

SCIENCE

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CONTRIBUTION OF BRYN MAWR COLLEGE TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN¹

THE retirement of Miss Thomas from the presidency of Bryn Mawr College, whose destinies she has guided since its formal opening thirty-seven years ago—for nine years as dean in association with President Rhoads, and for twenty-eight as president—and whose ideals, policies and achievements are in so large measure the work of her creative genius, turns our thoughts inevitably to the consideration of these ideals and achievements and to the contributions which this college has made to the higher education of women during her administration. These reflections may serve to lighten in some degree the feelings of sorrow and regret aroused by the severance of relations so long sustained, so rich in accomplishment and so warmly cherished by the students, graduates and other members and friends of this college.

Bryn Mawr began its work at an interesting period in the development of higher education in this country. The path had already been blazed for the collegiate education of women. Each type of institution now recognized—the coeducational, the affiliated and the separate college for women—had been in existence for several years—the coeducational, indeed, for over half a century—and with growing success. But the hard-fought battle was still on. In order to realize how complete has been the victory, how great the advance, recall the changed attitude of the public mind since those days toward college education for girls, indeed the present wide recognition of its vital importance for civilization under the new social order, the many problems then open and now solved—although there

¹ Address at the commencement exercises on June 8, 1922, upon the retirement of President Thomas from the presidency of Bryn Mawr College.

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