

DEMOCRACY CAN NOT SHIRK

The New York World reports that a majority of the democrats in the house at Washington are satisfied with the decision in the Standard Oil case. Either the World is mistaken or the democratic voters have made a serious mistake in the character of the men whom they have elected to congress. The World is probably mistaken in its poll. It does not want the trusts disturbed and "the wish is father to the thought" when it thinks that a democratic congress is satisfied with the decision. If there is not enough democracy in congress to enact legislation which will correct the supreme court decision and protect the public, congress might as well adjourn now and confess judgment against the party. It has taken twenty years to convict the Standard Oil company—which has only to reorganize to renew its criminal career—how long will it take to run the other trusts down now that the court has held it necessary to prove that the trust-magnates had criminal intent to UNREASONABLY restrain trade, when there is no legal definition of unreasonable restraint? If the democratic party is not able to protect the public from the trusts and from such decisions as that recently rendered what good excuse can it give for existence?

HUGHES, THE IMPOSSIBLE

It is reported that the progressive republicans look favorably upon Justice Hughes as a candidate against Mr. Taft for the republican nomination for president. That is an impossibility. Justice Hughes is not a progressive. His record shows he can be relied upon to take the side of predatory wealth whenever it needs him. Did he not veto the two-cent passenger rate bill? Did he not appoint a committee to white-wash the gambling transactions of Wall street? Did he not prevent the ratification of the income tax amendment by the last New York legislature? And did he not join in the Standard Oil decision that practically nullifies the anti-trust law by writing the word "unreasonable" into the law.

The New York World reporter must have been mistaken in what he heard. The progressives might run Taft as a progressive to defeat a worse standpatter (like Justice Hughes) but they would not think of running Justice Hughes as a progressive. If the progressives were to take up a man like Mr. Hughes they would forfeit whatever confidence they have aroused among the masses.

MARTIN LEADERSHIP

Senator Martin's leadership is assuming form and outline. He led all of the republicans except the thirteen insurgents and all the democrats, except those who voted against his resolution to put the Lorimer investigating into the hands of the committee that white washed him before. To be sure, there is "an understanding" that the investigation will be in the hands of a sub-committee which will stand four republicans and four democrats, four for Lorimer, and four against him, but why should the matter be left in doubt? And why should a committee which has disgraced itself and the senate, as the committee on privileges and elections has, be shown any consideration. And if any consideration was to be shown why was it not left to the Lorimer republicans to take the lead? This is Martin leadership.

"THE LIGHT OF REASON" AGAIN

Referring to Senator Pomerene's resolution providing for criminal prosecution of the Standard Oil magnates, the Chicago Record-Herald says: "To propose criminal prosecution in addition to dissolution and suits for damages provided for by the Sherman act is, really, to step out of the sphere illuminated by the 'light of reason.' Mr. Wickersham will probably make this plain and once more disclaim any intention of running amuck among the combinations and corporations."

"Little by little, but steadily as man's march to the grave," the Sherman anti-trust law is falling to pieces. In "the light of reason" of which we hear so much these days the trust magnate must not be seriously interfered with in his efforts to corner the necessities of life.

SHOWS ITS COLORS

If any reader of The Commoner has doubted the correctness of its estimate of the New York World, let him read the World's editorials in support of the supreme court decision in favor of the trusts.

APPRECIATED IN SOUTH DAKOTA.

Emil J. Woerth, Kimball, S. D.—I assure you that I most cheerfully enlist in this cause of humanity. The democracy of the nation has for the past twenty years struggled for those principles near and dear to the great army of burden bearing toilers; for principles calculated to bring about an equitable distribution of the burdens and benefits of our government. In this battle, led by that great champion of human rights, William Jennings Bryan, many brave and patriotic warriors have fought and fallen against the combined attack of favor-seeking and favor-obtaining agencies in command of accumulated wealth. In this conflict many "so-called" democrats have left their standard and took up arms against their comrades. But the faithful little band of Jeffersonians fought on, standing and falling upon the firing line in every contest in which democratic principles were involved, each and every one of them resolving that there is more glory in defeat fighting for the right, than there is in victory fighting for the wrong. Those principles for which they fought belong to all the people all of the time, and they are just as sacred today as they were when first pronounced inviolate by a written constitution. Now a marked change in our surroundings is observed. Corruption is found in high places, and we witness the amazing spectacle of opponent political generals, whose popularity was attained through sentiment created by a subsidized press, slowly sinking into oblivion. We see too around and about us many intelligent and well meaning men, who unthinkingly contributed their mite to the construction of the citadel which harbors those who pervert justice and turn the instrumentalities of our government to private ends, now, through a quickened conscience, rue the part they played. Once more the line is drawn; once more the battle is on; once more the democratic party is coming into its own. The quantitative theory of money has been proven correct. The guaranty of bank deposits has been held constitutional. The income tax is declared sane. The election of United States senators by popular vote is said to be probable, and those of us who have been ridiculed for espousing these reforms have been given a new lease of life on intelligence. "But lo, and behold" in this hour of vindication come those who have dwelled in prejudice and error and ask us to stand aside that they may reap the reward of our victory; those who deserted us when we were imperiled and turned their guns upon us as we were being attacked from every side; those who, under the guise of friendship, fought us within, while the enemy fought us without. I warn ye, let it not be one of these to lead our forces in 1912; but rather let it be one who at all times during the dark days of defeat stood steadfast, loyal and true. And whoever may be the choice let his fitness be measured beforehand by his present and past devotion to democratic principles, rather than plutocratic prestige—"lest we may gain a port, but lose a province."

