Dear Miss Tarbell,

I am enclosing some objections to my plan which were sent me by the New York young man who is to join us. My own son is individualistic, and when I got this letter, I pretended that "Jay" had sided with me in my idealism. Albert has a high regard for Jay's business ability.

I said

"Now you just listen to this letter from Jay! You will agree with him, I am sure. He puts the thing in such a way, that even you would have to admit the truth of what he says! I will eat my hat if you don't agree with his conclusions, even if you did laugh at me!"

Made somewhat doubtful by my certainty, Albert began to back water.

"Well, Jay is all right. If he says it will go, perhaps it will. By the way, what hat will you eat?"

"My fur hat" I replied.

Then I read the letter, and an irreverent youth was slapping his knee and enjoying himself in a paroxysm of mirth.

"I guess you don't need to eat that hat!" he said.

Seeing that he was hopeless, I addressed myself to softening and illuminating Jay, by means of this pathoetry which I enclose. "Pathoetry" you know, is poetry with pathos in it--not necessarily in rhyme.

I thought Albert would be awed by the loveliness of the thought, and silenced by the beauty of the argument. I was reading aloud, and had got as far as the nightingale, when an unsympathetic voice remarked drily:

"Nightingales don't sing in orange trees."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because orange trees grow in hot climates, and nightingales are natives of northern countries."

I am exceedingly sensitive. I ceased reading.

I fancied that the young man would not appreciate the tender touch with which I had handled the subject.

I pleaded for the nightingale, however. I was loth to lose her. He finally grudgingly admitted that possibly an orange tree, growing in the extreme northern part of the orange belt, might be visited by a southerly inclined nightingale.

But he said he thought an auk would be a better bird.

I asked him where an auk resided.
He replied: "About the south and the north poles".
I asked him what kind of a song it had, and he answered: 'a kind of croak' - I asked him how large it was, and he said: it was about the size of a goose.
I told him that I did not think it would be in accord with the unities, to bring an auk into the tale. That it would not sound as poetic to say "An auk perched upon the orange tree and croaked and its glossy green" as it would to say that a nightingale trilled her soft lay.
He did not seem to see any reason why. It seems to me that he is deficient in the poetic sense.
He said it would be much more interesting as an auk was a much rarer bird. He also said that it would not be beyond the bounds of verisimilitude, for an auk, which might have escaped from a zoological garden, to roost in an orange tree and croak, and that it could be seen much more plainly than a nightingale, and the old man would be more likely to notice it, on that account.
I have labored long with him, to see that if I were to replace the nightingale with an auk, that the less n which the bit of pathos was intended to carry, would be entirely lost, but when I appeal to the esthetic in him, I appeal in vain, as far as that department of art is concerned.

I know that you see much more in the literary line than falls under my eye, and are more competent to judge on these matters.
If you say auk, auk it shall be.
That is, if they are still in existence.
Albert says he does not know whether they are extinct, or engaged in extirpating.
Anyhow, this was supposed to be some time ago, so you need not let that bother you.

Yours very truly,

Ellen Eames DuBois.