

rary palliative rather than a cure? Do they burn with a passion to wipe out poverty, inequality, wretchedness? Do they love their fellowman as real philanthropists should? How can they? A man that would dry the springs of idealistic inspiration can never be himself inspired or inspire others.

I am proud to mention tonight the name of a real Jewish philanthropist who passed into the larger world a few days ago. Joseph Fels was born a Jew, knew the history of his people and felt the glow of the great moral light that shone across the ages kindled by Israel's teachers of righteousness. He made a fortune in business, but he felt that to be a soap manufacturer and make a substance that would cleanse the body was not enough. He searched deeper and farther. He saw the great distress in the world. He saw that democracy and humanity had not yet entered the industrial realm. He felt that permanent justice and not temporary relief was needed. And so, like the great idealists of his people, he lifted his work to the heights.

Only from the peak of spirituality can men fling the purifying bolts to clear a stifling atmosphere of self-complacency. This did Joseph Fels accomplish. And thus was he in life and in his labors a real Jew and because he was a real Jew he lived the life of a real philanthropist.



### JEW AND ALSO CHRISTIAN.

Address of Herbert S. Bigelow at the Fels Memorial Meeting in Cincinnati, March 8, 1914.

In the account in the book of Matthew, of the burial of Jesus there is a sentence which forces itself upon my mind today as an appropriate text for a sermon in appreciation of the life of Joseph Fels. It is the fifty-seventh verse of the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew, where occurred these words: "And when evening was come, there came a rich man from Arimathaea named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple." Applying these words to him in whose memory we assemble today we must truthfully say: "There came a rich man from Philadelphia named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple."

With what propriety may we speak of Joseph Fels, the Jew, as a disciple of Jesus? With what propriety may we speak today of Joseph Fels, the Christian?

"Mr. Fels," Lincoln Steffens asked him one day, "what in your opinion is the mission of the Jews in the world?" It was a witty answer which this Jew gave to the question, but it was also a serious answer. "In my opinion," said he, "the mission of the Jews in the world is to teach Christians Christianity." I speak of Joseph Fels the Christian, because I believe that if the nominal disciples of Jesus, particularly the rich ones, were to follow

the example of Joseph Fels, they would all of them be better Christians.

It is not the mission of Jews to teach Christians Judaism. It is not the mission of Christians to teach Jews Christianity. It is the duty of Jews to strive for the realization of the noblest ideals of Judaism. It is the duty of Christians to strive for the realization of the noblest ideals of Christianity. In proportion as these ideals are realized, the differences between men will disappear, and they will find themselves in essential harmony of thought and purpose.

According to some conceptions of Judaism, doubtless, Mr. Fels could not even be called a Jew. It is certain that according to some conceptions of Christianity he would have resented being called a Christian.

It would not be fair to the memory of Joseph Fels to claim him as a disciple of Jesus or to connect this great Jewish citizen with Christianity unless it is understood that by Christianity we do not mean what some Jewish people here this afternoon may think we mean, or what many Christian people may think we mean.

A noted revivalist came to a town in Illinois where lived a Henry George man of my acquaintance. In a short time the town was churned into a lather of so-called religious excitement. Whatever it was, the whole town got it, and the revivalist said that it was Christianity. But my friend did not agree to that. He went to the meetings because, as he said, they did put on a good show. This friend of mine was a man of some consequence in the town and admittedly a good citizen. His presence at the meetings seemed to be a challenge to the Evangelist. One after another worked upon him, but he was unmoved. Finally the evangelist himself left the platform and made a personal appeal to my friend. He urged him to "go forward." "No," said he, "I could not do that, not even if all the rest of the town did. I do not believe what you preach and I will not pretend to believe it." "But," said the Evangelist as a final argument, "it will help your business. If you go forward it will be the talk of the town. It will help you in your business." My friend replied promptly and with heat, that the Evangelist had no right to make that kind of an appeal to him or to any man. "That," said he, "makes hypocrites of men, not Christians." Whereupon the Evangelist turned upon his heels and left him with this remark: "If you will not come to Jesus, then you can go to hell." If Joseph Fels had been in that meeting, he would have felt just as my friend did. If that is Christianity, then he was not a Christian.

