

that the acceptance of the gift would have upon the public.

We have a concrete case in the Rockefeller gift, and this will serve as a better illustration than any imaginary gift. Here is a gift from a man who is not only not penitent but, on the contrary, quite boastful of the benevolence of his business methods. He does not come with conscience money but poses as a public benefactor and as a representative of an industrial system. He is not dead but very much alive, and his gift, instead of being presented through the contribution box as if from "an unknown friend" is offered at the front of the stage before the footlights, and with his name boldly written on a card, and the card firmly attached to the bouquet. The acceptance of his gift by a prominent religious association so far from hastening repentance, would naturally strengthen him in his conviction that he is doing the Lord's service not only in his methods of distribution but in his methods of accumulation. Can a church organization, dedicated to Christianity and teaching the doctrine of brotherhood and brotherly love, afford to put itself in the position of encouraging a corporation so unbrotherly and so destitute of love, compassion and pity, as the Standard Oil trust has shown itself to be? If Mr. Rockefeller were simply a stockholder who had grown rich by the methods of the company, without personal responsibility for its management, the question might present a little different aspect, but even then we could not shut our eyes to the responsibility of a man who would voluntarily and continuously accept the benefits of wrong doing.

But even more important than the influence exerted upon Mr. Rockefeller is the influence exerted upon the church. Can a church which accepts money from Mr. Rockefeller take an active part in condemning the methods employed by Mr. Rockefeller? Whether the gift is intended as "hush money" or not, does it not operate as such? A man who was recently asked for an opinion on the Rockefeller donation, hesitated whether he should give it or not, because some of the benevolent enterprises with which he was connected received substantial aid from an official of a great trust. He expressed himself as in doubt whether he should express an opinion upon the subject, and declared that it was the first time that it had ever occurred to him that the receipt of money from such a source influenced his own action. And yet he admitted that he recognized that to all intents and purposes gifts from an officer of a trust had on him somewhat the effect of hush money, because he did not feel free to criticize the methods employed by the Standard Oil company.

If Christianity is going to do the work that the Master laid out for His church it must apply Christian principles to everyday life, and Christ's gospel applied to everyday life is condensed into the commandment "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The church cannot afford to proclaim this doctrine to the world and then shrink from the discussion of the violations of it. Man's relation to his God is a personal relation and one which the outsider ordinarily finds it difficult to investigate, but we have Bible authority for the statement that man's conduct toward his brother furnishes the surest test of man's relations with his Maker. In fact, the Bible speaks very positively upon this subject and declares that a man is a liar if he asserts that he loves his God and yet hates his brother. The methods by which men prove their hatred of their brother are many and various, and probably no man of the present day has shown his hatred of his brother in more ways than Mr. Rockefeller. Is not the church likely to be hindered in its work of restoring justice and inaugurating an era of brotherhood by reliance upon gifts from men who have a large pecuniary interest in silencing the church's protest?

Neither can the church ignore the influence which its action may have upon public opinion. The church lives in the world and the world is prone to judge Christianity by the conduct of those who profess it. If a church accepts money from a notorious offender against morality, and if the church after accepting the money so acts as to raise the suspicion that the receipt of the money influences the conduct of the church toward wrong doing, will not many outside of the church doubt the good faith of the church? Will it not be a cause of offense to many? Is not a divergence between profession and performance the most severe charge that can be brought against either individual or church?

Mr. Rogers, one of the controlling spirits of the Standard Oil company, virtually admits that the business was formerly aided by secret rebates, and the government is now investigating charges brought against the Standard Oil company for recent violations of the law. The anti-trust laws passed by various states indicate the feeling that

there is among the people. If the object of the church is the regeneration of the world, and through this regeneration the establishment of love and peace in the place of selfishness and conflict, can it consistently form a partnership with trust magnates? Until the church has some maxim from higher authority it can afford to conform to the doctrine expressed in the declaration "if eating meat maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no meat."

It is hardly worth while to consider the argument that the church has no right to reject money offered to it. It would put the church in a pitiful position if it were so helpless that it could be made a partner in wrong doing without its power to refuse. But if any preacher is afraid that he will incur responsibility by refusing to accept Mr. Rockefeller's gifts, let him devote himself to the denunciation of the methods employed by Mr. Rockefeller, and he will not have any Rockefeller money offered to him. Let him preach the gospel of the One who, instead of attempting to absorb the wealth of others, gave Himself to the world and went about doing good, and he will never be put to the test, for the men who make millions by exploitation and then give a tithe of their plunderings to church or charity are not likely to embarrass with their gifts those who cry out and spare not. Elijah never had to ponder whether he should receive gifts from Ahab, for the truth which he proclaimed made Ahab his bitter enemy.

From every standpoint the acceptance of the Rockefeller money would seem to be unwise, while its refusal would bring to him, as he has never had brought to him before, the consciousness of his iniquities. The rejection of the gift would also leave the church free to preach a religion unadulterated by commercialism, and would go far to convince the public that the spirit of the meek and lowly Nazarene inspires today those who at the communion table recall His broken body and His blood.

W. J. BRYAN.

JUDGE DUNNE'S VICTORY

Judge Edward F. Dunne, the democratic candidate for mayor of Chicago, has won a notable victory, partly personal and partly because of his outspoken endorsement of municipal ownership. Judge Dunne is a splendid type of the democratic official. He is a man whose sympathies are with the masses and who has both the ability and the moral courage to guard their rights and interests. He very naturally espoused the cause of municipal ownership, and espoused it with the candor which characterizes his conduct on all questions. A victory for municipal ownership in the second city in the United States is very significant, and will encourage those who are seeking to restore to the people the benefits that are now being enjoyed by the corporations which are operating under municipal franchises. While the city of Chicago gave a large republican majority last fall, it has cast its influence in favor of the democratic doctrine that a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable. It is fortunate that this far-reaching experiment in municipal ownership is in the hands of one so competent to make the experiment under the best possible conditions. The Commoner extends hearty congratulations to Mayor-elect Dunne, and wishes him and the cause for which he stands abundant success.

