

Winter Park, Fla.,

June 28, 1926.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
McCall's Magazine,
New York City, N.Y.,

Dear Madam:

I am a Congregational minister from the north, and have had pastorates in Sanford, Tampa, and this beautiful city. Mrs. grower and I have read with deep interest your surveys of Florida conditions and have heartily enjoyed them.

After twelve years of residence and service in this state, we ought to be fairly well informed and qualified to recognize the accuracy and value of your descriptions and conclusions.

Agricultural development is our great essential. I bought recently in a Winter Park market cottage cheese made in Wisconsin. We have been eating potatoes from Maine, Dakota, and Cuba. Lot selling was for months a matter of multitude psychology. I visited on development near Sebring (a so-called "terrace," land perfectly flat), which had fifteen handsome busses to bring possible buyers free, and fifty young men, each with his own car to exhibit and urge the purchase of lots. That to my mind has been one of the evils of the boom situation--the winning such a host of men and women from places where they might be producing something into selling of "impossible" lots.

Then there is the diversion of a host from the farms or industries into filling stations, multiplied. Sometime ago, as of course you know, the Standard Oil started in buying good business points for retail sales. Often half blocks, cemented fronts, cornering the corners. This brings me to an appeal I wish to make.

The price of gasoline varies as one finds who takes long drives. In Tampa at times I have bought as low as twenty cents, usually twenty-five. Here, for months it was twenty-six, then it jumped to twenty-eight, where it now stays. Kerosene was twenty, now it is twenty-five. No statements make clear the reason, except the familiar one that Mr. Rockefeller needs more money, and that the rise is arbitrary. "Investigations" at Washington bring no satisfaction. Undoubtedly you have data, understand the reason for the fluctuations which mean real hardship. I have to limit the use of my Ford, while the ill-feeling is universal. I venture to ask that you write an article explaining these high prices of gas. No other article could be more popular.

With cordial appreciation of your fine service,
Sincerely Yours,

Charles D. W. Brower.