Memo - Women and Industry.

1-B

The challenge to women to prove that they are as fit, or fitter, for active life of the world, business and industrial particularly, is loud in these days, louder than it has been since the War. The doors were flung open so wide to women in the War, they so took away the breath of men by their spirit, courage, intelligence in tackling all sorts of men's jobs and actually doing the work, that there was a burst of confidence in the more militant of the sex. "We have proven our equality, shown our metal. Henceforth we will stand on a par with men in the industrial and business world."

The War is seven years over and no small part of the disillusionment of the whole dreadful business, is that now that it is over, things have swung back largely to the old plain. Moreover, while women work in the War and it was astonishing what she did, she still is far in industry and business from a place of equality. The point which stirs her to bitterness is her inability, in spite of her demonstrations that she has made, to command wages. The cynical do not fail to remark that this insistance on wages shows that she goes into industry for returns alone, that if the thing

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

in itself interested her as much as it does man, that her claim to equality would be better, but certainly she has a good alibi here. There are men in business, of course, for love of work, but the most of them work for need for for the love of money. So there is not so much in that. Generally speaking, the large effect is that she is regarded still as cheap labor and that every time the investigators go hunting to find out just how the matter stands, the fact that she is cheap labor is proven in a startling way. Mary Anderson, the head of the Woman's Department of the United States Department of Labor and whom nobody knows more about the matter says that, while there do not exist wide spread facts on comparative wages, she thinks that women generally speaking are paid about 25% to 50% less than men. That is serious (See clerical figures * Reports of Bureau of Labor.) There the body stands, a great body - five million and more - shot through with brilliant individual examples of achievement, backed by its splendid war demonstration, and yet an inferior body industially. What is it? Is there something in the woman's nature that prevents her as a group, not as individual, becoming stady, interested, ambitious industial workers, Thus [redacted] for flat equality on

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.