

April 26, 1923.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Do you know what drew that letter from you? It wasn't my letters at all, it was myself lying in bed at the Pennsylvania Hotel for three days and thinking "I wish I could see Miss Tarbell. Could I call her up. No I couldn't" and then looking reflectively at the wall paper and beginning this questionnaire all over again. The answer always came out wrong. This sounds rather foolish - I wasn't foolish at all. I'd been to a Campfire Conference for five days at Bear Mountain - great fun - but I'm not used to discussing for eight hours a day and had to recoup. I saw all sorts of people that I wanted very much to see, but I did want most unreasonably and constantly to see you. I asked Dr. Cabot whether it would be frightful nerve to call you up and he seemed quite sure ~~that~~ it would. "Isn't nerve ever a good thing" demanded Ada - "Not too much of it." said my god-parent firmly, and departed for his Boston train.

2.
Your letter reached Williamsport the day after
I did and it's a real relief to know you
didn't think me a frozen hussy for writing you.

Mr. Lester Scott who ran the conference said
he used to lick stamps for the Chures when you
were on it and that he hadn't seen you for
years. (He said wanted all the guardians to read
"The Business of Being a Woman".) He expressed
a good deal of admiration for you and wound up
"She's an old fashioned woman like Miss Addams."

Ada - "Own up, you wouldn't want to see Jane
Addams in ~~triches~~ breeches."

Mr. Scott. "No, but it's only because she wouldn't feel
comfortable in them."

We discussed fiercely & thoroughly up there, all
the time, three sessions a day, but everyone
regardless of age and shape wore Knickerbockers.
Why one should have to wear trousers for the arts of
debate and making resolutions is beyond me. But
in every other way the Conference was the most stimulating
thing I've ever been to. You probably know what
Campfire is — a national and now inter-national
organization for young girls. A great many people
confuse it with the Girl Scouts, and I hope they

can join someday but not before each organization has a firm grip of its own tested discoveries. I like the Camp Fire much better because it works in a far more flexible way to reach each individual girl and demands far more from the leaders, than the scout program does. It has spread to eighteen countries now and can be used, I think, as one more force to foster the understanding of nations.

Each well run camp fire group, ^{of course, the leaders are full of energy and a lot of work is done} knows that she has a girl in England, Alaska, New Zealand, India, China, etc and often the girls write to girls in other countries. It's a lower middle class movement — (so is the girl scouts — aren't women of ~~low~~ leisure lazy — it is the hard working stenographers and rural school teachers who give their time to run these groups.) and don't you think it's thrilling to think of all the little high school girls in Ohio, or factory girls in some other place ^{who are} forming friendships and writing their girlish confidences to ~~the~~ unseen girls in other countries.

I had a group of campfire girls last year — I don't know what it did for them but it broke down barrier after barrier for me. It's an extraordinary program for giving life more abundantly.

I wish you'd write a great deal more about
 human relationships. Not the second cousins
 of Abraham, but the "Business of Being a
 Woman" sort of thing. Are you and am
 I missing the articles? I want to try
 making out a week's and a two weeks
 course for guardians to give adolescent
 girls at camp — on how to select before
 falling in love — & that what they do
 after ~~of~~ marriage not what they feel is
 what makes the marriage — and all sorts
 of wild kindred subjects. If I do it, I shall
 crib from you as much as possible, also
 Epictetus, & all wise critters we ever had the
 luck to know — Heavens here I am still
 writing to you. If you ever do get time to write
 would it seem unnatural to you to call me
 by my first name. I feel so definitely a
 child learning from you that it seems
 absurd for you to do anything else.

5.
You write the things I'd like to write, and more
fundamental than that, you are exactly the
sort of person I'd like to be. You're so rooted
in reality and dignity and a sense of values —
and must have overcome so many things. What's
that — lines in Revelations "to him who overcometh
shall I give of the hidden manna, and he shall
have a white stone with a new name written
on it — none knoweth save him that receiveth
it — to him who overcometh! great phrase —

Faithfully yours

Ada McCornick.