

The immediate corollary is that from the moment we do that, to-morrow morning for instance, every gift, every offering here is suddenly refused. What reason do we give? If it were only the donors who were to be considered it might be done. It's human nature that ninety-nine out of every hundred of them — his voice rose a little bitterly — "would probably be only too glad to get their money back" — and the mere statement that you, as the Patriarch's grand-niece, his only relative, on mature thought did not consider the project as planned advisable might suffice. But this thing goes beyond that, beyond even the remaining few who are earnestly interested and would cause us trouble — it is worldwide in its publicity! Every newspaper in the land would snatch at it for a headline, and ask — why? And they would not be content with simply asking why — this thing is too big for that — too much before the people's eyes — too good 'copy.' They'd start in to find out — and the result is inevitable. Our safety so far has lain in the fact that there has been no suspicion aroused; but snooping around a bank vault at midnight with a mask on and a bull's-eye lantern fades to a whisper as a suspicion-arouser compared with anybody willingly coughing up a bunch of money once they've got their claws on it — and a yellow journal, let alone an army corps of them, on the scent of a possible sensation has all the detective bureaus in the country pinned to the ropes — they'd have us uncovered quicker than I like to think about it — and that means —"