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Letter: Ben B. Lindsey to Ida M. Tarbell, January 21, 1910

Lindsey, Ben B.

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Juvenile Court

DENVER, COLO.

BEN B. LINDSEY, Judge

January 21, 1910.

Miss Ida Tarbell,
C/o Everybody's Magazine,
New York.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

The incident you refer to occurred in September, 1907, following the dispute I had with the then Governor, Rev. Henry Augustus Buchtel, Chancellor of the Denver University in July and August, 1907.

I had, in a private talk at Chautauqua, New York, declared that men like Evans and Guggenheim were as much responsible for lawlessness in this state as some of the men in the Western Federation of Miners, who were then being prosecuted at Boise City, Idaho. I had stated that I was opposed to the lawlessness of both - that while I did not believe in hanging, if they hung the leaders of one element, they might perhaps, in justice, meet out the same fate to the others. *Buchtel went to his defense of Guggenheim & Evans*

That interview was somewhat garbled, but it nevertheless set the big business interests against me, and they refused to contribute to our juvenile improvement philanthropies, like the fresh air camp for the children, the day nursery, etc.

Of course, quietly and privately, some of the business men helped us, but, with a few exceptions, they were all more or less shy about being publicly known as helping--at least during the rather acute feeling that this controversy brought on.

Miss Olga Nethersole's Manager came here in August, 1907, and offered to give ^{matinee} a benefit for the work referred to. Some of the newspapers very generously advertised it under the supervision of Mrs. Gregory the Clerk of our Court. There was sent out to five thousand prominent people in Denver, including all of the society women, and members of the woman's club, a letter announcing the benefit, enclosing tickets that they might or might not purchase, and making an earnest appeal for assistance. *As I recall it there were not to exceed 300 tickets sold. We barely made enough out of the benefit to pay for the postage stamps and printing of notices to the leading society people and business men.*

A number of prominent society women told me that the reason they could not take part in it was because of the offense referred to. In fact, I was roundly lectured by one good lady, well known in philanthropic and social circles, for having spoken as I did against the theft of the senatorship by Guggenheim, and the corruption of politics by Mr. Wm. G. Evans' utility corporations. She said there had been a good deal of discussion about

Miss Tarbell's 50000 per Guggenheim for the University

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it in the newspapers (as there had been), and since the affair would be regarded more or less (as she expressed it) a "Lindsey affair", she and some of her friends could not take any prominent part in it, without giving offense to some of her husband's friends.

Frequently at benefits for children's work society occupies and, in our own work, had occupied boxes and shown itself quite generously. In this instance I do not recall that a single box was occupied. There were perhaps two or three - possibly a half a dozen - women who were fairly well known in society who sat in the audience. But society as such, and prominent women as such, who generally boost such affairs by their presence and influence, were notably absent.

I have since resigned as President of the Juvenile Improvement Association, because I know positively we were handicapped in some quarters in raising money for its little philanthropies because of the opposition of big business to myself because of some things I had said and done that grievously offended it.

I think we make some reference to other experiences I have had in this line in the Y.M.C.A. and the Church in the March number of Everybody's. I have simply insisted that when it comes to the society women, especially, they are no more free from the influences of the Beast than others. Of course, as you know, I have always insisted that the women of Denver have stood by me. In the election of 1908 the average mothers in the homes and the women who work, constituting as they do the great majority of the voting population among the women, supported me loyally, and but for their influence and support, I do not believe I could have been successful, although I do believe because of their influence I perhaps had a plurality of the vote of the men as well as that of the women.

Sincerely yours,

