January 13, 1933

My dear President Wood:

I have your letter of January 5th. I do not know that I can be of much help. To begin with I do not look on a college, particularly a Junior College, as a place in which women should be prepared for activities. As I see it the business for the college is to prepare women for life by training their minds to observe, consider, appreciate; arousing their emotions to a love of what is beautiful, decent, righteous; arousing their responsibilities towards two institutions for which as I see it they are ~~primarily~~ basically responsible. —First, the family; second, the community in which they live.

I never yet have been able to sympathize with the idea that there was anything more important for a woman than building up a family. It is the basis of civilization and she is and must be, as far as I can see, the source of civilization. She needs for this all of the awakening and the directing that the college can give her.

This means of course that she should understand what it is to be civilized. If your Board of Curators can put a satisfactory and compelling notion of that into your young women's minds you needn't worry about occupations.

The College in my mind ought through its social and economic courses to emphasize, after it emphasizes the responsibility of women for the family, a responsibility to the community to which she belongs. Your own community is the real place to contribute, at least to begin to contribute, to the economic and social development of the country. A good job at home may lead, too, to a good job in a wider field, but that is neither here nor there, the first responsibility is to the things where you belong.

You see what I am trying to say - I am doing it rather badly I think because I am in a good deal of a hurry - is that I haven't much sympathy with this emphasis being put upon occupational studies in college. If you can arouse young

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people to a sense of what it is to be civilized, to a desire to be civilized and a sense of their responsibility to pass that on you will do the greatest of jobs in my judgment. Anything else is merely opportunist's tinkering in a big educational program.

With all of which I am afraid your Board of Curators may not deeply sympathize, they may consider it beside the mark. But you know, dear President Wood, you do not have to put this before them. It can remain just between you and me and you can correct me if you think I am wrong.

Very sincerely yours

James M. Wood
President, Stephens College
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