

SOME THOUGHTS ON "THE RULE OF REASON"

The New York World is satisfied with the supreme court's trust decision. The World is an anti-monopolist but it "does not work much at its trade." Replying to Justice Harlan's point that the court, by writing into the law the words, "undue or unreasonable" sought to make law, the World says that in this particular the court "is in line with judicial procedure from the first."

When did any court interpret a statute against murder, embezzlement or any other crime on the theory that the legislature meant undue murder or unreasonable embezzlement?

The World says that the recent decision contains nothing that has not always been asserted by the courts that were enforcing the common law against monopolies. Then why have intelligent people been so strangely stirred by this decision.

The World says, "a rule of reason which forces the Standard Oil company, the most skillfully organized of all the trusts, to its knees, is not to be trifled with." But the Standard Oil company has not been forced to its knees. It will simply change its manner of organization and will continue its work of plunder. Indeed in this very decision it was made clear that with the Standard Oil reorganized as the old Northern Pacific merger was reorganized there would be no interference with it.

The World says that the trust magnates and their lawyers cannot find much comfort in this decision and that there is nothing therein to encourage them or prolong their vicious activities. Let the World's news columns answer its editorial utterances: In the same issue of the World in which this editorial appears (Wednesday, May 17th) there are several interviews with trust representatives. Andrew Carnegie who made every dollar he had out of the special privilege given him under republican administration calls the decision "common sense." President Brown of the New York Central shows that he does not agree with the World's notion that the decision is in line with other decisions relating to trusts and that it does not seek to change the law as it was enacted by congress. President Brown says that this decision transforms the Sherman anti-trust law from an impossible and destructive to a practicable and constructive measure. The representatives of the boot and shoe trust rejoice that in this decision the highest court of the land has "shaken off the shackles of the past" and adds that they would be happy if congress would only immediately adjourn. John Kirby, president of the National Association of Manufacturers rejoices over this decision and expresses the hope that the tobacco trust case will be handled in a similar way. The president of one Commercial Club rejoices that the court has recognized the difference between good and bad trusts and everywhere in the circle where the trust magnates most do congregate it is plain that from the Rockefellers of Standard Oil fame to every little stock exchange official in the country there is great rejoicing over a supreme court decision that gives broader license to great special interests that have already preyed upon the people to the limits of endurance.

GOVERNOR DIX ON INCOME TAX

Governor Dix offers a conspicuous proof of his willingness to take the initiative in legislation in any matter where the influence of the executive may properly be exercised by the vigorous letter to Speaker Frisbie in which the governor urges the duty of immediate passage of the income tax amendment. This letter is one of the most forceful and cogent of all the governor's utterances on public affairs. It is based on the indisputable propositions that the pledges of the party should be fulfilled, that the income tax amendment is one of the chief pledges embodied in the Rochester platform, and that there is no excuse for delay in its ratification. Says the governor:

"It is difficult to believe that any citizen can seriously urge that the income-tax pledge of the Rochester platform is not binding upon the democratic party, for the reason that the language of the pledge was 'an' amendment, not 'the' amendment. I need not say to you that when this platform plank was applauded and adopted by the convention, every delegate within the convention, and every citizen outside the convention, understood it to be a declaration for the income tax in accordance with the amendment then pending.

"To assert otherwise would be to charge that the democratic party resorted to trickery and

to a juggle of words in order to obtain votes. This I do not, and will not admit. A square repudiation of the principle of the income tax would be honorable. But to seek to defeat the ratification of the pending amendment on the claim that the Rochester platform in its income-tax pledge used the word 'an' and not 'the,' is to assert that the democratic party is willing to commit an act that would savor of perfidy and dishonor. For myself and the party, I repudiate the suggestion."

These are strong words. They have the ring of courage and sincere conviction, and there is no mistaking the force of their appeal, which will find a hearty response in the electorate of the state, and should be equally impressive when considered by the legislature. To ratify the income tax amendment is a duty second to no other which the democratic party in this state has proposed for itself. The governor's timely advice should be followed by immediate action on the part of the assembly. The senate has already done its duty in this matter.—Buffalo (New York) Times.

NOW THE NEW YORK WORLD

The New York World is another paper that appears to be greatly disturbed because Mr. Bryan offered to send The Commoner for two years to every new subscriber for the sum of \$1.00. Following is an editorial that appeared in a recent number of the World:

THE GREAT REVIVAL OF PATRIOTISM

"Shall the democratic party be Aldrichized?"
 "Shall the democratic national convention in 1912 be controlled by an Aldrich democracy, or shall it represent real democratic sentiment?"
 "Do you believe the democratic party should be kept free from entanglements with special interests?"

"Very well then, listen to William Jennings Bryan, who explains how it can be done—explains it in black-faced type that scatters over most of the first page of The Commoner, explains it in terms so simple that a little child can understand.

