

The Commoner.

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To President Roosevelt

Your attention is respectfully called to that portion of the Sherman anti-trust law which declares criminal any conspiracy in restraint of trade and names a penalty therefor. You will notice that the law reads: "Every person who shall monopolize or attempt to monopolize, or combine or conspire with any other person or persons to monopolize any part of the trade or commerce among the several states or with foreign nations, shall (not MAY) be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$5,000, or by imprisonment not exceeding one year, or by both said punishments, in the discretion of the court."

You are the chief executive of this nation and as such are not only empowered, but are required, to enforce the law. By commencing a civil action against the members of the beef trust you declare that the members of that trust are in your opinion guilty of a violation of the law. Why do you hesitate to commence a criminal action? The penalty fixed in the statute is insignificant compared with the penalty prescribed for a violation of less important statutes. When a man violates the internal revenue laws there is no hesitation about prosecution, although the license fee is small and the fine for selling without license heavy in proportion to the crime. If the members of the beef trust have raised the price of meat one cent per pound, they have laid a tax of millions of dollars upon the people of the United States, and it means an enormous profit to themselves. A fine of \$5,000 is insignificant, and a year in the penitentiary would be small punishment compared with that which is given to a man who steals a horse or a hundred dollars. Why do the members of the beef trust escape criminal punishment? Is it because of their respectability? If the doctrine of equal rights to all and special privileges to none applies to the administration of justice, there can be no such thing as respectability among those guilty of a violation of the laws of the country. Does their wealth shield them? Certainly, no one will justify the mild treatment of a rich criminal and the harsh treatment of a poor one. Are they favored because of the political influence they exert? Surely the republican party has fallen from its first estate if rich trust magnates can violate the law with impunity and defy the authority of the United States.

Imperialists have placed the dollar above the rights of the Filipinos, but will your administration show partiality in the enforcement of the law in the United States because of the business interests or political contributions of those who conspire against the welfare of the public?

It is publicly stated that some of the capitalists have condemned you for attempting to enforce the anti-trust law even by civil process; it is even hinted that they threaten to oppose your re-nomination if you show the strenuousness in this direction that you have shown toward the Filipinos, but can you be scared by such threats? You have shown physical courage and bravery upon the battlefield—you were not afraid of bullets when any one of them might have taken your life; will you now fear to face concentrated wealth? Civil suits may annoy the "captains of industry," but if you

are going to "shackle cunning" you will have to shackle it with criminal laws. A prison cell will prove more effective in the prevention of monopoly than judgments or decrees for the payment of money. You have a chance to show that you were in earnest when you made that Minneapolis speech—so far you have not convinced even your friends. The section of the federal statute quoted above has already been referred to in The Commoner, and is reproduced for emphasis. It will be reproduced again and again, not only that you may know the law, for you are presumed to know it, but that the people may be reminded of it also. They have no reason for feeling more kindly toward the members of the beef trust than they do toward other violators of the law, and they will not accept any excuse which you may give for dealing tenderly with a few rich packers who conspire against the whole people.

TO THE BANKERS WHO ARE FRIGHTENED AT THE BANKING TRUST PROPOSED BY THE FOWLER BILL:

Why have you not been frightened at the trusts proposed in other industries? Is there any reason why a banker should be in favor of squeezing out the small manufacturer or salesman and yet protest against being squeezed out himself? Come, be consistent, and oppose the principle of private monopoly everywhere, or take your medicine like men.

The Reason Why.

Why is it that the advocates of "harmony" are unable to find among the millions who conscientiously believe in the principles set forth in the Chicago and Kansas City platforms a single person whom they would support for a presidential nomination? Why is it that their only idea of harmony is to select some one whose views represent the views of a minority instead of the views of a majority of the party? The answer is easy. It is because they do not want harmony.

TWO PICTURES

In Cuba you have got
the Eternal Grati-
tude of a Free Peo-
ple.

In the Philippines you
have got the hatred
and sullen submis-
sion of a subjugated
people.

*These are the pictures to which
George F. Hoar, a republican sen-
ator, invited the attention of the
American people in his speech of
May 22d.*

A Bishop's Blasphemy

Bishop Thoburn, who has charge of the work of his church in India, recently gave testimony before the Philippine committee of the senate, and in the course of his remarks declared that God was responsible for the acquisition of the Philippine islands by the United States, and that our continued occupancy of the islands is necessary to carry out the plans of the Almighty.

The bishop is a brave man to assume, without better evidence than he has produced, that he is the authorized interpreter of the Divine will. He has taken upon himself a tremendous responsibility when he commends or defends the shedding of human blood in the name of the Creator. The press dispatches do not give the cross-examination, but the report of the hearings will contain no more interesting pages than those which record the questions put to him and his answers. He represents a type of which every generation presents a few odious examples—men who hide behind religion and attempt to throw upon God the blame for things which they want done but are not able to defend. The man who is guilty of profanity and takes the name of his God in vain is not guilty of blasphemy half so wicked as are those who place Him in the attitude of inspiring slaughter in order to give one nation a chance to make money out of the government of another nation. To repudiate the authority of men like Bishop Thoburn it is not necessary to deny the influence of Providence in the affairs of men and of nations; it is rather to condemn the sacrilege of those who, instead of seeking the divine attributes and searching for the divine law, make for themselves a god fashioned in their own image and clothe him with their own weaknesses and frailties.

Unless his testimony misrepresents him, Bishop Thoburn deserves a high place among those whose philosophy constructs society from the top and makes the masses the helpless wards of self-appointed and self-controlled trustees. If he is consistent in his ideas he cannot condemn Ahab for taking the vineyard of Naboth; but must condemn Naboth for not gladly surrendering the vineyard to his king. If he were to preach from that text he would probably expatiate upon Ahab's superior knowledge of agriculture and of the benevolence of his assimilation of all the vineyards in sight. If the bishop were discussing Dives and Lazarus he would doubtless congratulate the latter upon being near enough to Dives to secure crumbs from the table. Bishop Thoburn would find congenial companionship among those, all too numerous, who praise the possession of wealth without inquiring into the methods employed in its acquisition and attribute all poverty and misfortune to the lack of wisdom and energy. It is a complacent theory and soothes the conscience of those who take much from society and give little to society in return.

The bishop not only apologizes for, but even commends English rule in India and Hong Kong, declaring that the law is better enforced there than in self-governing Chicago. He has lived under the protection of the English flag long enough to become completely weaned from American institutions, and his testimony ought to be accepted as