

WASHBURN COLLEGE

Mr. Sampson Comments Upon the Recent Suppression of Free Speech at This Institution

Editor Independent: President Roosevelt's unconstitutional action in dismissing a government clerk for exercising her constitutional right of free speech has found recent reflection in the cowardly suppression of a socialist club by the trustees of Washburn college, Topeka, Kas. This was not the first infringement of academic freedom in this country. College professors or presidents in Rhode Island, Wisconsin, Illinois, and California had been dismissed or threatened with dismissal because their economic teachings or views did not happen to please certain wealthy patrons of the institutions in which they gave instruction. But the Washburn college case is the first instance to come under the writer's observation, in which free speech has been denied a student body. In this case, there was no charge of violation of college rules in the formation or conduct of the club. The ideas advocated by the members simply displeased certain gentlemen who had contributed to the financial support of the college, and upon their demand the club was suppressed.

The writer holds no brief for socialism. Some of the socialistic proposals may be for the good of society, and some may not. So far as the present issue is concerned, the only questions to be asked are these: First, does the propaganda contemplate anything immoral or unconstitutional; and, secondly, is slander, libel, or violence employed in its promotion? If these questions can be answered in the negative (and there is no evidence to the contrary in the present case), then socialism, whether in or out of educational institutions, merits toleration, and public sentiment should demand toleration.

In all ages, and under all forms of government, colleges and universities have been schools of democracy. From their walls have issued influences to crumble governmental absolutism. Czarism today has no more potent

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enemy than Russian universities. In every clime the university has stood between the people and the aggressions of the throne. The odious doctrine of German lese majeste is far-reaching, but it does not cross the sacred threshold of Minerva. In the University of Berlin, in the very shadow of the German throne, professors freely teach political doctrines utterly subversive of the imperial policy. Democratic America may learn at least one lesson in political liberty from German monarchism.

The United States, less than any other nation, can afford to tolerate such an action as that at Washburn college. The martyrs of 1776 did not die in vain. The constitution writers of 1787 did not write in vain. Free speech is the fountain of American political rights. Obstruct it, and you invite the revolution or the empire. Man was constituted a free being, and any institution, whether it be an American college or a world-empire, denies that freedom at its peril. The victims of repression may perish, but, like Samson of old, they will pull down the temple with them.

The action at Washburn college was not only un-American, but short-sighted as well. Whatever truth there be in socialism will derive new strength from the tyranny of Washburn college. The suppression of the socialist club will probably do more to advance socialism than the club itself could have done. The socialists will find the incident a blessing in disguise. Injustice always proves a boomerang.

The writer recommends to the trustees of Washburn college, in their subserviency to the arrogant money power, the indignant protest of Cassius, in "Julius Caesar":

And this man
Is now become a god; and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend
his body
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.

Why, man, he doth bestride this narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about

To find ourselves dishonorable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates;

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves that we are underlings.

Now, in the name of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed

That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed,
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!

Rather than suppress free speech, it would be far better for Washburn college to repudiate the patronage of men so un-American as to oppose free speech. Better would it be for Washburn college that not a dollar be added to her endowment, not a scholar to her roll, not a brick to her walls, than that she pollute the shrine of learning, and desecrate the aegis of American liberty by such vandalism.

But it is believed that a policy of freedom and Americanism would bring Washburn college to no such pass as this. Let Washburn college have the courage to proclaim that within her walls, humble though they be, and humble though they remain, the fire on the altar of free speech shall never be extinguished. Let her do this, and the writer believes that there is enough Americanism, even in these commercial, imperialistic days, to replenish her treasury not less than gratify her spirit, and increase her honorable rank in the educational world. It always pays to be a man and an American.

JOHN SAMPSON,
Washington, D. C.

Boom That Book

Editor Independent: One of the grandest articles ever written was that contributed by Speed Mosby to the Henry George Edition of the Nebraska Independent. It is one of the most exhaustive and convincing presentations of the single tax principle and philosophy that it ever has been my privilege to read. I do not see how any intelligent mind can consider that article and not be clearly and irrevocably convinced of the logic and justice of the single tax.

Now, I learn from the daily papers that the same Speed Mosby has written a book which, something after the style of the Literary Guillotine, cuts people up; and that certain petty politicians, who could not stand a little satire are trying to discipline the clever author for daring to make sport of their various weaknesses.

It strikes me that everybody who

does not approve of such petty persecutions should buy Speed Mosby's book.

