CHAPTER II

I DECIDE TO BE A BIOLOGIST

Five years went by in the house on the hill and then in 1870 when I was thirteen I found myself in Titusville, Pennsylvania, in a new house my father had built. How characteristic of the instability of the oil towns of that day, as well of the frugality of my father was this house. From the beginning of the Pithole excitement he had, as I have said, made money, more than he could ever have dreamed, I fancy, and then about 1869 practically without warning the bottom fell out, as the vernacular of the region put it. The end shut up my father's shops there but it also gave us the makings of a home. In that rapid development, only four years long, a town of some twenty thousand had grown up with several big hotels - among them was one called the Bonta House. It had features which delighted my father - long French windows, really fine iron brackets supporting its verandahs, handsome woodwork. The Bonta House was said to have cost $60,000 but its owners were glad to take the $600.00 father offered when the town "blew up." He paid the money, tore down the building, loaded its iron bracket and fine doors and windows, mouldings and all, and I suppose much of its timber, onto wagons and carted it ten miles away to Titusville where out of it he built the house which was our home for many years.

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Titusville was not like Rouseville which had suddenly sprung from the mud as uncertain as a mushroom of the future. It had been a substantial settlement twenty years before oil was found there, small but sturdy with a few families who had made money chiefly in lumber, owning good homes, carefully guarding the order and decency of the place.

The discovery of oil over-ran the settlement with hundreds of fortune seekers. They came from far and near, on foot, horseback, wagon. The nearest railroad connection was sixteen miles away and the roads and fields leading in were soon cut beyond recognition by the heavy hauling, its streets at times impassable with mud.

The new industry demanded machinery - tools - lumber - and the bigger it grew the greater the demand. Titusville, the birthplace of all this activity, as well as the gateway down the Creek, must furnish food and shelter for caravans of strangers, shops for their trades, offices for speculators and brokers, dealers in oil lands and leases, for oil producers, surveyors and draftsmen - all of the factors of the big business organization necessary to develop the industry. In 1861 the overflow was doubled by the arrival of a railroad with a connection sixteen miles away with the East and West. The disbanding of the Army in June of 1865 brought a new rush - men still in uniform, their rifles and knapsacks on their back. Most of this fresh inflow was bound to the scene of the latest excitement - Pithole.

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Stampeded though she was Titusville refused to give up her idea of what a town should be. She kept a kind of order, waged a steady fight on pickpockets, drunkards, wantons and in this she was backed by the growing number of men and women who having found their chance for fortune in oil wanted a town fit for their families. After churches, the schools were receiving the most attention. It was the Titusville schools which had determined my father and mother to make the town their permanent home.

But school did not play a serious part in my scheme of things at the start. I went because I was sent and had no interest in what went on. I was thirteen but I had never been in a crowded room before. In a small private school the teacher had been my friend. Here I was not conscious my teacher recognized my existence. I soon became a truant. But the competent ruler of that school room knew more than I realized. She was able to spot a truant and one day when I turned up after an unexplainable absence she suddenly turned on me and read me a scathing lecture. I cannot remember that I was ashamed or humiliated, only amazed, but something in me asserted itself. I suppose that here a decent respect for the opinions of mankind was born, at least I became on the instant a model pupil.

A few months later I passed into High School and when at the end of the year the grades were averaged at a

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ceremony where everybody was present I stood at the head of the Honor Roll. Nobody could have been more surprised; I had not been working for the Honor Roll, I had simply been doing what they expected me to do as I understood it and here I was at the top. I remember I felt very serious about it. Having made the top once I knew what would be expected of me. I couldn't let my father and mother or my teachers down, so I continued to learn my lessons. It was a good deal like being good at a game. I liked to work out the mathamatics and translations - good puzzles, but that they had any relation to my life I was unconscious. And then suddenly among these puzzles I was set to solve I found in certain text books the sesame which was to

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free my curiosity, stir desires to know, set me working on my own to find out more than these books had to offer. The texts which did all this for me were a series, I suspect a modern teacher might laugh at - Steele's Fourteen Weeks in Zoology, Geology, Botany, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry.

