Please copy this & send to Mrs. J.

Rockville, Indiana
July 30 1913.

Dear Mr Tarbell.

Let me begin by telling you that I've always admired you as one of the few great women writers of our time. 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 essay in the August Journal I feel like telling you something. This is confidential I brought two little girls into the world before I knew what marriage really

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means — I take I was utterly ignorant of life — I was as irresponsible as a heifer when they were born.
Then father also was very young and very irresponsible. But some way it dawned upon me that I must make life worth while for those children — so I began. Bricks without straw — We were dog poor & 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

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the loveliest – so between us we 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 to School. I taught them to cook & one home was a place of superlative happiness in spite of a delinquent father.
I took God along with me every moment. I put my personal griefs quite away & lived fully and frankly with the children for them.
One of them when she was 21 married a civil engineer – with fine prospects & a good character The 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

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out of a clear sky came the series of events that have simply knocked me silly. My eldest daughters husband failed utterly — lost out in his profession, brought her to poverty though he does not drink & has no bad habits — is a gentle man. My second child's husband went bad in politics lost all he had brought her to poverty & shame and she died of simple grief & despair.

I now have her little boy to rear — and I see my elder daughter though brave & true & 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" some how riding in these automobiles and having plenty of money — patronizing

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us socially and I see girls who never
and a lack of work in their lives around
like Empresses & managing fine
homes & grand looking children. One
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 lived for my duty
to the human race I was full of
your idea of womans sphere & 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. Scarcely knowing
whether to live with a man who cant
support her but who can make her

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have more children (which Heaven forbid!)
Where is the art come 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 wigwam
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 & you've got to keep on saying

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it — but if you ever fancied you missed
a whole lot — in missing motherhood —
just dont 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 & must do my best. But
I shake in my boots — really I wake up in the
night & just lie & tremble (I dont want you to
fancy that I sleep in my boots though) when
I realize that I have him to rear. —
I hope you wont think this an infringement

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on your time or a presumption on my part. Your stuff is grand & we're got to keep preaching it — But — well — fare well & pardon this outburst — I've always had it in my system to write to you & now I've done it —!

Admiringly —

Julia T Strauss

Author of "Ideas of a Plain Country Woman"

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Confidential

Rockville, Indiana
July 30th, 1913.

Dear Miss Tarbell:-

Let me begin by telling you that I have always admired you as one of the fore-most women writers of our times. I think your series lately printed in the American very masterly and I also reaad 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.

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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, riding in their automobiles and having plenty of money, patronizing us socially and I see girls who never did a lick of work in thier lives driven like Empresses 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 know ing whether to live wi h a man who can not support her but who can make her have

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Where is the out-come of all this? My home is now so desolate; my pretty, charming talented girl dead under such tragic circumstances. My beautiful mother gon 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, its 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' 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 outbrust. 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".

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