

Experts Discuss "Equal Pay" Rates

REALISING that women have long been an important factor in the labour market, Miss Eileen Powell—who has just returned from a meeting of the Committee of Experts on Women's Work held at Geneva by the International Labour Office—says that the conference of delegates from eight countries adopted for discussion the following items:

• Current developments equal pay, Miss Powell said and needs in public employment that the experts at the Geneva meeting services in relation to the meeting, stressed that no system of wage-fixing in itself, placing of women.

• Measures to facilitate however objective or satisfactory it might be, would bring the application of the principle of equal remuneration about equal remuneration if for men and women workers the will to implement this for work of equal value; and principle was lacking.

• The development of, and "It should be realised that the need for, vocational training the wage for a single woman ing for women in various needs sufficient remuneration regions, namely, Europe, the for herself and an additional Americas, Asia, and the person, whether it be a relative who acts as a house-

Middle East. Miss Powell (who in private life is Mrs. F. Colman housekeeper," Miss Powell Brownie) has been a recognised authority on women's work for many years. She has urged equal pay for more than 15 years, and she says that now, the gap between the women's rate and the man's rate is closing.

The Geneva Conference prepared a number of recommendations to be submitted through I.L.O., to member Governments. Miss Powell is of the opinion that advisory bureaux, similar to the magnificent Women's Bureau of America, could be of value in doing research about Australia's woman-power, as breadwinners, and as individuals.

"We have no information which, for instance, relates health to living conditions, and in turn to wage rates," Miss Powell said. "We do not

know what opportunities exist for women, and where there are no barriers to employment why women are not employed."

Miss Powell, a member of the State committee administering the Emergency Housekeepers' Scheme, investigated the London County Scheme for home helps.

"Unfortunately the Budget has cut the number of training centres—designed to help raise the status of domestic workers—from nine to one," she said.

World 8.3.52 Women's Pay

Sir,—Any young women seeking employment in the professional world, and perhaps holding a university degree, will find herself confronted by advertisements which read like this: "Rates of pay, males £746, females £610; living allowance, males £205, females £154."

Why this anomaly? The woman must have the same qualifications as the man and give the same service.

The excuse that men have responsibilities and women have not has been threadbare for a long time. The truth is, there are many young men who have no responsibilities, and there are many young women whose earnings are the mainstay of the family budget.

M. CONSTANCE COOKE.
Drumoyne.

Wage Computation

Sir,—The proposal by W.G.F. ("Herald," July 24) that the basic-wage problem could be solved by deleting provision for a wife and child was rejected by Federal and State Courts when advocated by feminist bodies. Employers' organisations do not now support it.

If the Court were to disregard considerations of family maintenance, and confine the male basic wage to the needs of a single adult without dependants, there would come to pass a catastrophic reduction in the earnings of the majority of male workers and a corresponding effect on females.

This is because one-third of male adults are single (temporarily so, for the most part), about 20 per cent. have no children, and a considerable number have no children under the endowment age. As therefore most adult males have no children and a substantial percentage no wives, endowment for dependants would still leave a very large part of the population with salaries and wages permanently much lower than at present.

O. SCHREIBER.

Sydney.

UAW
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