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HOTEL BRUHLOWSKI, Varsovie, le Sept. 25 1920.

Dear Idaren

Yours of Aug 24 came through in wonderful time. I found it here on my return to Warsaw.

I can't remember when I wrote you last but imagine it was about the time we assumed we would have to leave. As you know we didn't. It was the funniest thing you ever saw to see the newspaper men when they saw that Warsaw wasn't going to fall. They were sore and grouchy and ready to pack up and leave by the first train after they were sure that the Bolos were headed the other way and that their stories would drop off the front page. Most of them even had their stories of the fall all written. On Saturday the worst day - the 14th of Aug. - when the Legation told us we would have to go either that night or early the next morning MacKenzie planned to send his story out by me and have me put it on the wire in Krakow and he said he had it about ready then!

Of course it was a miracle and this being a catholic country where miracles are still the fashion you can imagine that this Battle of the Vistula adds to the prestige of the church. The Sunday before thousands had paraded the streets, bareheaded, singing and carrying all kinds of church pictures and statues and praying for the miracle to happen and the very next Sunday it did for it was on the next Sunday that at Radzyn 16 kilometers out of Warsaw the tide was turned. We went out that Sunday afternoon, got within 2 kilometers of Radzyn which the Bolos had at the time we were there. We saw General Henrys the chief of the French Mission out there and what the French did in this pinch of course can never be overestimated. While other people were handing out kind words they were the only ones that really acted and they got men and guns - lots of 75s and some 150s and munitions and they showed the Jews and the women how to dig trenches and the Poles how to shoot the guns. That Sunday Radzyn changed hands four times finally landing with the Poles and from that time the situation was saved. We drove out there in less than half an hour in crowded military roads so you can see how convenient it all was.

Of course the importance of this victory seems to us here can't be overemphasized. We think Germany was waiting to go in with the Bolsheviks if they took Warsaw and in any case probably there would have been a Bolshevik uprising all over Poland. The men were picked in all the towns who were to be the new government and lists of the families that were to be gotten rid of were found.

If we can only get a peace now and let these people get to work they will pull through somehow but if there is to be war all winter and another offensive next spring I don't know what will become of them. Gibson says the Allies have behaved like dogs - that Poland has all the

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

time taken their advice but that there has been no consistency in their advice. There's a rumor now that France is going to manage southern Europe - the Ukrainian question etc and that England will attend to the Lithuanian and Danzig. I suppose whether we get a peace or not is all in their hands. All I know is that 95 percent of the people here want it and are willing to get it on most any terms. But people have a hard enough time ruling anywhere and they certainly are a long way from doing it here.

It's really only the 16th century still here with universal suffrage theoretically imposed on it. I have been through Poland the last five days on one of the most interesting trips I ever had in my life and to see the contrasts of life here makes you rub your eyes and wonder if your imagination isn't running riot.

I visited among other people two wonderful women; a Countess Zamoyka 89 years old and her daughter. They are back in their castle a beautiful Tudor built in the 14th century, for the first time in 35 years. We're exiled from it by Bismark because they insisted on talking Polish and teaching it in the schools on their place when he had ruled that only German should be taught. Those women have been fighting all these years - in fact the whole 89 years of the little old lady's life has been given up to freeing Poland. To hear her talk about the Vienna Treaty with the partition of Poland and then about the Insurrections of 1831 (about the time she was born) and the of 1863 and then how they all had to escape in the night from the castle 35 years ago, it all sounds like a melodrama. The old lady was born in Warsaw but had never been back since childhood till this year. At first she thought she could n't stand it and then she realized that the Russians were not here any longer. You see all these years the idea of these foreigners in here was a burning thing to her. People tell how all through this last war this family which was in France travelled third class so as to save money to fight for Poland. She sold all her wine cellars that had accumulated through generations and things like that. And now at 89 she is working on the memoirs of her husband who was evidently a great man and no one else could write the book so she is, and is now completing the 7th volume. You would love her.

Speaking of books I am delighted to hear about your new Lincoln book. That is a fine thing to do and incidentally it looks like money which in spite of the Bolos is still useful. The other book I know will be a lot of work but I am glad you are doing it. With those two and your Standard Oil you have your hands full. I shall be relieved when you get that Standard Oil revision as it makes me sick to think of that book being out of print. Have they ever got out new printings of the Lincoln and Napoleon. And did you get out your little Lincoln book on religion, I hope so. Jas was complaining because he had never seen your novel. Send him a copy. I want him to read it and see if he doesn't agree with me. I know that is a good book even if it did not sell.

I had a lovely visit with him in Paris and Paris looked so nice and civilized and life really begins to look quite normal again there. I rather expect now to leave here fairly soon as there is no chance for a typhus campaign and go to Paris to work with my cousin Roland on the Reparation Board. He represents the U S on that Board and seems to think that I can be of use to him. If so it means that I will be in Paris for the next few months. I wish there were some chance that you might be coming over. If not I shall have to go home one of these days. I am not going to go on forever without having chances to spend hours talking to you as I always have.

My love to all the family and friends. I gather the babies are complete successes and that the adoring family gather around first one and then the other. I wish I could join the group.

Always affectionately

R. B.