

## DOES NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING PAY?

One of the catch-words of the day is that "It pays to advertise."

Let's consider that. Take newspaper advertising—it does pay the advertiser and it pays the newspaper. But does it pay humanity?

Originally the newspaper was a pamphlet, published to convey information to the people. In its early stages it was a friend of the people, and its success depended upon its being true to the people.

Finally shrewd merchants found that a good way to increase business was to tell the readers of a newspaper in its columns of the bargains they had to offer. And so newspaper advertising grew.

But as it grew, competition among newspapers to make money out of advertising grew. The desire to get more circulation was governed by the desire to make more money; and the paper with the largest circulation, as a rule, got the highest advertising rate.

In the competition for circulation, newspapers cut down the price until most newspapers were sold for a cent. With large advertising volume, there came a point at which the paper was actually sold at a loss, so far as the cost of white paper was concerned. But the advertising receipts made up for that loss and made a profit besides.

Then advertising became the big consideration, and the control of many newspapers passed from the editorial to the business office. Editors were not permitted to print news that might offend advertisers and cut off advertising revenue. The interests of the readers, the public, were subordinated to those of the business men who were paying large sums to the paper monthly for advertising.

And then the point was reached where advertising did not pay the public, however much it paid the newspaper owner and the advertiser.

Chicago is undoubtedly the worst city in the world in this regard, for here the newspaper publishers organized a trust of their own; and no matter how much they pretend to fight one another, they stand together in defending the private and selfish interests of their advertisers.

Naturally the biggest advertiser enjoyed the greatest privileges. And it didn't take public service corporations long to find out that the easiest and safest way to rob the public was to become big newspaper advertisers.

And the newspapers with powerful influence learned to use it in other ways to further enrich their owners. The control of public officials by the Tribune and News secured for them leases for nearly a hundred years on land in the heart of Chicago that belongs to the schools, at a rental many thousands of dollars annually less than