

Washington News

Attorney General Wickersham has presented to the United States supreme court a case of the government against the tobacco trust. The case against the trust is described by the Associated Press in this way: "The cases were tried in the United States circuit court for the southern district of New York, which, after dismissing the petition as to foreign tobacco companies and some of the subordinate American companies, adjudged the others to be parties to an unlawful conspiracy and enjoined them from continuing their operation and from engaging in interstate commerce. The attorney general takes the position that these findings, sweeping as they seem to have been, were not broad enough, and he asked the supreme court to

extend them to so widen their scope as to take in the foreign companies and some individuals who were relieved from the operation of the verdict. Many other extensions of the judgment are also requested. After showing that in 1890 competition was free, the various coalitions are traced in the document and facts are given to show that the combination has grown until its combined assets amount to \$400,000,000. It is asserted that the combination manufactures all of the cigars for export and almost three-fourths of the smoking tobacco and cigarettes for domestic sale, more than three-fourths of the plug, twist and fine-cut tobacco and almost all of the snuff and little cigars that are made. It is declared that 'the defendants

have persistently exercised duress, have practiced wicked and unfair methods and have used their great power in oppressive ways.' Further, it is asserted that they have been actuated by a fixed purpose to destroy competition and obtain monopolies, and that 'competitors have gradually disappeared and the combination, strongly entrenched, unduly restricts the business of those in the trade and prevents others from entering.' It is also asserted that 'bushwacking', methods were resorted to in the use of union labels, and the method in this proceeding is denounced as 'iniquitous,' and one such as is 'inhibited by a civilized conscience.' Indeed, it is declared that 'the record contains much evidence and a vast deal of correspondence concerning the operations of the bushwacking companies which disclose amazing depravity, and show with clearness how the sinister agencies were effectively utilized.' The advertising methods of the trust are referred to as a means of influencing both business and public sentiment and it is stated that not less than \$10,000,000 were expended in this way in the single year of 1906. The attorney general interprets the complaint as not merely directed to the acquisition and ownership of stocks or other property, but as against the company's operations in commerce. 'Competition has been persistently destroyed; scores of contracts have retired skilled men from the trade; many have been forced out and the necessary result of the plan long followed has given defendants power to exclude others, and exercise monopoly.' He seems inclined to the view that a receiver should be appointed for the business of the parties to the combination, and adds: 'The very existence of certain defendants is criminal and certainly they can not rightfully complain because restrained from carrying out the unlawful purposes of their creation; they are wilfully in positions where every act is a transgression.'

The treasury department has ruled that its officers may accept a bond if executed by a surety company at its home office or at an office outside the boundaries of the state where it has no license, for a principal residing in such state or for the performance of a contract therein. This follows an opinion of the attorney general to whom the question was referred. The assistant secretary holds also that such bonds running to the United States are valid and enforceable against the company whether or not it maintains an agency in the state in which the principal resides, also that the execution of a bond in this manner would not be doing business within the state within the meaning of the law. Under existing treasury regulations a bond can not be accepted by any of its officers if executed by a surety company or its agent in a state where the company has not obtained a state license.

On December 30 a committee of four persons completed the counting of the coins and securities in the United States treasury. They had forty counting experts to assist them and the work took about two months. An Associated Press report says: "Upon the retirement of Charles H. Treat as treasurer it became necessary for a counting of the contents of the vaults to be made for the incoming treasurer, Lee McClung, to give a receipt. Next Monday Mr. McClung will give Mr. Treat a receipt for \$1,259,001,756.37 2-3, the exact contents of the treasury. Not a cent was found to be missing from Uncle Sam's pocketbook. It was the quickest count ever made in the (Continued on Page 12)

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