The Week.

The Beef Trust has no friends. Next to the Standard Oil, it is probably the most cordially disliked monopoly, and the one safest to attack politically, in this country. The fact, however, that the packers are so justly held in disrepute should not be used as a warrant for doing them injustice, or, in order to punish them, for establishing a pernicious principle of government. The report of the President's investigators must be accepted as uncovering very bad conditions in some of the packing-houses. It does not, to be sure, include the more scandalous charges which have been bruited about. To those, Messrs. Neal and Reynolds did not choose to put their names; they were apparently willing to leave that field to imaginative writers. But what they do certify is repellent enough. The lack of sanitary appliances in the packing-houses, the disregard of the health and comfort of the employees, the careless and confused and dirty ways of handling food-products, with the inadequacy of the present methods of inspection, are shown with shocking concreteness and detail. The President truly describes the picture as revolting. But to jump from that to putting the United States in charge of the packing-houses is to cover a tremendous distance with an agile non-sequitur. The beef report makes out an excellent case for rigid inspection and control by the State of Illinois or the city of Chicago, but what has the national government to do with local exercises of the police power? Other States and municipalities are all the while attacking as grave abuses in factories and sweatshops. The list of laws for the State inspection of workshops and manufactureries is growing every year. Consumers' Leagues are pressing this fight for health of workers and soundness of product in a thousand localities. In cities all over the land the Health Departments are exerting themselves to remedy the very sort of hygienic and moral outrage detailed in the beef report. Why should the President propose to make an exception of Illinois and Chicago, telling them, in effect, that they need not clean up their own filthy premises since he means to step in and do it for them? We will say nothing now of the propriety of his acting on ex parte exposure by Government officials as if the packers had been tried by jury and convicted.

Another recent case, in which the Government won, on Thursday, involved the Milwaukee Refrigerator Transit Company and half-a-dozen railways. The Refrigerator Company held transportation contracts from the Pabst Brewing Company and other producers, whereby it controlled shipments to competitive points. It withheld shipments from railways which refused to turn over to it from an eighth to a tenth of the freight money, and gave the traffic only to the railways which yielded. In other words, the Refrigerator Company bludgeoned the railways into granting rebates. The transactions were still further complicated by the fact that a majority of the refrigerator stock was owned by stockholders in the Pabst Company; but the Pabst Company could not be held as party to the illegal contract between the Refrigerator Company and the railways.

The finding of the court against the defendant was obtained, of course, under a law which was a dead-letter until President Roosevelt began to push the enforcement as part of his campaign for a less competitive tariff bill. The new law, which is still in the conference committee of the two houses, will—if the promises of its sponsors be fulfilled—make it still easier to obtain convictions.

The Gaines campaign-publicity bill, reported by a House committee, instead of taking a middle ground between the more and less radical measures proposed, goes further than any of them. It is almost startlingly sweeping in its application to the election of all officials of whatever sort chosen at the same time as Presidential electors or Representatives, and also in its prohibition of political contributions not made by organized political committees. We know from the experience of various States that corrupt-practices acts designed to "bear lightly" on candidates and campaign managers have usually failed absolutely in their purpose. The Gaines bill, if constitutional, would gravitate two of the most obvious methods of evasion. It would not be possible, for example, for a corporation, instead of giving $60,000 outright to the National Committee, to send a thousand-dollar check to the candidates for Dairy and Food Commissioners in every State, thus escaping publicity because it was not using money in the national campaign. Furthermore, it would be illegal to employ private individual disbursing agents.

Standpatters is daily mounting to new heights of unreason, resembling mania. Like the defenders of slavery just before the war, protectionists are making a religion of their practice, and every man who dissents from it is an infidel and a heathen. In that spirit, Secretary Shaw on Saturday denounced Gov. Cumnins of Iowa for daring to say that a single Dainley schedule might be revised. The whole tariff has now become sacred. Any rash Uziah who dares to lay a hand upon it may expect to fall dead. But Mr. Shaw's proof of the inviolate nature of the tariff was bizarre. He appealed to the President as a sort of high priest of protection. Not once since his election in 1904, solemnly averred the Secretary, has Mr. Roosevelt dipped a syllable about tariff revision. The inference is that any Republican who does is no better than a traitor. In fact, Secretary Shaw plainly drew it in the case of Gov. Cumnins, whom he accused of being really a Democrat, and read out of the party. By the same token, Gov. Guild of Massachusetts will have to go, and along with him two-thirds of the Republicans in that State. But we do not know what Mr. Shaw would have said if some one in the Senate had challenged him about President-Roosevelt's tariff-revision speeches of 1902, and his suppressed tariff-reform message of 1904. To be consistent, he would have had to admit that the Republican President, like the Republican Governor of Iowa, was indulging in "repetition of the Republican policy of protection." With the very high-priest a heretic, Shaw's isolation in tariff orthodoxy is truly splendid.

Secretary Shaw's Philippine parole, delivered before the graduating class of the Kentucky Wesleyan College on May 30, was in his best vein.

"I have," said he, "a neighbor that has caused me trouble for years. I settle the disturbance, but when I come back I have a little baby in my arms. To keep and educate him seems the only thing to do. I take him by the arm and say, 'Spain! Spain! Spank! Spank!' The little fellow is well satisfied now. The other day when I recalled his nurse, Judge Taft, he looked up and cried,"

Our only complaint is that the Secretary does not carry on the parole. He does not tell, for instance, how the nurse's plea that the little boy be allowed to have a garden of his own and sell his radishes and green peas to the family (removal of the tariff), has been disregarded, nor how his adopted parent has planned to devote several of his weekly pennies to putting new gravel walks through the little boy's garden (subsidised railways), nor, finally, how the good of the family compels him, after a little while, to pay the hired man high rent for a wheelbarrow which the next-door neighbor would let him have for a song (coastwise shipping laws). If this is what Mr. Shaw means by "helping" our adopted baby, which, he says, our