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The

College Woman

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INTRODUCTION.

The discussion of any great subject to be at all valuable must have a basis in fact and reliable information. Accordingly, when I decided to prepare an address on "The College Woman," I sent to a number of leading colleges and universities the following questionnaire:

1. Total number of your Alumnae. (If you cannot give exact figures, approximate number.)
2. How many of your Alumnae have advanced degrees?
3. How many of your Alumnae are teaching?
4. How many are engaged in Christian work?
5. How many of your graduates are engaged in Social Welfare work?
6. In what other occupations are your graduates engaged?
7. How many have married?
8. Have you any information about the kind of men they have married?
9. Have you any information about the number of children of your Alumnae?
10. What reasons have you for thinking college women leaders?
11. In your opinion does the Nineteenth Amendment increase the importance of college education for **women**?
12. What modifications, if any, do you consider desirable in the woman's college?

This questionnaire was sent to about fifty (50) leading colleges for women and co-educational colleges and universities.

Twenty-five (25) answered my questionnaire more or less completely; fifteen (15) colleges for women and ten (10) co-educational institutions, namely, Woman's Colleges: Agnes Scott, Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Florida State, Mills, Mount Holyoke, Newcomb, Rockford, Simmons, Smith, Sweet Briar, Vassar, Wellesley, and Wesleyan. Co-educational: George Peabody, Huron College, Kansas University, Indiana University, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, Oberlin College, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford University, Washington University.

The College Woman.

Outline.

- I. THE FACTS ABOUT COLLEGE WOMEN.
- II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE FACTS.
- III. THE COLLEGE WOMAN AND THE FUTURE.
- IV. THE COLLEGE WOMAN AND HER COLLEGE.

Discussion.

I.

SUMMARY OF THE LEADING FACTS ABOUT COLLEGE WOMEN.

1. The Number of College Women.

The aggregate of graduates reported by fifteen (15) colleges for women and ten (10) co-educational colleges and universities, answering questionnaire, is sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-eight (66,668). There are one hundred and seven (107) other colleges for women and co-educational colleges and universities of recognized standing from which no reports have been received. Estimating the number of women graduates from this latter list on the basis of the number reported in the former list, and also from the information given in the World's Almanac for 1919, I conclude that a conservative estimate of the number of college women in the United States is two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000).

Besides there are a large number of women who have graduated from colleges not belonging to either of the four college associations.

Then there are many women who have had two or more years of college training or the equivalent.

If all grades of colleges are included and all women who have had two years of college training, the total number would probably be three hundred thousand to three hundred and fifty thousand (300,000 to 350,000).

Truly this is a mighty host!

Note this fact, that college women as a rule are advocates of the higher education of women, and as teachers and mothers, or in whatever sphere, are using their influence to send increasing numbers of young women to college. It is therefore safe to say that the number of college women in America will increase rapidly from year to year.

2. The Proportion of College Women to College Men.

I quote from the report of the United States Commissioner of Education, Bulletin 1920, No. 34:

"In college and graduate departments the number of men has increased from 44,926 in 1890 to 164,075 in 1916, while the number of women has increased from 20,874 to 95,436. Expressed in percentages the men increased 265 per cent and the women 357 per cent."

The following comparisons are significant:

In 1916 the B. A. degree was conferred on 11,229 men and 9,022 women.

In 1918 the same degree was conferred on 9,092 men and 11,243 women.

In 1916 the M. A. degree was conferred on 1,736 men and 886 women.

In 1918 the same degree was conferred on 1,332 men and 1,033 women.

(See Bulletin 1920, No. 34, Bureau of Education.)

According to the above statement the number of men receiving the B. A. degree *decreased* in two years 2,137, while the number of women *increased* 2,221.

The number of men receiving the M. A. degree *decreased* in two years 404, while the number of women *increased* 147.

3. The Number of Women Taking Advanced College Degrees.

Sixteen (16) colleges and universities report an aggregate of 2,227 of their graduates have taken advanced degrees. In 1918 the United States Commissioner of Education reported over 1,100 women had taken advanced college degrees. It is safe to say the number is annually increasing. This signifies not only the ambition of college women, but also increased influence and power.

