

a man who, caught redhanded in a theft of his clients' funds, coolly proposes that he and two or three others similarly situated shall hereafter be legally authorized to take the money of these half million voters to use it to defeat the candidates they intend to vote for. Following and confirming the Lawson disclosures of an utter lack of moral perception among the kings of high finance, this incident ought still further to disillusionize the people of the nation of the notion that these men are one whit better disposed toward property rights than so many Captain Kidds.

"Tainted money."

Literally, there is no such thing as "tainted money;" the taint is not in the gift itself, but in the circumstances of the giving and the taking. Money is "tainted money" only when given and taken for the purpose, or with the reasonable effect, of promoting injustice. It is this that makes the receiver "as bad as the thief." In the absence of what lawyers call "the criminal mind," there is nothing wrong in receiving money that has been stolen; it is wrong only when the receiver either knows, or reasonably ought to know, that he is thereby promoting theft. The same principle applies to gifts to churches from—well, let us say from Mr. Rockefeller.

Such questions are tested best by resorting to extremes for illustration. Suppose a candid thief—"Good Robber Brown," for instance, of Gilbert's grimly rollicking satire on a type of piety from which none of the churches are free—suppose the existence of such a thief, and how should we judge his gifts to churches? This money would have been obtained in larcenous pursuits; shall the gifts be therefore refused? Ask any honest baker what he would do were the thief to offer some of his money for bread in regular course of trade? The baker would take the money for the bread, of course, and, equally of course, no one would condemn

him for taking "tainted money." But suppose the thief were to offer extra prices for bread, in order to gain the baker's friendship, the baker being an influential member of the church, and, maybe, of the local grand jury. Wouldn't the baker deserve condemnation if he took that money? Wouldn't it be "tainted" money? For more complete similitude put the matter in another way. Suppose a fund were raised in the good thief's neighborhood for a church building or church work, and the thief contributed along with his neighbors in such manner and under such circumstances as to create no sense of special obligation. Should his contribution be rejected as "tainted money?" Hardly. Since the true owners of the money would be unknown, and there would be nothing in the circumstances calculated to effect the promotion of injustice, acceptance of the gift would be legitimate. But, suppose, on the other hand, that the good thief were to make his contribution in such manner as to make it reasonably appear that the particular contribution was the proceeds of a particular robbery, or reasonably to have the effect of exciting a sense of appreciation and gratitude or admiration tending to discourage the development of religious sentiment against his nefarious business! Wouldn't that alter the whole aspect of the affair? Wouldn't his donation thereupon become "tainted money" and its acceptance be censurable? There can be no doubt of it.

Now apply the principle to donations to churches by Mr. Rockefeller. Though Mr. Rockefeller's fortune be tainted through and through with injustice, surely the tradesman who sells him goods in due course of trade and at regular rates cannot fairly be accused of taking "tainted money." And why should churches not take his contributions along with other contributions, in the same innocent way as the tradesman takes an honest price for goods? We fail to see any reason why they

should not. But there is no such innocence if his contributions be accepted by churches under circumstances that might reasonably so affect the religious sentiment of the country as to weaken public opinion and public law with reference to the methods of injustice whereby he maintains the fortune out of which his gifts are drawn. In these circumstances the gifts become gifts of "tainted money," and their acceptance by churches has a flavor of guilt. Now, is there any reason for doubting that Mr. Rockefeller's gifts to churches are so given as to produce that effect if accepted? We think not. Gifts such as his cannot be taken by churches under the circumstances in which they are given, without influencing a pulpit tenderness not only to Mr. Rockefeller personally, of which there are notable instances, but toward the career of rapacity and the conditions of injustice on which his fortune thrives. As with the pious gifts of "Good Robber Brown," these gifts of Mr. Rockefeller's purchase of the churches a tendency not alone to condone his past depredations; the purchased tendency is also to help him secure aid and comfort in his predatory operations.

But let no one suppose that the money of your predatory Rockefellers and your "Good Robber Browns" is the only "tainted money" that churches take. When men whose fortunes come from unjust privileges so old as to be respectable, men who have no occasion to struggle in predatory ways for a fortune because unjust institutions have through inheritance or otherwise poured fortunes smoothly and honorably into their possession—when contributions to churches from such men as these are accepted under circumstances tending to maintain or to strengthen the hoary institutional injustice which has made the fortunes, these also are gifts of "tainted money." A rapacious Rockefeller or "Good Robber Brown" might care nothing for the laws of property so long as

he could override them, while an aristocratic Astor was scrupulously law abiding; yet if acceptance of a pious gift from the former tended so to influence religious opinion as to promote their profitable but unjust law-breaking, and acceptance of such a gift from the latter tended to perpetuate the profitable but unjust institution that gives him an unearned income, both gifts would be gifts of "tainted money."