Again, when we speak of Joseph Fels as a disciple of Jesus, it is due him that we should acknowledge the difference between that which Jesus taught, and that which other men have taught about Jesus.

For instance, in this same chapter of Matthew, from which we have quoted, there is the statement that on the instant that Jesus gave a loud cry from the cross and yielded up his spirit, great prodigies occurred. It is recorded that at that moment the veil of the temple was rent in two from top to bottom; that the earth did quake, that the rocks were rent, that the tombs were opened and that many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised and came forth from their graves.

Joseph Fels could not have believed that. I suppose that in these days nobody does believe it, except the man who has been taught from his childhood up that he must believe it.

Speculation about the nature of Jesus has developed strange theological doctrines, belief in which is assumed to be necessary to the faith of a Christian. This so-called Christian theology may still be the popular conception of Christianity. Of course, Joseph Fels was not a Christian in this conventional sense. He did not worship the Christ of theology; but is the Christ of theology the true Christ? Is he not a fantastic substitute for the real Jesus of history? This is an endless dispute and I have no interest to open it now. Each man may read the record for himself and each may have his own thought as to what sort of a man this Jew was whose name has been given to the Church of Christendom. I have my own thought as to what sort of a man Jesus was, and I can tell it very briefly.

I think He was this kind of a man, that if He were living among us now, He would not spend any of his time playing golf with Mr. Rockefeller. I believe that every Carnegie library would be a painful reminder to Him of the Homestead tragedy, although He might give Mr. Carnegie credit for his work in behalf of peace. But I think that He and Joseph Fels would have been great chums, and I believe that there is no Christian in America upon whom Jesus would have looked with greater approval than upon this Jew of Philadelphia, who, in spite of his riches, had entered into the fellowship of the true Jesus, had entered into the Kingdom of Heaven.

I believe that the aim of Jesus was to establish a new social order, based upon the sublime affirmation that men are of equal consequence as the children of a common heavenly Father, whose supreme law and pleasure is that His children shall be kind and just, one to another. Jesus was not a Socialist. He was not a Singletaxer. But His aim was, I believe, precisely that of the Singletaxers and Socialists of the present time. There was one phrase that was continually on his lips. He preached to men that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. The Kingdom of Heaven—the Kingdom of God—that was His slogan. For many centuries it has been taught that human nature is essentially bad, that the

world is hopelessly evil, and that man must look forward to another life for a redeemed society. In order to enjoy the happiness of this life to come, it has been taught that it was necessary for man to accept as a condition of his salvation, a certain set of theological opinions, which men in their weary speculations had woven about the personality of Jesus. All this teaching seems to me a sad perversion of that which Jesus taught. He cried that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. He taught men to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth." He taught that there is in the universe a soul, a God who cares. He taught that man's relation to this spirit of the universe is that of a son to a father. The business of the sons of God is to begin now, without waiting for Heaven hereafter, to build the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. If this is so, then Joseph Fels was a true disciple of Jesus, for his enthusiasm for the teachings of Henry George was based upon the belief that the application of these teachings to human society would lay the foundation of social justice upon which a new social order could be built, and the Kingdom of Heaven, as Jesus preached it, could be realized on the earth.

Joseph Fels believed that the greatest curse of our civilization is poverty, chronic poverty in the face of progress and plenty. He had the sensibilities and the imagination to feel in his soul this tragedy of the race. He could not understand how any man could pretend to be a good Jew or a good Christian and remain indifferent to the shocking waste and brutalization of human life caused by poverty.

On this subject he felt as intensely as did the poet Shelley, who wrote:

Thou knowest what a thing is Poverty  
Among the fallen on evil days  
'Tis Crime, and Fear, and Infamy,  
And houseless Want in frozen ways  
Wandering ungarmented, and Pain,  
And, worse than all, that inward stain,  
Foul, Self-contempt, which drowns in sneers  
Youth's starlight smile, and makes its tears  
First like hot gall, then dry forever!

Joseph Fels recognized the fact that poverty could be caused only by an unfair distribution of the world's goods. He understood that poverty could not possibly be abolished by any amount of charity. The real evil, as he saw it, is, that some of our institutions operate to cause an unjust distribution of the products of labor, so that some men get more than they are entitled to, while others receive less than they really earn. He saw no remedy therefor, except to go to this root evil and change the institution, so as to prevent men from getting what they do not rightfully earn.