Here I was suddenly on a ground which meant something to me. From childhood, plants, insects, stones were what I saw when I went abroad, what I brought home to press, to put in bottles, to "litter up the house." The hills about Rouseville were rich in treasures for such a collector, but nobody had ever taught me more than their common names. I had never realized that they were subjects for study like Latin and Geometry and rhetoric and other such unmeaning tasks. They were too fascinating. But here my pleasure became my duty. School suddenly became exciting. Now I could justify my tramps before breaksfast on the hills, justify my "collections" and soon I knew what I was to be - a scientist. Life was beginning to be very good for what I liked best to do, had a reason. No doubt this uplift was helped by the general cheerfulness of the family under our new conditions of life.

Things were going well in father's business; there was ease such as we had never known, luxuries we had never heard of. Our first Christmas in the new home was celebrated lavishly. Far away was that first Christmas in the shanty on the flats when there was nothing but nuts and candy and my mother and father promising, "Just wait, just wait, the day will come." And the day had come - a gorgeous Christmas tree, a velvet cloak,

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and a fur coat for my mother. I haven't the least idea what there was for the rest of us, but those coats were an epoch in my life - my first notion of elegance.

This family blossoming was characteristic of the town. Titusville was gay, confident of its future. It was spending money on schools and churches, was building an Opera House where Jo Jefferson soon was to play, Christine Neilson sing. More and more fine homes were going up. Its main street had been graded and worked until fine afternoons, winter and summer, it was cleared by four o'clock for the trotting of the fast horses the rich were importing. When New Year's Day came every woman received - wine, cakes, salads, cold meats on the table - every man went calling. That is, Titusville was taking on Metropolitan airs led by a few citizens who knew New York and its ways, even spoke familiarly of Jay Gould and Jim Fisk, both of whom naturally enough had their eye on us. Did not the Erie road from which they at the moment were filling their pockets regard oil as one of its most profitable freights? We were grain for their mill.

There was reason for confidence. In the dozen years since the first well was drilled the Oil Creek Valley had yielded nearly thirty three million barrels of crude oil. Producing, transporting, refining, marketing, exporting - by-products had been developed into an organized industry which was now believed to have a splendid future.

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Then suddenly this gay, prosperous town was hit a blow between the eyes. Self-dependent in all but transportation and locally there through the pipe lines it was rapidly laying to shipping points, it was dependent on the railroads for the carrying of its crude oil to outside refining points and for a shipping of both crude and refined to the seaboard - a rich and steady traffic for which the Oil Regions felt the railroads ought to be grateful, but it was the railroads that struck the blow. A few refiners outside the region - Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, concocted a marvelous scheme which they had the persuasive power to put over with the railroads - a big scheme - by which those in the ring would be able to ship crude and refined oil more cheaply than anybody outside. And then, marvelous invention, they would receive in addition to their advantage a drawback on every barrel of oil shipped by any onemt in the group. Those in the South Improvement Company, as the master piece was called, were to be rewarded for shipping and those not in to be doubly penalized. Of course it was a secret scheme. The Oil Regions did not learn of it until it had actually been put into operation in Cleveland, Ohio, and then it leaked out. What did it mean to the oil regions? It meant that the man who produced the oil, as well as all outside refiners, were entirely at the mercy of this group who if they would could make the price of crude oil, as well as refined. But it was a plan which couldn't survive daylight. As soon as the Oil Regions learned of it a

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wonderful row followed. There were nightly anti-monopoly meetings, violent speeches, processions, ~~and~~ trains of oil cars loaded for members of the offending corporation raided, the oil running on the ground, their buyers turned out of the oil exchanges, appeals to the state legislature, to Congress for an interstate commerce bill, producers and refiners uniting for protection. I remember a night when my father came home with a grim look on his face and told how he with scores of other producers had signed a pledge not to sell to the Cleveland ogre that alone had profited from the scheme - a new name that of the Standard Oil Company replacing the name South Improvement Company in popular contempt.