"Now this is the way to save the democratic party and prevent the perpetration of whatever outrages are about to be perpetrated:

"Mr. Bryan will do his part in the effort to protect the democratic party from Aldrichism. On the stump and through The Commoner he will insist that the progress made by the party during the past sixteen years shall not be thrown away; that the special interests shall not control the convention; that its platform shall be honest and unequivocal and its candidates devoted to genuine democratic doctrine.

"In order to place his views before a larger number of people, Mr. Bryan has given instructions that his paper, The Commoner, be sent to every new subscriber for a period of two years for the sum of \$1—the regular price for one year.

"You are invited to join Mr. Bryan in this great fight."

"What could be more simple or more certain?"—New York World.

The Commoner will be glad to have every corporation newspaper in the United States, as well as every other newspaper, announce to its readers that THE COMMONER WILL BE SENT TO EVERY NEW SUBSCRIBER FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS FOR THE SUM OF \$1.00. Mr. Bryan would be specially pleased to be able to present his views regularly through The Commoner to the people who have depended for light upon the tallow dips provided by corporation controlled publications.

POLITICS AND "BIG BUSINESS"

A reader of The Commoner sends the editorial page of the Chicago Daily News for April 27, 1911, with an editorial entitled, "Politics and Big Business," marked. On the margin this Commoner reader, referring to the News editorial says: "Sounds like W. J. B."

The News editorial follows:

A large part of the testimony presented before the Helm committee in the Lorimer investigation throws light on the close and corrupt relationship existing between some big politicians and some big business interests.

The trouble and expense to which representatives of various corporations go to secure the election of plastic representatives to the federal congress, men who will faithfully represent corporate wealth and misrepresent the people, has been mirrored with startling clearness nearly every day in the committee hearings.

Witness Cook, a Duluth lumberman, declares that Hines, the fleet-footed Mercury of the lumber interests, made a bitter complaint in his hearing to the effect that after Hines had elected

Senator Stephenson of Wisconsin the latter had to be "lined up" in Washington. Hines had discovered the Wisconsin senator, whom he regarded as "his man," implausibly working for free lumber. According to Cook, Hines disclosed that extra precautions were being taken to get a reliable senator from Illinois. Boutell had been settled upon by the interests, in anxious conference with Aldrich. Then Hines found that Boutell also had been working for free lumber. That led to the dumping of Boutell and the selection by Aldrich and Hines of Lorimer, who "agreed to stand pat" and would "listen to reason."

This is but one little glimpse into the evidence that has been heard by the Helm committee. Subterranean forces at work in Springfield now are seeking to have that committee dissolved or at least restrained. The Burrows whitewashing committee was the kind of inquisitorial body that "big business" likes if any questions are to be asked at all about its political enterprises. Burrows and his committee associates, with the exception of the inquisitive Senator Frazier, wielded the whitewash brush with masterful strokes from one end of the committee's career to the other. "Big business" had caused the committee to be packed with men who would "listen to reason."

"Big business" has succeeded so well in its demoralizing efforts to control the people's law-making body because it has worked behind the scenes, in the dark of the moon and with the lights turned low. "Big business" protects its own. Therefore its criminal agents, when exposed, are defiant. Their high-priced lawyers speak for them in public, and in secret places "slush funds" perform notable service.

The people are being enlightened to good purpose by the faithful Helm committee. What wonder, then, that "big business" is frantically endeavoring to choke that committee to death? But "big business" at last is at the bar of public opinion. It should be required to suffer full exposure and then to answer for its misdeeds.

GOOD, BUT NOT ENOUGH

The press dispatches report that the progressive republicans at Washington held a conference immediately after the Standard Oil decision and decided to support an amendment to the anti-trust law declaring that no restraint of trade shall be held to be reasonable. That amendment is all right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The democrats ought to support it, but they should invite the progressive republicans to join in securing legislation which will be effective. The anti-trust law has been on the statute books for twenty years, and has done but little good. Now that it is invoked the Standard Oil company can get around the decision by reorganizing. It is time to take up the matter in earnest and the democratic platform of 1908 presents the only real and effective remedy yet proposed.

PEACE IN MEXICO

According to the agreement between representatives of the Mexican government and representatives of the revolutionists the war in Mexico is at an end. The peace agreement was signed May 21st at Juarez, Mexico. According to the terms of this agreement President Diaz and Vice President Corral will resign before June 1st. Senor Barra, at present minister of foreign relations, will become the acting president and will call the general elections according to the terms of the Mexican constitution. The government will study the conditions of public opinion and will try to meet the demands of that opinion in the way of reforms. Hostilities are to cease immediately.

INFORMATION WANTED

K. Whitlaw, Ealing postoffice, London, Ont., asks for information concerning a sister's children. This sister, who died in 1896, married William Edwards and there were three children. Victor, now about twenty-three; Cora, now about twenty, and a third, now about fourteen. These children once lived in Longmont county, Colorado. Any one having any information on this point please send it to K. Whitlaw as above.

LABOR WINS A VICTORY

The decision of the supreme court releasing Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison from the jail sentence imposed by the district court judge, will be welcomed as a just judgment and the labor leaders are to be congratulated upon making a test case of it.