CAMPAIGN FUNDS

Near the close of the last campaign Mr. Cortelyou issued a statement in which he said that the republican campaign fund of 1904 was only about half as large as the republican campaign fund of 1896, and about equal in size to the democratic campaign fund of 1902. He also said that the fund was contributed to by more than four thousand persons. Whether he is correct in his estimate of the democratic campaign fund in 1892 is a question, but as a great many who helped to raise the democratic fund in 1892 were hand in glove with the republicans in 1896, it is possible that Mr. Cortelyou had authentic information on that subject. The significant thing, however, is his statement that only about four thousand persons contributed. For while he says "more than four thousand" it is reasonable to suppose that the number did not much exceed four thousand or he would have stated a higher figure. As the republican ticket received more than seven and a half million votes, the figures given by Mr. Cortelyou show that only about one republican in two thousand contributed to the republican campaign fund. It is evident, therefore, that but an infinitesimally small proportion of the republican voters contribute the "sinews of war," and it is also evident that those who do contribute the money control the policy of the party. Senator Stone, of Missouri, tried to secure the passage of a resolution which

would provide for an investigation of the campaign funds of the last three campaigns but failed to secure the passage of the resolution. Congressman Cockran of New York introduced a bill providing for the publication of campaign contributions, but it was not reported to the House by the republican committee which had it in charge. President Roosevelt asked for legislation compelling the publication of campaign contributions, but a republican congress did not respond.

The democrats should do everything in their power to secure legislation which will compel the publication of campaign contributions in advance of the election, and if they fail to secure such legislation they should put the republican party on the defensive in the next campaign by announcing, first, that no campaign contributions will be accepted from corporations. Corporations are not chartered to carry on campaigns. They are organized for business purposes and have no right to use the money of their stockholders for partisan contributions. Let individuals contribute their own money and not money that they hold in trust. Second, the democratic party ought to go a step farther and open its books for public inspection so that the voters will know that it is not receiving money from persons interested in legislation. The only way to make a successful campaign against the encroachments of organized wealth is to make it so honestly, so openly and so fairly as to appeal to the conscience of the country.

THE DES MOINES BANQUET

About three hundred Iowa democrats attended a Jefferson dinner at Des Moines on April 1, and founded an Iowa democrat club, following the plan adopted by the Kansas democrats. Gen. James B. Weaver was toastmaster and among the speakers were Hon. J. B. Sullivan, late democratic candidate for governor; Mr. John Dennison, late candidate for attorney general; Mr. Louis Murphy, editor of the Dubuque Telegraph; Mr. H. C. Evans of Des Moines, and Mr. Bryan. An abstract of Mr. Bryan's address will be found elsewhere in this issue.

The club's purpose will be to thoroughly organize the democracy of Iowa, and a banquet will be given each year in honor of Jefferson's birthday. The following officers were elected: H. C. Evans, Des Moines, president; A. R. McCook, Elma, secretary; George F. Reinhart, Newton, treasurer; executive committee, J. B. Sullivan, Gen. James B. Weaver, Louis Murphy, C. D. Huston, W. K. English, W. I. Branagan, W. K. Currie, E. H. Rockwell. The vice presidents by congressional districts are as follows: First, N. C. Roberts; Second, J. B. Murphy; Third, E. M. Carr; Fourth, J. J. Kieron; Fifth, J. M. Redmond; Sixth, C. G. Sparks; Seventh, J. S. Cunningham; Eighth, W. D. Jamieson; Ninth, S. B. Wadsworth; Tenth, George Ritz; Eleventh, W. M. Ward. On motion the plan of organization outlined by Mr. Bryan in The Commoner was unanimously endorsed.

GOOD WORK WELL DONE

It is not possible to print in this issue extracts from all of the letters that have been received during the past week from Commoner readers who have taken advantage of the special subscription offer. The following extracts speak for themselves:

A. L. McIntosh, Pembina, S. D.—Herewith find \$4.80 to pay for enclosed list of eight subscribers.

J. L. Cummins, Wisdom, Ky.—Herewith find list of five subscribers with money order to pay for same.

J. B. LePasseur, Duluth, Minn.—Herewith I hand you \$3.00 to pay for the enclosed list of five subscribers. This makes thirty subscribers I have sent you.

A Francis Hogeland, Locktown, N. J.—Enclosed please find list of ten subscribers with money order for \$6.00.

Seth Gongwer, Ashland, O.—Find enclosed \$3.00 for which send The Commoner for one year to the following five names.

Albert Brindley, Vevay, Ind.—Enclosed find list of five subscribers.

Dr. C. O. Lewis, Fayette, Mo.—I enclose a list of six new members.

D. C. Hunter, Rochester, N. Y.—Inclosed please find list of six subscribers, four of whom are republicans.

John E. Reynolds, Burnsville, Miss., sends list of five subscribers and money order for same.

M. W. Elliot, E. Liverpool, O.—Herewith find list of five subscribers and \$3.00 to pay for same.

L. P. Wills, Mountain Cove, W. Va.—Enclosed find \$6.00 for which please send The Commoner