

turned my plans topsy-turvey, though that had its influence. chiefly it was the sense of vitality, of adventure, of excitement, that I was getting from being admitted on terms of equality and good comradeship into the McClure crowd.

The Napoleon had given the magazine, now in its second year, the circulation boost it needed. My part in it was not exaggerated by the office or by me. We all agreed that it was the pictures that had done it, but the text had framed the pictures, helped bring out their value and it had been done at a critical moment.

I must stay with them, declared Mr. McClure. And the more I saw of Mr. McClure and his colleagues the more I wanted to stay. Of my first impression of S. S. McClure in Paris I have spoken. Closer views emphasized and enlarged that impression. He was as eager as a dog on the hunt - never satisfied, never quiet. Creative editing, he insisted, was not to be done by sitting at a desk in a comfortable office. It was only done in the field following scents, hunts. An omnivorous reader of newspapers, magazines, books, he came to his office daily primed with ideas, possibilities, and there was always a chance that among them was a stroke of genius. He hated nothing so much in the office as settled routine, wanted to feel stir from the door to the inner sanctum. And he had great power to stir excitement by his suggestions, his endless searching after something new, alive, startling, and particularly by his reporting.

Digitized by Google. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

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It was not anticipated by the office of the...
the second year, the circulation was 18 copies.
The Napoleon had given the...
of equally and good...
excitement, that I was...
likely to see the...
ended up glass...
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(11) P. The success of the Napoleon sketch
did me a good turn with Souther's where
my book of the Poland had been for some
time. They were hesitating about publishing,
it. There was no popular appeal. I was
entirely unknown. But the Napoleon work
gave me sufficient backing to persuade
them at least that was the explanation
the chief head of the concern - Wm. C.
Brownell gave me. My first book
was my second to appear. My reward for
writing it came from my interest in doing it,
- what I ~~had~~ learned about how to
go at a serious biographical study. The
family not-in-a-synthetic my first book
was for 48 cents. I had used up my
small share of the small sale in connection
of the proposed ~~copy~~ gift copy!
corrected

I did not believe the story but when I expressed my doubt all I could get out of Mr. McClure was a severe, "What a pity you do not know something about Napoleon." No new idea to me, since it was the first thing I was thinking every morning when I went to work. What I did not know as I worried over the possible publication of what I believed a fake was that in spite of his quick and enthusiastic acceptance of a good story, S. S. McClure was wary. Moreover, he had a contempt for the thing that wasn't true, a contempt for mistakes. Good stories - yes - but they must be true stories. Moreover, he knew what I did not as yet, that he could go the limit in his enthusiasms since he had at his side a partner on whom he counted more I think than he then realized to pull him back at the edge of a precipice.

This happened now. The story was in type, scheduled. Mr. McClure was going to Europe. "While you'r over there, Sam," said this partner quietly, "you better verify that Napoleon story. We'll hold it until we hear from you."

A few weeks later came a laconic postal card. "Don't publish the story of the opening of Napoleon's tomb. It wasn't opened."

I never heard the matter referred to after that. By the time he returned he had forgotten what to me was a near tragedy, to him a joyful bit of editorial adventure.

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