

San Fernando, Calif.,  
Jan. 9, 1931.

Dear Carl:

Much to our surprise upon our return from Carmel we received reports from various sources stating that you had repeatedly expressed yourself among the students to the effect that you had not been fairly treated by us in connection with the Los Angeles lectures. We have had no expression of that kind from you directly but the agreement among the reports that have been volunteered forces us to the conclusion that you must have expressed yourself in some such terms. Now we wish to call your attention to this fact that if you had or have any such feeling the right and manly thing to have done would have been to come directly to us and say what you felt and presented your reasons and certainly keeping silent before your fellow-students at least until after you had done that.

Probably unknowingly on your part, yet none the less effectively the course you followed was tantamount to striking a blow at the work itself. It was equivalent to saying to the students that we are not "square shooters" and owing to our responsibilities in connection with the work such implications hurt the work itself through sowing disintegrative seeds in the minds of others that sometimes develop fantastically but none the less disruptively. Now, if for any reason any student thinks this work is not for him it is his right to withdraw. If in his opinion it seems to be evil it is his right to oppose it by open and honorable methods. But in no case is he justified in striking beneath the belt, yet unless what we have heard has been wholly mistaken that is just what you have done. All the more is it the duty of one who is a student not to use the under-handed method of gossip or insinuation which, whether intended or not, has the effect of weakening the solidarity of the students or produces a disruptive effect among them.

We are well aware that it is much more often thoughtlessness rather than malicious intent that leads a student to do things of this kind, and we have no doubt that it was thoughtlessness on your part. But the fact remains that the forces released, whether thoughtlessly or otherwise, run their destructive course just the same. So it is absolutely essential to follow fundamental rules in all such matters. The rule in this case is, when one student feels himself unjustly treated or wronged in any way by another, and especially in the case of those who have official responsibility, go directly to the person involved and speak frankly but keeping silent before all third parties. You have not followed that course and so you have struck a blow. And as you value the work you should use every means that you have to offset that blow.

Now coming to the specific merits of the matter on which you seem to feel that you have not been treated fairly. You will remember that when you sought to come with us and help with the labors on the road, Sheila made it clear to you that you would be welcome provided you would accept being tried to prove your ability to handle the kind of problems an assistant in this field

must be able to face to be of real value. This calls for executive capacity, discriminating business and publicity judgment, initiative and the willingness and ability to accept responsibility. It is not a matter of simply handling routine chores as the work does not justify a special member of the staff for that purpose. We must look to local students to volunteer this service as the part which they can render in the common work. Otherwise the staff does this simply as something that must be done. You were on trial during the Los Angeles lectures and you must admit that you did not manifest the requisite abilities, though, of course, they may be latent within you. Now the proposition was that if you could prove yourself as qualified you would receive 25% of the net returns but otherwise all we could do would be to carry your current expenses. You agreed to this and came to S.F. with us and we carried your living and operating expenses in connection with the work.

As you should know the students that came nearly all felt the depression severely and many of them could not while others did not meet their share of the costs. The result was that while the campaign covered current expenses it failed to meet all expenses and thus there was a deficit that we had to meet out of our personal resources. We have kept our part of the agreement with which you accorded at Mt. Whitney and in turn you have retailed insinuations. Now is that playing the game squarely?

We are certain that your sincere and fine inner nature cannot approve of what you have done. We know perfectly well that no student is infallible, and we are prepared to face and have faced over and over again the strain which grows out of the thoughts, feelings and acts of students who have at times come under the influence of the shadow side of their nature. You yourself know something of what this means. But the student who has done wrong should acknowledge that fact when it is brought to his consciousness and do all in his power to correct the injuries he has inflicted. Brother, you have a responsibility in this matter which you should set right where you have spoken unjustly. You know where.

And now our every good wish is with you as ever. We know something of the real fineness within you and know that it is greater than your fallible nature. But you still have much to learn about yourself and there are places where you imagine yourself to be strong and wise where you are very far from being so. Let the fundamental rules guide you and they will lead you to clear seeing.

Ever yours in our common fraternity of labor,