

the purchase of the canal service of two American ships of 5,700 tons each for \$1,300,000 when the government was offered two foreign ships of 8,000 tons each for \$750,000?

What resemblance between the "platform" protesting against the prosecution of Paul Morton on the ground that the corporation rather than the individual should be proceeded against, and the "platform" providing for the prosecution of the individuals comprising the beef trust?

What resemblance between the "platform," promulgated in a speech at Harvard college, condemning the able lawyers who for a price give their talents to great corporations in order that the people may be oppressed and the "platform"—a few days later—providing for the appointment as secretary of state of the greatest corporation lawyer of them all?

What resemblance between the "platform" declaring against the attempt by trust magnates to control the politics of the country and the telegram of congratulation to Dupont, chief of the powder trust, on the occasion of his election to the United States senate from Delaware?

What resemblance between the "platform" which protested against the growing influence of corporations in politics and the fact that the majority of the cabinet is composed of men whose predilections are distinctly corporation and the other fact that LaFollette is not regarded by the general public as a particularly welcome visitor at the White House?

What resemblance between the "platform" of standpatism on the high protective tariff and the declaration: "Political economists have pretty generally agreed that protection is vicious in theory and harmful in practice?"

What resemblance between the "platform" declaring against the growth of special interests and the championship of the ship subsidy bill?

And last, but by no means least, what resemblance between the "platform" declaring in favor of an adequate railroad regulation bill and the passage of a measure having the approval of Nelson W. Aldrich and Joseph B. Foraker?

Mr. Taft will do quite well if he shall avoid making "any invidious comparisons."



INDUSTRIAL MURDER

The report of the coroner of Allegheny county, Pennsylvania, for the month of August shows that there were killed in that county—Pittsburg being the metropolis—fifty-nine men, thirty in railroad accidents and twenty-nine in the manufacturing plants. During the same month more than 300 industrial workers were more or less injured. This is a record equal to some battles which have been recorded in history. During that same month there were killed and wounded in industrial circles in the United States more workmen than there were American soldiers killed or wounded during our war with Spain. In one year American railroads kill and wound more than were killed and wounded on either side in any one battle of the civil war. Yet this annual slaughter—which is industrial murder—calls forth only casual protest.



"WHOLESOME" LAWBREAKING

Referring to the proposition that Mr. Hariman and his associates be prosecuted for their railroad mergers the Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat says the administration has the matter under consideration. This correspondent adds: "Whether the merger is beneficent or otherwise, in its effect upon interstate trade, must be decided by the legal advisers of the administration. If it is held that the consolidation is wholesome in influence, the administration will probably not go into the courts."

This same correspondent refers to Mr. Roosevelt's Memorial day speech in which he urged the legalizing of pooling agreements, saying: "Subject to first giving to the government the power of supervision and control which I have advocated, the law should be amended so that the railroads may be permitted and encouraged to make traffic agreements when these are in the interest of the general public, as well as the railroad corporations making them."

The Globe-Democrat's correspondent explains: "With pooling legalized the anti-trust act, so far as it applies to railroads, would be nullified."

If it be the province of the authorities to determine whether the violation of law on the part

of railroad magnates is "wholesome" why not relieve the conscience of these public officials by making provision in the law itself?

Why not make the Sherman anti-trust law read something like this: "Every contract combination, in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy in restraint of trade, etc., is hereby declared to be illegal except where such contract, combination, trust or conspiracy is regarded as 'wholesome in influence?'"

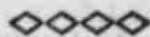
Why not provide also as per the hint given in Mr. Taft's speech a law something like this: "All bad trusts are hereby prohibited; provided that nothing herein shall be so construed as to interfere with good trusts."

Or: "All bad conspiracies are hereby condemned but good conspiracies are not to be interfered with."

Or: "All violations of law are to be punished except where such violations are considered 'wholesome in influence.'"

Absurd as some of these suggestions may seem they are no more absurd than the proposition that men sworn to enforce the law have the right to determine whether the violation of law by powerful men is "wholesome."

It is no more absurd than for the administration to say at one moment "we are opposed to combination and agreements" and at another moment to recommend that the law be so amended as to permit and encourage railroads to make traffic agreements. If we are to have railway regulation why are such agreements necessary "in the interest of the general public?" Why not let the government lay down the rule in the process of this regulation—a rule to which the railroads are to adhere not by agreement among themselves but in recognition of the superiority of their creator, in compliance with the law of the land.



BONAPARTE'S DILEMMA

Attorney General Bonaparte now finds himself in a position where the charitable will sympathize with him. Because he talked about shooting a covey of trust and rebate criminals the special interests have raised a storm about his head. Because he only talked of shooting, and has brought down no jailbirds, the poor head of the people's lawyer is the target for more general censure. To add to the predicament in which Mr. Bonaparte finds himself, the Washington correspondents are busier than ever writing rumors of his approaching resignation.

