

Chamber of Commerce,
Holyoke, Massachusetts.
July 3, 1920.

My dear Miss Tarbell,

You must have prayed for me because now I have "worked up AND out" and I shall sail for France the last of this month.

The city of Holyoke is sending me to help reconstruct the village of Apremont which Holyoke has taken as a memorial to the boys who are buried near there.

I am to do practically the same work there as here. And they want me to help link the two places together.

Of course I am delighted, and particularly pleased because they seem to have confidence that I can do this for them.

I do wish now that I might have the power to interpret the life in Apremont to this city in the form of a book perhaps. Much has been written about all phases of reconstruction over in France, but I long to be a scribe as well as a teacher and preacher.

However, my first and last that will always be "Service" and I already love those little children before I have seen them. I hope that I will be able to bring to them something of the inspiration and understanding sympathy which you gave to me when I was a little girl. I remember well how I used to fly to the attic, weeping over the trials of a cross aunt, and take refuge in one of your books. I have read them over and over, always saying to myself" I will amount to something"

And now I am off to do or die and I know that I am the happiest girl in the world. And with your sympathy and loving kindness, I shall be afraid of nothing on land or sea.

Wont it be a wonderful experience to help those dear people build their little homes . I want to help them to bring cheer back to their fireside. But I know that I shall gain much more than I give and I shall learn that to die for ones country is the divinest thing in the world.

I want to write to you from Apremont , if I may, and tell you the things about the people and their problems which only a big heart could understand.

And if I am able to render any little service in Apremont, I want you to know that it is due to your inspration way back in my attic study when the world seemed dark indeed in a very unhappy home. but I do think that I had to know an unhappy home before I could possibly understand any of the sorrow of no home at all. So I like to geel that the Good Father has been getting me ready for this task.

I am taking the letters which you have written to me for they are among my choicest treasures. And I thank you again more than I can say.

Faithfully yours,

Alta Jane Emerson