

January 15, 1929

Mrs. Hannah Hume Lee
Congregational Education Society
14 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

My dear Mrs. Lee:

I have been away from New York for some time, and returning find your letter of November 26, asking my judgment on Mrs. Stewart and her work.

With the object of Mrs. Stewart's work, I have always had a very genuine sympathy. I believe that a persistent, organized attack on illiteracy should be carried on. With Mrs. Stewart's methods I have not always been in sympathy. I think it probable, with her optimism, her temperament, her inexperience with the way things are really achieved in the world, that she claims too much for her Moonlight Schools, that she probably has exaggerated both the extent and the results.

I have not been in sympathy, too, with her campaign to end illiteracy by 1930, or whatever date she gives. I have told the Committee myself that I thought there was a suspicion of dishonesty in stating so near a date for such a movement - setting any date at all, for that matter. We know perfectly well if we have any intelligence that it is out of the question to end all of the illiteracy in this country at any specific time. I have told Mrs. Stewart and the Committee my feeling about this.

I would prefer, dear Mrs. Lee, that you consider this as confidential. I do not want to chill anybody's good intentions. I don't want to throw cold water on a movement which, wisely conducted, I sympathize with. But I feel it is only fair to answer your letter.

Sincerely yours