

THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS

NO ONE who gives a little serious thought to the prevailing conditions of life to-day can resist the conclusion that we are living in a critical time. These are the days when powerful corporations and combinations flourish, days of organized effort to crush competition, days of monumental extortion, of strongly entrenched iniquities that exact a heavy toll in money and in life, of multitudinous oppressions to support fictitious capital and of wide-spread contempt for the laws of justice and righteous living. These are days, too, when as never before in human history, increasing numbers of people, wise and unwise, are concerning themselves with social conditions, dedicating themselves to solve social problems, organizing themselves for social change, and endeavouring to apply the motives of religion to the problems of modern life.

While the continued and increasing development of the vast and varied resources of our country is heaping up wealth at an enormous rate, and while the abounding prosperity of our country makes us rejoice, there are many signs in our midst that are undeniably disquieting. We cannot for a moment doubt that in the large view of things we are moving toward the one far-off divine event toward which the whole creation moves. We have sufficient faith in God and in man to believe that in the long run error must give way to truth, and injustice and unrighteousness must give way to justice and righteousness. But we have read history enough to know that as humanity sweeps onward there are many lapses and reverses, and many peoples and nations who, having halted in the upward march, have been trampled in the dust of the dead ages. Whether it shall be so or not with