It is strange that any intelligent person should question in his mind the soundness of this statement. Consider together, for instance, two men,

one of them the richest young man in America, and the other, the man who is regarded, by popular acclaim, as the most useful man in America. Consider young Astor, who at the age of twenty-one, is said to have come into the possession of a fortune of eighty million dollars, and Colonel Goethals, who for a salary of fifteen thousand dollars a year has directed the work of building the Panama Canal.

It will not be contended that young Astor has ever done a thing for society, to entitle him to that fortune or to any part of it. He has not earned a dollar. But to accumulate the Astor fortune, Colonel Goethals, receiving fifteen thousand dollars a year and not spending a cent of his salary, would have had to begin work seventy-one years before Noah was born—assuming the correctness of the Bible chronology. Put these two men in our dollar scales and see how they weigh. Young Astor with his income on his eighty million, receives from society, for doing nothing at all, as much as two hundred and twenty-six Colonel Goethals receive for an organizing and engineering ability which has commanded the admiration of the world.

Joseph Fels believed that poverty is due to unwise economic institutions by which an unfair distribution of the world's goods is made. To change these institutions and thereby to abolish poverty, this was the all-consuming purpose of his life. This man set to the rich men of America and of the world an example which is of profound significance. He believed that the sanest and kindest thing that a rich man can do who really wants to be of the greatest use possible in this world is, not to give of his substance to relieve a few of the victims of poverty, but to employ his time and talent and means to create a public opinion that will be intelligent enough to abolish the social institutions that interfere with a just distribution of wealth.

Many men have acquired the art of accumulating fortunes, but Joseph Fels, I believe, is justly entitled to this distinction—he was conspicuous among all the millionaires of the world in that he alone had acquired the fine art of spending his fortune.

Much, however, as we approve of his kind of philanthropy, there is another thing that is even more remarkable and admirable about Joseph Fels. The most remarkable thing about him is that, being a millionaire, he should have been able to see the essential injustice of the system by which his fortune was made. Men do not like to admit that they have not earned their millions. There is more unction for their soul in the current philosophy that great fortunes are the reward of great ability, that poverty is the penalty of incompetence, that it is magnificent of the rich man to condescend to feed the poor some of his substance. This current philosophy asks no ugly

questions about how the man got his money. It concedes to the rich the justice of their title, and flatters and fawns upon them for all their condescensions and charity.

Joseph Fels believed that his fortune could not have been accumulated in a society founded upon the philosophy of Henry George. He looked upon himself, not with satisfaction, as a person whose ability was worth millions more than the general run of men, but rather he regarded himself as a beneficiary of social injustice, and felt that he owed the world not charity, but restitution. It was not restitution for his own soul's sake that concerned him, but restitution for society's sake. What he aimed to do was to find a way of making restitution that would be of the greatest and most permanent benefit to the world. His way was to use his fortune for the overthrow of the institutions which made his fortune possible.

Joseph Fels might have divided his wealth among his few employes. But what he felt called upon to do was to use his means for the education of the public, to teach the voters to understand what is the trouble with their social order and how it should be changed. This plan involves not only good intentions, but a sound, practical judgment.

This Joseph Fels way is a noble expression of that ideal of justice so eloquently proclaimed by the great prophets of Israel. It is also as fine an expression of the spirit of Jesus as the world has seen. This man gave, not some of his money merely, he gave it all. He gave his entire income. He was more frugal than a twenty-five dollar a week clerk.

The life of Joseph Fels calls to mind the story of the young ruler, who asked the Good Teacher what he must do to inherit eternal life. "Thou knowest the commandments?" answered the Teacher. "Yes," the young man had kept these from his youth up. But these commandments were a code of ethics for the individual life. These the young man had observed. Yet there was one thing he lacked. What was it? He lacked a social conscience. He must rise above this plane of individual righteousness. He must cease to think of himself as a rich man. He must look with compassion upon the multitude. He must regard himself humbly as one of the brothers of men, anxious to please his God by working mightily for the cause of truth and justice and humanity.

The Great Teacher, to rouse this social conscience startled the rich young man with these words: "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when the rich young man heard these things, he became exceedingly sorrowful. And Jesus seeing him said, "How hardly shall they that have riches, enter into the Kingdom of Heaven!"

