



The Devil and Co., Limited.

All the devil wants is a good working partnership with respectability; and this he is sure to win by showing respectability that it pays to take him in. Then "He is not so black as he is painted" in the first line of the popular chorus whose finale is the chant: "We praise thee, oh God, for the many benefits taken away from others and given to us. We thank thee that in Thy great power Thou sought out us and made us great also."

A vicious or disreputable traffic never rests till it has got a heedless public to participate in its profits by accepting a license at a price for its legal existence, or in some other manner got the government to take stock in it. Such a traffic virtually says to a city council: "We are here to stay, and mean business, at the same time we want to be law-abiding; to be taken inside the law is worth something to us, so you might as well make something out of us and help the town along; come, don't be squeamish, be public-spirited and take us in. Besides if you don't, there's no knowing how bad we'll be." Then, when our school fund and our public library fund accrue from the permits of saloons and brothels, the community is in full partnership with these industries which are thereby permanently sustained, respectability must defend its partners.

When railroad corporations, bolder still, virtually say to a State's representatives: "We have got almost everything we want since we have got a monopoly of the carrying trade, and are raking off all the public will bear, at the same time we might be annoyed and impeded in our business by any adverse State laws, especially such as might relate to taxation. And there's no telling how much expense your State would have to incur in litigation if you do not favor us in this little matter of exemption from taxation." Then, with several hundred passes (to say nothing of other favors) are snugly lodged in the pockets of sundry legislative and judicial functionaries, and of various county assessors, the State's officials begin to discover a warm feeling in their hearts for these monopolists, and somehow it happens that when the legislature adjourns the State has become a party to any and all the hold-up methods railway corporations may see fit to pursue. Nor has it even got so much as license fees to exonerate itself with; instead, its people are bound to actually pay tribute to the carrying trade.

Yet who can tell how much is tribute or booty and how much is for actual honest service? How convenient this mixture is! The word tribute takes us back to the eighteenth century when organized piracy roamed the high seas, crippling commerce and leaving devastation and terror in its path. These pirates had no mix-up about their trade, but when they were strong enough to make their demands on trading nations they called a spade a spade and boldly demanded annual tribute as a price for withholding their pirate guns, for ceasing to cripple sea traffic. Modern pirates do not roam the high seas to cripple trade now, they are established in custom houses, crippling trade at our ports, and are really hired men for the arch pirates who have fattened into trusts through tribute or tariffs demanded first from foreign traders and received by the government as prize-money for still greater tribute thereafter accruing to trusts from consumers of trust-made goods. It is the government partnership or power of might in this tribute or loot-taking that gives it its high tone. Pure piracy had a regal power transcending mere partnership, but a thief or burglar has no standing in society. Why it is a penal offence to receive goods stolen by a burglar or highwayman; you are a party to the offence; even if these gentry do have honest callings in the daytime, that makes no difference.

Of late, however, this questionable partnership has assumed a far more sinister phase. Our Carnegies and Rockefellers have been so polite, so affable and pious, so generous to some libraries and universities that many institutions are continually on their knees to these idols. They are not only willing to pledge a partnership themselves, but are willing to mortgage the youth of the coming generation. Of course privately owned seats of learning can, perhaps, claim a sort of right to warp the morals of their students, but for a State University like that of Nebraska to whine and crouchingly hold its hands before the Carnegies and Rockefellers is as much a give-away on the fiscal affairs of the State as was disclosed

two years ago in Chicago when schools had to be closed because the rich were systematically dodging their taxes. For a university to take John D. Rockefeller's money is more than taking him into partnership, it is putting him in the school room as teacher of his own methods. It is instituting a school for highwaymenism, to which Fagin's school for pickpockets was only a kindergarten. Once set up such a man as a patron saint of a college of university, and all the ethical ideals of the school will be let down to those of a corsair.