There were long days of excitement. Father coming home at night, silent and stern, a sternness even unchanged by his after dinner cigar which had come to stand in my mind as the sign of his relaxation after a hard day. He no longer told of the funny things he had seen and heard during the day; he no longer played his Jew's harp, nor sang to my little sister on the arm of his chair the verses we had all been brought up on:-

"Augusta, Maine, on the Kennebec River
Concord, New Hampshire, on the Merrimac, etc."

The commotion spread. The leaders of the New York Petroleum Association left out of the original conspiracy and in a number of cases as was soon to be shown outraged chiefly for that reason, sent a committee to the Oil Regions to

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see what was doing. The committee was joyfully welcomed partly because its chairman was well known to them all. It was my Rouseville Neighbor, Henry H. Rogers.

Mr. Rogers had left the Creek in 1867 and become a partner in the Pratt firm of refiners and exporters of Brooklyn, New York. He and his associates saw as clearly as his old friends in the Oil Regions that let the South Improvement Company succeed in its plan for a monopoly and everybody not in the ring would be forced to go out of business. The New York men seem to have been convinced that the plans for saving themselves which the organized producers and refiners were laying stood a good chance of success, for back in New York Mr. Rogers gave a long interview to the Herald. He did not mince words. Cleveland and Pittsburgh were "straining every nerve to create a monopoly." They would succeed if their control of the railroads continued. He and his fellows felt as the men in the Oil Regions did that the breaking up of the South Improvement Company was a "necessity for self-existence." They were as bold in action as in words for when a little later the president of the Standard Oil Company of Cleveland, Mr. John D. Rockefeller to date the only beneficiary of the South Improvement Company, sought an interview in New York with Mr. Rogers and his committee he was treated cavalierly and according to the newspapers retreated after a brief reception "looking badly crest-fallen."

Thus was the Henry H. Rogers of 1872.

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Out of the long struggle begun as a scrimmage came finally a well-developed cooperative movement guaranteeing fair play all around. It was signed by the Standard Oil Company's representative and all the oil carrying railroads. The railroads indeed were the first to succomb knowing as they did that what they were doing was contrary to the common law of the land and being thundered at as they were by the press and politicians of all the country. "I told Willie not to go into that scheme," said old Commodore Vanderbilt and Jay Gould whined, "I didn't sign until everybody else had."

Out of the alarm and bitterness and confusion, I gathered from my father's talk a conviction to which I still hold - that what had been undertaken was wrong. My father told me it was as if somebody had tried to crowd me off the road. Now I knew very well that on this road where our little white horse trotted up and down we had our side, that there were rules, that you couldn't use the road unless you obeyed those rules, that it was not only bad manners, but dangerous to attempt to disobey them. The railroads, so said my father, ran through the valley by the consent of the people; they had given it a right of way. The road on which I trotted was a right of way. One man had the same right as another, but the railroads had given to one something they would not give to another. It was wrong. I sometimes hear learned people arguing that in the days of this historic quarrel everybody took rebates, that it was the accepted way. If they had lived through those days in the oil regions in 1872 they would have realized that far from

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being accepted it was fought tooth and nail. Everybody did not do it. In the nature of the offense everybody could not do it. The strong wrested from the railroads the privilege of preying upon the weak and the railroads never dared give the privilege save under promise of secrecy.

In walking through the world there is a choice for a man to make. He can choose the fair and open path, the path which sound ethics, sound democracy and the common law prescribe, or choose the secret way by which he can get the better of his fellow man. It was that choice made by powerful men that suddenly confronted the oil region. The sly, secret, greedy way won in the end and bitterness and unhappiness and incaluable ethical deterioration for the country at large came out of that struggle and others like it which were going on all over the country - an old struggle with old defeats but never without men willing to make stiff fights for their rights even if it cost them all they ever hoped to possess.