4. What College Women Are Doing.

Taking the answers to the questionnaire as the basis and accepting the estimate of the total number of college women at two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000), I have reached the following conclusions:

- (1) Number engaged in teaching. 55,000
- (2) Number married. 110,000

- (3) Number engaged in Christian work . . . 5,000
- (4) Number engaged in social welfare work . . . 6,250

In every case the above numbers are only *estimates*. It is impracticable in many cases to secure accurate information. It is believed, however, the figures given are very conservative. The number given as engaged in Christian work has reference rather to those doing what may be called professional Christian work, such as Missionaries, Y. W. C. A. Secretaries, etc. It does not include Sabbath school teachers and those doing work in their own churches.

In reference to those engaged in other occupations the answer of Mount Holyoke College may be taken as representative, namely: "Medicine, Law, Ministry, Dentistry, Scientific Farming, Nursing, Public Health and Hygiene, Literary Work, Library Work, Statistics, Educational Supervision, Osteopathy, Designing, Landscape Gardening, etc."

5. College Women as Leaders.

It is the unanimous opinion of all the colleges answering the questionnaire that college women are leaders. The following spheres in which their influence as leaders is great are specially mentioned: "Teaching"; "Many social, political and religious activities as well as in their special field of work"; "Association of university women, the college women's clubs"; "In school and Christian work and church organizations."

This does not mean that *every* college woman is a leader nor that *all* leaders are college women. And yet the facts are that college training does prepare for leadership and does develop leaders.

6. The College Woman and the Nineteenth Amendment.

The answers to the questionnaire indicate very emphatically that the enactment of the Nineteenth Amendment vastly increases the importance of the college education of women, and that the amendment adds greatly to the responsibility and opportunity of the college woman.

7. College Training Vastly Increases Efficiency.

It widens the horizon; it gives a vast amount of valuable and useful knowledge; it trains the mind to think more profoundly

and more accurately; it develops and strengthens all the powers of the soul; it gives poise; it renders the judgment better and more reliable; it gives higher ideals and aspirations. For all these reasons college training increases efficiency. But we are not left to reason alone. Our inquiry concerns the *facts* about college women. What then are the facts as to their efficiency? First of all in the great war college women *only* were assigned to the most difficult and important posts abroad and acquitted themselves splendidly. Then in the teaching profession the demand for college women is greater than the supply. In the matter of remuneration college women command the largest salaries. To all this add the testimony given above as to leadership.

SUMMARY OF FACTS.

1. The number of college women in the United States— Alumnae of colleges and universities belonging to the three college associations, reporting to New England College Association, and to the great universities on the Pacific slope, two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000).

Besides there are many women who have one or more years of college training. If all grades of colleges are included, and if all who have had two years of college work are counted, a conservative estimate of the number of college women in the United States would be three hundred thousand (300,000)—probably more.

2. There are more women than men taking the B. A. degree, and almost as many taking the M. A. degree.

3. They are filling positions of responsibility and leadership in every walk of life. Over two-thirds of them are in homes, schools, religious and philanthropic work, that is to say, in the greatest centers of influence.

4. They are leaders.

5. They are destined under the Nineteenth Amendment to exert a great influence on the nation.

6. They are most efficient.

II.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE FACTS.

1. **The number of college women is significant**—250,000 to 350,000. This number is constantly increasing. They are distributed over the entire United States. No city of any size, and scarcely a town, in which college women are not found. Moreover, they are organized. "The Association of University Women," succeeding "The Association of Collegiate Alumnae," is one of the most influential organizations in the country. Then in nearly all cities college women are organized into college clubs. College women then are a great host, well organized and aggressive.

2. **There is much significance in the fact** that a larger number of women than men are taking the B. A. degree, which is the *cultural* college degree, that the number of women taking the master's degree is increasing while the number of men is decreasing. This indicates not only the increased power represented by these higher degrees, but the growing influence of women in the educational world.

3. **There is great significance** in the *increased efficiency* which college training has given to this large number of college women. The higher education has rendered them in every way more capable. Their well trained and informed minds, their disciplined wills, their vision, their poise, their ideals, their ambition, their interest and zeal, all give them a conscious power. And indeed one of the great forces in the world today is the power of college women.

