



Considerable comment has been heard this week over the fact that a political meeting was held last Sunday night in one of our leading churches. Dr. Lasby and some members of the St. Paul M. E. church will doubtless resent the

statement that a political meeting was held in the church, and it is only fair to say that the church authorities in granting the use of the edifice for the meeting of the rescue society probably did not know that the gathering was destined to become the opening political meeting of the spring campaign. If Mayor Weir had not been present it is doubtful if the meeting would have had any political significance. But His Honor, with all of the tremendous audacity and reckless egotism that characterize this conspicuous personage, was there, and he spoke. It followed as a matter of course that from the minute he commenced to speak the affair became a political event. As a matter of fact the first gun in the Weir campaign for a third term was fired at this meeting.

Mayor Weir, with a sublime effrontery that must either be the offspring of ignorance or knavery, occupied the attention of the congregation by recounting some of his Herculean efforts and accomplishments in the cause of morality. He told what he had done in the past and intimated what he would do in the future, his whole speech being a cunning and more or less subtle appeal for the favor and votes of those present in his impudent attempt to further fasten himself to public office at the expense of the community.

The mayor in the course of his stump speech made one statement that is so glaringly untrue that it should not be permitted to go unrefuted. His hearers were given to understand that he commenced what is known as the "moral crusade" entirely of his accord, and he claimed the credit for the origin and maintenance of the movement. What are the facts? The events to which the mayor referred are of so recent a date that many persons remember perfectly under just what circumstances the mayor inaugurated the crusade. An effort was made to give sacred Sunday evening concerts in this city and the mayor, it will be remembered, was horror-stricken. With houses of ill fame running at full blast and unmolested, with gambling establishments having their own way, with Sunday liquor selling and notorious Sunday night dances in the down town blocks, the mayor singled out these sacred concerts and waged a terrific warfare on them. THE COURIER at that time pointed out the mayor's inconsistency in a manner vigorous enough to call forth bitter denunciation and George Woods introduced a resolution in the city council that placed the mayor in an embarrassing position. Rev. Shephard and other ministers took up the theme, and finally after much delay, the mayor, in order to appear consistent, inaugurated the crusade against vice, because, he said, "the people demanded it." He didn't pretend at the time that his action was the result of his own aversion for wickedness, and strong desire for moral reform. And his claim as made at the Methodist church last Sunday evening is certainly not a flattering tribute to the intelligence of the people of Lincoln.

The churches, by the way, cannot be too careful in preserving their dignity, and in discountenancing all efforts to crowd personal or party politics, of the Weir or any other brand, into the pulpit.

Literature and the drama seem to be draining into the channel of showy nothingness through the funnel of the epigram. The *fin de siècle* books and the *fin de siècle* plays are nothing more nor less than an agglomeration of epigrammatic nonsense. There is a showing of wickedness; but these things do not shock us because they

are so manifestly forced and unreal. Oscar Wilde's play's "Lady Windermere's Fan" and "A Woman of No Importance," and the books like "A Yellow Aster" and "The Green Carnation" are being followed by a mass of glittering rubbish that is nauseating to a healthy person. The cable informs us that Wilde has just brought out a new play entitled, "An Ideal Husband." A newspaper correspondent says: "At present not much is known of its plot, but it is believed that the author has still clung to his former plan of making up for lack of incident by smartness of dialogue. Just how London will accept a continuation of the epigram remains to be seen." Some of the choicest specimens of Wilde's so-called wit are given herewith: "I hate being educated." "So do I. It puts one quite on a level with the lower classes, doesn't it?" "I adore political parties; they are the only place left to us where people don't talk politics." "The sum Baron Arnheim gave me I have given away twice over in public charities since then." "Dear me! What a lot of harm you must have done, Robert." "I usually say what I think." "A great mistake nowadays. It makes one so liable to be misunderstood." "Did you know her well?" "So little that I got engaged to be married to her once." "She wore too much rouge last night and not quite enough clothes. That is always a sign of despair in women." "She looks like a woman with a past, doesn't she? Most pretty women do. But there is a fashion in pasts just as there is a fashion in frocks. Perhaps Mrs. Cheveley's past is merely one from Paris. They are excessively popular now a days." "Dear Gertrude you belong to the new generation. In my time, of course, we were taught not to understand anything. That was the old system. I assure you that the amount of things I and my poor dear sister were taught not to understand was quite extraordinary." "Morality is simply the attitude we adopt towards people whom we personally dislike." "Fashion is what one wears oneself. What is unfashionable is what other people wear." "Vulgarity is simply the conduct of other people." "Romance should never begin with sentiment. It should begin with science and end with a settlement." "Women who have common sense are so curiously plain, aren't they? They always look like second-hand dictionaries." "No woman, plain or pretty, has any common sense at all. Common sense is the privilege of our sex." "A woman's life revolves on curves of emotions." "A strong man thinks only about his future. A weak man thinks about his past." "Youth is not an affectation, youth is an art."

Waiter Damrosch made his first appearance as an actress in New York city, Friday January 18, appearing as "Trilby" at the grave Century club, an institution which usually sits, like gray haired Saturn, quiet as a stone in west Forty-third street and contains most of the wise and dull men of the city. Each year the club loses its solemn character and discovers how foolish it can be. It organizes a performance with a stage and all appurtenances. The man who has the most pleasantly foolish idea is the honored man of the Century. There is not the slightest doubt that Damrosch wears this year's palm. When the curtain went up, a very tall person with very big bones, dressed in the well known Trilby costume, tripped forward. It was Damrosch, and he was applauded so loudly and so long that many feared he would never be able to make his voice heard. He did make it heard, and he sang, "Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt," in a voice so terrible and so free from music that even Trilby, in her hypnotised state, could not have touched it. When he had finished the simple ballad, many aged men of the Century were in tears brought on by laughter. It was a perfect and beautiful success. At the end of the song Damrosch, who appeared in his bare feet, lifted the sole of one foot towards the spectators and upon it was written "No. 1." This seemed to the wise men of the Century almost the funniest thing they had ever seen or dreamed of, and they laughed more than ever. Before Damrosch could begin his encore, a club member, disguised as Dr. Parkhurst, came out and said: "Unless this show is made more indecent it must stop." Then a man who most beautifully imitated Anthony Comstock, climbed upon the stage and announced that he was Anthony Comstock, and that he would not allow such a heartless parody upon a minister of the gospel. The beauty of this disguise was apparent when a member of the club, an old judge, showed that he was completely taken in by the good acting of the indignant Comstock. He rose in his place in the audience, declared that it was a private club, could do what it pleased and wanted no suggestions or rebukes from outsiders. The indignant judge was soothed and Mr. Damrosch sang his encore.