Suppose a symmetrical towered building is to be added by Rockefeller to one of our universities; is it possible for the countless youth that will swarm therein to withhold their admiration from the great benefactor? Nor will they fail of the natural emotion of gratitude for benefits enjoyed. From that point to a defence of the methods of these modern buccaners is an easy step, and attempted emulation a foregone conclusion. So much for example, but that is not all, for is any one simple enough to suppose that a school fostered by the head of a great trust will ever unveil the sacred obscurity that envelops the question of tariffs? Is it likely that any question of political economy of public conduct involving the vested interests of wealth will ever be illumined? Lord Macaulay declared that if the admission of the law of gravitation involved any considerable financial interests, that principle would still be unsettled.

A course at such a university would send out into the world graduates crippled for life in their moral intelligence. To discern right from wrong on all great issues of the day would be out of their power. And to declare that these immense benefactions do not hamper free speech in universities in the face of daily facts to the contrary is absurd.

And more insidious than the dissemination of error in subsidized universities is that possible in endowed public libraries. Books having such an innocent look on their backs and such noble titles are filled with the most intricate tissues of lies so beautifully interlaced with truth that it would take a court of law to tear them apart. Worthless hack-writer versions of our greatest statesmen's lives belittle our highest models of citizenship like the Morse series which practically writes Thomas Jefferson down to the level of our lowest successful politicians, at the same time declaring him one of our greatest men. Biographies of new men, in which various kinds of freebooters are whitewashed to appear kind and good and angelic, worthless text books on history and political economy, all these are but too ready to creep into the best of libraries, but when a man whose whole life action is set against justice to all men because he believes in his heart in the special right of the few men to the earth, and has a fierce class loyalty, and a fierce determination to make his own morals accepted as a world standard, his power for evil when let loose in a public library is unlimited.

His very virtues, since they are in partnership with his warped ethical sense, make him all the more formidable. In short, in these matters of public benefactions, if "we should not look a gift horse in the mouth," we should by all means look the title of

the gift horse right well in the mouth, lest we become receivers of stolen goods and take the devil into partnership.—Lona Ingram Robinson, in Des Moines (Iowa) Register and Leader.

EQUALITY.

"Taxes are equal is a dogma. I'll prove at once," exclaimed a tory boor; "Taxation hardly presses on the rich, And likewise presses hardly on the poor."

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Among a large number of recent magazine articles on capital punishment but one was found which offered any apology for the practice. This one was written by the professor of "Moral Philosophy" in Cornell University. The professor favored capital punishment as a means of doing the victim good. This was said, not in the sense that a dead Indian is said to be a good one. The professor's idea was that the murderer needed this shock to make him sufficiently penitent and bring him back into harmonious relationship with his fellow-beings.

Now comes another Christian scholar, the president of Oberlin College, who declares that the "question of capital punishment is not one that can be decided upon principles of abstract right and wrong."

Question of Principle.

If the question of capital punishment cannot be decided upon principles of abstract right and wrong, what question can be so decided? Can a thing be wrong in the abstract and right in the concrete? If we are to ignore abstract principles in dealing with the murderer, why may we not set them aside when we trade horses or sell life insurance? Are there any "principles" of right and wrong? If so, when is a man bound to respect them? Might not the chicken thief plead that his trade is one that should not be judged by principles of abstract right and wrong? If the executioner is beyond the jurisdiction of morality, why not the thief?

Would society have more to fear from murderers if capital punishment were abolished? This is the only question left if there are no principles involved.

Question of Expediency.

There has been no execution in Switzerland since 1879, none in Holland since 1860, none in Portugal since 1843, none in Finland since 1826. If the humanity of these states had resulted in a great increase of murderers it would seem that they might have discovered the fact by this time and returned to the blood for blood plan.

If life is less safe in Michigan or Maine than in Ohio or New York, statistics do not reveal the fact.

But no one who believes in the inherent justice of the universe would expect to find that an institution which is wrong in principle could be expedient in practice. Tell me what is right and I'll tell you what is practicable.

