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The Unequal Pay Envelope

She was a nice girl.- You knew it at a glance, - trim, healthy, trustworthy; and you liked her none the less because at that moment she was outspokenly indignant.

"B. & B's have given me that position as a ledger clerk I've been after so long," she told me - I knew her to be admirably fitted for the work - "I am to be paid \$24.00 a week. But what do you think? Jimmie D. was taken on at the same time, for the same work, at \$28.00! And it's not only that, but later, when there's an opening higher up, no matter how well I have done, no matter if I have proved myself better than he, do you suppose I will get the first chance? No! It will be he and they will tell me if I complain that I am doing well 'for a woman!' It's not fair."

I had come to congratulate Mary B. on finally getting into a great concern on which she had a sharp eye for a year or more. I had heard her say repeatedly she'd take less money than she was getting for "just a chance." Her reasons had seemed sound to me. For several years she had been stenographer, filing clerk, book-keeper and "handy man" in a small but healthy business. She liked the work and her employer, but she had gone as far as she could. She was restless. It was not the money. It was opportunity - a place where she could stretch her ardent young ambition, exercise her boundless energy. She wanted to be connected with a

"big thing" - "something that hummed" as she expressed it. B. & B's, she told me, was organized for advancement. "They want you to work up - are looking for business talent. It's the most wonderful system you ever heard of. Jobs all classified, divided and sub-divided - you can come in as a typist and climb to a Chief Clerkship." 'Chief Clerkship' seemed to be the top notch of her dream. "I know I can get on there," and as a final proof of her faith she always added, "I will take less than I am getting at the start." And she had - \$11.00 a week less!

When I learned my young friend had finally succeeded I called to congratulate her; but instead of the jubilant satisfaction I had expected, here was irritated discontent. Where she had formerly been confident, I found her despondent, discouraged.

"But the system you told me about," I said, - "the logical promotion on merit, the eagerness of the business for new talent, what has happened? Have they given it up? Or are they slowing down? Business poor?"

"Nothing of the sort. They are growing as fast as ever. and Miss Kinkle, the employment manager, says they all believe more than ever in the merit system; but it is gentlemen first - Miss Kinkle says that herself - not ladies. That boy will be raised before I am - I know it - because he's a boy and I'm a girl. It isn't fair."

It seemed a matter for examination. Here was a fine and plucky young woman, set on making a first class record in a

department of business for which she had fitted herself, with all her enthusiasm oozing out, and that at a moment when she had obtained something she had been eagerly seeking for over a year. What had she learned that had so disturbed her. And could she be reassured? Women did rise to the heights at which she aimed, did it in this very concern. Was not the possibility as great for her as for those who had succeeded? She would have been the first to say, Yes. What angered her was not that a girl could not and did not rise, but that she could not and did not rise as easily as a boy - was not considered as valuable as a boy, even if she turned out equal or better work on the same job - that their unequal pay envelopes proved.

But how to get at the reasons. Where should one begin? There must be reasons. Women have become too valuable in business and industrial life to be treated cavalierly. Moreover, I knew - better than my young friend did - that B. & B's tried to be just in their dealings with women. Were they falling back on the superstition that a woman couldn't do a man's work in an office, or had they something that Mary B. and I could lay hold of, and if we were fair-minded, admit was at least a partial explanation?

But where to begin? For conversation's sake, I asked - "How did there happen to be a place for you? Did they make a position or was there a vacancy?"

"A vacancy. Sallie G. resigned. She came into B. & B's ten years ago as a filing clerk. She didn't know anything. They educated her, pushed her on. It was what she told me about them

that made me so keen to get in."

"But why did she leave?" I was still making conversation, but the answer brought a glimmer of light.

"To marry."

"Do many girls leave to marry?"

"They're always marrying, so Miss Kinkle says. She asked me if I was engaged, said she couldn't take me if I were. But I don't see what that has to do with it. That boy (she was still too irritated at her friend's superior chance to call him Jimmie, as she usually did) - that boy will marry - expects to when he next gets a raise - told me so himself."

