

city in which a woman lives is her home. The municipal government of the town concerns her and her children as deeply as it concerns any man. The State in which she lives is also her home, and every affair of state is as much her affair as the darning of the children's stockings or the sewing on the family buttons.

The country in which a woman lives is also her home. To every American woman "America" means "Home," and national affairs ought to interest her quite as much as the latest fashions in shirtwaists or hats.

There are 365 days in a year, and with this time at her disposal a woman who understands her duty can attend to the affairs of the house in which she lives and at the same time play a citizen's part in the management of her larger home, her city, her State, her country.—Lida Calvert Obenchain.

THE WAGE SYSTEM AND WAGE SLAVERY.

Editorial by Judson Grenell in Saturday Evening Blade.

Wage slavery is supposed to be closely allied to the wage system. In fact, many who write for labor papers use the terms as synonymous. They are regarded as twins. To work for wages is to be a "wage slave." The employer is the "slave owner," the superintendent or foreman is the "slave driver," and the workingman or woman is the "slave." So common have these forms of expression become that many take it for granted that the wage system really is slavery, and that the only way to overthrow such a system is by a revolution in industry that will abolish employers and employes as separate classes, and unite them in one.

And yet there is nothing cruel, or inhuman, or slavish, in the wage system. In fact, it is as innocent of injustice as is the bargaining over a counter for a piece of cotton cloth or a spool of thread. So long as a would-be purchaser can buy the cloth or leave it alone, or the would-be seller can advance or lower the price of the spool of thread; so long, in fact, as either seller or purchaser is free to exchange or refuse to exchange, the natural higgling of the market prevents exactions on the part of either purchaser or seller. It produces an equilibrium of cost, price and value.

The wage system, of itself, is not wage slavery. It is in practice as well as theory, where there are right conditions, as equitable a way of disposing

of one's labor and skill, and of purchasing human exertion, as is the bargaining over the counter of the dry-goods merchant, or in the grocery store, or the meat market.

What makes slavery of the present method of bargaining with the employer is not the system, but the fact that the two parties are not on an equal footing. The glory—or, at least, one of the glories—of the trade-union movement is that it has in a measure restored this equilibrium, and is likely to do still better work in this direction as great corporations with extensive plants replace the small concerns. The labor union is welding the wage-workers into compact bodies, able to exert a pressure in the direction of equitable bargaining. It has, in fact, deprived unscrupulous employers of some of their power to impose unjust conditions, and in so far as it has done this it has eliminated wage slavery from the system.

It is a fact, however, that the wage system, under present economic conditions, has in it the elements of wage slavery. These economic conditions make the difference between free bargaining and restricted bargaining; between equality and inequality; between the power to demand and enforce just compensation, and being the victims of those who, owning the tools, can starve into submission the possessor alone of labor strength and industrial skill.

Slavery consists of being deprived of the right to work for one's self. The wage system cannot do this unless it is buttressed and protected by laws and customs preventing the worker employing himself. Give the laborer absolute freedom of self-employment and no employer, no matter how strong may be his desire, can buy labor except at a price equal to its value in exchange. That is to say, the laborer will then absorb, in wages, the full value of his labor, and will be able to exchange it in the market for as much labor strength and skill in the shape of goods or products as he himself has created.

Machinery in itself has no power to enslave. It only has power to employ. Capital—another name for machinery used to produce wealth—can enslave no one only as it is given abnormal privileges. To free the laborer, then, it is only necessary to restore to him the power to make an equal bargain, and this can be accomplished in great part by restoring to him the use of the soil. Until this is done he will be at a disadvantage that trade unions can

only partially overcome. He will be a "slave," not because of the wage system, but because he is prevented, if he should so desire, from employing himself.

TRUE STORY OF THE CHICAGO STRIKE.

Part of an article in Public Opinion (New York) of June 10, 1905, by Luke Grant, a well-known Chicago newspaper man whose reputation for ability and fairness is without reproach.

Nineteen clothing cutters, members of the United Garment Workers of America, left their places in the clothing department of Montgomery Ward & Co., December 15, 1904. Little notice was taken of the strike. It received a four-line mention in the newspapers and that was all. Nearly four months later, after the places of the strikers had long been filled and the strike itself regarded as a "closed incident," it plunged Chicago into one of the worst industrial conflicts in its history. Ten human lives have been sacrificed; scores of persons have been maimed and injured in street riots and blockades; bitter race prejudice has been engendered; business losses have run up into the millions of dollars. The city itself, seriously embarrassed by lack of funds under ordinary conditions, has had to expend \$50,000 for additional police protection. Special deputy sheriffs have cost Cook county an equal amount.

For what? asks the average citizen. Because union teamsters sympathize with union garment workers? Is there not some hidden significance behind this titanic struggle that has not yet come to light? The strike of the garment workers was just. No matter what the clothing manufacturers say, their main object was to disrupt the garment workers' organization and establish the "open shop." In the clothing industry the "open shop" frequently means the sweatshop, and it was against this that the garment workers struck.

The firm of Montgomery Ward & Co. employed but a few cutters. The garments were made up in outside establishments. About four weeks after the garment workers' strike began in the shops controlled by the National Wholesale Tailors' association, the firm of Montgomery Ward & Co., not at that time a member of the association, began sending out garments to be made up in nonunion shops. The union cutters objected, although there was nothing in their contract specifically prohibiting such a course. Robert J. Thorne, secretary of the company, says he offered to arbitrate the dispute in accordance with the provisions of the contract. This the union men deny, and say they