

"A MATTER OF POLITICS"

Comments of the Press on the Rockefeller Donation—A Question of Principle

As a rule the republican papers of Nebraska printed without comment the news that Rockefeller has offered to donate two-thirds of a hundred thousand dollars toward erecting a "religious and social building" for the University of Nebraska, provided the citizens raise the other third. This is in line with republican discipline—the leaders have not spoken in decisive tones, and the little fellows are waiting for the cue.

The State Journal, however, the other day said in its "More or Less Personal" column:

The Omaha World-Herald, the Lincoln Independent and C. J. Bowlby's Crete Democrat are all out with frothing denunciations of Mr. Rockefeller's brazen attempt to buy the state with two-thirds of the price of a \$100,000 building for the university. Everybody understands that it is a matter of politics with these papers. The average citizen assumes that \$66,666.66 is a small "bribe" for the great state of Nebraska, and is not disposed to make any fuss about the acceptance of the money. Even rather squeamish people are satisfied to leave this whole matter with the chancellor. If there is a man in the country who can be trusted to manage an affair of this kind without being corrupted by the "money power," it is this same Dr. E. Benjamin Andrews.

It is indeed a "matter of politics" with these papers. Not a partisan matter to catch the Russian vote for Slobodiski, or to combine the church and whisky elements in electing a mayor, but simply a matter of principle.

The Independent has always had, and has now, the utmost confidence in the integrity and ability of Chancellor Andrews. It has no fears that he will ever become corrupted by the "money power." That is not the point.

Mr. Rockefeller's proposed two-thirds of a gift—or gift "with a string to it," as a Lincoln business man remarked the other day—is simply one of a series of steps to induce the people to accept as true the plutocrats' creed—

It is better for society on the whole that its surplus wealth fall into the hands of the few to be by them disposed of as they see fit. Given, then, a strong sense of trusteeship for the public on the part of the wealthy few—we have a better disposition of surplus riches in the present order of things than would be the case were surplus wealth more evenly distributed.

The Rockefeller building would teach that creed day in and day out. Insidiously it would inculcate in the minds of the people the doctrine that a man of the Rockefeller type—to quote W. J. Ghent—"is at once the loaf-giver to the needy, the regulator of temporal affairs, the lord protector of church and society." It would teach the people to accept as a matter of course these millionaire charities. The danger in this is well expressed by John A. Hobson, the distinguished English economist who lectured at the State University not long ago:

"Those engaged in private charities know the dangers of promiscuous giving. What about the public? Has it no character to lose? I challenge anyone to deny that these methods of getting money for public purposes awake in the receiver at any rate that sentiment of patronage which is the mortal enemy of independence in an individual or in a city."

Says Richard L. Metcalfe in the World-Herald—

"Contributions such as Rockefeller proposes to make to the Nebraska university are not offered with a really good motive. They do not even rise to the dignity of gifts to the conscience fund. They are made for the purpose of creating, in the minds of unthinking men, the notion that there is really something great and noble in men who on the one hand corrupt the public service, debauch political parties and exact at the hands of its official representatives undue and unfair privileges under the law, while on the other hand, in seemingly generous sums and yet in comparatively small amounts, they contribute to educational institutions."

W. F. Cramb in the Fairbury Journal says—

"We hope the regents will flatly refuse to accept the money. The

Nebraska University is a state institution, maintained by the state for the non-sectarian, public and open instruction of all those who desire to enter. As such it is the pride of the state, the same as our public schools. Whenever private individuals, with more money than means of spending it, contribute to the support of such an institution, this pride is greatly lessened, and the wholesome influence of the school depreciated. If John D. Rockefeller can give to state universities, he can give to the public schools, and the time may come when all our institutions of public instruction will become dependent, in whole or part, upon the charity of the rich. Rockefeller's money would pollute the pure stream of public instruction. Let the temptation be resisted and the stream kept pure from the fountain head, where innocent, prattling childhood licks its first syllables at its mother's knee, on down to the broad stream of higher education which flows into the ocean of human action."

Col. Bowlby of the Crete Democrat wonders if there is a man in the state who would contribute a dollar if Bartley should propose to give two hundred thousand of the money he stole from the state to be used in erecting a magnificent Y. M. C. A. building in Lincoln, provided others should make up another hundred thousand, and continues—

"The Standard Oil company may not have stolen its money, but to get and hold a monopoly of the oil product, it has done things much worse than Bartley is charged with; then, why should our great state university, which has been supplied by the people with all the money it needs, be greased with the Standard Oil slick? If Mr. Rockefeller wants to return some of the money he has taken from Nebraskans, let him reduce the price of his oil 3 to 5 cents a gallon, which would distribute it among those who contributed it. All the people of Nebraska ask of the Standard Oil company is to sell its oil to them at a reasonable profit. They don't want donations, nor alms."