At all events, uncomprehending as I was in that fine fight, there was born in me a hatred of privilege, privilege of any sort. It was all pretty hazy to be sure, but still it was well to have at fifteen one definite plank based on things seen and heard, ready for a future platform of social and economic justice if I should ever awake to my need of one. At the moment, however, my reflection did not carry me beyond the wrongness of the privilege which had so upset our world, contradicting as it did the principle of consideration for others

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which had always been basic in our family and religious teaching. I could not think further in this direction for now my whole mind was absorbed by the ~~appalling and~~ over-whelming discovery that the world was not made in six days of twenty four hours each.

My interest in science which meant for me simply larger familiarity with plants and animals and rocks had set me looking over my father's books. Among them I found Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks" and sat down to read it. Gradually I grasped with a combination of horrow and amazement that instead of a creation the earth was a growth - that the creative days I had so clearly visualized were periods, aeons long, not to be visualized. It was all too clear to deny backed as it was by a wealth of geological facts. If this were true why did the Bible describe so particularly the work of each day, describe it and declare "and the morning and the evening were the first day, etc." And end, "and God rested the seventh day." Hugh Miller labored to prove that there was no necessary contradiction between Genesis and Geology. But I was too startled to accept what he said. A Bible that needed reconciling, that did not mean what it said was not the rock I had supposed my feet were on; that words could have other meaning than that I had always given them I had not yet grasped.

I was soon to find that the Biblical day was disturbing a great part of the Christian world, was a chief point of controversy in the church. I had hardly made my discovery when Genesis and Geology appeared in the pulpit of the Methodist

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Church of Titusville, Pennsylvania. Filling this pulpit at that time was a remarkable and brilliant man, Amos Norton Craft. Dr. Craft was an indefatigable student. It was told of him to the wonder of the church that he laid aside yearly $200.00 of his meagre salary to buy books. Like all the ministers of those days he was obliged to face the challenges of science. Many of his fellows, most of them so far as my knowledge went, took refuge in heated declarations that the conclusions that science was making were profane, godless, an affront to divinity. Not so Dr. Craft. He accepted them, strove to fit them into the Christian system. He startled his congregation and interested the town profoundly by announcing an evening course of lectures on the reconciliation of Genesis and Geology. The first of the series dealt with the universe. I had never known there was one - the stars, yes. I could name plants and constellations and liked nothing better than to lie on my back and watch them, but a universe with figures of its size was staggering. I went away from those Sunday night lectures fascinated, horror-stricken, confused - a most miserable child, for not only was my idea of the world shattered, not only was I left dizzily gyrating in a space to which there was no end, but the whole Christian system I had been taught was falling in a general ruin. I began to feel that I ought to leave the church. I did not believe what I was supposed to believe. I did not have the consolation of pride in emancipation which I find youth frequently has when it finds itself obliged to desert the views it has been taught.

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Indeed, I doubted greatly whether it was an emancipation. What troubled me most was that if I gave up the church I had nothing to put in place of something it had given me which seemed to me of supreme importance; summed up that something was in the commandment, "do as you would be done by." Certainly nothing which Hugh Miller or Herbert Spencer whom I began to read in 1872 in the Popular Science Monthly helped me here. They gave me nothing to take the place of what had always been the unwritten law of the Tarbell household based as I knew upon the teachings of the Bible. The gist of the Bible, as it had come to me, was what I later came to call the brotherhood of man. Practically it was that we should do nothing, say nothing, that injured another. That was a catastrophe and when it happened in our household - an inarticulate household on the whole - though one extraordinarily conscious of the minds and hearts of one another - when it happened the whole household was shadowed for hours and it was not until by sensitive unspoken efforts the injured one had been consoled, that we went on about our usual ways.

This was something too precious to give up and something for which I did not find a substitute in the scientific thinking and arguing in which I was floundering. The scientists offered me nothing to guide me in human relations and they did not satisfy a craving from which I could not escape and that was the need of direction, the need of that which I called

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God and which I still call God. Perhaps I was a calculating person, a cautious one. At all events I made up my mind to wait and find out something which better took the place of those things which I so valued. It cost me curious little compromises, compromises that I had to argue myself into. The chief came in repeating the creed.

