July 30 1913.

Dear Miss Tarbell,

Let me begin by telling you that I've always admired you as one of the great modern women authors of my time. I have just read a fine story recently printed in The American Magazine, and I also read with deepest interest your page in The Ladies Home Journal.

Today after finishing your essay in The August Journal I felt like telling you something. This is confidential and I brought the little girls into the room before I knew what marriage was.
rooms — which I was entirely ignorant of life — I was an arrant braggart as a helper than they were born. Tha' gather also was very young and very irresponsible. But somehow it clung upon me that I must make life worth while for those chil- dren — so I began. Bricks without straw — in our dog-poor time dear young husband played poker and lost what little he earned. Mind you he's a fine fellow now — but as I say to memory young.

My mother was — well I can't tell you much so you'd know — but she really was the most intelligent woman and
the earliest—so I knew we must set out to educate those little girls. The result was they were finer, more talented far away more intelligent than any of the girls who went on to school. I taught them to cook. Our home was a place of superstition happening on 4th of a delinquent father.

I took God along with me every moment. I put my personal grief quite away. I lived fully and freely with the children for them.

One of them when she was 21 married a civil engineer—with fine prospects & a good character. She other married a fine looking brilliant local politician. I thought I had arrived. The girls were "raised." I had a paying profession. All at once
out of a clear sky came the wind of events that have simply knocked me silly. My eldest daughter’s husband, quite suddenly—out of his frying pan, brought her to poverty through his own fault. He drank what he had besides. He was a gentle man. My second child’s husband must had meabilities but all he had through her to decency & shame and she died of simple grief & despair.

I was home the little boy the war—and I saw my eldest daughter through heart—tine & hour a little married down away with a husband who shows all signs of being a change for us to look always. Right along with this I see grandmas that just turned up” somehow riding in their automobiles and having plenty of money.
as socially and I see girls who are and a lack of work within his own who emphasize managing fine homes and grand looking children. She of these wasn't even "straight". I had a baby before she was married six months. I simply immolated myself on the altar of home. I died for my duty to the human race. I was fully justified of women's duties. When duty you may have read some of my work along that line. But here I am fifty years old. One darling child dead - the other in most unfortunate circumstances. Strictly knowing whether to live with a man, she can't suffer her heart. She can make her
Have I more children (which I have forbid!)

Where is the at once of all this?
My home is now so desolate—my
pretty charming talented girl.
Dead under such tragic circum
stances. My beautiful brother some
time ago—the most ignomine
little first born of mine facing
her more than hard problem—
My husband is fine now and
I am thankful for him—but
Oh, honey, when you write about
home—well—of course it all
time I miss you and long on sayin...
but, if you ever fancied my mind
a whole lot— in training motherhood—
just don't think so any more.

And the knowledge I now have of life— no frame
could tempt me. Having a child into the
world or undertake a war it, makes the dear
little baby mine. I must do my best. But
I make in my boots— really I make up in the
night & just lie & tumble (I don't want for the
fancy that I sleep in my boots though) when
I realize that I know how to rear—
I hope you can't think this as injurious
in your keen or a presumption on
my part. Your stuff is grand. I
must get to keep preaching it.
But—well—farewell for now.
This will not—be always had to
in my system to match you to
now. I'm done it!

Ammunition

Julia F. Denton

Author of "Dream of a Plain Cowman"
Confidential

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Let me begin by telling you that I have always admired you as one of the foremost women writers of our times. I think your series lately printed in the American very masterly and I also read with deepest interest your page in the Ladies' Home Journal.

Today, after finishing your articles in the August Journal I feel like telling you something. This is confidential. I brought two little girls into the world before I really knew what marriage meant - while I was utterly ignorant of life. I was irresponsible as a heifer when they were born. Their father also was very young and very irresponsible. But some way I dawned upon me that I must make life worth while for those children; so I began. Bricks without straws; we were dog poor and my dear young husband played poker and lost what little he earned. Mind you he's a fine fellow now, but as I say he was very young.

My mother was - well I can't tell you just so you'd know - but she really was the most intelligent woman and the liveliest - so between us we set out to educate these little girls. The result was they were finer, more talented by far and more intelligent than any of the girls who went away to school. I taught them to cook and our home was a place of superlative happiness in spite of delinquent father. I took God along with me every moment. I put my personal grief quite away and lived fully and grandly with the children's hopes.
One of them when she was twenty-one married a civil engineer, with fine prospects and a good character. The other married a fine looking brilliant politician. I thought I had arrived. The girls were "raised" and I had a paying profession. All at once out of a clear sky came the series of events that have simply knocked me silly. My eldest daughter's husband failed utterly - lost out in his profession, brought her to poverty, though he does not drink and has no bad habits - is a gentleman. My second child's husband went hard in politics, lost all he had, brought her to poverty and shame and she died of simple grief and despair.

I now have her little boy to rear and I see my elder daughter, though brave and true and good a little worked down drudge with a husband who shows all signs of being a charge for us to keep always.

Right along with this I see families that just "tumbled up" somehow, raving in their automobiles and having plenty of money, patronizing us socially and I see girls who never did a lick of work in their lives driven like sempresses and managing fine homes and grand looking children. One of these wasn't even "straight" - had a baby six months before she was married.

I simply sacrificed myself on the altar of home. I lived for my duty to the human race. I was full of your idea of woman's sphere and duty. You may have read some of my work along that line. But here I am, fifty years old, one darling children dead - the other in most unfortunate circumstances. Scarcely knowing whether to live with a man who can not support her but who can make her have
more children (which Heaven forbid)

Where is the outcome of all this? My home is now so desolate; my pretty, charming talented girl dead under such tragic circumstances. My beautiful mother gone long ago. the sweet mignon little first born of mine facing her more than hard problem. My husband is fine now and I am thankful for him, but, Oh, honey, when you write about home—well—of course, it's all true and we've got to keep on saying it—but if you ever fancy you've missed a whole lot in missing motherhood—just don't think so any more.

With the knowledge I now have of life no power could tempt me to bring a child into the world or undertake to rear it. I have the dear little boy with me and must do my best, but I shake in my boots—really I wake up in the night and toss and tumble (I don't want you to fancy that I sleep in my boots though) When I realize that I have him to rear.

I hope you won't think this an infringement on your time or a presumption on my part. Your stuff is grand and we've got to keep preaching it, but—farewell—and pardon this outburst. I have always had it in my system to write you and now I've done it.

Admiringly

Juliet V. Straner
Author of "Ideas Of a Plain Country Woman."