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### WELLESLEY COLLEGE AND THE DE-VELOPMENT OF BOTANICAL EDUCATION IN AMERICA<sup>1</sup>

It is an honor for one to be assigned any part, however minor, in the exercises for which we have assembled to-day, and I am not insensible to the high honor of being invited to give the address this evening. The most significant distinction between man and the rest of creation is his intellect, and the most important matter that can ever concern us is the advancement and diffusion of knowledge. We are met this afternoon to dedicate a beautiful building to these uses.

I have been fortunate in knowing something of this building from the time when it existed only as a need, then as a dream, then through all the various stages of plans in mind, blue prints, bids and contracts, disappointments and delays which mark the construction of every building worth having—and now the welcome stage of a dream come true.

I had almost said, "the final" stage of a dream come true; but that would have implied a misunderstanding of the entire situation, for the completion of this building bears somewhat the same relation to the department of botany of Wellesley as the graduation of students from college bears to their life work—it is only a commencement. True it is not, if I may use a pleonasm, an initial beginning, but it marks the beginning of bigger and better things, not only for botany in Wellesley, but for botany in America, for whatever facilitates better work in any discipline, anywhere, is a benefit to all.

What has gone into this building? Brick and mortar, of course, as those can testify who have watched it rise from day to day. But more than brick and mortar. Aspirations and ideals, hopes and wishes, ability in planning, impatience at delays, discouragements vanquished by zeal and persistence, a determination to have the best in order that the best may be accomplished; love, devotion and sacrifice the building is fairly held together by these imponderables more firmly than by beams and concrete.

I would like to emphasize, if I may, the comparison of this occasion to a college commencement, for just as commencement day has been preceded by years of activity and accomplishment that justify the final diploma, so this building has been preceded by years

<sup>1</sup> Address delivered at the dedication of the new Botany Building, Wellesley College, November 4, 1927.

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