Yes, it doubtless is a "matter of politics," but what about this "frothing denunciation" from the State Journal's other self—the Lincoln Evening News—

"It is gratifying to observe that some Nebraska newspapers are not in favor of receiving sixty-six thousand dollars from a man who has made them and the rest of his dollars by ruining the business of other men and thus forcing them to sell their holdings to him. The moral affect of Nebraska's receiving a few thousand dollars from a twentieth century Blackbeard for the erection of a semi-religious building would be unfortunate. It is sometimes said that churches and schools will take any kind of money and be thankful to the donor and silent thereafter in regard to his crimes. That churches and institutions are beginning to think more of their institutional self-respect than to accept blood money is one of the cheering signs of the times. A few years ago Rockefeller's offer to the state university would have been accepted without question. The reign of the money power is still supreme, but states and institutions are beginning to enjoy their dignity and to be very chary of connections which will lessen it. Mr. Rockefeller's merciless seizing of the oil fields, his destruction of the value of the holdings of other men, his cowardly scheming to bankrupt them while hiding behind others, the constant rise of the price of oil as soon as he had destroyed his competitors, should preclude his connection with an educational or religious institution. To organized society he bears the same relation as Blackbeard of colonial times."

The Hub of Chaos

Editor Independent: Please send me a block of five. For more than four months I have not been to the village and postoffice less than a mile away. Sickness in my family has confined me to home duties. Meanwhile I amuse myself by stirring up the animals. I goaded the authorities in Washington into action in our navy yards. These few days and nights' activity made Sternberg keep the cable hot the day after his arrival and soon relieved harrassed Venezuela.

"We stand pat."
"Price is value expressed in terms of money." Jupiter is God expressed in images of brass, marble, etc. Neither price nor Jupiter ever were

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or could be except in the imagination of their deluded votaries. Each born of the imagination can only live in the place of this birth. This flat dollar price unit is the hub around which our chaos revolves. Stick this fact in your pipe and smoke until you see it is a fact.

"Value is our estimation of things." For personal use I would not give a dozen eggs for a diamond, therefore the value of a diamond is less than the value of a dozen eggs. What arrogant nonsense! Educated mullet heads, educated with lies, are more dangerous, if not more contemptible, than ignorant mullet heads, for they confirm the ignorant in lies. Meanwhile your paper is the best of its kind so far as I know, and, like the doctor's prescription to the maid with a stinking breath, will help some; and I circulate it to the best of my opportunities. It seems absurd to write it, yet history tells us nothing save but purchase by blood. What little you and I do is simply duty done. The pay—privation, abuse, curses—may they slip from us as the water glides from the duck's back.

F. W. ANTHONY.

Mattawan, Mich.
(Mr. Anthony, with his bete noir, the "flat dollar price unit;" and Mr. Ellington, with his "human units" or "human foot pounds," keep the editor guessing to find out just what each of these gentlemen is driving at.

If Mr. Anthony purposes to use his belly as a "measure of value," of course a dozen eggs are more "valuable" than the Koh-i-noor. Why isn't "price value expressed in terms of money?" If it isn't that, what is it? Mr. Anthony must understand that articles of wealth vary greatly in many qualities. Under ordinary conditions, articles of food are plentiful, more or less perishable, and the satisfactions they give—the wants they satisfy—are fleeting, although regularly recurring. A starving man would give almost anything he might have, or do almost anything for something to satisfy his hunger. But having eaten his fill, would he place as high an estimation on a loaf of bread?

A diamond satisfies a human want—not, of course, so imperious as hunger—but, nevertheless, a want. It is not consumed in a fleeting moment of time, as is a loaf of bread, but may be retained for years, perpetually satisfying the natural desire for beautiful things. Doubtless this capacity for satisfying human desire for the beautiful would be lessened in some degree if diamonds were as plentiful as ordinary pebbles; yet no matter how plentiful, the diamond, the ruby, and other precious stones, as we now know them, would still be preferred by the gatherer of pebbles. It is needless to add that their value would be little if any more than ordinary pebbles.

It is not necessary to inquire why

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Meier & Meier, Attorneys, Lincoln, Neb. NOTICE

Lois O. Doyle will take notice that on the 4th of April, 1903, P. F. Greene, a justice of the peace of Lancaster County, Nebraska, issued an order of attachment for the sum of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars and costs in an action pending before him, wherein James R. Burleigh, is plaintiff, and Lois O. Doyle, defendant, that property of the defendant consisting of one table, three dressers, one iron bedstead and springs, one walnut bedstead and springs, one lounge, one rocking chair, one wash stand, one center table, one kitchen table, and the contents of dressers, has been attached under said order. Said cause was continued to the 26th day of May, 1903, at 9 o'clock a. m. at which time defendant is required to appear, or plaintiff will take judgment for \$25.00 and costs. Dated at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 14th day of April, 1903.

JAMES R. BURLEIGH, By Meier & Meier, his attorneys.

human beings have wants more or less imperious; it is sufficient to know that they have them, and that if they are to be satisfied, these human beings must (a) find the things, (b) make them, or (c) secure them from some other human being. If the latter, they may be taken by violence or peaceably. If peaceably, then exchange is the natural solution. If exchange, then each party to it tries to and must give something he wants less for something he wants more—which is quite possible, because tastes differ.

The phenomenon, "value," appears in exchange, actual or potential. Whether it is, as Capt. Ashby contends, the force of demand in action for the articles of wealth, appraised, estimated, or "valued" by those concerned in the exchange—is not material here. The fact is, that persons never exchange without making some mental estimate, and that estimate is based on the saving of future energy rather than on what has been expended.—Associate Editor.)

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