Typed by M. Cloud

Ada P. McCormick
Tucson, Arizona
October 5, 1945

(Letter from Ida M. Tarbell
to her family, 1891)

5 Rue du Sommerard, Paris
December 7, 1891

BlT My Dear Family:

I have dropped down in the midst of getting the dinner. I do it once a week,- I mean I get dinner once a week, not drop down, to tell you a piece of news which is exciting me greatly. What do you think? It isn't anything about the Meadville matter. Scribner's Magazine has accepted my story, France Adorée. You remember that I asked Sara to send it to a list of other places if they returned it which I took it for granted they would do. Someway success has seemed out of the question to me ever since the "late war." Today I received a letter from the magazine saying that they would take the story if I would allow certain changes to be made. I think after "mature deliberation" for about the 1/50 of a second that I'll allow the changes to be made. Of course I have no idea when it will appear. Not for several months, I presume, for there are always many delays on the big magazines but that it has been accepted at all is a tremendous encouragement to me. It gives me heart and hope. I am glad to know that I can do a thing which an entire staff - (private) will pronounce good and be willing to publish. When it comes out it will be a great help in securing orders in the future and then too, it will pay me a little in "filthy lucre," which somehow I think a great deal of these days. The story is really a study of M. Claude. I got most of the points while I was taking my lessons and wrote it after I came over here. There is only one thing in it which is recognizable I think, that is the story of the bell made

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from the ~~fre~~ French cannon. There is nothing in it which would give offense to Claude himself, I think, if he could read it. When it comes out Will or someone better take it up to him and read it over. I wouldn't have the dear old soul think I'd done a mean thing in writing him up - not for the world, and some one in T. might tell him in an unpleasant way. I hope you will all like the story. It gives me more pleasure to think it's been accepted on your accounts than anybody else. Somehow I've been afraid you would get suspicious that I am an idiot, or fraud or something for coming off here but if I can do two or three good things by it I am sure you'll feel that I have done wisely. I think you best not say anything much about it until it comes out which probably will be sometime. It couldn't appear now until March I presume for the magazines are made up sometime ahead. When I get the money for it, I'm going to buy you all a present and run the risk of losing them by sending them through the mail. I think I wrote you that the McClure Syndicate asked me to write them a little article. They will give me $10.00 for it. I sent it Saturday. It is "Marrying Day in Paris." I don't know what papers it will get into I am sure. My next Syndicate will come out on Dec. 20. I haven't heard from any of the papers yet about No. II. Street Sweeping. Wish Will would ~~ask~~ write to th e papers - I sent him the list I believe, same as the first list except Omaha Bee was changed to Minneapolis Tribune and ask them if they used the article. I'll call it in if nobody did and use it over. I think this is all about the work. No there is one thing more. I have received a letter from Bishop asking me to go to Calcutta, not on the Indian Witness which as I supposed has an editor, but to go into one of the girls' school as a teacher, perhaps take charge of one of them. He says that probably

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literary work would open soon. I cannot think of it now. It doesn't appeal to me in the least. If I thought it was my duty I'd go. I don't. I am going to get started again at least before I go off into anything permanent and if I can make independent literary work support me then I shall devote myself to that. By that means I can go home once in a while for a decent vacation. I am actually sick sometimes now to see you all. I don't know how I'll get through two years. If I can make a few strikes like the Scribner article, however, I'll go home and return or better still, bring you all over. It makes one simply adore America to live away and as for home and you folks I get into the drivels whenever I stop to think of you. I'd give a kingdom to be home for Xmas but I know you'll all think of me that day and you may be sure I'll think of very little else but you. I don't know whether I can get anything to send in a letter or not. I shall try if I get some money, which I think possibly I may do in time. I want to leave the $75.00 left me intact in case of sickness or accident. It is really unsafe not to have a reserve here. I know that if I don't send anything you'll all understand why. Don't try to send me anything. You need it yourselves I know. Another Xmas, who knows. I may be at home, though if all goes well with us all, I expect not until exposition time. Then we'll move out to Naperville and stay for a couple of months. What larks!

The girls are all pretty well. We are five now. Miss Schmidt, the little girl I roomed with on the steamer, is with us. She was 10 weeks in Berlin and came here to meet her brother, an artist and a fine fellow. He is a designer in New York, makes lots of money, keeps a brother in Berlin at the university, and is keeping Lillie over here this year. She'll stay with us until Feb. Mary

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Henry is having pretty good success with her letters but Mrs. Henry is sick and at Clifton and I wouldn't be surprised if Mary had to go home in a few months. They are such an improvident lot! It takes my breath away but I suppose when one has to live from hand to mouth as they have had always, it gets to be second nature and they don't know how to do otherwise. Jo is well and studying very hard. She is going to be a capital French scholar, is getting a genuine accent which I am not because writing so much. I think Jo will stay here
83T until March at any rate and probably then go to Berlin.

I haven't been doing any sight seeing much. Monday last I went to the Grand Opera. We went to the very tip top of the house, 8 of us, and paid 50 cents each for our seats. There were actually people up there in full dress. Everybody was eminently respectable. The Opera was Lohengrin and superb. I went because Kit Young Hampton had asked for some particulars about it. I send her letter in this mail. It is scrappy and not interesting I fear but I hadn't time to do better. When writing is one's business you can't spend much time on extras like that. I was very glad, however, to write the letter for her.

Mother's letter with the account of Mrs. Kepler's death and funeral was very sad. I do pity the family so. What will Mrs. Kepler do? I wish you would give her and Dora my love and sympathy.

Please tell me all about Sara and how she gets along at Buffalo. I shall be much concerned until I know she is safely through her trial there and back home again. I am so glad Mrs. Chamberlain was so kind. If Sara would let know she was there I am sure she would look after her, too, a little.

Paris
85.

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Don't fail to tell everything when you write. Mother feared her letters were "rambling." They are "splendid." I read them over and over. Mrs. Kerr wrote Jo in a letter received today all about the chickens. Jo thought she was one ahead of me but I produced the letter on the death and destruction of the Tarbell hens a few weeks ago and she gave up. So write all the household particulars. Give my love to Lizzie. I'll try and write Aunt Hat a Xmas note, if I have time.

I have been afraid you might worry a little about my health from what I wrote Sara two weeks ago. Do not. I am feeling better than at any time ~~before~~ since I came. For two months my whole system refused flatly to operate naturally but I think now it has seen the folly of its ways and concluded to return to business. I hope so. The weather has been very warm and rain, rain, rain. The walls in our house have actually dripped with dampness. I was alarmed for a while but am it has ceased now and is getting a degree colder. It is simply awful getting about when it rains for there is no way of saving your clothes from the mud. But I must stop. Love to everybody. I'll write again before Xmas, I think. Have the merriest time you ever had in spite of low oil and hard times. If you can't have presents you can have fun so do. That's good advice.

Yours Lovingly,
Ida M. Tarbell

(Says on first page of letter "Scribner receipt France Adorée.")

PARIS
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