November 26, 1928.

Mrs. Frederick McCormick,
935 Louisa Street,
Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Dear Ada:

I should have written you before about Bucknell. It would be quite out of the question for me to consider there or anywhere else; at least this year attempting a residence lectureship such as I have here. A few or any institutions so far as I know have any provisions for such work as this. It is an experiment here; an alumnus having set aside the money to bring every year, for five years, a person outside of academic circles to live on the campus, to do class conference work, be available for talking with students if they wish. It is a hazy commission and we all look at it here as experimental, certainly I do. I am not a teacher; but a piece of definite lecture work might be more useful to the students, we don't any of us know yet.

It would be no use of your coming on to see what I am doing, for you would not be permitted to come into the class. Sensibly, I think, the faculty have decided that work should be purely for the students and the faculty; no outsiders allowed and only thirty members in the class. Quite enough, possibly too many. No examinations.

My subject is historical. I am keeping it within the twenty years from 1880 to 1900 and rambling anywhere there that interest leads, though, of course, I have a scheme. The motive force of the period, of course, is combination and I am trying to show how that drove men willy-nilly. You wouldn't get much use out of anything I was saying to help you in your investments, though from the subject of speculation you get a good round lecture on the immorality at lending money at 9 per cent for speculative purposes. The stock market at a period like this is one of the most disorganizing immoral influences in the business world. It is a gambler and a thief, and at the present moment it is doing untold injury to men who are doing real business and want to be able to get the money they need of honest persons at five and six per cent. So there, my dear sinner, is what you would hear in my discussions; not about today, but what went on forty and fifty years ago.

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There are a lot of things that I should like to write you about but I must go to work. I wanted you to know that it is quite useless for you to go ahead with any negotiations at Bucknell. At all events, I must see this thing through and make up my mind as to whether it has been worth while to the college before I would consent to attempt it again. Just at the moment I feel that I should have more experience as a teacher than I have had and perhaps a more definite plan of work, however, I, as well as some of my colleagues, are not sure but that the non-academic approach can be made suggestive and stimulative. I am not sure, too, but what the temptation to imitate the professor interferes a bit with my usefulness, that if I insisted upon being more purely a journalist and a writer I'd go farther. However, that all remains to be seen.

Always faithfully,

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