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### III.

## Equal Pay For Some, Why Not For All?

In certain walks of life, equal pay is established. The Government itself recognises the principle of Equal Pay in paying women Members of Parliament, women Ministers of the Crown and women Parliamentary Secretaries salaries equal to those of their men colleagues. In the Civil Service, too, Equal Pay is given to Medical Officers (except in the Post Office and General Board of Control for Scotland), Factory Inspectors (Class 2) in the Home Office, Senior Commissioners and Commissioners in the Board of Control, Sub-Postmasters and Sub-Postmistresses (unpensionable) in the Post Office, and House and Assistant House Masters and Mistresses in Borstal Institutions under the Prison Commission.

The London County Council, not alone among Local Authorities in recognising the principle of Equal Pay in certain services, lays down equal rates for Dispensing Chemists, the Medical Staff, Law Clerks and certain Administrative Officers. Its men and women Inspectors in Elementary and non-technical subjects also receive equal salaries. A common hourly rate, too, is paid by the London County Council to men and women instructors in Evening Institutes.

Without doubt, tribute must be paid to the medical and legal professions in influencing Local Authorities, for, significantly enough, when these professions were first opened to women, the men themselves insisted that equal fees should be demanded and equal salaries paid. Thus equal pay is the established basis of salaries and fees for the medical and legal professions, and in other fields such as journalism, pharmacy, and advertising, where women are breaking new ground, it is the practice to pay women the same rates as men.

It may also be said that among first-rate writers, dramatists, musicians, artists and actresses, sex differentiation in salary

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does not obtain. It is the finished creation, not the sex of the creator, which counts.

In industry, according to the statement of Mr. R. S. Hudson (then Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour) in the House of Commons on June 7th, 1935, "where you find that the processes are the same, you will find in the majority of cases that the piece rates are the same". For example, in the cotton industry, where men and women have been employed on the same processes for many years, approximately the same piece rates are paid.

Furthermore, in all those cases where the life of the individual is supported not by the sale of his or her labour but by the investment of accumulated moneys or the profits of trading, equal pay is conceded without question. The woman whose income is entirely derived from dividends draws exactly the same income from this source as if she were a man. The woman who lives on the rents obtained from house-property is not expected to accept lower rents because she is a woman. The woman in trade, whether she is the owner of a chain of shops or whether she sells kippers on a stall, expects and gets the same price for her goods as her men competitors in big business or the street market.

If Equal Pay is the universal practice where the goods offered for sale are something other than human labour, if the Government, Local Authorities, and private employers concede Equal Pay for some categories of human labour, why not for all? If teaching in the evening can be paid at equal hourly rates, why not give equal monthly rates for teaching in the morning and the afternoon? If some men and women in some industries can be paid equal piece rates, why not all men and women performing equal work in all industries? The principle of equal pay for equal work must be recognised for all avocations and in all countries.

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The Series includes :—

- I.—THE HISTORY OF THE WOMEN TEACHERS' DEMAND FOR EQUAL PAY.
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