Dear Mr. Rutland:

I am very glad to learn that the American Library Association contemplates printing new books for the blind. What the sightless need and will always need is more and better books. Tastes differ among the blind quite as widely as among the seeing, and every effort should be made to place all kinds of literature at their fingertips. It is gratifying to note how liberally they are supplied with novels, essays and bright, amusing short stories. But I have observed a persistent demand among them for books like Mark Twain’s Life on the Mississippi, Conrad’s works, books of great European authors, and religious literature of a higher quality. It should be remembered that, as larger numbers of the blind learn how to read, the quantity of embossed books will have to be increased, and the special demands of different classes of readers will have to be met more adequately.

Surely the joy and interest which books bring to sightless people who live barren lives is the strongest plea for the work of the American Library Association plans to start. If the new books are printed, you can be sure of the most enthusiastic appreciation among those who receive them. They will mean, not only an added source of entertainment, but also many new doors to the thought, experience, beauty of the world of light. Perhaps the worst thing about blindness is, it makes us feel apart from the ways of our fellowmen. Books charm away bitterness, and so, the fullness of life is ours!

With cordial greetings and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Helen Keller