Pittsburg Pa.
April 29-
1909.

Dear Miss Tarbell

I sent you a letter this week, but fear that you have not received it, I not knowing your proper address and sent it to the General Delivery. I am enthusiastic over the many truths you have told about Pittsburg though they were not much to the liking of some of our so called public spirited men who want a great deal of credit for doing nothing except to draw a fat salary and applaud themselves. My aged mother and me were subject to an outrage here last year the knowledge of which has gone the rounds of men in office here

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and elsewhere, and yet there has no decisive step been taken to put an end to some of the pernicious practices of drunken Aldermen. And I do not feel that I owe any allegiance to a city that willfully closes its eyes to the thieving and double dealing of these men as a body who are sworn to conduct their offices as a benefit to the public and not as a menace to safety. I do not think that the truth have ever been told concerning this only one of the many evils existing though the Pittsburg survey workers came pretty close to it in their article of February Charities and Commons on the Aldermans courts, they did not make it strong enough. they should have told of the Aldermans drunkenness as well as their Constables.

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On the first of april 1908 my mother a woman past sixty years of age, had an order of Wallpaper delivered by one of Kauffmans drivers, who on leaving our doorstep declared that our little poodle dog, of which we have a pair, had bitten him refuring to show his injury however, but coming back the next morning and revealing ever such a slight scratch on the shin bone, and demanding that we have the dog shot and he being perfectly harmless and never having given us any trouble we refused, and I took him to a doctor and was assured he was allright and then to a place of safety, and this most unreasonable man brought

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officers to the house for the laudable purpose of putting the dog to death, (as mother said if we were being robbed and murdered it would be hard to find an officer,) but let there be a poor dog to be shot and they come in squads. Mother offered him anything in reason, yet he went before Alderman Heber McDowell and charged her with keeping a ferocious dog, and a time was set for a hearing and Mother, Sister Mattie, and me left our homes on the evening of the 8th of April, trusting and believing in this mans ability to make peace between us and our neighbor and he the Magistrate broke it and treated us in the most cruel barbarbar manner, destroying our faith in our fellowmen, and planting the seeds of anarchy

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and rebellion in our hearts forevermore.
The prosecutor was sworn and was
treated with every consideration in
the taking of his testimony, and then
mother was called, and we stepped
out with her into the magistrate's pre-
sence, on seeing which he ordered his
constable on the floor, to find out
what we were doing there, and Mother
asked him to please let us remain
as we were her witnesses and might
be needed, and he screamed at her
telling her that that would be lat-
er on and wanting to know if
she wanted us on her back. We
were ushered precipitately back in
to a rear room, where we took

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seats just inside the door, realizing that something was terribly wrong yet not wanting to believe the evidence of our own eyes that the Alderman was both drunk and disorderly. Mother was ordered to stand up and take oath and she was weak and trembling and leaned her arm ever so slightly on the desk before him and he railed at her again in the most offensive brutal manner, not to dare lay down in front of him and to stand up straight and take the oath (this in the name of God) And I seeing mother about to fall could not bear any more of the drunkards abuse, and just followed a natural impulse in stepping forward and asking him to please treat her civil, not meaning to do any thing wrong or to anger him.

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And he got down and staggered over to me, standing over me in the most threatening barbarous manner and declaring me under arrest, and without reading any warrant saying that in default of a fine of one dollar and costs, I would stand committed to Jail. Oh, God the pity and horror of it that such things can be done in the name of the law, that is meant to sheild one and all, and that the perpetrators of there horrible breaches of the public peace, allowed to commit sin upon sin in this highhanded atrocious manner because of their political supporters.

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I opened my mouth to gasp for breath and he dared me to speak another word saying if I did he would make it a summary sentence and send me to Jail without the privilege of paying. I was so frightened I fell back into my chair, my senses reeled, every thing went around before me, and in that supreme moment I seemed to hear the voices of a multitude, crying out in a similar distress, and I have heard them ever since. I saw Mother come tottering toward me in a blind sort of way, she does not know how she got across the room to this day, and dear sister going toward the door to get help, and the brute let go of me, and reached out for her, saying he would fine her too, but she was going too fast and got away,

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bringing help inside of half an hour during which time I suffered all the agony of death and degradation, and the alderman further abused us by coming into the rear room where we were held like rats in a trap and ordering us to pay up and get out, or he would have us taken out, and I no longer able to articulate coherently, mother tried to reason with him begging for just a little time, he saying he would give us very very little time and declaring that was no place to loaf, as if we, orderly self respecting citizens had not gone there against our will in the first place.