Will The Independent please publish a review of the work and give its readers the price; thereby probably obliging hundreds of others, as well as, yours sincerely,

JAMES BARTLEY.

Amsterdam, N. Y.

(The Independent regrets that it cannot, at present, give any information regarding this book of Mr Mosby's. His address is Jefferson City, Mo., and it is likely that a letter of inquiry addressed him there would bring a prompt reply.—Associate Editor.)

DISASTER AND DESOLATION

Death Holds High Carnival in the News Columns of American Journals, and an

EPIDEMIC OF CATASTROPHES

On Land, On Sea, On Railways, In Fire, In Flood, In Mines Prevails.

Rarely, if ever, has a new year in America been ushered in with so much frightful misfortunes and such awful fatalities to human beings as this goody year of our Lord 1904. Opening the ghastly carnival was the fearful holocaust in the Iroquois theatre, Chicago. Promptly following came the loss of half a hundred, or more, sea going passengers in the strait of San Juan de Fuca. Before we had our breath recovered news flashed throughout the land that a hundred human beings were lost in railway wrecks. Typhoid fever in a Pennsylvania village called home fifty or sixty. A Pennsylvania mine disaster closes the recitation of horrors with

200 MANGLED BODIES

slowly being recovered from the depths of the black earth. In addition to these great accidents of fire, collision and explosion came the reports from day to day of flood disasters along the Ohio river, and the isolated incidents along the highway of life where murder, suicide, street car, misplaced switch, and other forms of mishap have claimed victims until if one were to permit pessimistic reflection, he would be discouraged over the conditions surrounding existence. In the presence of death, disaster, desolation and the uncertainty of individual existence we naturally turn our thoughts to the wives, children and other dependents and to the

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and other life insurance organizations as the only safe form of protection for those bereft by disaster and desolated by death. Fortunately a hundred years of experience has established a law of average as to humanity's death rate, and based upon this ascertained experience the life insurance company meets the liabilities brought upon it by disease, disaster and death and amply as well as promptly drives the wolf of poverty from the door of desolation and indemnifies the bereaved so far as indemnity is possible.

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HOW CLARK BUYS A BOND

Which Guarantees His Family an Estate, if He Dies, and Himself a Home, if He Lives.

Mr. Clark, aged thirty-five, is manager of the elevator in the town of Salem. The position pays him a good salary, enabling him to support his family and lay aside about \$200 per year. Though he is now living comfortably, he realizes that he must devise some way of providing an income for his declining years.

His idea is to buy a farm. During a period of meditation as to whether or not he shall purchase a certain quarter section of land which is for sale at \$5,000, he is interviewed by a representative of the Old Line Bankers Life Insurance company of Lincoln, Nebraska, who endeavors to interest him in Life Insurance.

Hardly does the agent get well started, when he is interrupted by Mr. Clark who tells him of his intention to buy a farm. He states that he is about to make a small payment on the purchase price and will, if the agent can offer anything better be an interested listener.

"Well," said the agent, "suppose you buy a farm worth \$5,000 by paying the small sum of \$175.25 annually without interest, for twenty years, the contract for same containing a clause specifying that, should you die at any time, the party from whom you buy the land will cancel all deferred payments, and give your estate a clear title; or if you live to the maturity of the contract, give you not only the deed to the land, but pay you as large a percentage of profit as you could reasonably expect to make from the property. Would you buy a farm on those terms?"

Of course Mr. Clark was interested, and since the Company secures each and every contract issued with a deposit of approved securities with the State of Nebraska, he expressed a willingness to become a party to such an agreement.

"Well," continued the agent, "if you will pay annually to the Old Line Bankers Life Insurance Company of Nebraska the sum of \$175.25 they will, if you die at any time, pay to whom you may name the sum of \$5,000. If you live twenty years, they will give you a cash settlement consisting of the guaranteed reserve and an estimated surplus, amounting to \$5,491.25. You will readily see that you receive \$1,986.25 more than you pay in, which is better than four per cent compound interest. Then, too, having the assurance that, should you die, you would leave a comfortable estate." Mr. Clark bought the insurance, and what Mr. Clark did you can do.

Permit our agent to explain a contract to you. If you do not own all the land you care to farm, ask for circular No. 1 which shows "How Jones Bought and Paid for a \$6,000 farm." If you have a mortgaged farm, call for Circular No. 2, which shows "How Samuels Paid a \$2,000 Mortgage." For further information address the OLD LINE BANKERS LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY, at Lincoln, Nebraska.

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