"And if you did marry, would you leave like Salli G., or stay on?"

"Leave, I hope! I wouldn't want a double job. But what has that got to do with it? I'm paid for my daily work and I ought to have equal pay and equal chance - the future has nothing to do with it."

I couldn't agree. We argued it out. It needs to be argued out occasionally to persuade even the convinced woman who suffers from the unequal pay envelope that wages are determined not merely by what you can do in a day but partly by the promise of what you can do in the future. All wideawake concerns are on the watch for fresh material - promising new talent - unusual energy and interest. The future depends on them. When they think they have found qualities of value they keep an eye on the one who exhibits

them - help him along. Into their calculations must always enter the chance of losing the chosen person. If it is little, i.e., if they think they can hold him, he is more valuable than if they are doubtful about it. A man is a better risk than a woman of equal talent. Marriage increases rather than depreciates his value. It ties him closer to his office, makes him more determined to rise. Marriage generally takes her out - for a time at least - and if she doesn't drop out at the start, the probability is that she will disappear sooner or later. That fact lessens her potential value. Marriage has made him more stable, her less stable. My young friend had collided with a fact of life which she had always refused to consider, that her pay envelope and her advancement suffer from the different effect marriage has on her future and that of a man. The fact that marriage does not always take a woman away from the desk or the machine does not as yet materially alter the fact.

"But why should I, who am not of the 'marrying kind' suffer because other women are?" my young friend groaned. She was harboring a delusion, and if she had searched her soul she would have owned up to it. She is the marrying kind - every woman is - even to the end!

"Maybe it does have something to do with it," Mary B. reluctantly agreed, "but there's another reason that I have thought more about. Girls are easier satisfied with a job than boys. Let them find one they like, where the boss is all right and the pay good and you can't budge them. They don't want to do better.

There's just such a girl here. I feel as she was keeping me back. She has a good job of course but no better than the one I left. And mine was more interesting - I did more things. She looks after one of the officers, takes his letters, fixes up his desk, keeps his bank book, buys his theatre tickets, orders his car - a regular office valet, I call her. She knows all his ways and nobody can get by her to him - it makes her feel important. She lords it over us all because she's his secretary. Don't think about her future - don't think about mine. Of course the man doesn't object to her burying herself in his office. The best man in the world isn't unselfish enough to push a woman into a bigger position if she has been trained to suit him. He's selfish about it. No conscience - no sense of responsibility. Just hangs onto her because she makes things easy for him. She's 'indispensable,' he says.

"If he had a man as valuable as she is to him, do you suppose he'd hang onto him? Never! He'd push him out, no matter whether the man wanted to go or not. He would see he owed it to the business. He has a conscience about men getting on. He hasn't about women. He don't take them seriously enough. That's one reason we girls shouldn't sit on these pretty jobs. When they find us fighting our way up, whether they like it or not, they'll take us more seriously. That's why I won't stay in a place where I've mastered the tasks."

I listened with sympathy to her outburst. It would calm her. And she was right. The business world is full of these sleek office cats, contributing greatly to the apparent masculine efficiency

and to the notion that women lack initiative in business.

But another point in my friend's case stirred my curiosity. She had been given a position vacated by a friend who had grown up in the concern. Now, there were several girls in positions immediately below the one vacated. Why, in an establishment priding itself on its system of filling vacancies from its own ranks did not one of the girls in line get the place? Mary B. could not tell me. "I don't believe it was just because Sallie G. wanted me to have it. It looks like favoritism, don't it? I hate girls who don't think of other girls. But I was so eager to push in here I never asked or wondered if I was getting something that belonged to somebody else. I wish you would go and talk to Miss Kinkle and find out. I'll worry now until I know. Miss Kinkle will tell you straight - she's always straight."

I knew about Miss Kinkle - knew that she was all Mary B. claimed. B. & B's employment manager was one of the proofs that industry is taking women more seriously than it once did. She is also a proof of the way women of special cultivation are blazing paths in the hitherto uncharted forests of industry, bringing qualities particularly their own to one of its latest professions - the profession that generally labors under the uninteresting title of "Employment Manager."