A FABLE

Once upon a time a very respectable looking man who went by the name of Mr. Chief Justice persuaded an unsuspecting citizen who bore the rather plebeian name, The Common People to buy a handsome looking horse, giving a guarantee that the horse had no defects. The purchaser had not gone far when the horse balked and the purchaser then discovered that he was blind in both eyes and had several other ailments. He hunted up the respectable looking man and reported his discovery, whereupon Mr. Chief Justice informed him that the subject should be considered in the Light of Reason and assured him that the word Reason, when applied to horse trading, converted the phrase "no defects," into "not unreasonably defective," and gave him six months' time in which to dispose

of the horse. Mr. Common People could, of course, do nothing more but he begged Mr. Chief Justice to loan him his robe so that he might properly impress anyone who was looking for a faultless horse.

[With apologies to Aesop.]

EXPURGATING THE BIBLE

One by one the beautiful passages of the Bible are going out of use in plutocratic society. It has become necessary to drop them out of deference to the feelings of some of the more sensitive members of high financial circles. Solomon said: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold," but this is offensive to the worshippers of men like Rockefeller. "No man can serve two masters," is a good philosophy as well as good religion, but it is objected to by the friends of some of the senators. And now, since Chief Justice White has succeeded in committing eight members of the court to the position he took fifteen years ago in favor of judicial legislation for the protection of the trusts it may be necessary to eliminate the 26th verse of the XI chapter of Luke. "Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

THE WALL STREET TEST

Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan has endorsed the supreme court decision in the Standard Oil case; he declares it satisfactory according to the Wall street test. "The recent tone of the American stock market shows that it is correct." That settles it. If it improves the stock market who can question the decision? This is the logic of the money kings. Mr. Morgan not only declares that the decision is "entirely satisfactory" but adds that he "expected it." "Expected it" did he? While the rest of us poor mortals were wondering what the decision would be he "expected it" to be just what it was. He knew the court, possibly, better than most people. He may have known who recommended the appointment of the judges. How long will the people regard with complacency such decisions as that rendered in the Standard Oil case? And how long will they continue to misunderstand such comments as that made by Mr. Morgan?

ROOSEVELT ON TRUSTS

Mr. Roosevelt is still unable to distinguish between a large corporation and a monopoly. He is still harping on "progress in industrialism" and insisting upon "regulation." The democratic platform strikes at monopoly, not at production on a large scale. It insists upon legislation which will make it impossible for a monopoly to exist. Mr. Roosevelt does not seem to take any interest in the decision of the supreme court which amends the law—although he has felt free to criticize when the decision did not suit him. He is not even in favor of restoring the vitality of which the decision has robbed the law. He seems to be content to continue to attempt the impossible task of regulating a private monopoly. One might as well insist upon allowing ferocious beasts to run upon the streets and trust to policemen to protect the public from them.

AS INDIANA SEES IT

If it required any further proof that W. J. Bryan is a statesman and not a politician it is abundantly furnished in his attitude on the wool schedule. While others are attempting to stop the gaps in their political fences by showing an inclination to compromise the question, Bryan takes a stand with the toiling many who have a right to buy woolen clothes for themselves without paying tribute to any interest or an undue share of revenue into a treasury which is being raided continually by the most profligate and extravagant expenditures ever witnessed in any government. Free wool is good democratic doctrine and any leader of the party worthy of the name must favor it.—South Bend (Indiana) New Era.

AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

The unholy alliance which Senator Martin is trying to make to aid the Lorimer republicans justifies the opposition made to him by progressive democrats when he was selected leader. His leadership consists in leading those who follow him into the standpat republican net. His effort to justify putting the new Lorimer investigation into the hands of a nine to six Lorimer committee as his resolution provided was absurd. The sooner his leadership is repudiated the better for the democratic party.