Joseph Fels, in the course of his earthly pilgrimage, asked that same eternal question. What must he do to fulfill his destiny? What must he do to feel that he had spent his days usefully and nobly for the good of men? To him there came the same answer. "Give all that thou hast, all of thy time, all of thy fortune, all of thyself, to feed the poor, and give thy judgment too, and spend thy fortune in the way that according to thy judgment promises the most certain and permanent help to the poor." And when Joseph Fels heard this answer, he did not turn away sorrowful, because of his riches. Instead, this Jew took the Cross that many a Christian will not touch, and followed, from that hour until he left us, the path revealed to him, the path of justice, which is almost wholly forsaken by the rich, but which alone leads to the gates of the Kingdom of God.

The social aspirations of Joseph Fels are finely expressed by a story with which Mr. Lloyd George concluded at Glasgow, on the 4th of February of this year.

"I remember," said he, "a story told me in my youth of a very remarkable, but rather quaint old Welsh preacher. He was conducting a funeral service over a poor fellow who had had a very bad time through life without any fault of his own. They could hardly find a space in the churchyard for his tomb. At last they got enough to make a brickless grave, amid towering monuments that pressed upon it, and the old minister, standing above it said: 'Well, Davie, you have had a narrow time right through life and you have a very narrow place in death; but never you mind, old friend, I can see a day dawning for you when you will rise out of your narrow bed, and call out to all these big people, "Elbow room for the poor!"'"

That was what Joseph Fels believed to be necessary—elbow-room for the poor. He gave princely sums all over the world, to show people how to get elbow-room for the poor. He supported with great zeal the Lloyd George Budget and the Land Value Taxation movement in England. It is because of labor such as his, that there is ground today for the hope and the confidence expressed by Mr. Lloyd George in the last sentence of his Glasgow address: "Ah, I can see the Day of Resurrection, the dawn of the resurrection of the oppressed in all lands already gilding the hilltops."

The hope that gleams from the hilltops of the future, what is it but the light of these beautiful souls of men who have loved justice and toiled for freedom with all their might?

O why and for what are we waiting,  
While our brothers droop and die,  
And on every wind of the heavens  
A wasted life goes by?  
How long shall they reproach us

Where crowd on crowd they dwell,  
Poor ghosts of the wicked city,  
The gold-crushed hungry hell?  
It is we must answer and hasten  
And open wide the door  
For the rich man's hurrying terror  
And the slow-foot hope of the poor.  
Yea, the voiceless wrath of the wretched,  
And their unlearned discontent,  
We must give it voice and wisdom  
Till the waiting tide be spent.  
Come then, since all things call us,  
The living and the dead,  
And o'er the weltering tangle .  
A glimmering light is shed,  
Come join in the only battle  
Wherein no man can fall,  
Where, who fadeth and dieth,  
Yet his deed shall still prevail.



### JOSEPH FELS.

A Tribute by Laurie J. Quinby.

When Truth's eternal message tells  
Of those who fought in Freedom's cause  
For higher Justice, better laws,  
Fame's crown shall rest on Joseph Fels.

Throughout the world today we mourn  
The loss of one whose highest aim  
Did economic truth proclaim—  
While in this world he made sojourn.

The truth of Singletax he saw—  
Its equal good 'twixt man and man,  
With helpful urge he sought to plan—  
Extending sway through peace and law.

When Strife's black flag's forever furled,  
And men-rejoice that man is free,  
The name of Joseph Fels shall be  
An honored one throughout the world.

When woman shall have ceased to grieve,  
And little children run and play,  
To waiting dusk from break of day,  
His noble aim shall men believe.

His mighty arm is stilled tonight;  
Upon his eye, whose gleam spurred all  
To higher purpose, now the pall  
Of heavy death has dimmed the light.

Now rest in peace, great-hearted friend,  
Content in thought of work performed,  
For nobler systems well reformed,  
Through thy great efforts without end.



The abolition of poverty. Not its relief by doles and soup kitchens; not its patching by charity organization societies, but its abolition.—Joseph Fels.



I want to make *me* impossible, which means that society should make it impossible for any man to accumulate a million dollars in money or property through special privilege.—Joseph Fels.