

MEMO - Women and Industry. - Nelle Swartz -

She is still with the Labor Board. She says she stays on because she knows that men do not like to have a woman on the Board and she thinks they ought to have one on the Board, whether they want it or not. She is, of course, an unusually modest person about herself. She is probably abler than most of the men and undoubtedly more devoted to her job. I take this, not from what she says, but from the general situation. We talked of the comparative salaries in the State. She says that there are men on the Board doing no more, and she tells me no better work, who are getting as much as \$1,200 to \$1,500. per year more than she. She thinks that women's salaries have increased substantially since the War but there are inequalities between men and women for the same kind of work. She says that the inequalities are not as great in this State as Mary Anderson reckons them to be in her recent letter to me. She is sending me a study that was made two years ago by the State Board (See that this is received)

I asked her about her experience with women as heads of businesses. She says there are a number. The one she is most interested in is a Miss Cass, of Buffalo, who is the head of one of the largest Box Manufacturing Companies in the State, one of the largest in the

country, the Burte or Burke Company. She thinks very highly of her as an employer. Very interesting in regard to the change in the Box Making industry. They find by investigation that while the output has been enormously increased that the number of operatives has been decreased by something like 60%. They were impelled to this examination by the recent strike which went on for nineteen weeks and were the men lost out. She says that she sought from the manufacturers the reason for this and they showed her how much machines had been improved until they were doing many tasks which formerly required hands, also that they had been perfected so that several machines could be cared for by one man. This displaced several workers that were required when each machine had to have its own operator. She says there are many displacements of this kind going on in all factories. We talked of the displacements that are caused by the change of fashion. She had experience with the numbers of women that were thrown out when the beaded gowns were abandoned. She spoke also of the displacements on the abandonment of the artificial flowers. Very few are used today so that many girls and women who had been trained for this work, for it required skilled workers, had been thrown out of a job. Many of the tasks that are

abandoned because of the vagaries of fashion, displace women who have learned the particular trade required and who know no other. In certain cases the training of the finger, the sense of touch, has made it difficult for them to adapt themselves to other varieties of tasks, although of course, it is not impossible.

She speaks of the extraordinary patience and self-sacrifice of the Box Makers Strikers who held out almost at starvation point, for what they believed was the right principle. She says that they are making many investigations into occupational diseases, particularly of the poisoning, as in the case of Benzol, a new substance is used without any idea of whether it will be dangerous to the operators, that it is only by experience that they learn this. In the case of Benzol, investigation has shown that perhaps half of the workers are seriously poisoned. In the American Can Co. they have abandoned its use altogether because of this fact. She says that is is ~~generak~~ considered too little is known about Occupational diseases and their causes.