4. **The conscious power of college women** constrains them, impels them to activity. They cannot be idle. Nor as a rule are they content to do small, frivolous things. With a great fire burning within them they must do something, and something worthwhile, something in keeping with the ambitions and ideals of their college. As we have seen, the facts indicate they are engaged in doing great things. They are found in all the "learned professions," in almost every sphere of human activity, and more than two-thirds of them are found in three spheres, *the home, teaching and religious work*. Mark you these are the centers of the greatest influence in the world. What will it mean to the hundreds of homes to have an educated wife and mother! It is the woman who makes the home, gives it social standing, sets its ideals, moral and intellectual, creates its atmosphere, makes

it wholesome, healthful, attractive. Then it is she who makes it a center of influence in the community.

What will it mean to have thousands of college women teaching in the preparatory schools and colleges of America? It will mean far better instruction and hence better preparation for college, and for life, of thousands of young people. It will mean true ideals of education. It will mean inspiring our youth with higher ambition. It is impossible to estimate what the college woman in schools will mean.

What will it mean in the religious sphere? How much will the college woman mean to the Young Woman's Christian Association, to the Foreign Mission Work, to the Sunday School, to every branch of church work?

5. The Significance of the Leadership of College Women.

One of the outstanding features of our modern world is the large number of organizations of every sort. Among women especially are organizations numerous and large. There are the women's clubs, "The American Association of University Women," various church organizations and many others. Now it is well known that the power, usefulness and effectiveness of any organization depends largely upon leaders. And college women *are* leaders as we have seen.

6. What the College Woman Signifies to the State.

We have seen that it is almost the unanimous testimony of the colleges that the Nineteenth Amendment increases the importance of the college education of women. Why? What shall it mean to the State? Woman's suffrage is new. The vast majority of women have given but little attention to politics. How shall they use this new power put into their hands? Never had wise and able leadership a greater opportunity or greater responsibility. When the Nineteenth Amendment was before the country for ratification, it was argued that the enfranchisement of women would mean cleaner politics, better officers in State and nation, better laws, especially as affecting the home and school. It was argued that woman would be found on the right side of moral questions. Are these hopes to be realized? The answer will rest to a large degree with college women. Still further, the balance of power in almost any election will be in the hands of the women.

How will they use it? The college woman will have much to do in answering it.

It will thus be seen in how many ways the facts concerning college women are significant. I verily believe that nothing has occurred within the last century of greater significance to mankind than the college education of woman.

III.

THE COLLEGE WOMAN AND THE FUTURE.

1. The College Woman and Womanly Ideals.

There is nothing in this world more attractive, more lovable, more potential for good, more necessary for the highest type of civilization, more needed at the present time than *womanly* women. And what is the highest type of woman? True womanliness combines gentleness and strength, modesty and refinement, purity of heart, speech and behavior, holds womanhood the highest gift of Heaven, is not mannish nor loud, nor coarse, nor forward. To crown all the highest type of woman is a Christian.

One of the saddest and most discouraging sign of the times is the trend among so many women in our country and in the world away from this high ideal of womanhood. Who is to check this disastrous trend, and to maintain the highest ideal of womanhood? My answer is, *college women*. In no way can they better serve America and the world, in no way can they better serve civilization and Christianity than in restoring and maintaining the highest type of Christian womanhood.

2. The College Woman and the Next Generation.

What shall the next generation be in intelligence, in morals, in character, in usefulness and in their attitude towards God and the Bible? Upon the answer to this question depends the future of our country, the perpetuity of our institutions, the future of Church and State. The college woman will have a large part in determining what the answer shall be and for the following reasons:

The number of college women is already large and is rapidly growing. They are widely scattered throughout the country and are most influential.

Again, it is estimated one hundred and ten thousand (110,000) of the two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) marry. As mothers their influence upon their children will be very great, if

not decisive. But their influence will not be confined to their own homes; it will extend to the homes of their neighbors and to their communities.

Again, it is estimated that fifty-five thousand (55,000) of the two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) college women become teachers. More and more the secondary schools are demanding college graduates as teachers. They teach children at a very impressionable age and have much to do in determining their future.

