

## WICKERSHAM AND THE TRUSTS

Does the Administration Wish to Destroy Them or Merely Make Them Subservient to the Party in Power?—The Attorney-General's Record in the Case

The World is on the right track in exposing the dilatory prosecution of the beef trust. This is but part of a larger policy which is being applied to all the trusts. Ostensibly it is a policy to reform the trusts rather than to destroy them. The attorney general himself is an advance agent of federal incorporation and regulation, the path of which is being prepared by his present policy.

The so-called enforcement of the Sherman law is a pretense and a means to other ends, to ends desired by the more prominent trusts and by the administration, whose duty before the law and under the decisions is to destroy them. A change of form and not of substance is being offered by the trusts and apparently accepted by the administration. What is actually taking place under the law is the submission of the trusts to the supervision and regulation of the federal executive, the subservience of the organized business of the country to the interests of the party and faction in power, to a government of men and not of law. This condition once created is to be made permanent by federal incorporation and regulation under specific authority of law, if obtainable.

This policy involves a betrayal of the public will. Back of it perhaps lies an honest if selfish opinion that the public good requires great combinations and a strong government. Though it be cried from the house-tops in the name of popular rights, it is the plea of the special interests for their salvation and permanency, a plea to change the basic facts of American society and government. Having corrupted the smaller agencies of American government, obtained from the states effectual charters of monopoly under which they have combined and grown strong, they feel able to corrupt and control the national government, and to that end desire the centralization of

power where it can be most effectively exercised for their protection.

Mr. Wickersham is on record as conceding the fact that the monopoly of today is the creation of the state corporation laws; that monopoly is always the creature of government, of special privilege and protection. He is now on record, in effect, as favoring that protection by the federal government under a regulation extending, as he says, possibly to prices and, as it must follow, to wages. And all the time he knows, though he has repeatedly ignored it, that monopoly can be destroyed by a federal law compelling a reform of the state corporation laws. He knows that such a law has been proposed and introduced in the senate. And he knows that it is constitutional and efficient, that it has respectable backing. It has been repeatedly called to his attention, yet he privately evades it and publicly ignores it, while he preaches the inevitable necessity of the trusts and of their regulation by a federal bureau.

I refer of course to the Williams bill, introduced by John Sharp Williams at the last session, which provides that no corporation shall be permitted to engage in interstate commerce unless in its charter and governing laws it conforms to prescribed conditions of capitalization, organization and management. The conditions named make the creation of a monopoly practically impossible, its detection easy and its punishment severe. It strikes at the source as recognized by Mr. Wickersham and removes the cause of all the pretended difficulty in eradicating monopoly. A word from Mr. Wickersham as to this law will be timely, but it will never be extracted except by a crowbar or, as his office has stated, unless requested by congress.—Robert R. Reed, in New York World.

### HARMON IS TOO OLD

The average age of presidents at inauguration has been only 53, and of the three elected who were more than 64, two died within one year. Governor Wilson will be 56 in 1913 and Governor Harmon 67, so that at the beginning of the next presidential term Harmon will be three years older than Wilson would be after serving eight years as president. President Taft is now only 55 years of age. Certainly Harmon's age is a great objection to his nomination for the presidency.—Cleburne Daily Enterprise.

It is certainly an exposition of good judgment for voters, in making a selection for presidential timber, to seriously consider age along with ability. Young and active men of today have more power and executive ability than those of more mature years. In the foregoing case Wilson has Harmon "beasted" by eleven years, practically a political lifetime.—Cleburne (Tex.) Chronicle.

### HEALTH CONSERVATION

Dayton, O., Sept. 19, 1911.—What promises to be a noteworthy development in the health conservation movement in this country is the decision of the public health department of the General Federation of Women's clubs to ask that all federated clubs units in a common month-by-month campaign of study and work, and to invite all other public-spirited women's organiza-

special information may doubtless address the general chairman, Mrs. S. S. Crockett, at Nashville.

E. G. ROUTZAHN.

### MR. TAFT'S VETO POLICY

Mr. Taft's blunder is indefensible, almost incredible. We say this more in sorrow than in anger, for it is best for the country that both candidates for president in 1912 should be excellent men who represent sound and truly progressive principles. For political reasons of his own Mr. Taft has deliberately chosen to cast his fortunes with the non-progressive elements of his party, arraying himself in equal hostility to progressive democracy and its natural ally insurgent republicanism. Mr. Taft's own conduct gives added importance to this democratic rehabilitation in its relation to the public welfare.

Mr. Taft's veto policy makes tariff reform and tariff reduction the burning issue of the 1912 campaign. It makes a coalition between the democrats and the insurgent republicans not only logical but inevitable if the insurgents are to retain the flimsiest threads of political consistency and conscience.—New York World.

### FIRST-RATE RECORD

Judge—"You are charged with non-support of your wife. What have you to say for yourself?"

Rastus—"Well, judge, I don't get her three more washings a week than any other culled lady in the block."—Toledo Blade.

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