

## Observations on the birth of an idea

Mr. McCarty wanted me to write a letter for the month of December. He wanted it to be in by Nov. 15 but I was busy with other matters until practically that time. I wondered what to write. The idea occurred to me, This is Christmas time. I should write something specifically related to Christmas. Then I remembered how when I had studied ~~x~~ in Berlin and Charlie Woodbridge had lived up in a different section than I had and we had often met and discussed matters. One day he said to me, This is a very gloomy city. There is a feeling of gloom and misery about it, but he said, as Christmas approaches I feel there is an increase of cheerful happiness and joy everywhere. It is temporary because of the economic situation under which the area is suffering but you can just feel the difference.

Now as I thought of writing a Christmas letter I thought this may perhaps do for a start, not particularly well, but I don't know of anything at the moment that hasn't been used a thousand times so I'll start with this. So I said I'll just sit down and dictated about 5 things and then == about 5 pages and then if there is anything in it that would seem good for the letter let Mr. McCarty indicate that and I'll work over it. So I sat down and I described the situation in Berlin without naming the city or the country. I described the economic situation and the general misery of the people. It was the result of a ~~xxx~~ war that they had lost and in which territory had been taken from them. They were given heavy so-called reparations to pay. As I tried to describe these this situation in general terms the thought occurred to me no wonder Hitler came to power when people were reduced to such a condition and so I mentioned that these were the conditions that could easily give rise to any dictator that would offer a panacea by rousing race hatred or ~~general~~ general attitudes of . . . Then I said how my friend said how he felt this general lightening of feeling as Christmas