

THE RECEIVER OF A GIFT BECOMES THE APOLOGIST OF THE DONOR.

Probably many of the readers of The Public are following Miss Ida M. Tarbell's history of the methods of John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Company, now appearing serially in McClure's Magazine.

The Omaha World-Herald telegraphed Miss Tarbell, as an admitted authority on Mr. Rockefeller's methods and motives, to ask her for her opinion in regard to Chancellor Andrews's proposition that the State University of Nebraska accept a donation from Mr. Rockefeller to be applied to the erection of a building to become the property of the university.

MISS TARBELL'S REPLY.

New York, Jan. 28.—To the Editor of the World-Herald: In my opinion the chief duty of an institution of learning is to train young people to think things through their legitimate conclusions, and to inspire them with moral courage to fit their conduct to those conclusions.

Money is one of the minor necessities in making honest thinkers and courageous actors. It is useful in an educational institution only in the hands of men who prefer to do without it rather than to dull the conscience of faculty, students and friends by compromising with any kind of moral or intellectual subterfuge.

If the acceptance of the gift from Mr. John D. Rockefeller brings with it tacit recognition of the commercial principles which he has employed with more conspicuous success than any other man in the country; if it closes the mouth of any man in Nebraska to the corruptive influence of those principles, no greater calamity could befall the University of Nebraska than to accept his money.

Human experience seems to show that the receiver of a gift becomes sooner or later the apologist of the donor and his methods. Where there is a possibility of such a result, jealous regard for the moral atmosphere of the institution makes the refusal of the gift an imperative duty.

IDA M. TARBELL.

THE GREAT STANDARD OIL COMPANY HAS WON ITS FIGHT AGAINST MEL HOSSLER.

Special dispatch from Chardon, Ohio, to The Cleveland Press of Jan. 30.

Mel Hossler's oil wagon has stopped!

The Standard Oil company has won one of the most bitter fights of its career of over a quarter of a century. That career has been punctuated by broken hearts. Along the way of the huge corporation wounded people are lying.

When agents of the Standard Oil company approached Hossler with golden offers, he drew himself up, curled his

lip in scorn and turned from the polished lawyer who called to see him, in disgust. Then he paused and sang out over his shoulder:

"Go back and tell John Rockefeller that all the wealth he has would not tempt me to give up to him."

Then the assault began afresh, but Hossler's townsmen rallied to his assistance and bought his oil at the market price when the Standard Oil company offered oil free.

For two years the Standard has kept agents in Chardon trying to drive Hossler out of business. He was attacked in every conceivable way. He was harassed all day, night was made hideous for him, and the sanctity of his home was invaded, and not even was he allowed to mutter his evening prayer in quietude.

Yet Mel Hossler would not give up. Doggedly he held to his determination to live in spite of the Standard.

But last night under the awful attack which never stopped the end came.

Mel Hossler's mind snapped.

It came after business reverses. Winter came on and food for his family and his horses was high. Then sickness came and medicine and doctor bills were higher. Finally his daughter, 16 years old, his inspiration in the fight, fell ill. That blow was the last.

He went to the jail last night and gave himself up. He said brokenly: "I have lost."

His friends say he wanted to be locked up.

ROCKEFELLER AND CARNEGIE. SPECIAL PRIVILEGES.

Extract from McClure's editorial announcement of the second part of Miss Ida M. Tarbell's History of the Standard Oil company. See McClure's Magazine for November, 1903.

Mr. Rockefeller's success in circumventing the efforts of the Oil Regions to obtain fair play on the railroads was phenomenal. In six years after the South Improvement Company, which gave him his first start, was broken up, he had succeeded in obtaining contracts similar in every point to these of that company, even to the clause which gave him drawbacks on other people's shipments. It was as quick and effective a method of putting competitors out of business as it would have been for the banks in which they had deposits to have handed over to Mr. Rockefeller a part of their deposits, and ethically it was quite as unrighteous.

The result of these advantages was naturally and inevitably a practically

complete monopoly of the oil business—crystallizing into the Standard Oil Trust. The same practice would have given Mr. Rockefeller the control of wheat or corn, beef or iron. A variety of the same practice created Mr. Carnegie.

It is now twenty-one years since Mr. Rockefeller completed his trust. Alarmed by the injustice which he and others were able to do in business by the illegal acts of the railroads, Congress took fright, and in 1887 passed an interstate commerce law forbidding railroad discrimination and appointing a commission to see that fair play prevailed. It is a well-known fact that in spite of the most faithful efforts of the commission railroads still systematically favor one shipper to the harm of others—build up one locality to the ruin of others. Because no such wholesale and unrighteous acts of stealing are possible as that on which the Standard Oil Trust was founded, it cannot be argued that the public is to-day receiving fair play from the railroads. One has only to study the reports of the Inter-State Commerce Commission, of the recent Industrial Commission, to study the phenomenal growth of certain businesses, as the so-called beef trust, to know that evasions of the laws against railroad discrimination are incessant. Indeed, it is less than five years since the business of the country was thrown into confusion by Mr. Cassatt's announcement that henceforth the law would be obeyed on the Pennsylvania system and no rebates would be granted to any one. Such a revolutionary policy was this announcement of obedience to law that Mr. Andrew Carnegie actually refused to do business henceforth with the Pennsylvania, and began to build his own road. He created a commotion which has resulted in the monstrous steel trust, an organization which may be said to be a monument to Mr. Carnegie's unwillingness to do business if he could not enjoy illegal privileges. Indeed, there rests with the public to-day no less than in 1882, when Mr. Rockefeller completed his dazzling conquest, the imperative duty of continuing its struggle for justice on the railroads. The railroads exist by the consent of the people. The gentlemen who control them are allowed their franchises, allowed the great fortunes they make from them, on the theory that they can give a better administration than can be obtained by State administration. And unquestionably these gentlemen can do so if they will. It seems to have been pretty clearly demonstrated, however, that they will not—unless forced to it.