I could repeat, "Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," because for many years I did not know what that meant. It was the resurrection that disturbed me. I could not accept it, nor could I accept the promise of personal immortality. That had become a grave doubt with me when I first grew dizzy with the consciousness of the vastness of the universe. Why should I expect to exist forever as a conscious mind in that vast emptiness? What would become of me? I did not want to think about it and I came then to a conviction that has never left me that as far as I am concerned immortality is not my business, that there is too much for me to attend to in this mortal life without over-speculation on the immortal, that it is not necessary to my peace of mind or to my effort to be a decent and useful person, to have a definite assurance about the affairs of the next world. I say this with humility for I believe that some such assurance is necessary to the peace and usefullness of many persons and I am the last to scoff at the revelations they claim.

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And yet it was hard to give up Heaven. Among the books on our shelves - many of them orthodox religious books was one that had a frontispiece which I had accepted as a definite picture of the Heaven to which I was to go. Jehovah sat on a throne, Cherubim and Seraphim around him, rank upon rank of angels filling the great amphitheater below. I always wondered where my place would be and whether there would be any chance to work up in Heaven as there seemed to be on earth, to become a Cherubim.

But giving up this Heaven was by no means the greatest tragedy in my discovery that the world was not made in seven days of twenty four hours each. The real tragedy was the birth in me of doubt and uncertainty. Nothing was ever again to be final. Always I was to ask myself when confronted with a problem, a system, a scheme, a code, a leader, "How can I accept without knowing more?" The quest of the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, had been born in me - the most tragic and incomplete, as well as the most essential of man's quests.

It was while groping my way frightened like a lost child I found a word to hold to - evolution. Things grew. What did they grow from? They all started somewhere. I was soon applying the idea. Nothing seemed to matter now, but to find the starting point of things and having that see why and how they grew into something else. Howwere you to go to work to find the start of life? With a microscope, and I soon was in the

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heat of my first intellectual passion, my first and greatest - that for the microscope. With a microscope I could perhaps get an answer to my mystification about the beginning of life, where it started and then I believed I would find God again.

I was a practical person apparently for I at once began to save my money and soon had enough to put into a small instrument. The house in Titusville, like many of its period, had a tower room, a steep stair case running up to it. This room was surrounded on three sides with big double windows. I begged to have it for my own. Here I was allowed to set up shop; here I had my desk, my papers and my microscope; here I was alone with my problems. It was that little microscope that had a good deal to do with my determination to go to college. If I was to become a microscopist, and I had already adopted that word, I must study, get an education.

This determination of mine to get an education, go to college, was chiefly due no doubt to the active crusade going on in those days for what we called woman's rights. Ours was a yeasty time, the ferment reaching into every relation of life, attacking and remodeling every tradition, every philosophy. As my father was hard hit by the attack on his conception of individualism in a democracy, freedom with strictest consideration for the rights and needs of others, as I was struggling with all the handicaps of my ignorance, with the nature of life, a search for God, so my mother was facing a little reluctantly a re-adjustment of her status in the home and in society. She had

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grown up with the Woman's Rights movement. Had she never married I feel sure she would have sought to "vindicate her sex" by seeking a higher education, possibly a profession. The fight would have delighted her. If she had gone to Iowa she surely would have soon joined the agitation led there in the late '50's by Amelia Bloomer, the inventor of the practical and ugly costume which still carries her name, the real founder of dress reform. We owe it to Amelia Bloomer that we can without public ridicule wear short skirts and stout boots, be as sensible as our feminine natures permit which is not saying much for us when it comes to fashions. But my mother found herself a pioneer in the Oil Regions, confronted by the sternest of problems which were to be settled only by immediate individual effort and goodwill.

