

Russellville, Ark.,

May 28th '33.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,  
New York.,

Dear Miss Tarbell;

Please accept my abject apology for not making meself clear in my recent letters to you. I am very stupid in expressing myself. I did NOT expect you to act as agent for the article; I thought from your letter, that you would select one of the articles, run your blue pencil through it freely telling me where and what you'd advise cutting, then write me a page or so ~~of~~ <sup>about</sup> what I should add or revise-- constructive criticism. <sup>And possibly the names of one or two possible markets.</sup> So I sent the little check for postage for return of ~~mes.~~ <sup>ms.</sup> and the typing of the criticism. I do wish you had cashed the check-- I DON'T like to beg, though I'm, almost desperate enough. Once in my life, a writer gave me a criticism like that, and my story sold on its first trip after revision under her direction; evidently, I keep on making the same mistakes year after year, but no one has ever cared a d--n ( if you'll pardon it) to point them out to me, and it's terribly hard to keep trying to pull myself up by my bootstraps. Once, a professional critic charged me five dollars to tell me I didn't know enough about the printing of a city newspaper to write a reporter story-- and I couldn't get to the city and learn! So , if I can find someone who has actually written feature articles who will "point up" my faults, I may possibly be able to improve. I thought that you'd had experience in interviewing business men and could easily see what I'd omitted or stressed too much. (You did point out that I stressed their poverty too much) <sup>fresh-water</sup> The pearl I offered as additional pay is worth \$ 35, to \$50.

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As it is, I only know two or three markets which use personal-  
ity sketches; <sup>few are listed</sup> I sold most of mine to the old Everybody's, at their  
solicitation and they sent me printed instructions-- almost an out-  
line, to follow. I really don't offer many things to The American  
or The Post-- goal of all amateurs. About one article or story  
per year, because they write encouragement, and one yarn nearly  
landed in The American; they asked me to change it for them, saying  
they'd be glad to have another look at it-- but they were never  
quite satisfied with the ending, and didn't state why, so I didn't  
know what else to do to it. That story, just as they refused it,  
was rated by O'Brien as one of the best of that year, after it ap-  
peared in Adventure.

I deeply appreciate your suggestions as to the cutting of my  
articles and shall immediately revise them along those lines; if  
they sell, I'll remember your help substantially. If I can get a  
summer course somewhere in some good school of journalism I can  
possibly whip something into saleable shape--IF I can persuade my  
husband to lend me the money as an investment. I hope to get to  
the U. of Missouri for the five-week summer course, some day, but  
my better-half played philanthropist to everyone before recalling  
that charity begins at home.

If you need any material on Hot Springs, or anyone or anything  
in Arkansas at any time, I can get it for you and will be glad to  
do it. PLEASE do not think I meant to exploit you, and believe me  
with all good wishes, for both your health and continued success,

Very sincerely,

Ruby E. Livingston

Member League American Penwomen.