

Miss Tarbell of the Class of 1880 spoke for the
Allegheny women, Alumnae and Undergraduates.
In outline she said:-

In June 1930 I celebrated my Fiftieth Anniversary as
as alumna of this College, that is, I have had under my eye
for fifty years the experiment undertaken in 1870 of admitting
women to Allegheny College. It was very much of an experiment
when I entered, the only girl in my class, four upper classmen
ahead of me and thirteen graduates behind me. We women were
still subject to various taboos which we disregarded to our
confusion and shame. One which I remember was that no young
woman was allowed to put foot on the campus below Bentley Hall.
at her English University
it was like the forbidden area/ of which Virginia Woolf speaks
with bitterness in her book, "A Room ^{of} ^{own} ~~No~~ Oneself."

We came in as an experiment. Has the experiment proved
itself? How does an experiment in woman's education prove itself?

First, by what it does for her, the individual. Because
of it is her mind more active - her imagination more responsive -
her heart warmer - her love of beauty keener - her reverence
deeper? If so, her education has enriched her. She is better
able to live happily with herself - she is a better person to have
around.

Speaking of the Allegheny alumnae as I know them they are
because of their experience here better women to have around.

But a college education, if it is to justify itself to
society, must arouse in the woman a stronger consciousness of her
responsibility to pass on what she has gained. Education which has
not aroused such a responsibility is like the gold which they say

people are piling up today in safety deposit boxes - dead gold - which does not even earn the rent of the space it fills.

A What has education done to help our Allegheny women to fulfill their obligations of their lives? What are these obligations? Every women must answer that question for herself. Nothing more personal than the obligations of human beings, but generally speaking there is for all of us, not only the obligation, but the necessity of putting ourselves on a sound economic basis. Women must work. The world has never in all history been so managed that women did not have to make their economic contribution, that is, man alone could not support the family. I am not, of course, not talking about the exceptional beings, the people who pay income taxes, but there are so few of them among the forty million or so workers in this country - not one percent as a matter of fact. Women must work in the majority of the twenty five or thirty million families in this country. Now I am not one of those that believe that the college should be giving to women or to men vocational training, but if a woman gets out of college a knowledge of that machinery which we call the mind, if she learns how it functions and most important-thing that its efficiency may be improved as the years ago, if she learns how to live with her fellow men and women, find out that this world wasn't born yesterday, and both its good and ^{its} evil have been slow, slow growths, and that the increase of good and the over-coming of evil are both stiff jobs, not to be guessed off - well, if a young woman learns that in college ~~by~~ she has the most important essentials with which to attack any and every economic job.

My observation is that the women who have gone out of Allegheny have all of them been able to attack and to carry on this problem of contributing something to the economic life of the world more successfully because of their education here.

But I am inclined to think that the most important test - the final test - of college education for women is whether because of it they are strengthening and enriching the basic unit of society as it is now organized. What effect is the college education of women having on the home? Whether we like it or not the home is practically in the keeping of the woman. It goes up or down according to her handling of its many sided life. Society goes up and down according to the home, the kind of citizens it is turning out.

At the present moment in spite of the wide-spread education of women in this country we are getting out of American homes a larger proportion of criminal youths than we have ever had before. I am not holding women ^{alone} responsible for this, far from it, there are many complex ^{reasons for} qualities in what we speak of as the crime wave but I do feel that serious-minded college women should ask themselves whether or not they have been fully recognizing that a college education is not justified solely by the enrichment of their personal life, desirable as it is, ^{that or} by the outlook and training which it gives to help them in their economic struggle, that in the long run its justification must come back to whether or no it is making this basic unit of society ^{which} they are charged, the making of the home, a sounder, healthier, more reliable starting place in life for youth.

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And here again my experience with the graduates of Allegheny College in the homes which so many of them head is that these homes are the better places because of their experience here.