residence in the Philippines or desire to trade there.

It is argued by some that the Filipinos are incapable of self-government and that therefore we owe it to the world to take control of them. Admiral Dewey, in an official report to the navy department, declared the Filipinos were more capable of self-government than the Cubans, and said that he based