

HARPER & BROTHERS  
Franklin Square  
New York  
N. Y.

June 15, 1921.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,  
120 East 19th Street,  
New York City.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I had expected to be able to write you about the Lincoln-Browning material before this. So I am writing you a line or two of cheer and explanation, for I think we shall soon have all the difficulties smoothed out. Mr. Peck, with whom we are in negotiation for the Diaries which are actually owned by his aunt, Mrs. Miller, resides in a city somewhat distant from her home. Several days must elapse before he can adjust his views with hers and write to us. The fact that he himself is in Berkeley, California, makes a five-day journey for a letter even after they have reached a common decision.

In his last letter, Mr. Peck tells us that Mrs. Miller's hopes have been raised by some unwise friend of hers in the Illinois State Legislature who says that he has heard that a bill is to be introduced authorizing the State to buy the Diaries. Neither Mrs. Miller nor Mr. Peck have been able to find out that the bill has actually been introduced, but the result is that Mrs. Miller does not, for the moment, wish to go ahead with our proposal, although both of them are quite agreed as to its fairness and to the general conditions of it. Mrs. Miller is well along in years and this possibility of an outright sale has given her the notion that she wishes to dispose of the property finally rather than to have it published on a royalty basis, to leave her heirs the money instead of the royalty-producing book.

Mr. Peck is strongly in favor of our proposal and I think that he will soon be able to present the case to Mrs. Miller in such a way as to secure her approval. I am expecting to hear from him late next week, and I rather think that we shall then be able to go ahead. I will write you at once upon hearing from him.

Let me thank you now for your patience and kindness.

Cordially yours,

William H. Briggs

William H. Briggs...H