

free trader does not fight against nature and economic law. He recognizes that two sets of tram lines owned by two different companies cannot run down a single street. He sees that in such a case competition is practically impossible, and the best substitute is municipal control or municipal ownership. It is plain that the people of the locality ought to prescribe the conditions under which a local monopoly shall be exercised.—London Speaker of April 21.

SOME CHEMICAL TRUSTS.

Although we now manufacture and supply our own market with hundreds of articles which formerly were imported, and although we obtain no revenue from the duties on these articles, yet it is a mistake to conclude, as many have done, that duties on such articles are dead letters and are not effective. It is these non-revenue producing duties that are most effective in protecting trusts.

Thus the duties on drugs and chemicals, with few exceptions, produce little or no revenue, yet protect hundreds of trusts. Chemical manufacturers and chemical dealers take to trusts as ducks take to water. Combinations, associations, agreements and understandings are common throughout the entire trade. Manufacturers in similar lines sell by the same schedule of prices; jobbers practically do the same; retail dealers have uniform prices. Druggists in most cities, villages or counties have their associations which fix prices on most of the important articles dealt in. Free and open competition, if it ever existed, is a thing of the past in almost every branch of the chemical trade. Chemicals being mainly raw materials or medicine, protective duties upon them are almost certain to become "instruments of extortion."

Some of the "heavy" chemicals which are controlled by substantial trusts are borax, linseed oil and white lead. Some others controlled by agreements, selling agencies, etc., are paris green, ultramarine blue, bromine, etc. Nearly everything in the acid line is under control. Thus acetic acid (wood alcohol) is controlled by a monopoly, Manhattan Spirits company, which sells in this country at nearly double cost price—present price is 90 cents per gallon for what is estimated to cost less than 50 cents—and exports its surplus sometimes at prices but little above cost.

In "fine" chemicals there are numerous trusts composed of cliques of manufacturers, which, by means of some

form of agreement or understanding, control production and prices of scores of articles. Thus, four of our largest manufacturers of chemicals, two in Philadelphia, one in St. Louis and one in New York, each manufactures about 350 articles. Each firm has its own catalogue, but they might as well sell from one catalogue, for their prices are uniform.

Some of the articles manufactured by these firms are iodoform, citric acid, bismuth salts, mercurials—such as calomel, corrosive sublimate, etc.—chloroform, resublimated iodine and iodide of potassium, bichloride of potash, bichromate of soda, santonine, strychnine, rochelle salts, etc.

The duties on all of the above and on hundreds of similar articles are prohibitive and serve no purpose except to protect the trusts formed to take advantage of these duties. As usual, the members of these protected trusts are very wealthy and much of their great wealth has been filched out of the pockets of the people by means of these worse than useless tariff duties. According to the New York Tribune Almanac (See American Millionaires), William Weightman, of Powers & Weightman, one of the four firms mentioned above, is "considered by many the richest man in Philadelphia."

Many chemicals are exported, and often at prices considerably below our home prices. But for our inordinate duty and internal revenue tax of 700 or 800 per cent. on alcohol—the most necessary and costly supply in chemicals—our chemical industry would probably lead the world.—Byron W. Holt.

AN ACADEMIC QUESTION.

"The question as to whether we shall keep the Philippine Islands is now purely an academic one."—Rt. Rev. Henry C. Potter.

What is an academic question? One on which the professors and students of an academy or college may exercise their speculative faculties, but which has no other interest for mankind. One which is purely speculative, having no bearing upon practical duties, opportunities or affairs. How many angels can dance on the point of a cambric needle? Was St. Paul's thorn in the flesh sore eyes or epilepsy? Is there a general goose in addition to all individual geese? Such questions were earnestly and even violently discussed by the schoolmen of the middle ages, but are now regarded as purely academic.

Does the Philippine question belong to any such list? Not unless the

perpetration of any and every great wrong must be accepted by the people in servile submission, and the perpetrators thereof be permitted to proceed to the perpetration of other and still greater wrongs.

The other night a thief stole his neighbor's watch. Being apprehended the next day, he said: "It is true that in general I do not believe in stealing; but this watch is now mine, and the matter is practically settled. The question as to whether I shall keep the watch or not is now purely an academic one."

Some months ago a band of robbers kidnaped a man's child. The child is still alive, and its whereabouts known. Is its restoration a purely academic question, simply because the kidnaping is an accomplished fact?

The Missouri compromise was adopted in order to "settle" the slavery question. Was the discussion of slavery after the adoption of the compromise a purely academic one?

The Philippine war is costing a hundred American lives a month. It is also costing the American people in taxes at least \$100,000,000 a year. Is this purely an academic question?

If we keep the Philippine islands either as colonies or as territories, it means that we must have an immense navy and standing army. Is this an academic question?

"Practically the matter is settled," we are told. Yet the people of the United States have never yet passed upon the question at the polls, and will not have an opportunity to do so until next November. Is this an academic question?

Almost 1900 years have passed since Jesus Christ proclaimed "a Constitution for the Kingdom of God," as Hase calls the sermon on the mount. That Constitution has been set aside or violated by human folly and wickedness for nearly 19 centuries. Is the matter of its application an academic question?

For our part, we are still old-fashioned enough to believe in the constitution of the United States, the declaration of independence and the sermon on the mount. We do not believe that the golden rule is played out. We think that divine injunction contains more wisdom, both for men and for nations, than all the so-called practical policies of shrewd selfishness or grasping greed. We are not yet ready to set aside the golden rule and adopt in its stead David Harum's revised version: "Do others as they would do you, and do it fust." We