LAW OFFICE
HAL C. DeRAN
FREMONT, OHIO

Fremont, O. Jan. 9" I939.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
// Harpers Magazine,
49 East 33 rd. Street,
New York.

My Dear Miss Tarbell, - I have just finished reading your most admirable article in Harpers for the current month. It was so different from your hard studious and factual work among court records and in dusty files. The fine delineations of Rogers , Flagler and McClure lead me to write suggesting that you could render all those who have lived for more than sixty years last past a great service by writing a magazine series on the men you met during your Standard Oil investigations. I was in the Ohio Legislature from 1897 to 1901 and worked with Attorney General Monnett in the Standard Oil Investigation.

Henry M. Flagler met and was in business with the Harknesses in Bellevue, Ohio. The families and the folk lore of those people still live here. By a strange circumstance the present patriarch of the senate George W. Norris, was born and grew to manhood and taught school in this county and within three miles of the home of Harknesses.

Your intimate story of Rogers and Flagler and your manner of telling it interested me quite as much as if you had written a biography. The true and inevitable conclusion concerning this Standard Oil Groupe must be that they were one and all money mad. Each was greedy, aggressive, and highly suspicious. None of those men really enjoyed life or actually understood that there might be a better way of living.

Your reference to Lawson, seemed casual and yet definite. As a matter of fact Monnett and I gave Lawson his most valuable amunition. If you have Frenzied Finance at hand you will observe by turning to it that a letter published in the book written by me led Lawson into the insurance angle of his fight. It was my conviction then and is yet that with all the bank control Standard Oil could not have so dominated the financial world but for its control of the insurance millions. This angle was over looked until I happened to receive a letter from John A. McCall president of The New York Life Insurance Company, which was intended to prejudice me against Lawson. Of course this was a wind fall for us. It showed the way Standard Oil used the Insurance Companies.

Thayer of the firm Ridgeway Thayer & Co., was from Bucyrus , Ohio and a friend of Monnetts and sent Lawson to us.

Theodore Roosevelt stood firm in that fight. It was he who arranged to have Odell as governor of New York appoint Charles Evans Hughes to act for the Insurance Investigating Committee.

One phase of that investigation which has been pretty much the basis for all claim to liberalism on the part of Hughes is not known to the public. After Hughes was appointed and began his work Standard Oil instituted a concerted and vicious campaign against him and his business and Hughes notified Lawson and Roosevelt that he would resign. That it would ruin his law business and destroy him financially. After much negotiation in which Roosevelt Thayer and Monnett conferred alternately with Hughes and then Lawson it was finally arranged that Lawson should pay Hughes $50 000.00 in addition to his allowance as attorney for the legislative Committee. Lawson paid this sum by check and had the re

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turned check the last I heard from him. Whether the family has kept this valuable historic document I do not now know.

Your mention of McClure seems to conceal rather than to express your real admiration for him. To my mind in the light of history McClure should outrank any publisher or publicist of that period. None of the News Paper editors of that time compared with him. In imagination fore sight and devotion to his country he should be placed above Bok or Pulitzer or Whitelaw Reid.His courage to fight and his total unconcern for personal consequences mark him as the real gladiator of his time. He should have had the Lawson Articles and would have but for the friendship between Thayer and Monnett.

I urge you to write a series of articles giving personal facts and estimates of the men of your time.It would be historys last chance to get those personal facts from one who not only knew but whose ripe judg ments of men and measures would furnish the generations yet to come with correct estimate of those times.

You have lived the life, kept the faith and at eighty two still remember.Voltaire is perhaps the only personage of literature and history whose record equals yours. I congratulate you. I am,

Yours Very Truly,

H. C. DeRan

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