Society's Stupidity.

Judicial murder must brutalize men. It cannot beget a respect for life. The murderer is not to be hated. He, most of all, is to be pitied. We should look up him in sorrow, not in anger. His crime does not give us the least warrant for injuring him. It rather puts us under greater obligation to do him good because his need is great.

If the state is to have hangmen, would it not be appropriate to draft for that service the preachers who profess to be disciples of the Nazarene and still defend the gallows? What right has a man to claim the name of "Christian," who does not acknowledge the duty to return good for evil?

No man can believe in capital punishment when once he comprehends the truth of Victor Hugo's assertion that the slums are the product of social injustice and that vice and crime are but the vomit of the slums. It is monstrous for society to condemn and kill the victims of its own stupidity.

Most criminals are more sinned against than sinning. Let the murderer be taken care of for the protection of the state and his own good. In our condemnation of his act let us not forget our share of responsibility. The social wrongs, of which we are all guilty, chief of which is land monopoly, have filled our cities with the disinherited children of hunger and neglect and these furnish our criminals.

Justice, not punishment, is the safety of the state.

Herbert S. Bigelow,
Pastor Vine Street Congregational Church, Cincinnati, Ohio.
January 28, 1906.

Our Toilers Behind the Times

British Labor Leader Says the Americans Are Too Slow.

London, Jan. 27.—Keir Hardie, the labor leader, when asked in the course of a campaign speech why British workers were free traders while the workmen in protected countries, especially the United States, favored a tariff replied:

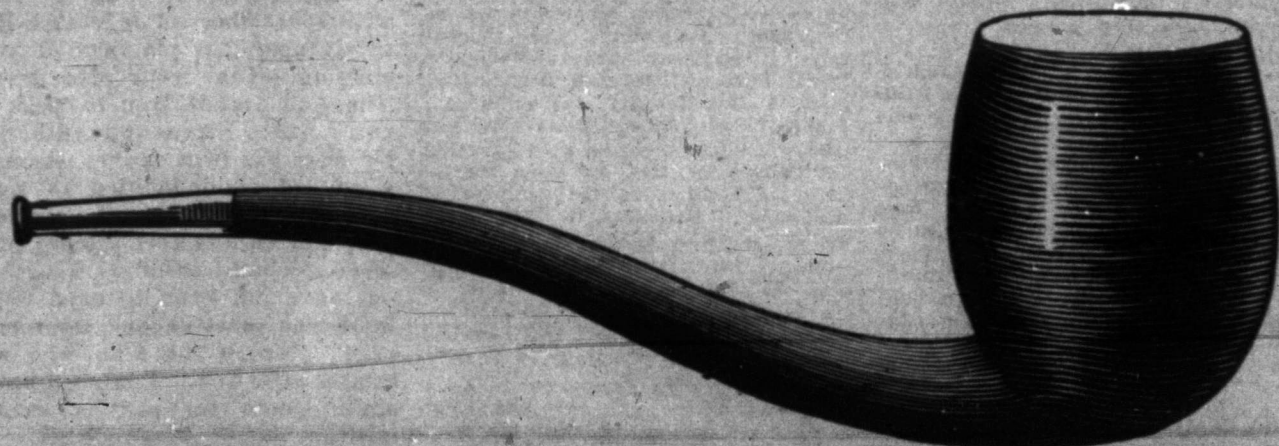
"The American workmen are a long way behind the European in the matter of political education. In Europe labor is practically identified with socialism; in America socialism is still in its infancy, and is by no means co-extensive with the labor party.

"Moreover, American capitalists are still able in crises to smash labor organizations. The fact is that no real labor party exists in America, where the workmen vote the Republican or Democratic ticket.

"Here labor is better organized. It is far more highly educated in political science."

The money a married man has to put into necessary things would more than buy a bachelor all the luxuries he could attend to.

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