

Typed by M. Cloud

116  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

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

(Says at top of first page  
"Death of Khedive")

January 9, 1892

(Outline of sole of shoe over writing  
on first sheet)

LOST  
My Dear Family:

It is Saturday night and I am too tired to work. I "want my ma" and as long as there is not any way of getting her or any of the rest of you, I have set myself to reading your letters of this week and to writing. I have had three from home. 2 on Monday last one from <sup>2 mothers</sup> and one from Sara and another from Mother on Thursday. I did not write more than the postal this week because so busy. I wrote you, of course, that the money came all right. It not only did not cost me anything, I got 38 cents premium on it! You get premiums here on most everything. How much did you have to pay for it? I wish I had written you to send to my banker. I have all my checks ~~sen~~ made out to E. J. Mathews and Co., No. 2, Wall St., N.Y. City, on account of Ida M. Tarbell. It costs nobody anything and though I get no premium there is no trouble to anybody. It would have saved you expense if I had done so. I have bought my first Xmas present, a pair of shoes. The soles are --- so much by ~~ate~~ actual measurement and the size you see on this sheet. They are elegant for the wet and cold we have here and will never wear out I imagine. I am expecting them to wear as long as I do here, probably you <sup>ll</sup> see them when I get home one year from next May or June.

So the pictures got through all right. I'll pay for the framing - when my ship comes in. Your Grip letters did sound rather

PARIS

108.

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
her family, Jan. 9, 1892)

-2-

117  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

terrible and I could easily be worried if I would let myself but I will not. Everything has combined to depress us the last fortnight. The Grip has been terrible here in Paris. They say that fully half the city is in bed. A week ago came the sad news that Mr. Carson, one of the gentlemen who was so good to us on the Friesland, had died on the 16th of December. We were greatly shocked. I knew he was sick but did not think of such a thing as his dying. We have had letters from Dr. Van Baunon and Mr. Coffin, two other members of our party in regard to his death. Dr. V. B. said that he did not dream of his dying for two years but knew that probably he could not live much longer. He was a very clever fellow about 42, an architect and wealthy. He leaves a wife but no children. I shall never forget how good he was to us.

I never supposed the day would come when the death of the Khedive of Egypt would have any ~~personal~~ direct effect on my happiness but actually I have been quite as much affected by it as I would if I had been a genuine Musselwoman. The news came yesterday morning and Madame came in directly to inform us how bad the Egyptians were feeling. That night we took dinner there and found them all very grave. They say they do not regret the sovereign because he was weak but they do the man since he was upright and good. They showed us his pictures, a handsome man of 40 and dwelt at length on the extraordinary beauty of his wife. (By the way my son-in-law showed us his sister's picture the other night. He did it with the greatest secrecy. No man is allowed to look on a woman's picture not in his own family and Monsieur Tewfic, who is the soul of courtesy, keeps this picture hid away from all his mates.) They explained the government

PARIS  
109.

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
her family, Jan. 9, 1892)

-3-

118  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

103T to us at some length. It is probable that the uncle of one of the gentlemen here will be the president of the council. This man told me the other night that when he went back to Egypt he might mean to found a society for young men pledging them not to marry, since Now their customs do not allow them to visit see the face of a woman before they marry and he believes that by forming a society of celibates they could change the custom. It is barbarous to hear them talking of having 4 wives and a harem but we are getting used to it. They are all down with mild attacks of grippe and since the Khedive's death have been certain they were going to die. Last night after dinner a crowd of young Egyptians, strangers to us, came in. They held a long conference on the <sup>state? affairs?</sup> ~~of~~ their country and spent much more time cursing England than lamenting the Khedive. It is remarkable how they detest England and her occupation. But enough of the heathen.

I enclose a little souvenir of an event which is one of the most interesting in the religious year of the Catholic Church of Paris -- the fête and Neuvaine of Ste. Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris. The church where the fête is held is only a little ways from us in the same square as the Pantheon (I think I sent one of you a picture of it, Pantheon). The fête began the 3rd of January. It lasts nine days (Neuvaine means for 9 days). Each day of this time there are 3 services with special features usually pilgrimages from some convent or church near or in Paris. Today I dropped in on my way to the library and found a pilgrimage from a nunnery, there were about 100 novitiates in black dresses and covered from head to foot in white veils. They made a tour of the church during the service

Paris

110.

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
her family, Jan. 9, 1892)

-4-

119  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

carrying their white and gold banners. The music is lovely at all these services. But the most interesting thing to me is the blessing of ~~relics~~ relics at the tomb of Ste. G. Outside of the church on the street leading to the portal are perhaps 50 little booths put up for the fete where are sold every conceivable sort of trinket decorated with pictures of Ste. G. and her works. There are cards of all kinds, brooches, statues, colored glass plaques, painted tablets, etc., etc., besides beads galore, crucifixes and other sacred nonsense. At the door there are still more of the stands and one is within the very chapel of Ste. G. At this latter I bought the little scapular I enclose. It bears a picture of Ste. G. She is always shown with the spindle and accompanied by a lamb. The P.P.N. means <sup>priez</sup> praisez pour nous (pray for us). The tomb on the other side is in the chapel within the church. It is in gilt and most elaborately decorated. The chapel in which it stands is beautifully painted and the stained glass windows give scenes from her life. You take your trinket within the chapel and kneel before a little altar at the head of the tomb. A priest stands there and takes your article and presses it on the tomb. He gives it back to you as you drop in 10 centimes (2 cents). This scapular has been blessed at my expense, (I went through the performance to see how it would seem), and if <sup>you</sup> any of you want to try its merits wear it over your heart. If it will preserve you from the grip I'll feel like becoming a devotee of the pious G. She was a lovely woman it is certain. Some of the most beautiful pictures in the Pantheon are devoted to her life.