Here are two of the great centers of influence—the home and the school—and in these two centers the influence of college women must be pronounced.

But what about the Church and Sunday school? Do they not have much to do in determining what the next generation shall be? Far be it from me to discount either of these. But remember that the children have almost stopped going to church, and as for the Sunday school even a good teacher has her class only one-half hour a week and has no authority over attendance or preparation of lesson, while the day school teacher has the child *four or five hours* a day for *five days* in the week and has authority.

Again there are other ways in which the college woman exerts an influence over the young, such as the Christian Endeavor, the Y. W. C. A., etc. Nor must her personal influence be overlooked.

Then, too, as a member of the Church and through all the work of the Church she exerts an influence upon the young.

It is obvious, therefore, that the college woman will have a large part in determining what the next generation shall be.

3. The College Woman and the Future of the Kingdom of God.

It is God's plan to carry on His work in the world through human instrumentalities—men and women. It has always been the belief of the Presbyterian Church that God uses most effectively *educated* men and this belief is now shared largely by all denominations. This applies to a great extent to the ministry. But if a college education renders ministers more efficient, will it not render more efficient *all* Christian workers? Obviously then the future progress of the Kingdom depends largely, under God, upon the training of the workers. Apply this principle to women. In foreign missions the proportion of women to men is seven women to five men. Two-thirds of the women have college training. (Burton St. John of Student Volunteer Movement.) The majority

of our Sunday school teachers are women. The women are better organized and doing a larger work in the Church than ever before. How greatly will college training increase the efficiency of women in all lines of Christian work! By so much will it increase the progress of the Kingdom.

And now let me gather together all the influence, all the efficiency, all the ability, all the vision, all the resourcefulness, all the strength, all the leadership of the college woman in the home, in the school, in society, in all the woman organizations, in the State, and in every calling in which she is engaged. Sum it all up and tell me what it might mean in bringing in the Kingdom of God, *if consecrated*, and what it might mean *if not soundly Christian*. Truly the future progress of the Kingdom is very vitally concerned in the college education of women. Let me recapitulate what the college woman will have to do with the future:

(1) She will have a vast deal to do with the ideals of the women of the future.

(2) Under the Nineteenth (19) Amendment she will exert a great influence on the future of our country.

(3) She will have much to do in determining what the next generation shall be.

(4) She will have a great deal to do with the future progress of the Kingdom of God.

IV.

THE COLLEGE WOMAN AND HER COLLEGE.

Any discussion of the college woman is manifestly incomplete without a study of the college which is the source of her power. Back of the college woman is her college.

1. The College to a very large extent makes the College Woman what she is.

She is the product of her college. I wonder how many duly appreciate the influence of the college upon its students. Consider the following facts:

(1) The girl enters college at an impressionable age.

(2) In most cases it is her first experience away from home.

(3) She has idealized the college as the highest institution of learning, as possessing authority in education, as the fulfillment of her dreams and highest ambitions.

(4) All that the college *is* powerfully impresses her—the tradition of the college, its ideals, its atmosphere, its student body, its activities, its work.

(5) She is equally impressed educationally. The professors, the text-books, the methods of teaching impress her. In science, in philosophy, in history, in Bible, in literature the college is authoritative. She will probably accept without question the views of the teachers and the text-books. Their superior learning, their degrees, their position and their dogmatic assertion usually carry the student. Even if she has doubts as to the teaching, she cannot cope with a well trained and informed professor.

(6) In her standards of Christian faith and living the student generally adopts the standards of the college.

For these reasons when a student has spent four years at a college she is *the product* of that college. She has adopted its ideals, has adopted its traditions, and conform in faith and practice to all her college stands for. It is *her* Alma Mater. She has learned to honor and love it. She would consider it disloyal to deny its authority, or to question its teachings.

2. The Kind of College Needed for Exerting the Largest Influence for Good upon our Young Women.

It must be a college with the highest ideals of womanhood. Woman's greatest power is in being a true *woman*, not in aping man. Let the college teach that to be a true woman is the crown of her glory and the secret of her attractiveness and of her largest and most salutary influence.

It must be a college *able* to provide the best teachers and the best equipment.

It must be a college which does thorough and honest work, and maintains the highest scholastic standards.

