

May 25, 1939

Dear, dear Gertrude Hall:

Indeed, I know what it is to weep when there is no pain. Your letter left me sobbing as I have not for a long time. It is a beautiful letter, Gertrude. I cannot believe that "All in the Day's work" could bring from you and Gigi so much praise.

It means the more to me because you two have always seemed to me, and rightly too, to live on a higher plane. I have always been a little shy of you, worshiping from a distance. That I have been able to set down a record which has moved you both so much makes me both proud and humble and fills my eyes with tears whenever I think of what you have written.

You are right, oh, so right, when you say that the greatest thing in the world is love. That is what has kept us going through all these centuries. I believe, myself, that it piles up, becomes a stronger and stronger force among men and Nations. I think we are seeing clearer now than ever that hate and greed and suspicion are failures as motive powers, that it is nothing but love of humanity, love which begins at the breakfast table and runs through the day and night that drives the world up and on.

I have just had a remarkable experience - five weeks in my old College in Northwestern Pennsylvania working on Lincoln with a class of thirty young people. It is the College of the district in which I was born and lived all my early life. This district saw and lived through the mad search for petroleum and in the long labor to make it fit to give men more light, more power and heat. And along with it went the struggle of a few to get all that was in it for themselves. It was enough to curse the land forever, but in the intervals of my class room work I drove for miles up and down the country and everywhere I found men and women living a larger, broader, more cheerful life than they ever had

before. Never before did I realize the extraordinary beauty of that part of Pennsylvania. Thirty miles was a long way for us to go in the old days with horse and buggy. It took a day to do it. And now an hour carries us up and down, in and out, over hills, through woods, along streams, passed beautiful lakes - such richness of beauty, and men and women working like beavers to develop it, rejoicing in homes, little and big, proud of their flora, not wanting outside things so beautiful and rich are the things on their own land. I do not know what it did to me, Gertrude, but I do know this that it has made me believe more in the spiral than anything that has happened to me for a long time.

And then my thirty pupils listening to a shaky old lady talk about a man who she believed had so much for them, listening with such intentness, asking such human, natural questions, trying so hard to get something, see a little clearer - I could weep when I think of them. And I believe that we are passing on in all this jumbled effort of ours a better equipped youth than we have ever had before, and I believe it will be one which better understands what this thing we call democracy means - something more than a word to them.

Well, I did not mean to write you this long letter, but you brought it on yourself, dear Gertrude. What you say that you and Gigi feel about "All in the Day's Work" gives me new courage, new hope.

But I cannot say all I feel about your letter. I am putting it among the proofs of my spiral which grow over night.

Bless you, dear Gertrude

Always affectionately yours

Mrs. W. C. Brownell
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