Dec. 29, 1939

Dear Miss Tarbell -

With all my heart I do "come in" the picture of Twin Oaks with yourself at the door — and is that the redoubtable Caroline by the side porch? Miss Beals made a real portrait of a place and a feeling in this photograph.

I hope you were there at Christmas and that everything was gay and right for you.

Here, we had the family feast on Sunday with a tree. My brother Paul and his wife and the youngsters, Maxine and Dean, made a lively party, though my brother has been quite ill and had to take Christmas a little easier than usual. We were so happy that he is on the mend, however, and that seemed the best Christmas gift of all.

P.S. The elephants guard my heart & on a jade green gown! Thank you for the nice little hearts! Sara

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On Monday, my father and I dined at the hotel. He enjoyed it, I think, and I was happy to be free of domesticity. Then there was a party for me in the afternoon and he rested his weary bones and communed with the radio!

So long as we have radio communication, there is no isolation. How silly to think that there can be. The Finns, the Britons, the French, the Germans, the Russians, and the Balkans, the Turks and the "neutral's, walk into our ears at all times - and hammer away on our sympathies. I feel as if what happens to any of them, anywhere, happens to me — it is dreadful to be inactive and worse, to have no conception of what is right and useful to do!

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I still love the human race - however stupidity & ignorance blur the charm of it. Less and less I feel any confidence in politics and government as determinants of human fate. There is a spiritual thing stronger and deeper than politics! You might call it the genius of the race or specie, even. That "genius" will have its way — all we can do or be is to be true to that inner spiritual fire — the sacred flame in each soul — and take our chances! Am I far wrong?

You see, I've been reading history and filling in a gap in my education from 3000 B.C. to about 1100 A.D. in the Near East — It seems to me that

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Genghis Khan rides again, for good and ill, all over the map!

Meanwhile, we are having an interesting time reviving arts and crafts in the State of Maine, to the end that people now on the relief rolls shall have a livelihood. Weaving, rug-making, etc. finds guidance and outlet through the Maine Craft guild with its store established last summer at Saco.

What is the news from the Tuppers? Caroline is grown up, of course. I should love to see what she has become — she was so interesting as a little person — Please give my love to Clara if you think to do so when you write. I suppose she is a true Californian now!

My love to you, as always. Sara Merrill

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