Of course Mr. Bonaparte is a failure as attorney general, just as his predecessor was and just as any man may be who tries to steer a middle course between what the people want and what the administration of which he is a part is willing to have him do. We are driven regretfully to the conclusion that Mr. Bonaparte will not be able to do more than Mr. Moody did. The most that can be hoped for is that if the present attorney general leaves the cabinet on account of his attitude toward the monopolies and rebaters he will not be rewarded with a seat on the bench of the United States supreme court.

[Now before any republican reader takes The Commoner to task for these harsh statements against the republican administration let him be informed that the above appeared as an editorial in that stalwart republican newspaper, the New York Press.]



"MAY BE REDUCED FIFTY PER CENT"

Nothing shows the growth of tariff revision sentiment more plainly than the attitude of the National Association of Manufacturers. This association at its national convention held several months ago declared in favor of a revision of the tariff the same to be accomplished by a commission or board selected for that purpose.

It must be remembered that this association is composed of tariff beneficiaries and the association's action has been generally interpreted to mean that many of these manufacturers have been made to realize that some measure of relief must soon be given to the people else they are likely to demand a full measure.

When Senator Foraker defended the high protective tariff in replying to Secretary Taft he doubtless thought he would at least have the sympathy of the beneficiaries of that tariff. Therefore a letter printed in the "American Industries" and written by Mr. H. E. Miles, chairman of the tariff committee of the National Association of Manufacturers, is interesting. That letter is addressed to Senator Foraker, and for the information of Commoner readers is printed in full in another column of this issue.

It will be seen that these manufacturers

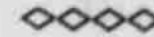
approve of Mr. Taft's "tariff-revision-after-the-presidential-election" policy. And they also want it revised by a commission—which is usually the method employed to "accomplish" those things which the commission's creators do not intend to have accomplished. It will also be seen that these manufacturers want the tariff investigation to be behind closed doors.

The Commoner believes that the tariff should be revised not by a commission but by the American congress composed of men who are presumed to be the representatives of the people. And the investigation and discussion of the subject should be in full view of the American public even though the proceedings should disclose that the people have been plundered, through the shelter given to the trusts in the republican tariff, to an extent not heretofore suspected.

Some idea of the extent of the tariff imposition may be obtained from Mr. Miles' letter. He says: "About forty per cent of all the members of our association who have by correspondence pronounced for revision declare in their letters that their own schedules MAY PROPERLY BE REDUCED FIFTY PER CENT OR MORE WITHOUT HURT TO THEIR RESPECTIVE INDUSTRIES OR TO THE COUNTRY AT LARGE."

How exorbitant must be this precious tariff fostered by the republican party when even forty per cent of its beneficiaries, frightened by the rising tide of public sentiment, admit that their own schedules "may properly be reduced fifty per cent or more without hurt to their respective industries, or to the country at large."

If the common every day experience of the consumers is not sufficient to awaken republican voters to the iniquity of the existing tariff system surely the confession in the letter referred to ought at least to challenge attention and invite thoughtful investigation.



VIRGINIA VS. PENNSYLVANIA

The people of Virginia voted \$1,000,000 for the erection of a capitol building at Richmond. A magnificent structure was the result, but the public officials having the matter in charge have put themselves in disfavor with the Pennsylvania gentlemen who attended to the construction of the Keystone state's capitol. The Richmond building cost only \$600,000, and \$400,000 of the appropriation was covered back into the state treasury. The Virginia capitol cost the Virginians less than the graft worked on the Pennsylvania capitol in the one item of bronze work alone. The graft worked in Pennsylvania on the one item of furniture for the new capitol would have paid for the erection of two such buildings as the one to which loyal Virginians point with pride. The difference between the Pennsylvania building and the Virginia building is that the former was built by dishonest men who robbed the state, while the latter was built by patriotic men who looked after the best interests of their commonwealth. The former is the logical result of allowing a rotten political machine to run the state, the latter is the logical result of intelligent and honest participation in public affairs. It is to be hoped that at some time in the future the people of Pennsylvania will realize the necessity of running their own public affairs instead of leaving them to the tender mercies of a political machine that hesitates at no crime calculated to perpetuate its hold upon the public revenues.



GIVE IT ALL UP

The Wall Street Journal says: "Speaker Cannon speaks by the card, and with a keen appreciation of political conditions, when he says that if congress does not act wisely at the next session there will not be much need for the election of delegates to the next republican national convention. The republican party must move carefully lest it be grounded on the sands of financial despotism, or be swept into the torrent of radical socialistic agitation, destructive of financial rights and confidence. Either way means shipwreck."

Republican leaders might profit by the example set by Mark Twain in the only romance he ever wrote. Through a series of interesting incidents and accidents Mark Twain led his hero to a point where to turn either way meant instant death. The reader, wrought to high nervous tension, wondered how it would all come out when he turned to the following page and read this note from the author: "The reader will not see this story continued in another issue. The fact is the author has got his hero into such an all-fired bad fix that he here and now washes his hands of the whole affair."