October 19, 1939

Dear Dr. Henderson:

Several months ago - I am ashamed to say how many - you wrote me a most interesting letter. You had redd that book of mine on my Day's work and you had found that our experiences had run parallel at many points. I would have liked to have answered the letter at once, but unfortunately I was beginning at the time to reap the harvest of a period of overwork. I had to give up many things, among them answering letters for a rather long period. But I am back at my desk finally and trying to clean up.

Mrs. Henderson was of course all right in urging you not to yield to what you call your seventy four old youthful timidity by writing a letter to a strange young lady of eighty one. This young lady of eighty one long ago got over that strange feminine reluctance to tell her age. As a matter of fact I am afraid I have been rather blatant about mine and have come to a point where I am rather trading on it. However, your parallel experiences interest me.

Yes, it has been hard to tell who to vote for in the last few years. I have voted twice now for F D R, but the last time when I cast my vote I prayed the Lord to forgive me. I couldn't see anything better to do unless not cast my vote at all. As for 1940, we'll just have to wait and see, that is hoping there will be a 1940 for American democracy. With two raging beasts loose on the earth like Hitler and Stalin I feel a little shaky myself about freedom to vote for anybody.

And yet I am not disheartened. I have strong confidence in the ultimate victory of free thinking, right living. But it looks to be

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

as if those of us who feel that way have got to take a lot of drubbing before we have any very clear ~~notions about~~ free thinking and right living.

But I must not run on any longer. I just wanted you to know that I appreciated your letter and that it would have been long ago answered if it had not been that I was pretty well out of the running for so many weeks.

With all good wishes to you and Mrs. Henderson, believe me

Very sincerely yours

Rev. Arthur S. Henderson
Leavenworth, Kansas

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library