

Prophecy on RBF

RBF  
Book review  
President  
summer 1936

Feb 7 1936

R.B.F. is an active and restless man. He is quick in his estimates and essentially partisan in his sympathies and attitudes. He is not troubled by opposition and indeed expects and likes it. I do not have the impression that he is quite candid at times, nor is he much troubled with consistency. He presses hard for what he wants and is apt to get peevish with what stands in his way at these times, and to employ various and perhaps devious means to obtain it. He ~~was~~ is affable but not dignified. He lacks the desire to settle things once and for all, preferring temporary and inconclusive makeshifts if there be necessary to avoid decisions he dislikes. His is a quick intelligence, directed more often to a scrutiny of the means than of an evaluation of the ends, <sup>which are assumed but not analyzed.</sup> intelligent but not intellectual.

But he is adventuresome, liberal, friendly, and with a light touch and kindly independence. He has quick sympathy and lively emotions. Indeed aside from his desire for liberalism, his enjoyment of activity in a cause thought good, one has the impression that his emotions are of dominating effect upon him. He can't stand incompetence in the form of stupidity.

The first year or two will see the NS fared under the H.S. and possibly W.W.'s departure on the basis of lack of knowledge of his field. I think that Day will stay if Day doesn't take any initiative to leave. We shall suit JDR<sup>jr</sup> as long as he lives and JDR<sup>iii</sup> as long as RBF lives. This is in the field of real motives. On the whole the RF will remain or revert to conservative methods, but with some variation in declared objectives.

I have the fear that I shall be party to some evasions and prevarications and sharp practices at the suggestion of RBF and <sup>and</sup> with his approval. In this instance it will be best for me to declare that I'll have nothing to do with it, or if my cooperation and coquizeance be called for to suggest abrupt resignation to do literary work or whatever for he has lived with compromises before and can again - and again request them without hesitation unless his attention is sharply summoned.

The other foreboding I have is that he will continue to be too busy to be gotten at for conference and discussion. He has been busy dodging himself in these past

two or three years and the RF may not satisfy the restlessness that has called for  
activities.

The order of his success and preference with the officers will be in emotions  
AG, <sup>was</sup> TBA EED ~~DS~~ WW and DHS, in intellect <sup>was</sup> EED, AG WW TBA + DHS. With the  
Rockefeller Family no breach will occur. He will get bored with some of the Trustees and  
I should expect that some of them will not be returned to office as a result of RBF's  
antipathies. Also if we lose officers we shall lose them briskly and with some  
storms and ill-feeling on departure on their part.

The end result of Fosdick's presidency, which, barring accident will run its full course, will  
be that the SS will be largely in the fields of application of various practical  
reform, the IHD and MS will be largely supported, and the Humanities swung to rather  
new and experimental forms. Fosdick will live restless and hyperactive and will not  
be content with a routine and conservative atmosphere. But he distrusts his own  
restlessness and wants only first rate arguments against it. If these are inadequate  
he will be unconvinced and eager to "live dangerously".

The longest time I ever saw him to talk to was 3 hours at his rooms in Nov 1934.  
We shall know more by this time (Feb) 1937.

AG.