

A Possible Surprise. The supreme court recently decided that the war tax on export bills of lading was unconstitutional. The attorney-general had pointed out to the court that such a decision would involve great embarrassment to the administration. Referring to this point, Justice Brewer said: "It furnishes no reason for not recognizing that which in our judgment is the true construction of the constitutional limitations." Some of the administration politicians would be greatly surprised and doubtless considerably embarrassed in their schemes of exploitation if the supreme court should conclude that in considering the Porto Rican case it should be guided by the constitution regardless of the personal interests of administration politicians.

Tale of Two Cities. Rev. Dr. Parkhurst, in a recent address, thus expressed his opinion of New York City:

"If Sodom and Gomorrah were near New York City and I had to move, I'd move to one of them in preference to living in New York City. The only objection they have to the decalogue there is that it is not longer so that they could shatter more of its commandments."

And then, by way of comparison, he mentioned Pennsylvania:

"The only state that is worse than New York is Pennsylvania. That is the crowning glory of political baseness. There is not a place on earth where the devil is happier. If it were not for such men as John Wanamaker, God knows what that poor, unfortunate state would come to."

The Pittsburg Post insists that Philadelphia is worse than New York. It is "a tale of two cities," and if half true, there is room for a great deal of improvement in both.

Care for the Human Race. The Tri-State Medical Society, held at Keokuk, Iowa, recently, inaugurated a good and much needed work. A committee consisting of Dr. J. C. Murphy of St. Louis, Dr. D. C. Brookman of Ottumwa, Ia., and Dr. Frank P. Northury of Galesburg, Ill., was appointed to ask the next legislature of the three states to pass laws regulating marriage of degenerates and criminals. The society unanimously passed the resolutions, giving it as the sense of the Tri-State Medical Society of Iowa, Illinois and Missouri that such laws be passed. New officers were elected and Chicago was chosen for the place of meeting in April, 1902. Dr. J. C. Murphy of St. Louis was elected president and Dr. Bayard Holmes of Chicago, first vice president.

It is strange the intelligence of this country has not long ago required such amendments to our marriage laws as would protect the character of future generations. If one-tenth of the care shown in the propagation of live stock was displayed with reference to human beings, there would be more intelligence and happiness and less insanity and misery in this world.

Entirely Consistent. The Indianapolis News, commenting upon the appointment of Mr. Knox, says:

"We are not disposed to judge Mr. Knox in advance. But at the same time, as things go in this world, it must be admitted to be unfortunate that the man who may be called on to enforce the

anti-trust law should have such intimate relations with the combinations against which that law is directed."

Has the News failed to recognize the fact that the appointment of Mr. Knox was an entirely consistent one? The News must know that the combinations against which the anti-trust law is directed provided the sinews of war for the republican party in the campaigns of 1896 and 1900. Mr. Knox's predecessor in the cabinet had intimate relations with the combinations against which the anti-trust law is directed. Every department of the government is on intimate terms with these combinations and their representatives. Republican congressional conventions nominate men known to be favorable to these combinations. Republican legislatures elect men to the senate who have intimate relations with these combinations. Republican newspapers to-day in many instances openly and boldly uphold the trust system and point to these combinations as the natural result of progress and prosperity. Why, then, should the administration be criticised, because of Mr. Knox's appointment, by newspapers which helped to place this administration in power?

The President Contradicts Himself. At Decatur, Alabama, the President took occasion to defend the administration against the charge that it favored militarism and viewed blood and carnage with indifference. But in his anxiety to make the defence complete he found it necessary to contradict what he had said during the negotiations of the Paris Treaty. The conflict between the speech made at Decatur and the instructions given to the Peace Commission can best be shown by presenting the two in parallel columns:

Decatur Speech.
We have never gone to war for conquest, for exploitation or for territory, but always for liberty and humanity, and in our recent war with Spain the people of the whole United States, as one man, marched with the flag for the honor of the nation to relieve the oppressed people in Cuba.

Extract from Correspondence Between Day, of the Peace Commission, and Hay, Secretary of State.

United States Peace Commission, Paris, Nov. 3, 1898—10 a. m. (For the President.—Special.)
—After a careful examination of the authorities, the majority of the commission are clearly of the opinion that our demand for the Philippine Islands can not be based on conquest. * * *

DAY.
Department of State, Washington, Nov. 3, 1898.
—The President has received your dispatch of this date and awaits your letter. Meantime, however, the question may be ultimately determined. He assumes you have not yielded the claim by right of conquest. In fact the destruction of the Spanish fleet on May 1 was the conquest of Manila, the capital of the Philippines. * * *

An Important Admission. Senator Depew, at the celebration of his last birthday, admits that the predictions made in regard to trusts during the last campaign have been more than fulfilled. While he does not feel any alarm, and misjudges public sentiment on the subject, his words are worthy of consider-

ation. After painting a rosy picture of the future, he says:

"The animal most frequently seen upon the pages of a large portion of the press of the United States during the canvass of 1900 and brought out upon the platform at every meeting of one party was the octopus. It frightened millions of voters as to the dangers to themselves, with its tentacles spreading over and enveloping the country, but the octopus of the imagination of the populist writer and speaker of October, 1900, was a lamb compared with a lion beside the real octopus of March, 1901. A billion-dollar corporation formed in October might have reversed the November verdicts. And yet such has been the march of public opinion, owing to the marvelous conditions which have come up within a few months, that the formation of a \$1,100,000,000 company frightens nobody, and is not even the subject of extended editorial comment in the pages of the Commoner. The processes and the procession up to the present have so happily included, for their own benefit, every profession, trade, and occupation, that people are looking for results instead of criticising methods or listening to predictions of disaster."

Mr. Depew's business connections are such that he looks approvingly upon all consolidations of capital. He has such faith in men of wealth that he is willing to entrust them with a monopoly of production and the control of prices; and he is so far removed from the laboring man and the ordinary consumer that he is unconscious of their needs or perils. He is near the head of the banquet table and is enjoying himself, as indifferent to the interests of those who toil as were the companions of Belshazzar. The readers of THE COMMONER have been informed of the progress of consolidation and of the objections thereto, but Senator Depew's admission is an important one.

A Popular English Song. The May number of the Review of Reviews reproduces an excellent cartoon which appeared in the Westminster Gazette (London). While this cartoon cannot be exhibited to the readers of THE COMMONER, they will be interested in the ballad which Salisbury, Chamberlain, and other government leaders are represented as singing. It reads:

A Patter Song for the Government Choir.
In the war we made a start
With a gay and gladsome heart,
And we thought with little trouble
We could prick the Boer bubble.
But we didn't know they'd horses,
And we didn't know they'd guns.
(Spoken): But they had—yes, they had.

Yes, we found they'd guns and horses,
And we wanted larger forces—
But it really didn't matter,
Didn't matter—matter—matter;
It really didn't matter
Not a bit.

We got up an election
And we talked of disaffection;
Votes given to the liberals
Were given to the Boers.
For we thought the war was over,
And the army was in clover.
(Spoken): But it wasn't—no, it wasn't.

Yes, we found it wasn't finished,
And the army had diminished—
But it really doesn't matter,
Doesn't matter—matter—matter;
It really doesn't matter
Not a bit.