Roughly, its business is to select people for jobs rather than to pitch them into them without any examination as to fitness - to steer them when once they are taken on, to help them up. What

a change it makes in the working life of girls! Did you ever watch the process of hiring in factories still untouched by modern notions? I have often.

I remember once seeing the sign "Girls Wanted" at the gate of a factory making bulbs for electric lamps. A half sleepy gate-man received the half dozen or so girls who applied. He literally shoved them into an office where an overworked superintendent took their names and ordered a boy to take them to room so-and-so. Here, a foreman asked them brusquely, "Ever done any work of this kind?" They all said, "No." I should judge that there were none of them over sixteen, and that none of them had ever been trained to do anything properly. They simply wanted work. They were taken by the boy to the room where the work was to be found, and put down at long benches where scores of girls were busy. Each new comer was told to watch the girl at her side, and this was all the instruction that she had in the operation by which she was expected to earn her living. Is it any wonder that girls thrown into an occupation in this way do not stay? Is it any wonder that they become quickly industrial tramps.

This was the condition finally attacked by the more intelligent employers, and it is out of this condition that there finally has evolved an interesting method of selecting, training and holding girls in various kinds of work. I have seen it in successful operation in button factories, clothing factories, printing and binding establishments, silk and cotton mills, lamp

factories, sanitary paper works, candy factories, handkerchief works, and in all sorts of clerical staffs.

It means, in its best estate, first, not employing a girl unless she is physically fit for the effort that is to be asked of her. And this is determined by careful examination of her condition. It means, not employing her if physically she is going to be a menace to her associates because of disease. This is far more serious and frequent than many think. I have myself seen a girl folding and packing handkerchiefs, who was in an advanced stage of a loathsome skin disease - a menace to her companions, and certainly to the public that was going to buy the handkerchiefs she was packing.

It means that the girl selected is taken over the plant by an instructor who shows her the relation of the operation that she is to perform to the finished product. It means that she will have at her shoulder for as long as necessary a person who can train her in this particular operation. It means that her grievances will be heard, taken seriously and dealt with equitably. That is, she comes in at once to a carefully organized machine, where she has proper training and inspection, and where interest in the operation itself is aroused and a future is opened to her.

Wherever the system has been even partially successful with girls, it has been because some wise woman was able to co-operate intelligently with an open-minded and experimenting management. Miss Kinkle was the wise woman in this case. I had first

met her in Washington back in 1918 when she had come to a committee to which I belonged to beg for help in getting some kind of work - anything, she said - in industry. She looked to me at that moment as unfitted for a factory as anyone I had ever met. Rarely do you meet a person more deeply dyed with the academic than she was. And this was natural enough for I found on a little questioning that

in all her thirty-five years of life she had never been outside of a school room. She had all sorts of degrees, not only from American but from foreign universities. She had taken all the valuable special courses in economics, sociology, psychology that had been offered on both sides of the water. She had lived in Settlements, she was saturated with opinions. She spoke a beautiful and accurate scientific jargon, wholly unintelligible to the average employer of labor. One did not talk long with her to know that so far the one factor that she had never considered in her industrial calculations was human beings.

But she was humble in spirit. "For weeks," she said, almost tearfully, "I have been trying to place myself in industry, but nobody will have anything to do with me. As soon as I begin to talk they tell me they don't want me. I have educated myself beyond the point of usefulness. I cannot endure it to go through this War without making some little contribution. I want to make it in industry. How shall I go about it? I'll do anything.

I told her about a woman I knew who at that moment was doing splendid service in the industrial field, who, when asked how she had educated herself said, "By five years in Marshall Field's basement. Spend five yearsthere and you will have a sound basis for working in industry."

"I am ready," she said. And she proved her readiness by taking a job on a machine in a munition factory. When the War was over she went into a clothing factory stitching overalls. She was fascinated, not by the operations but by the contacts. She began to see her way, decided she would work for the position of Employment Manager in a department store or mail order house like B. & B's.

