

ATTITUDE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Rockefeller gift of \$100,000 to the American board of foreign missions has already served one good purpose. It has revealed the attitude of the Christian church in America toward polluted wealth. It must be confessed with regret that the attitude is not more unequivocal and uncompromising. It is true that the great majority both of laymen and ministers are perpendicularly against accepting one penny of this man's millions, the heaping up of which has entailed so much human misery. But there are others who advocate acceptance of this money and for reasons so specious and unethical as to arouse the indignation of those who seek to cherish the highest Christian ideals. For example, a well-known president of a well-known school of theology urges acceptance in the following words:

"I would accept gladly \$100,000,000 from Mr. Rockefeller or from anyone else. The idea of considering where the money was obtained is, in a measure, ridiculous, when the thought of the good it will do is concerned. When we think of the blessings that can be conferred upon thousands by the generosity of a person willing to part with his money for worthy motives, such gifts can not be spurned for trivial reasons. Fortunes collected in many of the trades and professions of the present day can not be said always to be gained in a manner that the church would commend. Rockefeller's system is no worse than many others. The church accepts gifts of money for worthy purposes from many such persons. When I think of the good I might accomplish with the \$100,000 gift of Mr. Rockefeller, I am more

and more convinced that the objection to the acceptance of it was not sustained by the arguments brought forward."

This man does not attempt to defend the character of the donor. He thinks it is utterly ridiculous to consider where or how his money was obtained. He would perhaps see no objection to the acceptance of a donation from a gambler or a thief. The objection of sharing in such spoils he thinks would be for trivial reasons. The best that he can say for the Standard Oil Croesus is that he is no worse than many others whose help the church has not spurned. Has he not in this urged the strongest reason for the missionary board to decline this money. If it is true that the church connives at immoral business practices by sharing in the proceeds, is it not time that church officials were rebuked for such connivances, especially when the rule can be drawn against a man who is confessedly the summary and synthesis and the very embodiment of some of the worst practices in our modern commercial life? The chief apologist, almost the only apologist (outside of hired writers and paid speakers) which Mr. Rockefeller has had of late is H. H. Rogers, who has been his life-long associate and accomplice. Mr. Rogers' principal plea for his senior partner is that he has never broken the law but once, and then unconsciously. He has done only what others have been doing. "Why, then," says Mr. Rogers, "select him for a sole example." The answer is that he has been the arch offender and the testimony against him is all but unanimous and conclusive. It is the duty of the Christian church, if not of the secular state, to make careers like his so odious that few of the younger generation will care to follow in his footsteps.—Ram's Horn.

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