The monopoly that takes the increasing residue.

How true it is that land monopoly confiscates all that other monopolies are forced to leave is shown in the Kansas gas belt with startling clearness. Hundreds of cities, towns and villages in south-eastern Kansas now use only natural gas for fuel and lighting. They get it at a cost of 10 to 20 cents per 1,000 cubic feet, and in many places at less by a flat rate per month—10 cents a month for 30 candle power lamps and 50 to 75 cents for stoves. Is this a great blessing to the people? That depends upon whether they own the land they live on. But only about half the inhabitants do. The other half are renters and for them the landlord acts as receiver for the benefits of cheap gas. He adds the saving to their rent. Aside from the pecuniary advantage in cost of fuel and light, there is cleanliness, convenience and comfort in the use of gas, and this makes the gas towns very attractive as places of residence. But people who go there must pay a land monopolist the value of those privileges, either in purchase price or rents. "Do you expect to enjoy the benefits of cheap gas for nothing?" exclaim the land monopolists when their inflated prices are questioned.

The Chicago traction fight.

Mayor Dunne has acted wisely in responding favorably to requests to go directly to the people of Chicago with his plan (p. 369) for defeating traction graft and securing municipal ownership and operation of the traction service.

Obstructed by a majority of the City Council's committee on transportation, under the leadership of pronounced opponents of municipal ownership who have succeeded for the present in pigeon-holing his plan while they try to give a franchise to the Morgan grafters, the Mayor asks the people to come again to his support for the protection of their own interests. Naturally this policy is not agreeable to aldermen and newspapers that stand for the traction ring. But it is the right and the wise course to take, and already its favorable effects are noticeable.

Municipal ownership in Sheffield.

An example of the animus of the traction newspapers of Chicago was furnished a few days ago. Quoting from the Daily Consular report of the 16th to show that municipal ownership had failed in Sheffield, England, from neglect to charge annually for depreciation of plant, they were exceedingly lugubrious because it would now be necessary to increase fares. But they failed to make it as clear as the Daily Consular report did, that fares in Sheffield are 17 per cent. cheaper than the next cheapest in England; and that with as high a rate of fare as at Leeds—an average of less than 24 cents—there would be a great profit in the Sheffield system after ample allowance for depreciation. This is what the traction press of Chicago regards as failure of municipal ownership! It is a noteworthy fact that while they picked out this solitary item, they unanimously overlooked a more significant report, from Nottingham, in the very same issue of the Daily Consular report, and in a more conspicuous place. This report shows that, with an average fare of only 2 1-6 cents, the net profits for the year just closed at Nottingham exceeded \$100,000. It also shows, an important fact in connection with the traction question in Chicago, that only one fatal accident occurred in connection with traction operation in Nottingham during the year, and

that this was the first in three years, during which time 7,250,000 miles had been traversed by the municipally owned and operated cars, and 80,000,000 passengers carried. Other accidents have been few and trivial.

Municipal ownership in Glasgow.

The official report of traction operation in Glasgow (p. 382) Scotland, is interesting here, especially in view of the flippant criticism that the traction newspapers and other friends of traction interests made of Mr. du Pont's estimates (p. 345) of earnings for a municipal street car system in the streets of Chicago on which traction franchises have expired. Mr. du Pont estimated the gross earnings for the first year at \$12,000,000. The trackage on which he estimated is 264 miles, and the population to be served is 1,100,000. Turning now to the Glasgow report we find a trackage of only 147½ miles for a city the population of which is only 800,000. Yet the receipts for passengers carried last year (196,767,519) would have amounted at a 5-cent fare to \$9,788,375. Why should \$12,000,000 receipts be regarded as a rash estimate for the Chicago properties, if Glasgow would have received at the same fare nearly \$10,000,000 on her system, though with much shorter trackage and a smaller as well as less active population?

THE PRESIDENT'S WEAK SIDE.

It is not in a factious or partisan spirit that we may see wherein President Roosevelt, at this period of our national life, is seriously lacking. The personality of a public officer may at times be an important feature in a nation's history, and may thus become a legitimate subject of comment.

The President has gained the reputation of "doing things." He did things in the Cuban war. He was a brave officer and received his just reward of praise. He went down in the submarine boat. It was a daring act, which appealed to the sportsman spirit of the country, and was admired even by those who seemed to