It must be a college which makes it a condition in the employment of teachers that they shall be members of an evangelical church and cordially hold the fundamentals of Christianity. It is the teacher who makes the college, and it is the Christian teacher who has most to do with making the college Christian.

It must be a college which teaches the Bible, and teaches it as the inspired Word of God, not merely as literature, or from the standpoint of the destructive critic, but reverently and by one who believes it and lives it.

It must be a college with Christian traditions. The character of the college, what it has been and done and what it has stood for become traditions which are handed down from one generation of students to another and are a power.

It must be a college permeated by a wholesome stimulating Christian atmosphere. The student breathes it as she does the air. It is something which cannot be controverted or avoided, but silently, unconsciously yet certainly makes its impression.

Such is the kind of a college needed for producing the highest type of college women.

3. What Depends upon the Christian College for Women?

(1) THE CONSERVING OF THE FAITH OF OUR CHOICE YOUNG WOMEN.

As a rule it is the choice young women who go to college. They have successfully completed four years of preparatory work and have been recommended by their principals. Their average age is over seventeen (17). They are ambitious and gladly undertake a four year college course.

Then the colleges are trying more and more to select their students. Entrance requirements have been raised and more strictly administered, with a view to securing the best prepared and most capable students. The college curriculum has been developed, the methods of teaching improved, and the standard of scholarship raised. At the end of the first year those who have fallen below this standard drop out. Hence as a rule college graduates represent the ablest and most aspiring class of our women. Now what will it mean to those women and their homes to have their faith destroyed or enervated in college? What will it mean to the Church, to society, and to the world? I can conceive of no greater disaster than the undermining of the faith of the college woman. Nor can I conceive of any greater service than that rendered by the Christian college for women, in which faith is strengthened and developed. The opportunity and responsibility of such a college at the present time is great beyond expression.

(2) THE MEETING OF A GREAT CRISIS.

A few years ago I made an address on the subject "The Woman Crisis." Since then the crisis has developed and become far more

grave. Today thoughtful people everywhere are alarmed. I have indicated the possibilities of the college woman meeting this crisis. Here let me supplement this statement. We must go back of the college woman to her college, and my statement is this:

It is not merely the college woman, but the *Christian college* for women which must meet this crisis.

In *The Delineator* for June, 1921, Vice President Coolidge has an article entitled "ENEMIES OF THE REPUBLIC—Are the Reds Stalking our College Women?" In this article under the head, "Mighty Influences of Women," Mr. Coolidge says: "For the fostering of sound and loyal opinions we must depend on the home, the press, the pulpit and the schools. Especially must we depend on the higher institutions of learning, the college and university, for there teachers are educated and their opinions largely formed. With the great increase in colleges for women, and of those who attend them, with the teaching of the nation so largely entrusted to women, with the greatly augmented power conferred by equal suffrage, and with the predominance of the mother in the home, the instruction given and the opinions prevailing in women's colleges, will more than ever create a mighty influence in the determination of America's future. Mothers feel more keenly than all others that they have given hostages to the future. They know that they are wrapped up in the welfare of posterity. If that influence fails, there is no influence for good that can succeed." The author then proceeds to show the condition which prevails in many leading colleges for women. The article emphasizes very strongly my contention that it is the Christian college for women which must meet the great woman crisis of today. And unless this crisis is met, the civilization of Christendom and our Republic are in peril. Never was the Christian college for women so important as now.

(3) UPON THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN DEPEND A
SAFE AND ABLE LEADERSHIP AMONG WOMEN.

We have already seen that college women are leaders—leaders in education, leaders in the home, leaders in woman organizations, leaders in society, leaders in religious and philanthropic work. The influence of such leaders cannot be estimated. Is there anything more important than that these leaders should be sound in

the faith and consecrated Christians? What is the source of supply of such leaders? Obviously the Christian college for women.

I have now discussed "The College Woman and Her College" under the following heads:

(1) The College to a very large extent makes the college woman what she is.

(2) The kind of college needed for exerting the largest influence upon our young women.

(3) What depends upon the Christian college for women?

If I have made my points clearly, then the conclusion is inevitable.

The Paramount Importance of the Christian College for Women.