January 19, 1931

Mr. Joseph Du Vivier
35 Boulevard Haussmann
Paris

Dear Mr. Du Vivier:

I am sorry that I have been so slow in answering your letter enclosing that delightful clipping from Martin's Ferry, O. I had no idea that the news of my shame had crossed the Atlantic. As a matter of fact as you and Mrs. Du Vivier probably realize it was not my books that had been used as classroom texts in the Bible classes of The United Presbyterians. I never wrote a text that they would look at a second time, I imagine. But a very intelligent little woman by the name of Martha Tarbell has for years been publishing annually a volume of notes on the program of lessons which the authorities lay out for our American Sunday Schools. The notes are excellent for she is a learned lady and surprisingly liberal in her views. She has always emphasized temperance in these lessons - not prohibition. I fancy, but I do not know, that she keeps quiet on the political issue.

Immediately after I published my first article against prohibition poor Martha Tarbell began to suffer. Sunday Schools that have used her books for years banned them and I am afraid her income has been really seriously injured. Is it not outrageous that the righteous should be so swift in striking before they have convinced themselves that the head they hit is the right one?

Of course so far as I am concerned it is to laugh. But for this very distant cousin of mine whom I never saw until this thing happened when I looked her up and made my apologies, it is serious business. The most amusing side of the episode is that you and

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

Mrs. Du Vivier should be congratulating me from Paris on having my books named on our new American Index! I owe the inquisitors something however for their intolerance has brought me news direct from you.

Please give my love to Mrs. Du Vivier and to Paul and Ned whom I remember very well. I hope I shall be seeing you both here in American one of these days. With all good wishes.

Very sincerely yours

Digital Images, 2010. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.