Lakewood, Ohio, May 3rd, 1939.

Dear Miss Tarbell—

Nanny Howland recently presented me with a copy of "All in the Day's Work", which, needless to say, was not only appreciated by the recipient as a gift, but thoroughly enjoyed by him as your biography. In it you seem to me to have revealed your true self, impelling the confession that you now appear as a life-long friend as well as a "notorious" neighbor.

Your descriptions from personal experience and observation of early days along Oil Creek bring back vividly the days of my youth, spent travelling over the same territory, absorbing the same atmosphere, being thrilled by the same scenery; - even though, trailing you as I did by a decade, the mad rush and incidents connected therewith had by my time become a tradition, - so rapidly do changes take place in Oildom.

But while reading your book I was particularly impressed by the discovery that your outlook throughout so consistently coincided with my own, even though the horizon of your activities has embraced a much wider territory. Was this due to heredity, or was it the result of early environment? Probably both. For, as to the first, did not your father and mine evidence a common interest by early and continued support of the Prohibition Party? And did not your mother and mine demonstrate their congeniality by annually packing their lunch-baskets at the first whiff of Autumn and hieing themselves up to Woodlawn Cemetery, - there to spend a day as hilariously as their surroundings and their Methodist Code of Conduct would permit? And, concerning

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the second premise, cannot I recall an occasion during my pre-high school days at Drake Street when my teacher, – (I wonder who she may have been?) – interrupted a regular lesson long enough to read to us a portion of "Wealth vs. Commonwealth," – my first inkling of what was then going on in the world at large. Even though I "may have forgotten the singer, I have not forgotten her song". (Would not such an occasion now-a-days prove a juicy morsel for a Dies Committee!!). And when at a much later period I myself understood the reading of Mr. Lloyd's treatise was not I forced to walk around the block after each third or fourth chapter in order to cool my seething feelings before continuing!! I mention these incidents merely as indications of the non-heavenly atmosphere which "lay about us in our infancy", probably molding to some extent the mental attitude carried forward into later years.

But we both lived through it; and here am I, – a Standard Oil pensioner notwithstanding erstwhile vociferous proclamations that scruples would never permit me to become a Standard Oil employee! Thus proving the truth of a remark once dropped by good old Dr Day with sufficient emphasis to make a lasting impression upon a ten-year-old boy: "There is nothing so uncertain as a thing you're sure of". But such is life! Perhaps blazed for us by Divine Guidance rather than hewn out by individual effort. And, speaking for myself, life has on the whole been joyous; – never more so than now, in spite of my "tainted income". At seventy-one I can still claim to be an optimist, – with occasional resistancies. And, unless I misread between the lines of your book, so can you. There has been a very noticeable advance in general attitudes on social problems, – at least in this Country, – since the days of Homestead and Pullman strikes.

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Well, now! That was quite a sermon for Ed. Smith. But, as above stated, I have been so impressed by the similarity between your experiences and mine, in spite of our widely separated fields of activity, that I am taking the liberty, as of one neighbor to another, of announcing the discovery; — for the time is bound to come before many years when one of us shall be reading in the morning paper an obituary of the other. Last November I expressed such a probability to John Emerson and within three months I was reading his! But I sincerely hope you will not be similarly effected, and that you may long continue to live a happy and useful life, — perhaps sustained by your curiosity as to the contents of Robert Lincoln's sealed package. As to myself, one incentive to hang on for a while is the hope that I may sometime spend a summer tramping through the woods and over the hills of Warren and Venango Counties, with a lunch in my pocket, a song in my heart, and a friendly feeling for all mankind; returning each evening to the good old East End, there to loll in an easy-chair on my front porch, hailing the neighbors as they pass, reminiscing with those who may feel so disposed. And in my day-dreams may I not picture you among that latter group, knowing full well that, notwithstanding your Connecticut garden and friends, you too occasionally long for a good whiff of Hemlock forest, — a morning view of Barnsdall's Hill with the Pine trees on its summit silhouetted against the background of a deep blue sky, — the wealth of scenery and tradition within the limits of a day's tramp, — a sunset glimpse of the Celestial City with Sunset Castle pointing the way, — a peaceful evening spent drifting around an ideal neighborhood where all doors, — (like those of McKinley's Castle Garden), — swing inward, — followed by a restfull night made still more so by distant songs of innumerable

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frogs and froglets down on "The Flats". Such are the enduring assets which, overlooked by the Oil Industry in its skimming of the surface, are now available to those who have "eyes to see, ears to hear", and souls to respond. Grateful am I that I could live through such an era - absorb such an atmosphere, - appreciate its true values. Selah!

If Sarah, Esther, and Clara happen to be with you, give them my best. As to yourself, permit me to repeat that my greeting is extended not only to an old-time neighbor, but also to a brand-new acquaintance. May you live long and prosper in all those things which are worth while.

Sincerely,
Edward Smith

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