She found a tiny little place finally in this latter establishment. There they discovered her, put her on the employment staff. Her mind had been so thoroughly trained, her knowledge was so great, her humility so genuine that at the end of four years she was put in full charge of the staff employing girls.

So I gladly went to see Miss Kinkle. I found her transformed - all her academic aloofness rubbed off, her eyes smiling, alert, her language without a trace of the old terminology which had hampered her - direct, simple, to the point. And, best of all, she radiated friendly human understanding. It was easy to see why she had become the power that she was in B. & B's. She had put all her great equipment at the service of the girls with whom she was working - they were her study now, and she was wise enough to

learn that they were at once the most absorbing and the most difficult subject she had ever tackled.

"Why," I began when we had done reminiscing. "did you take on Mary B. if, as I suppose, there are a dozen girls in this concern a notch below, one of whom should, according to your boast that you look inside for stuff to advance before you go outside, have been put in the place?"

"Mary B. didn't ask me that question," she said, laughingly.

"No. I asked her. She couldn't answer, and her conscience is troubling her now. Also, she is harboring unhappy suspicions about the system. She fears it isn't 'fool-proof' or 'favorite-proof.'"

"It isn't. But if it applied all its rules and principles in a machine fashion we would make more mistakes than we do. Mary B. got that place because there was not in the group below a girl that had her eye on it, wanted it bad enough to sacrifice half of her pay envelope for two weeks while she picked up speed to handle the work - that's our rule. The girls in line happened to be the satisfied, incurious kind. They prefer to stay where they are. They like their work. Mary B. was willing to sacrifice - to push herself in. She'll push up, and that is what we want her to. We cannot get enough girls that will fight to get ahead."

"But why doesn't she get the same wages as Jimmie D. who, she tells me, came in when she did?"

"Ah, there," Miss Kinkle said, "you strike tradition,

This is an open-minded concern, but you can't make men believe - even these men - that ambitious girls are worth as much as ambitious boys. And as groups they are not, largely because they are more quickly satisfied with what they have, like their associates, don't want to be disturbed, don't pick up new things. Why, even Mary B. knows less at the end of the two weeks she's been here than Jimmie D. He has fumbled with every machine new to him in the room, knows our vocabulary - every office has its own, you know - our routing and habits. It's the boy in him. Mary is learning, but it isn't in her to soak in the peculiarities, the ways, the equipment as Jimmie does. Now, the management knows this. It makes the best of girls less valuable than the boys they equal, and they'll remain so until they learn that they must overcome their reticence, their dislike of change, their indifference to work that is going on around them. It is something more than what they do at the machine that makes them valuable - it is what they show they can do and what to do.

"Mary wants to be a Chief Clerk - she will be, here or somewhere. But when she is a Chief Clerk Jimmie D. will be in the firm. If he'd been in the place she left, he would have been offered a share in the business before they would have let him go - partly because he would have made it a condition of staying, but Mary B. never thought of that. Even the most ambitious girls rarely think beyond Chief Clerkship now, and few think that far."

"And if she had 'thought that far' would they have given it to her?"

"Probably not - they would have said, 'She's fine - we need her - but what if she should marry?'"

"Perhaps they would have said, 'It isn't safe. She'd soon be running us. I heard a man who had taken in an 'indispensable' woman speculating the other day about how long it would be before she was president instead of him?'"

"Mary B. will be Chief Clerk here if she continues to show the same qualities she has so far - reassure her as to that. But it will take her longer because the men above do not really want women at the top. They accept them when they make themselves too valuable to be parted with, but I find it much harder to advance them. The firm doesn't believe they are as good business material - doesn't believe they have the daring, ingenuity, the steadiness business requires in its positions of responsibility. They watch for business talent in boys, rejoice over it, but do not often consent that it exists in women. So Mary B. must suffer because so far we women haven't shown much evidence of business talent - though we have abundant evidence of qualities needed in such an enterprise as B. & B's - exactness, punctuality, conscientiousness, willingness, loyalty, - great qualities; but they still have not ^{word} found that they sense the creative end of business, and men don't believe they have it in them to understand it. That, in the last analysis, is why Mary B. receives \$24.00 a week for

doing the same work for which Jimmie D. gets \$28.00, and why he will be a Chief Clerk long before she is." #

"Is it so everywhere - factory, shop, as well as office?"

