

goes. That entire increase, due solely to social progress, is private property! This three years' increase alone in the land values of New York is equal to more than \$100 for every man, woman and child of the population.

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AN IDEAL CHICAGO, AND THE COST OF IT.

I. Preliminary Observations.

In the sweltering summer time three months ago, the Commercial Club of Chicago put out plans and specifications for an ideal city, and the Chicago papers were full of the subject.

The plans exhibited a beautiful conception—beautiful even in the narrow sense of mere art-culture, but beautiful also in that larger sense of an exquisitely attractive adaptation of means to ends for great communal uses. Any one of discernment will say so after looking at the plans themselves, which are still on public exhibition at the Art Institute.

But the weather was too hot at the time to say much or to think much of this project after the first journalistic outburst; and not a great deal was said of it after that, nor perhaps much thinking done about it—not even by the Mayor, who, at his own request, was authorized by the City Council in July to appoint a commission of aldermen and private citizens to take the matter in charge.

In the cooler weather of autumn, however, one's thoughts may turn with freshness and steadiness to the merits and possibilities of so magnificent an undertaking.

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It is not a local matter merely.

The complete reconstruction of the second city of the Republic on lines of great common utility and transcendent beauty, is in itself a subject for national enthusiasm.

Simply as a spectacle it should be of universal interest, and it is to be more than a spectacle.

The utility of it, the beauty of it, the subtle art that unites the two, its constructively revolutionary character, the adaptability of the plans to other municipal sites, the financial problems it raises, the civic spirit it puts to the test of sincerity—these and kindred considerations give to the Commercial Club's movement for an Ideal Chicago, elements of human interest which cannot be confined within any one city's municipal boundary lines. It must appeal with peculiar intensity of interest to the best thought of every community in the land.

There is, it is true, something sinister in the trademark.

For civic purposes the Commercial Club of Chicago is not a name to conjure with. The highest ideal of too many of its influential members is of the "cent-per-cent" order. Of course this makes its patronage a strong recommendation to the "cent-per-cent" class, to whom the fattening of investments is the chief end of mortal existence; and to them its endorsement of the Ideal Chicago has carried an agreeable fragrance of real-estate profits. But wherever else the prestige of the Commercial Club penetrates, this agreeable fragrance turns to an offensive odor. The working masses of Chicago—and we by no means limit this description to persons eligible to labor union membership—have little use for the Commercial Club or any of its recommendations.

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Yet it would hardly be fair or wise to judge that club in this matter by its "cent-per-cent" membership. Even if a sordid group does happen to be the more influential, a large part of the membership is not of this class. Among the members who are promoting the movement for an Ideal Chicago, are many men of genuine civic spirit.

Even if that were not so, the project should be considered upon its merits, regardless of its label; and such is the consideration we purpose giving it in a series of articles to follow this one.

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THE UNECONOMY OF CERTAIN GREAT BENEFACTIONS.

It may be that the world is growing better, as Mr. Andrew Carnegie says, and that in the practical application of the thought of brotherhood, or trusteeship,* by the very rich the struggle of the masses for existence will be turned into something of a festival; but history and philosophy seem to show that the line of human society's best interests runs counter to charity and beneficence—and ease.

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From the world's beginning man has contended, in a slowly-decreasing measure, against nature.

Her harsh laws have encompassed him, and there has been none to show mercy; but that which

*In Cooper Union, New York, at a meeting (1903) of the People's Institute, Mr. Carnegie said in the course of an address: "Whenever the rich act as trustees and provide out of their surplus wealth for the genuine permanent good of the poor, then will be solved—and not till then—the question of wealth and poverty."