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Copied by M. Cloud

Ada P. McCormick
Tucson, Arizona
October 1, 1946

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell
to her family from Paris, 1892)

17 Rue Malebanche, Paris
11 September, 1892

216T My Dear Family:

I've been out celebrating Sunday with the Catholics. This morning Mesdames Hall and Staley teased me into a pilgrimage and I was glad enough to go with somebody. We went down to one of the old churches near us and among the other curious things we saw was a frescoe representing the branches which spray out of Jesse. The old gentleman was reclining on a very modern looking sofa cushion and from his vest front sprang a tree as big as his leg. The tree branched, five branches on a side and on each branch was perched one of the connecting links -- a fine looking king in a robe and a crown. They all seemed to be having a highly social
217T time. The Virgin and Child were at the top of the main trunk. The frescoe was not very old. One expects to see such grotesque things in ancient art, but it does seem as if they ought to get rid of a little of their realism by this time.

After <u>dejeuner</u> we went to St. Cloud by the river to a fête and pilgrimage in honor of St. Clodvald or St. Cloud, a sixth century saint whose father was king of Orleans and who had to take to sainthood in order to escape a wicked uncle who didn't want him around. They've a bright new church at St. Cloud -- in place of the one the Prussians shelled in '70 and they had a pretty procession from it this afternoon. All the dignitaries were out; the bishop in his miter and carrying a big crosier. There was a beautiful reliquary carried in the procession which contained a glass vial in which, I
218T suppose, was the heart of St. Cloud. There was a great crowd of

people followed them. These churches get out quite as big a crowd as our best churches at home. The people are thoroughly devote. Indeed I cannot see but what they are just as reverential and faithful as Protestants and but what the average of the faithful is just as high here as in America. One thing makes it look different. All the people go somewhere on Sunday here while at home the great mass who don't go to church lounge at home. It looks more frivolous here but really I don't believe it is.

Just a year ago we four girls were at St. Cloud. It was 219T one of our first excursions when we were all feeling uncertain about what we dared do and we saw that day our first ~~fair~~ fête, excepting the one at Antwerp -- ~~while~~ well, a fete doesn't interest me so much now.

Tuesday.

I must finish up my letter in a hurry for it is almost time for my dejeuner. Tuesday is always a busy day for me for I generally send off my work then, and I am doing lots of work now. If it ~~is~~ only goes! I shall certainly get back to America -- sometime.

I hope the quarantine in New York has not scared you. We are all safe here so far and there is probably no doubt but what we shall continue to be. There has not been a case of Asiatic cholera in Paris. The weather is cooler -- and such precautions! They actually have washed the whole surface of the town with a disinfectant. There is no nervousness at all here ~~exp~~ except among the foreigners. I am very well too. My old ladies go off this week -- they are very bright interesting women and so kind. I shall be sorry enough to see them leave.

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220T Don't think I shall be lonesome tho'. All I want this winter is to be let alone.

I had a letter from Mary Henry last night. Her mother is better and Mary is feeling bright. Bishop Vincent has been to see her and the Cincinnati school is sure she thinks.

I rec'd Mother's letter from Findley's Lake. It must have been lovely there with the lilies and the fish and the donation party, etc. I think I'll go up and get a look at the place when I get home. Are times any better? I wouldn't dare tell you the state of my finances but actually I can't feel serious. McClure has promised to send me some money soon. I imagine they are not any too punctual in his office about paying. They owe nearly or quite $100. So you see if I get it -- and I shall -- I shall not
221T starve. I'm not afraid of doing that. I'm only afraid of always being obliged to stay here unless I work my passage over. But we might as well sing as cry. It isn't so bad to be poor if you are only happy. I must stop. I meant to write a good long letter this time and I find I've nothing at all in this. Love to everybody. Eat plenty of green corn for me. I've not seen an ear in market -- nor a watermelon -- "nor nuthin." Send me all the news -- and some blotting paper.

Did that letter on San Michel come out in Dispatch.

Lovingly,

Ida M. Tarbell.

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