"Go ask Mary Anderson. She has more knowledge than any one else and less prejudice. She's one woman in this country that's where she ought to be," with which I heartily agreed. And so I went to Washington to talk over the Unequal Pay Envelope with the woman who carries the imposing title of "Director of the Woman's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor."

The Women's Trade Unions in this country are small bodies, considering the number of women in the trades - probably not more than 380,000 out of the several millions of women in industry; but they have produced several leaders of whom they can rightfully be proud, and one of them is Mary Anderson.

She came to this country from Sweden when she was sixteen, an immigrant who had never done anything but farm work. She went into domestic service and after a trial or two, luckily found a woman who understood that noble task that American women have had put to them - and not always have discharged with the understanding that the importance of the task deserves - that of helping the non-English speaking, untrained foreign girl to become a competent, trustworthy American citizen. Mary Anderson found a woman who helped in her development. She learned to read English in that household, keeping a newspaper always in her pantry and picking out words in leisure moments.

But she did not like housework and finally made her way to Chicago, where she went into a shoe factory. She joined the Union, rose to leadership, and when the War came was asked to Washington to aid in a new undertaking of the Department of Labor, called the "Woman in Industry Service." There were several committees, more or less official, working in Washington at that moment on the problems incident to mustering out the tens of thousands of women the Government needed in the factories on war supplies and it was to be expected that in their zeal they would get in one another's way, dispute authorities, wrangle over aims and methods and really hinder what they all had at heart. It was not long after the inauguration of the Woman in Industry Service before those close to the situation realized that there was a calming and steadying influence emanating from this new quarter, and learned that in case of a tangle one of the best persons to see was Mary Anderson.

The War passed - but the Woman in Industry Service stayed. It was clearly needed - so much needed that in June on 1920 Congress enlarged it into a Woman's Bureau, and a little later Mary Anderson by demand of her colleagues in industry and by virtue of her record was chosen as its head. She is still there.

Congress declared that the new Bureau was to "formulate standards and policies which should promote the welfare of wage earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency and their opportunities for profitable employment." High sounding phrases which the Woman's Bureau has translated into a whole battery of concrete objectives. This is the way Mary

Anderson recently summed them up:

"The eight hour day, Saturday half holiday, one day of rest in seven, a 30 minute lunch period, 10 minute rest periods, no night work between midnight and six a.m.; wages to be based on occupation and not on sex; satisfactory sanitation and working conditions, and the elimination when possible of constant standing or other posture causing physical strain, repeated lifting of heavy weights or other fatiguing motions, operation of mechanical devices requiring undue strength, exposure to excessive heat, humidity or cold, exposure to dust fumes or other occupational poisons without adequate safeguards against disease. Our standards also include the policy that women should not be prohibited from employment in any occupations except those which have been proved to be more injurious to women than to men, such as certain processes in the lead industry; that where women are employed a competent woman should be appointed as employment executive with the responsibility for conditions affecting women; and that women should be appointed in supervisory positions in departments employing women."

Inclusive and entirely reasonable.

Mary Anderson's Bureau has no authority to impose a single item of this program on anybody, anywhere, but she does have power - and limited means - to make them all known in the industrial world and in those neighborhoods which influence it; and for six years now she and her associates have never relaxed in their labor to present their ideas in so telling a fashion that no reasonable person could deny them. They have carried on unwearingly a struggle to make all the States in the Union accept what a few States have abundantly proved, that long hours, evil conditions and low wages are an actual drag on a business as well as a grave social menace.

They have gone ahead with the faith of convinced missionaries, sending their members into one State after another (often at the request of local agencies) to find out from the working women themselves

just how things were - sorry findings often, far below their standards. They have spared no care in tabulating and digesting the information they gathered, no pains in making their reports, and when each piece of work was complete they have set their wits at work to visualize it in charts, maps, posters, bulletins, pictures. They are bitter enemies of buried information. They see no reason for gathering it if it cannot be kept alive - passed on where it will stir and educate. So they are indefatigable in finding new and effective ways of using their hard won facts.

