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Looking back now I know that the crash which in 1906 split the McClure crowd was inevitable. Neither Mr. McClure nor Mr. Phillips, the two essential factors in the creation, being what they were, could have done more than he did. Each acted according to an inner something which made him what he was, something he could not violate. So McClure’s Magazine suffered a shock from which it was never to recover - is now only a name.

What happened was that a powerful untrammelled creative imagination collided with a disciplined judgment which was as rigid as a steel rod when its notion of professional integrity was challenged. Mr. McClure’s passion for adventure, new enterprises, forbade him to be content with what he had. He was always wanting more. His first adventure had been with the Syndicate. Then came McClure’s Magazine, then The McClure Phillips Book Publishing Company - all flourishing in 1906. But while all these things were building one of the General’s chief editorial joys was inventing magazines. So far none had actually passed the stage of a name and a dummy. Personally I had never but once been an active factor in one of these editorial flights. That was when Mr. McClure in London had suddenly ordered me in Paris to drop whatever I was doing and to hurry into Germany to collect material for an Animal Magazine.
But in 1906 Mr. McClure brought home from one of his foraging expeditions a plan which had for him a quality which forbade criticism. He saw it, I think, as a revelation, something which could not be denied. It was more than a magazine, it was an attempt to combine with a cheap magazine which it goes without saying was to have an enormous circulation with the enormous advertising which circulation brings, a scheme to solve some of the great abuses of the day, abuses which we had been hammering in McClure's Magazine. He proposed to do this by giving them a competition which would draw their teeth. The charter which he brought back and the company he was already forming in which he had already sold stock provided not only for a McClure's Universal Journal but a McClure's Bank, a McClure's Life Insurance Company, a McClure's School Book Publishing House, a McClure's Ideal Settlement in which people could have cheap homes on their own terms.

Mr. McClure clearly regarded the plan as a great humanitarian enterprise. It possessed him like a religious vision and it seemed to him blasphemy I think to question its realization. Obsessed as he was he was blind and deaf to the obstacles in the way.

I do not remember that I had ever been angry with Mr. McClure in all the twelve years I had known him. I had always felt so certain in the flood of ideas which poured from him that there were divine sparks. I had profound gratitude
for his ability to stir to enthusiasm, to action, to gaiety. I had respected the quality of intellect which made him quickly and cheerfully give up a thing to which he had committed himself utterly when he was convinced he was wrong - and it should be said that Mr. McClure always gave his colleagues full opportunity to prove him wrong. But now I came upon something different, a conviction that this undertaking so impractical, as I saw it, was an inspiration which must not be questioned. I was angry all through and I am sure I hurt Mr. McClure by telling him flatly and at once that I would never have anything to do with such a scheme.