



A LETTER AN ORDINARY MAN MIGHT WRITE.

By Ethel M. Chapman

Dear Co-ed:

I'm afraid you won't like this letter,—until you think about it. Some girls would turn it down absolutely,—girls who depend on the quality, called womanly charm, to relieve them from further responsibility to society; but they couldn't understand as you do. And then I'm not sure that this thing doesn't concern you as much as it does us. Have you ever wondered whether we are letting the cult and standards of our Alma Mater blind us to some of the things the times are demanding of us just as ordinary men and women?

Yesterday I came back to our provincial little home town. The sheds were bright with last year's circus posters; the snow stretched in patches over the muddy fields like so much linen from a broken clothes-line; there was none of the water-color landscape effect that we always associate with pastoral scenes when we are away from them, but there was something very real and enduring about it all. In the littlest house an old man bent by years of husbandry smoothed down an axe-helve with a sort of joyful concentration; his old wife bent by years of housewifery and making babies comfortable in the crook of her arm while she worked, pinched the dead leaves off

her geraniums. They are very happy. I think I know why; they have been an active part of the simple wonderful things that make life, with a religious faithfulness to its minor details and it can never hold for them anything of fear or boredom.

It's a great thing for a man to know that he can cope with life; that he is paying his debt to existence every day. I don't know whether a girl feels the same about it or not, even in an institution like yours, existing for the study of the arts and crafts of making a home. I'm afraid that many parents, even, are advanced only far enough to believe that it's a good idea to bring up their daughters to know how to work, but they hope for the degree of prosperity that will never make it necessary. Now the cooks and maids and nurses and factory girls that we were depending on for the future are working in the fields and factories and shops of Europe. Somehow I can't help thinking it's a good thing for the young woman of our country. It means that we will have to bring to her housework and home-making, the scientific ingenuity, the architectural wisdom, that we have brought to the industrial world where men work. Then we can prepare a pathway not