

# FEEDING THE HUNGRY

## The Sunset Club Discusses Charity at a Banquet

### EDITOR STEAD TALKS,

#### He Tells What the City Needs and How to Attain It

#### Many Ladies Listen to the Members and Guests Elaborate Their Views.

It was ladies' night at the Sunset Club.

The occasion brought out 750 ladies and gentlemen, who gathered in Landlord Parker's big dining-hall and partook of a sumptuous supper. This done, they spent the remainder of the evening in discussing how best to feed the hungry.

Apart from the importance of the subject dealt with the gathering was a unique one, even in the annals of the Sunset Club. Secretary Underwood ventured the statement that it was the biggest meeting the club ever had. Paul Gares, the veteran hotel clerk, who is an authority on such matters, said the array of female beauty present beat all records. It was what the Salvation Army people would call a "free and easy." Conventionality was thrown in the winds, and jollity and good fellowship reigned supreme. The menu, which was an artistic specimen of the printer's art, was interspersed with wise and witty sayings from Shakespeare, Pope, Leigh Hunt, and Sydney Smith. Each particular saw struck off in a sentence the good points of the particular dish to which it referred.

The menu and the subject of the evening were discussed with equal relish. The former also contained the latter, which was the pertinent question "What Shall We Do with Our Unemployed?" The seeming incongruity of the feast and the subject did not appear to trouble any of the speakers. Both men and women were heard, and while some of the speeches were ineffectual, many practical and timely suggestions were thrown out, which may bear fruit in the near future.

#### Opening of the Discussion.

The chair was taken by Arthur J. Eddy, and, after briefly introducing the subject, he introduced as the first speaker Professor Charles H. Henderson, of the University of Chicago. Professor Henderson occupies the chair of sociology in that institution, and his address, which was read, was a careful review of the unemployed problem. He said that after the temporary distress will have been relieved there will still remain permanent elements of misery as a part of the social fabric. Speaking of what should be done for the present emergency he said motive and method should go hand in hand and be linked together in one great civic league. The providing of work was what was most essential, and this might be done by improving the parks and repairing and cleaning the streets and alleys of the city.

"If you don't make work," said Professor Henderson, "your soup kitchens and relief stations will bring such a mountain of poverty on this city that it will not be able to crawl out from under it in twenty years."

Coming to statistics the speaker said there were only 40,000 vagrants in the United States, and they did not constitute the problem. It was the large numbers of honest working men who wanted work and could not get it.

W. T. Stead followed and, as usual, he succeeded in stirring up considerable opposition. He did not miss the opportunity to lecture Chicagoans on their shortcomings. "You are egotistic in your virtues, and you are glib in your views, and I don't know which you are proudest of," he said. "In your treatment of the homeless and destitute I have not seen a city in Europe so hard driven and so ill provided with the ordinary appliances of relief. In one of your worst police stations you herd the unemployed with criminals and use your palatial city hall as a casual ward for the homeless and destitute."

#### Some Crying Needs.

Then he quoted the well-known saying of Carlyle that if a horse were starving and had no owner he would be given a staple and a feed, but the more valuable hinged had to go naked. Answering the question how to find work for the unemployed, he said the city needed public lavatories, baths, and clean streets, and no better opportunity could be offered for having these things done.

In the latter part of his speech the London editor was frequently interrupted. He said the condition of the streets and alleys was such as to endanger life and health, and then added indignantly: "All this may be good if your purpose is to keep down the surplus population. You need a new Post office and police stations, and workhouses in every ward, where your people can go to without being sent into the 7,000 saloons of the city. Here is work for the unemployed."

He declared that hungry men would come, for it was natural for them to do so, and he hoped that Chicago would be spared the torch and the assassin's bullet, for such acts would destroy its credit and proud standing in the commerce of the world.

#### Trade and Preaching.

He said the city wanted a new Post office and new police stations, and a people's palace to take the place of the 7,000 saloons. All this would provide work enough if it were done. He closed with these words: "If we in this room were compelled to turn out tonight and walk the streets for one week in the garments of the unemployed, feeding as they feed, living as they live, hungering as they hunger, you would raise all the money wanted to employ them before New Year's Day."

Mr. Stead violated the rules of the club by appearing in evening dress, but he was forgiven and heartily applauded into the bargain.

Attorney David declared the criminal unemployed were labored in the community. Addresses were given by J. C. Stirling, A. Egan, A. W. Wright, Mrs. Florence Kelley, Mrs. Sterling, Dr. Sarah Lockett Stevenson, Miss Jane Addams, of the Hull House, and at the close Mr. Stead briefly replied. Mr. Wright answered the question by saying, "Do nothing." All the other speakers were in favor of doing something.