One of the most effective and popular of their devices is a series of pictures contrasting what they consider good working conditions with what they know to be bad. Pictures of actual factories where dirt, disorder, ugliness and danger rule are shown and followed by working rooms which are clean, orderly, pleasant, safe.

These pictures travel from coast to coast, telling their story to groups of men and women in shops and in clubs - to chambers of commerce and to unions, to churches and schools. Charts and posters go with them. Other countries than ours have heard of them and borrowed them. They have been seen in China and Japan and in both countries made their mark. Spain has sent for them, so has Mexico.

The pay envelope has been one of the chief concerns of Mary Anderson and the Bureau. The Government standards lay down "occupation not sex or race" as a base for determining a woman's wage, which I take it means that she ought to be paid according to what she does.

what she does.

"How is it?" I asked her in Washington. "Are wages as unequal as women claim?"

"Well," she smiled, "there's a spread of from 25 to 40 per cent between what is paid a man and a woman for what looks like the same work though it frequently is not - exactly. The question is complex - hard to decide. You see, in all the older industries the work is pretty well defined. This is his - that is hers. Take my own trade - shoe making. Stitching has always belonged to women - cutting to men. And if we overlap, the tradition that women are worth less than men stands. It has always been so - and there are reasons. We are not physically so strong. We cannot and ought not to do certain things they do - that brings down our value - that stands in shoe making, so it does in many industries where women form a big part of the labor force. Take inspecting in a cotton mill. The man is always paid more though she is the better inspector. Handling cloths is one of her natural trades. She sees broken threads, stains, knots more quickly, but she can't put the big rolls of cloth on the frame, she can't take them off. He can. Strength is still at a premium in factories though it is discounted as heavy jobs are turned over to machines. That is being done everywhere. Gradually the muscular advantage will lose its weight, be replaced by skill, brains. The War did something to show employers that brawn wasn't as valuable as they thought. They had to have women on heavy jobs so they devised machines to help her out. Now the men are back

but the machines stay - making things easier for men. Funny, isn't it, how things come about?"

"But can women do as much work as men on light machines?"

"It depends on what it is. Where it is a task requiring sensitive touch, delicate fingers, quick eyes, she'll do more. Plenty of proof of that, but she isn't so quick to learn a new machine. She isn't curious about it, and the boy is. He generally can operate any machine in his room without teaching after he has been about a few weeks. If there is a vacancy he gets it, if he wants it. She would have to be taught. We've got to whip up curiosity in women workers about processes other than those they are employed on, awaken interest. They do not realize that the power to get on has something to do with wages - you can't tell how much but it has something."

"Is there anything in the claim I hear from employers about women losing more time?"

"Well, something - probably less than they claim. But women do lose more time. There are days when they ought not to work; and they are the ones to stay at home and nurse the mother if she is ill, or the boy himself perhaps. Illness in the family which keeps her away from the shop puts her back and gives her a reputation for unreliability that the boy does not have. This is one of the unfairnesses of the situation. It is of course to her credit that she gives her help at home. It shows she regards those she loves as more important than her job - and she ought to, they

are more important; but it works against her and her wages, and it sometimes helps weaken her sense of responsibility toward her job. She does understand that her mother must be cared for but not always that her employer must fill his orders on time."

"And they accuse her of changing her job more frequently - of wandering from place to place?"

"There are girls that go to work with no wish or idea of permanency. They go because they must. How often I have heard them say, 'Do you suppose I'm going to stay forever on this old machine?' They are the tramps of industry, but don't forget that one of the employer's bitterest complaints against men is that they float from job to job. ~~I imagine the turn-over in woman's labor is no greater than in man's~~ ^{women} but you must not blame ~~them~~ too much for changing. Thousands are pitched into operations they do not understand and receive no adequate instruction. They are scolded, they see somebody injured, get discouraged, so they move on to the next sign, 'Girls Wanted.'

