

wages and vice are closely related. The natural attraction of sex is to them a reasonable explanation for social evils. They point to the fact that women in all walks of life—women above want—women of beauty and bounty—women with health and wealth—women whose only worry is to find a way to spend their time and money—go astray in greater proportion than the shop girls struggling with the problem of long hours and low wages.

Admitting their contention as correct, is it not far preferable that a woman be permitted to follow the instinct of a healthy, satisfied nature, by choice, rather than be forced into a life of shame through necessity forced upon her by greed?

A woman surrounded with happiness and luxury, consuming rich food, likely develops the senses leading to the forbidden acts of society more rapidly and to a greater extent than those who are poorly fed and overworked. Hence a comparison between these two does not disprove the statement that low wages and long hours are strong factors in the moral degradation of our working women.

But whether it is true or not, no one should seriously proclaim that a working girl should not be given every opportunity and assistance to permit her to remain good if so inclined, and not to be forced by sheer necessity to give even a smile, much less sell her virtue to provide the necessary comforts of life.

Society imposes upon women a moral standard of conduct which the average underpaid wage-working woman can only maintain by heroic self-denial, and if through her enforced weakness and necessities she fails, society consoles her with severe condemnation.

Society assumes the right to fix her moral standard, but refuses to assist her in securing conditions by and through which that standard might be upheld. In this emergency the trades-union movement rolls up its

sleeves, clears the deck and takes up the voyage where society abandons the ship.

With the assistance of the trades union the women can and will succeed. It permits them to meet the test. In it they learn their duties and obligations, their right and their might, how to secure it and how to maintain it. Society may propose, but a good trades union will dispose.

That these organizations of women are doing an immense amount of good, not only for themselves but for mankind in general, needs no argument. The good women are here and organized. Among them may be women in the boot and shoe trade, the binding girls, the box-makers, the garment workers, the necktie makers, the pocketbook makers, the stenographers, straw and felt hat workers, suspender workers, teachers' federation, women's central bodies and many others—all skilled and drilled.

These organizations have the will and the force and intelligence to do and to dare. For this reason I suggest that these various women's organizations be given the fund to be used for the erection of a women's labor temple, where they can meet, plan and voice their needs and wants; where rest may be furnished the weary, and the pangs of worry be soothed and lessened, and the dread of hunger removed, and where life and hope will be instilled in the minds and hearts of those laden with sorrow, and their present made worth while.

Let them have the means to erect a modest, sanitary, fireproof temple, dedicated to the women workers of Chicago, and it will be a monument whose sentiment and purpose will be more lasting and give greater importance and inspiration to the good women and men of Chicago of today and the days to come, than anything done in the past to perpetuate the glories and grandeur of the World's Fair. Very truly,

F. G. H.