PARIS  
III.

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
her family, Jan. 9, 1892)

-5-

120  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

04T  
The lectures have begun again and I am trying to get in one a day. It is good for the French and I must master the language before I can do all I want here. It is slow business, however, when you are earning your bread at the same time. My French teacher of whom I take one lesson a week assures me, however, that I am progressing. I certainly have learned something. I have been writing busily this week. Last Sunday I received an order from McClure for an article on the late King of Paris, M. Alphaud, whose big funeral I wrote you about. I did it up in a hurry Monday and Tuesday in time for T. night's mail, the pet time for sending letters to America with us. I hope he will take it. He said possibly some one would get in ahead of me but thought he could use it if hurried up. I sent a photo with it. I shall be greatly pleased if I get a letter a month in with him. It is encouraging to know that the Chicago Tribune has taken the 3 first Syndicates. I wish they'd send me some money. Probably they will soon. I think the Dispatch is doing better than I expected. It is paying me \$5.00 each for my extra letters but I presume they do not care for many extras. I am at another story, which I shall not submit, I think, until after the Scribner's bring out my France Adoree. I have not, of course, heard from them again yet about the time they'll publish it or about what they'll pay. I have a scheme for an illustrated article which will work well I hope. When I worked up my syndicate on the beggars I had a lot of stuff left and through M. Chevallier I have been on track of a lot more. I want to use it and I have gone in with an artist, one of our Sunday quartette at the American Chapel. He is to illustrate, I to work up the article. I am going at it as soon as I wade through the first draft

Paris

112.

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
her family, Jan. 9, 1892)

-6-

121  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

of the story I have on hand now. I think we can make it very picturesque and interesting as well as valuable, -- then if we can get it published, I can work with this young man with propriety for he is going home in May to be married. I hasten to assure you of that for my past experience with young men has been so severe that I feared you might worry. Mr. Townsley, the artist's name, invited us to his studio last Wednesday. He has charge of the general work in one of the best Academy's here, and shares the Master's private studio. We sat in the midst of the latter's pictures and bric-a-brac for an couple of hours and heard art gossip and looked at sketches as well as ate oranges and candy. Before leaving we visited the girls <sup>studio?</sup> and saw them painting and sketching. <sup>classroom?</sup> Sara would enjoy it so. I am glad she could get home for the holidays and hope she can go back to Buffalo soon if she ought to. I wish I could help. Maybe I can soon. It did seem so good to get her letter. It was more like having her better. The pretty book mark came safe and has found a place in my French note book. I can say all your Xmas presents by heart and I feel as sure of the whole story of father's rebellion against having the doctor as if I had been there. Do take care of yourselves. The possibility of anyone of you being very sick makes me turn cold. I hope Mother has found her voice by this time and is able to give the chickens the hot breakfast she laments their not having. By the way I want you to see that the chicken yard is well stocked in '93. I shall want chicken twice a week at least when I get home and you might as well begin to plan for it. Since Mother has given Ella the thin paper I shall look for a letter soon. Don't let her forget it. I think Esther and Clara ought to write me a description of their Play House. I wish I could send them over a

Paris

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
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-7-

Ada P. McCormick/  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

122

French cook stove, etc., for it.

Monday Morning

I have written very strict this morning and have a moment before lunch to write. It is very cold again and we are having our first snow. The weather is delightful, however, much more enjoyable than those dreadful October cold days. The Seine is very high, too, and delightful to ride on. I came up from church on it last night and never saw it more beautiful. We are still further depressed by Egypt again this morning. Prince Said came home yesterday from his military school sick, today he is still here in bed under the doctor's care. It is funny and pathetic to see these Egyptians when in trouble. They are perfect children. The Prince sent a telegram yesterday to the new Khedive who is only 18 which my funny "son-in-law" informed me cost 350 francs (40\$70.00).

I received a letter from Lucy Pickett in Meadville. You remember. I presume that she was here and went home sick. She wants to give French lessons and is thinking of trying to get up classes in Titusville, Oil City and Franklin. I am going to send her letters of introduction to Mrs. Chambers and Mrs. Hukell. If she comes to T, please do all you can to encourage her. She speaks very well and is a nice girl though a little erratic, I fancy. She is conscientious and will do good work.

By the way, I almost forgot to tell you about my new dress. I took my plaid skirt off the waist and let it down into a little train, then I bought enough wool astrakan to put a narrow edge around the bottom and I put half a new sleeve in my red silk waist and now I'm fixed until spring. The skirt is very stylish and I fixed it myself.

Paris

114.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell to  
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-8-

123  
Ada P. McCormick  
Tucson, Arizona  
October 12, 1945

We are breaking up here a little. Mr. Case leaves for Italy today. Miss Schmidt goes to Germany next week. Jo and Annie came very near going to Italy with Mr. Case but Jo felt that she could hardly afford it now. They could make a splendid trip of 2 months for \$200.00. If I go there I'm going to walk. There are some artists here whom I know who went there and were gone 5 months for \$150.00.

But I must stop for I have a great number of letters to write. I hope you will send me a Chautauquin sometime, with a blotting paper in it. Write me often and don't be afraid of writing too much. Keep well and take care of yourselves. Remember now that I am, as Will says, "17000 miles away(or less)" and you have an added reason for being careful. Don't worry about me. I am well and going to be get on. Love to everybody. Please remember me with sympathy to Mrs. Moreland. Willie's death is very sad.

With lots of love,

Ida M. Tarbell.