The move to Titusville, however, soon put my mother in touch with the crusade for equal/political rights which was taking the place of the earlier movement for women's rights. The Civil War had slowed up that agitation, indeed many of its best talking points had been conceded and were slowly going into practice. Most of the militants had thrown themselves into war work and after the war into the campaign for negro suffrage, but the passing of the 14th Amendment in 1868 for the first time introducing the word male into the Constitution aroused a sense of outrage, not only in the advocates of equal rights but in many women who had not approved of previous agitations. Elizabeth Gady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, the greatest of the early leaders,

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failing to keep the humiliating distinction out of the Amendment began a tremendous national crusade for woman's suffrage. They marshalled a group of splendid women and undertook an intensive campaign meant to reach every women in the country. It reached us in Titusville, even reached our home where my father and mother always hospitable to crusaders opened their doors to them. I remember best Mary Livermore and Frances Willard, not that either touched me, saw me, and of this neglect I was acutely conscious. I noted, too, that the men we entertained did notice me, talked to me as a person - not merely as a possible member of a society they were promoting. There was Neal Dow - father by this time was a prohibitionist - who let me show him our Dante with Gustave Dore's picture. Men were nicer than women to me I mentally noted.

As the struggle for equal rights grew in heat I became aware that it was far from a united struggle, that as a matter of fact leaders and followers were spending almost as much time disapproving of each other's methods as fighting for their cause. The friction came largely from the propensity of Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony to form alliances shocking to many of their oldest and wisest friends. Before the war they had rather recklessly from a political point of view supported easier divorce. As one of their friends wrote them they had in so doing broken the heart of the portly Evening Post and nearly driven The Tribune to the grave. Time had not cooled their ardor for strange bed-fellows. They made one now of which

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I heard no little talk by my mother and her friends; it was with the two most notorious women in the eye of the public at the moment. "Hussies" they called them in conservative circles in Titusville, Pennsylvania - Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin.

It was not difficult for even a girl of fifteen to pick up some idea of what these women were so well did they advertise themselves and so delightedly did the press back them up in their doings. Beginning their careers as clairvoyants they had developed professionally their undoubted powers until they were in the sixties - the two best known and best paid trance-physicians of their day. Victoria claimed to have raised a child from the dead and Tennessee, the harder worker of the two, made enough money to keep thirty-five relations in comfort. "If I am a humbug sometimes look at the dead beats I have to support," was her answer to those who accused her of abusing her talents. Both women frankly advocated free love and so it was believed quite as frankly practiced it.

With this equipment they entered Wall Street in the '60's as consultants. The "Lady brokers" they were called. They quickly built up a profitable business. Old Commodore Vanderbilt was so tickled by their combination of beauty and effrontery, talents and ambitions, that he is said to have proposed marriage to Victoria. He was more valuable as a friend. She kept his picture on the wall of the salon where

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she received her clients and under it the framed motto, "Simply to thy cross I cling."

In 1870 Victoria Woodhull announced herself as a candidate for president in 1872. So successful was she in attracting and holding big audiences and so brilliantly did she present the arguments for equal rights that Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony threw scruples to the wind and took her into their camp from which promptly there was a considerable exodus of scandalized ladies. Not only did Victoria win the countenance of these two great leaders but she involved them in the Beecher-Tilton scandal which for months she worked steadily to force before the public.

The reverberations of the conflict inside the suffrage party together with what I picked up about the Beecher trial (I read the testimony word by word in our newspapers) did not increase my regard for my sex. They did not seem to substantiate what I heard about the subjection of women nor did what I observed nearer home convince me. Subjection seemed to me fairly divided. That is all I saw there were "hen-pecked men," as well as "down trodden women." The chief unfairness which I recognized was in the handling of household expenses. Women who must do the spending were obliged to ask for money or depend on charging. My mother had not been trained to live on as generous a scale as was now possible, but my father never said, "we have so much and no more to spend." They worked often at cross purposes.

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So I gathered as I listened to intimate talks between women, listened to suffrage speakers, read their literature so did many American husbands and wives. I felt no restraint myself for I always had at least a little money and I, too, could charge. This foolish practice led me into funny expenditures.