"Then, there is seasonal work. The factory runs six months only. They must live and they go where they can find work, and usually it is cheap and irregular. The instability of a great deal of low-class industry that calls in unskilled women reacts on her reputation as a worker. She is as poor as it is. How can you expect a man or a woman to become a diligent, careful worker when their only contacts are with inefficiently, often dishonestly managed concerns.

"All of these factors pull her down and they all go to support one of the most mischievous fallacies in regard to the woman who works - one which many men fall back on when you talk to them of the unequal pay envelope. It is that women work only for pin-money, that men are the 'providers.'

"Well, I wish I could send them around with our investigators - ^{some of the} where conditions of employment ^{are} tell them some of the stories we have heard from the 270,000 women ^{studied} have interviewed in the last few years. They'd learn girls work to help pay the rent, to make the home more cheerful, to buy their mother hats, gowns, coats she would not have otherwise. There are thousands and thousands working to make homes more agreeable for those they love, and other thousands with heavier burdens - the support of invalid mothers, the care of young sisters, the education of a brother. For years we have been hearing about the girl who works for pin-money, who can afford to work for less than a living wage because she lives at home, who spends her earnings on silk stockings and fur coats. There may be some such girls, in fact I presume there are, but I have known thousands of working women personally and I have known very few to whom such statements apply. Through our special investigations we have studied men as well as women so that we might have a basis for comparison and what we have found is only a confirmation of what we already know to be true - that a large majority of single women who live at home contribute all their earnings to their families. Nearly seven out of every ten single women, who live at home, turn over every cent they make to their mothers or fathers getting back for themselves

only what can be spared after the family needs have been met.

"Men fret, too, because married women work - say they are neglecting the home. There is no group of women in all the land striving harder for the benefit of the home than the married women in industry. We have found thousands of married women who work in industry at night so that they can spend their days looking out for their children, who work because their husbands do not make enough money to support their families or who add their earnings to the family income so that their children may have better education and greater advantages."

"Possibly these women don't all of them spend their money wisely, put too much into finery and too little in food, buy fine coats on the installment plan. Working girls aren't the only foolish virgins in the world - or foolish humans. How about men who buy cars on the installment plan, and cut on the family's living?"

"What we want in this Bureau is that woman be recognized as the important factor she has come to be in industry, and not be treated as if she was merely 'casual labor.' Her wages must be based on what she can do, not on old fallacies about pin-money, and men always supporting the family."

"But is there no improvement in her situation," I asked. "Isn't she regarded more respectfully, and isn't the margin between what she and the man are paid narrower than it was twelve years ago - say, before the War?" And I quoted a little lady who had said to me recently, "John and I are both doing more than before the War. He's

a chief clerk and I 'm a stenographer. The firms we work for are of equal grade and pay the same wages, but my per cent. of advance is greater than his. It's so everywhere in our office. I take it they see they didn't appreciate us fully before the War, but that doesn't mean they think yet we're worth quite as much as men!"

There is a robust optimism about Mary Anderson which does one good. Those who handle as many discouraging facts - not guesses - as she does, who are striving daily to wipe out great tracts of prejudices and selfishness and blindness should not be over much blamed if they "see red" sometimes, refuse to admit progress although the fact of that progress is one of the chief arguments for continuing work. She is never afraid to count the gains - however strongly she feels their incompleteness.

"Your little lady is right. There has been enormous improvement in the conditions under which women work, a narrowing of the inequality in the pay envelope, a general recognition of her significance, her potentiality, in the country's industrial life. She has become a producer not to be ignored. There is much to encourage us, but - much remains to be done."

Back in New York I reported to Mary B. my talk with Miss Kinkle and Mary Anderson. We tried to tabulate the causes of her unequal pay envelope which those wise and thoughtful women had named.

"There's marriage," she said. "I suppose I shall have to admit that it will make Jimmie D. more serious and that it probably

will take me away from my desk, at least I would have two purposes instead of one - as I have now. "

"And there's too great satisfaction with one's job, settling into a comfortable position."

"Yes, and too little interest in what's going on around, and no curiosity about machines and less muscle."

