

SOCIAL JUSTICE.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE MEN'S CLUB OF HOLY COMMUNION CHURCH, ST. LOUIS, BY MAX P. STAHL.

We are assembled here tonight as guests of a congregation which holds a singular position among the churches of this city, which is doing a work which in due time will be duly appreciated by our community for which it is bound to prove a great boon. During the last five years not less than eight prominent churches have left the downtown district and moved into the more fashionable west end, while this part of our city is more and more changing into a tenement district, where live people who, unable to pay the steadily increasing rent, are compelled to put up with very scanty home accommodations. Seeing these conditions, and recognizing that it is just these kind of people to whom Jesus of Nazareth directed the attention of his disciples with the words: "The poor ye have always with ye," Rev. Blaisdell, rector of this Church of the Holy Communion, refused not only to follow the general trend westward, but in addition decided to build his house here and open it to the people as a sort of neighborhood house. By this action he recognized the mission of the church in our times to confine its activities not merely to the spiritual needs of humanity, but, recognizing the interdependence of body and soul, to try simultaneously, as much as is in its power, to better the surroundings and social conditions of men.

But every clear-sighted student of our social conditions must see that the best which can be achieved by work of this kind is only an alleviation of the evils which the crowded tenement conditions of every great city bring with them, that it is insufficient to try to cure the symptoms, that we must do as the physicians do, first make a diagnosis and find out the cause and then remove the causes.

The distinguished lecturer of the evening, Mr. John Z. White, of Chicago, will speak to you to-night on "Sources of Municipal Corruption," and after you have heard him you will be surprised that you have not found the solution of the vexing problem long ago for yourselves; and you will also clearly see that they are the very same sources from which spring all the other evils under which our social organism is suffering, and which make wholly ineffective all the benevolent work which is done in the name of charity. As the late Mayor Jones, of Toledo, "Golden Rule Jones," as he was called, said: "Charity is mere make-shift; the only way to help the poor is to abandon a social system that makes them poor!" The great English thinker, John Ruskin, is the author of the words: "The considerablest part of the misery of the

world comes from the tricks of unjust taxation." That is the crux of the whole matter. The only means by which we can bring about a thorough sanitation of our social conditions is by abolishing privilege, and especially privilege in taxation, thus securing equality of opportunity for everyone. The abolition of privilege alone will achieve what all the charities of the world can never achieve, benefit each and every one of us, yea, in the end, even the multi-millionaire Rockefeller himself as much as the poorest denizen of the slums, giving the former the security of possession in what his individual labor has produced, and securing the same for his children and children's children without earning for them the hatred and contempt of their fellow men for their rapacity, and by removing the obstacles in the life of the poor, giving the downcast and downtrodden a new impetus and a new chance in life. In a just plan of society the least is as important as the greatest, a thought which was expressed by Jesus in the words: "What ye have not done unto the least of them, ye have not done unto Me," which is commonly, but wrongly, interpreted a message of charity, not as the world-liberating gospel of social justice.

It is a great law of social justice which will teach people the art of living *by one another* instead of *upon one another*; which will establish among men the golden rule instead of the rule of gold; which will bring about for mankind a new, glorious day, the dawn of which we may already perceive. Ours is the sacred duty to bend all our energies to help in bringing about that day:

"Aid the dawning tongue and pen,
Aid it, hopes of honest men,
Aid it, paper, aid it, type,
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
And your earnest must not slacken into play;
Men of thought and men of action: Clear
the way."

Such a man of thought and action, a militant preacher of the gospel of social justice, we have with us here to-night, and it is, indeed, a great pleasure for me to introduce to you Mr. John Z. White, of Chicago.

Progress, of Melbourne, Australia, is reprinting from October SINGLE TAX REVIEW Mr. P. J. O'Reagan's article on "The Real Truth Regarding Land Values Taxation in New Zealand."

"The landlord is not a partner in the industrial community; he is not a partner in it, but a parasite upon it."—Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith.

THE AGE OF GRAFT.—Nurse—Why, Georgie, your hands are all dirty!

Georgie—I don't care! This land is worth \$2,800 a front foot.—Puck.