December 19, 1928.

Pres. Albert Britt,
Knox College,
Galesburg, Illinois.

Dear Pres. Britt:

I am sorry to leave Knox without having a talk with you. If you were to be here before Saturday, and if Christmas were not so near, I should certainly remain; but as it is, both Mrs. Britt and Dean Simonds think that it will be just as well for me to go on, but I do not want to go without some hasty notes on our experiment. Let us hope that it is a "noble" one.

I am full and running over with what has happened, particularly my notions center around the group that I met in our so-called conferences. I am quite convinced that one coming here for a social time and meeting a group of students as I have been doing would much quicker break down the natural barrier between strangers if the conferences could be held in the room which you put at my disposal in the library. The meetings, then, would not have savored so much of the schoolroom and its inhibitions. We would all have been on the same floor level, could have been seated around tables with books and papers; we could have conversed as it seems to be difficult to do when a leader sits on the platform with a group on a lower level. Moreover, if we had been a gathering of the seminar type, I think Mr. Campbell and his colleagues would have felt freer to take part in discussions. I have talked this over with him and Mr. Stimson, and they both agree that we might have gone farther. Again, I underestimated the background of my group. They were not quite prepared for what I had prepared for them and I would suggest that anyone of my successors, who holds conferences, should give in advance a simple course of reading, covering in general the topics to be discussed, perhaps adding, too, a bibliography, which is well to take care not to have too elaborate. My subjects at the start were too elaborate.

I am quite certain that the most important thing is for the leader and the group to become acquainted as soon as possible, and if that is to be done, there must be some natural informal opportunity, and that such a room as my office, properly equipped, would give. Once on terms of fair intimacy with a small group and it would not take long to get in touch with many more outside. Several girls, who would not follow my vocational talks at the hall, came

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to me to talk over their personal situations, because of what some one, who had follwed the talks, told them. I feel very strongly about giving to students as advanced, and on the whole, as interested and serious as those who were in my group, a chance for seminar group. Mr. Stimson tells me that he is to conduct a small seminar group next semester. I believe that if you could let him have my office, it would be a splendid thing for his department. Indeed, I wish every one of your departments might have a room for such purposes, and when I get very rich, I will come back and let you build me a wing from the library, using as an entrance the door opposite my office door, making the wing a companion to that of the big reading room, giving each department a special place for the selected few, alas they are never too many, who have a real passion for something outside the formal textbook work.

Please do not think, from what I have said above, that I am the least dissatisfied with having made the experiment--only that I did not do more. I have been interested from the moment I arrived until now that I am about to leave. I hope my work will have been of some use, but I am sure of this, that if it is it is of a nature to which you could apply no measuring stick. I know I am going away with a very warm feeling for Knox, the place, the faculty and the students. I hope when you come east next time, we will have a chance to talk it over. Regretting that I am not seeing you before I leave, and wishing you the happiest of holidays, believe me.

Faithfully yours,

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