"And lost time."

"And the superstition about pin-money, and the man as the sole and dependable provider for the family."

"And his belief that we have no creative business faculty. No wonder the pay roll is unequal," sighed Mary B.

"Yes, but it's a challenge," ^{she} encouraged her - "a challenge to break down superstition and prejudices and correct whatever can be corrected in the woman's attitude. There are correctible points, now, aren't there?"

"It makes one a kind of soldier, doesn't it?" said Mary B., squaring her shoulders - "a soldier in the Woman's Industrial Army - an army in training," she added, ruefully.

She had found the ^{phrase} ~~phrase~~. The eight and a half million women at work in this land are just that - an Army in Training."

Watch this Army as it turns out in the morning, like soldiers at the call of the bugle. They come, for the most part, fresh faced and blithe, for they are young. ^{Two-fifths} Half of them are under ^{forty-five} twenty-five - ^{forty-five} twenty-four - four-fifths of them under ^{forty-five} forty-four - the fittest years of their womanhood. Watch them distribute themselves. Over

a million find their way to the trades of the farm and forest and garden. They go naturally and unquestionably there to tasks which the great majority of the world believe impossible, as well as undesirable for women. You will find among this million fisherman, lumbermen, stockherders.

Two million more of them will march into mills and factories and shops of every known kind. A quarter of a million will take ^{as telephone and telegraph operators;} their places ^{on} railroads; electric roads, at the wheels of taxi service, in every kind of device for fetching and carrying men and goods. Three-quarters of a million more will have to do with trade, and ^{nearly} ~~over~~ a million and a half with that complicated system which keeps track of the operations of men, the vast clerical system so essential to the handling and distributing of all that is made and raised.

There are 572 occupations recognized by census takers in the United States; in all but 35 of them girls and women find places. They penetrate into every corner of the enormous machine which provides for the physical needs and wants of human beings. Think what would happen to this machine, if, for any reason, women were suddenly entirely withdrawn. It would paralyze, like a general strike. Industry depends on her, needs her, must have her.

If she is so important under normal conditions, how indispensable does she become in time of acute labor shortage such as the Great War caused. Her demonstration particularly in this country and in England, of what she could do when given a chance, was as

brilliant as surprising. One of the few real gains of the walter of the War - and what has followed - is the realization that a nation has in its citizenship an hiterto unrealized productive force, something to fall back on in a great stress - catastrophe - an undreamed capacity of women, to adapt themselves to all the tasks of modern industry and business.

There was a moment in the War when the optimists of the sex, seeing what women were doing and listening to the amazed applause of people and government, declared that now there would be an end of inequality in wage and opportunity - but they ran too fast. Wars do not bring mileniums. They may prove the progress of certain accepted notions - they did in this case - the notion that women could not handle tools, swing a belt, man a shop. The women found that often they could do "as well as men"; but, the War over, men replaced them, save in isolated cases. The world swings back to what we call the normal and apparently the inequality of wage and opportunity of which women in industry complain are "normal!"

No. The War has left the gap in wages, but left it narrower than it found it. It increased enormously the number of people who were willing to treat the woman in industry as something more than a casual comer - a roaming factor - interested alone in pin-money, filling in the period in which she was looking for a husband. It needed some such demonstration to prove her importance. It must not be forgotten that this Woman's Industrial Army was, unknown to the world a hundred years ago. It began to form when men began first

to replace the hand by the machine. It was never a planned organization. It came with the need, like a people uprising, gradually overflowing the country, penetrating into places long forbidden to women, absorbing, changing and everywhere disturbing. It is only in the last twenty-five years that it has begun to realize itself - has developed leaders, found itself a subject for study by state and Federal governments, that laws for its protection, its training, its future have begun to be devised.

But it is not by legislation and agitation, important as they may be, that the inequalities in the pay roll and in opportunity will be chiefly overcome; that will be done by the records made by the women in the ranks, - at least, so Mary B. and I had concluded at the end of our talk, and we both remarked as we parted that we believed Mary Anderson, head of the Woman's Bureau would agree with us!