I had no sense of the appropriate in clothes. Often I had an ardent desire for something fitted only for grown ups and I always had a keen ambition to fit myself out for occasions. Sometime in the early '80's Clara Louise Kellogg came to town. My father and mother were in the West but they had arranged that I was to hear her. It seemed as if some kind of a regalia was necessary so I charged a wide pink sash and a pair of yellow kid gloves.

Out of the agitation for rights as it came to me two rights worth going after, quite definitely segregated themselves: the right to an education, and the right to earn my living - education and economic independence.

The older I grew the more determined I became to be independent. I saw only one way - teach - but if I was to teach I must fit myself, go to college. My father and mother agreed. I had a clear notion of what I wanted to teach - natural science, particularly the microscope, for I was to be a biologist. I made my choice - Cornell first opened to women in 1872, but at the moment when the steps to enter Cornell were to be taken there appeared in the household as an over Sunday guest the President of a small college in our

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neighborhood - only thirty miles away, Allegheny. Among the patrons of that College was the Methodist organization known as the Erie Conference, to which the Titusville Church belonged. I had heard of it annually when a representative appeared in our pulpit, told its story and asked for support. The president, Dr. Lucius Bugbee, was a delightful and entertaining guest and learning that I was headed Cornellward adroitly painted the advantages of Allegheny. It was near home; it was a ward of our church. It had responded to the cry of women for educational opportunity and opened its doors before the Institution I had chosen.

Was not here an opportunity for a serious young woman interested in the advancement of her sex? Had I not a responsibility in the matter? If the few colleges who had opened their doors were to keep them open, if others were to imitate their example two things were essential - women must prove they wanted a college education by supporting those in their vicinity and they must prove by their scholarship, what many doubted, that they had minds as capable of development as young men. Allegheny had not a large territory to draw from. I must be a pioneer.

As a matter of fact the only responsibility I had felt and assumed in going to college was entirely selfish and personal. But the sense of responsibility was not lacking nor dormant in me. It was one of the few things I had found out about myself in the shanty on the flats when I was six years old and there was a new baby in the family.

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The woman looking after my mother had said, "Now you are old enough to make a cup of tea and take it to her." I think in all my life since nothing has seemed more important, more wonderful to me than this being called upon by an elder to do something for mother, be responsible for it. I can feel that cup in my hand as I cautiously took it to the bed and can see my mother's touching smile as she thanked me. Perhaps there came to her a realization that this rebelling experimenting child might one day become a partner in the struggle for life so serious for her at the moment, always to be more or less serious.

But to return to Dr. Bugbee and his argument; before he left the house I had agreed to enter Allegheny in the Fall of 1876. And that I did.

What did I take with me? Well, I took what from my earliest years I had been told it was necessary to everyone - a Purpose, always spelled with a capital. I had an outline of the route which would lead to its realization. Making outlines of what was in my mind was the one and only fruit that I had gathered so far from long terms of struggle over grammar, rhetoric, composition. Outlines which held together I had discovered cleared my mind, gave it something to follow. I outlined all my plans as I had diagramed sentences. It was not a poor beginning for one who eventually, and by accident rather than by intention, was to earn her living by writing - the core of which must be sound structure.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

One thing by choice left out of the plan I carried from High School was marriage. I would never marry. It would interfere with my plan; it would fetter my freedom. I didn't quite know what Freedom meant; certainly I was far from realizing that it exists only in the spirit, never in human relations, never in human activities, that the road to it is as often as not what men call bondage. But above all I must be free and to be free I must be a spinster. When I was fourteen I was praying God on my knees to keep me from marriage. I suspect that it was only an echo of the strident feminine cry filling the air at that moment, the cry that woman was a slave in a man-made world. By the time I was ready to go to college I had changed my prayer for freedom to a will to freedom. Such was the baggage I carried to college where I was soon to find several things I had not counted on.

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