

sult of the investigation into the Baker case is typical, says the Post, of every similar investigation instituted by the department. We should suppose so. A private soldier, in the Philippines and out of reach of constitutional protection, who has written home "disloyal" facts in private letters, would be an extraordinarily brave man, if, when approached by his colonel in the process of a "rigorous investigation," he didn't welcome an opportunity to explain that his letters were jokes. It would be altogether too evident to him that if he neglected that opportunity the outcome of the matter would be no joke. This "rigorous investigation" has all the earmarks of rigorous intimidation. It is evidently in aid of the rigorous press censorship McKinley maintains at Manila.

A test law suit of universal interest has just been decided, upon the facts, by a Chicago jury. It bears upon the so-called labor riots of 1894, and is one more link in the chain of proof that exonerates Gov. Altgeld from the malicious charges of promoting riot, which have been distributed broadcast by the plutocratic interests that he, as governor, refused to serve and whose predatory schemes he frustrated. The city had been sued by Armour & Co. for damages caused by the loss of refrigerator cars burned by mobs during the "railroad riots" of 1894, and the case turned upon the question of riot or no riot. Witnesses were produced in behalf of the city, who testified that the cars had been destroyed not by a mob, but by individuals acting independently, some of whom, at least, were employes of Armour. Armour was unable to overcome this testimony, and the jury decided against him. It held in effect that there was no labor riot. And that is the truth. What the plutocratic press of Chicago called a riot, and worked up so sensationally to justify President Cleveland's invasion of a state with federal troops for local police pur-

poses, had no other basis than a conspiracy of railroad magnates. They caused some of their own old rolling stock to be destroyed, by their own employes, for the purpose of making out the appearance of a case of riot against the strikers. This is the third jury trial tending to expose that conspiracy.

With all but partisan cavillers, who would manufacture an excuse for voting against Bryan if they could find one, his reply to the silver payment and North Carolina negro questions is conclusive. The questions were propounded to him by the republican club of Princeton university, in these terms:

"1. Will you if elected president redeem the coin obligations of the government in gold or silver.

"2. Do you approve of the disfranchisement of the negroes of North Carolina by the democrats of that state."

Mr. Bryan's reply is as follows:

1. I can only repeat what I answered in reply to a similar question at Wilmington, Del.—namely, that I shall enforce the law as I find it, but I shall not attempt to construe the law until I reach it. The republican party has the executive, house and senate, and there is one more session of congress before another president is inaugurated. I have no way of knowing whether this law or some other law will be in existence after the 4th of March. My views on the money question can be ascertained from the Kansas City platform and from my letter of acceptance.

2. In regard to your second question, I beg to say that the North Carolina amendment is not an issue in the present campaign, and your own sense of fairness will convince you that you should hold the president responsible for what he has done in Puerto Rico, but not hold me responsible for what has been done in North Carolina. The administration has prescribed an educational qualification in Puerto Rico which excludes 83 per cent. of the black men of voting age, and has also denied them the protection of the constitution. The republican policy in the Philippines drew a social line between our people and the people of the orient. The race question in this country will be sufficiently difficult without adding a race question greater than our own which will have to be dealt with 7,000 miles from home. I might suggest this question to you: How can you object to anything down in the south if the republican party is going to do worse

in the Philippines than is done in the south?

Doubtless Daniel W. Lawler, of St. Paul, voices the sentiment of a good many other plutocrats who wear the democratic label, when he proposes to "bury Bryanism this time," so that "four years from now the old party"—by which he means the old democratic party—"will march to victory." If there be many such democrats they are an obtuse lot, not to know that the old democratic party won its last victory long ago. It died in the embrace of the slave oligarchy in 1860. And though the corpse was galvanized into muscular activity by Tilden, the old party itself has never been and never will be resuscitated. Cleveland's regime was not democratic, neither old nor new; it was simply a tender to plutocratic republicanism. The prediction is perfectly safe that the old democratic party will win no victory four years hence should Bryan be defeated now. Its deposed bosses may indeed come into power in the party organization; but if they do, the rank and file of the new democracy will leave them to their funereal feast. Out of Bryan's defeat, should that unfortunately and improbably be the result of the pending election, only one of two things can come: either Bryanism will retain control of the party, leaving its plutocrats in the republican party to which they have gone, or a new democratic organization will spring up, leaving the old one where the democratic masses of all parties in the fifties left the whig organization.

ON THE BRINK.

The presidential contest will have been decided before another number of The Public appears, and on the eve of that portentous event we invite every voter under whose eye these words may fall to consider the issues well—to consider them with the same conscientious sense of responsibility he would wish to bestow if he knew that his were to be the casting vote.

In behalf of Bryan, imperialism is put forward as the paramount issue.