October seventh
1922

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Miss Tarbell called yesterday afternoon to talk with me concerning the Copley manuscript. She expressed regret that the necessity of fulfilling certain prior obligations before starting today on an extended trip, had prevented as thorough a study of the manuscript as she desired, but she had read carefully a considerable portion of the manuscript from the first chapter on, and had read parts of all remaining chapters. The following is a summary of her statement to me:

1. The manuscript is a "remarkable piece of work" with respect to research, breadth of view, interpretation and devotion to the subject; and is interesting throughout. It has flesh, blood and vitality, and should prove interesting and enlightening to those who would read it.

2. From the point of view of acceptance by publishers, however, it presents difficulties because of faults in craftsmanship. From that point of view it is "unmanageable," for three principal reasons:

   a. The manuscript at the beginning, including the preface, assumes an interest in Taylor's life, instead of assuming a lack of interest and the necessity of creating it at the very start.

   b. The construction is faulty in that it gives the reader a sense of confusion; many times, Miss Tarbell says, as she was reading later chapters she asked herself, "Hasn't the manuscript said something about this before — why the repetitions?" We talked this point over and came to the conclusion that possibly the trouble lies in the first book; that the story marches forward chronologically from the second book on, and the confusion was due to the fact that the first book, instead of being simply a brief story of scientific management, anticipates the story to follow by including too much of the life.

   c. The manuscript is too long; unnecessarily long even from the point of view of telling the story adequately — the style is one in which two words are used to do the work of one; and too long particularly from the point of view of interesting a publisher in the work as a commercial proposition.

3. The problem is one of making every effort to secure a publication of the present manuscript (with the usual final revision, elisions, publishing, etc.), in order to get on record this remarkable wealth of information concerning the man and his environment. There
is in Miss Tarbell's judgment no alternative except a complete rewriting. She cannot conceive of a craftsmanship which can make a condensation of the present manuscript except by leaving only the dry bones of a creation which now has flesh and blood and vitality.

4. If this wealth of detail can be got on record, a shorter life which will be more widely read is sure to follow; but it must be a new creation and not a condensation of this particular manuscript. Miss Tarbell even expressed the opinion that Mr. Copley himself, after he has forgotten the present effort and has come to a position in which he can objectify his subject (the present trouble seems to be due to the fact that he has had such devotion to the subject that he could not objectify it as a requirement of craftsmanship), might sit down and out of his understanding of Mr. Taylor write a 75,000 word manuscript which would be a "masterpiece."

5. The problem being to secure a publication of the present manuscript, Miss Tarbell advises the Committee to exhaust every possible resource to that end. In that connection she expresses the opinion that, having examined the manuscript, she is now less hopeful of publishers of general literature and more hopeful of publishers of technical literature, because of the construction and emphasis of the manuscript.

Miss Tarbell has returned the manuscript to this office.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Miss Tarbell for her files, but to no one else; however, I am enclosing copies for you to send to members of the committee.

Very truly yours,

Managing Director.

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H. S. Person/W
Enclosure.