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He held mothes for court in the sum of three hundred dollars and never heard a word of her testimony or finished administering the oath. He further threatened to have us all taken out when mothers bond was being signed and my fine paid under protest, and my sister endeavoring to get the names of people who witnessed the atrocity. They were nearly all Jews there that night, this being a jewish hearing before and after we were railroaded, and I saw pity written on nearly every face some of them coming to us after and telling us that even in Russia where the hand of the oppressor has never been lifted, that such things would not be tolerated by intelligent people, and I ask you as an american, if this is not a bitter pill

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to swallow, considering what our forefathers fought and died for. I was beside myself with anguish not alone for myself but for other poor creatures who did not have the money with which to grease there filthy hands and had to give up the next best thing to life itself sweet Liberty, and I went directly to Mayor Guthrie and the Public Safety Director, thinking they would take a hand in helping defenseless widow women from having to bear the shame and agony of arrest and wholesale pocket picking I told Mayor Guthrie that I would not feel half so outraged, had I

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been knocked down and robbed by a highwayman and he hung his head saying he was ashamed of his city and recommending that I see a lawyer, though I had previously told him I was utterly unable to pay a lawyer and thought it was a case for the public safety department. And Director E. G. Langs answer was a verbal acknowledgement that these pilferings are notorious but that they had no jurisdiction over the Alderman or their doings. I advertized in the Press for witnesses and begged the papers to publish my experience with a view to save others not that I wanted any unpleasant notoriety or expected to in any way benefit, but they refused. The post recommending me to the Legal Aid Society who in turn

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shifted and dished, saying that the conditions under which their charter was granted, enjoined them against taking any cases which should come under the district Attorney and sending me to him Gocking who has since died and I was sent out by an attache of his office to find an honest alderman who would take the information, and here was where I was made to realize the rottenness of a great city, for of the six different Aldermen whom I approached, they one and all got behind Magistrate Brody of the front office saying it was a case for him, and he positively

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said it was not and recommended that I see a lawyer. Each and every man whom I approached acknowledging the existence of the iniquity, yet each and all shifting and shirking their individual responsibility for it. I feel that I barely escaped insult and for the sake of all womankind I would ask if you know of any way possible to let this widow woman's appeal be heard and answered. I know that flagrant cases like mine are of daily and hourly occurrance here, and that it is not safe under the system existing for anyone to go into an aldermans court without having or taking a long chance of having their pockets picked on the flimsiest kind of a pretext, and I know that this one man alone is the worst of his kind, and will

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stop at nothing to gain his ends.
The Jail and County court records
will show that he has incarcerated
first one man and then another
both defendant and prosecutor
times without number, just to
suit his own evil purposes and
pocketbook and to satisfy a grudge.
He calls himself Czar of his court
and is located in a rich Jewish
settlement and gets a great deal
of their dirty work to do, being
one time coroner here and his of-
fice being a political center for his
ward. And that must be the reason
why he has not been punished
they having all to stand together.

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There is something so horribly unfair about it all, that though I have been assured by H. D. W. English that my testimony has been laid before the committee on lower courts, that I am impatient at the delay. It has taken hold of me and I have written to the Clergy and the united Christian workers to help, but they do not seem able to solve the problem or help the people to any relief along these lines. I often waken up at night and find myself unable to go to sleep again for pondering on a way to save others from the agony and despair of that night. I never see a loaded patrol wagon that I do not grieve for the poor creatures who find themselves incarcerated, and who are often as inoffensive as we were. I was

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Just sick over it and so was mother. We are poor but respectable people. I am the widow of Dr. E. C. Walters, who graduated at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Class of 1891. He was found dead seated in his office chair at Little Washington Pa. on the 5th of November 1903. The suddenness of his most untimely death well nigh unseated my reason at the time, it leaving me and his two dear children unprovided for, and mother found a shelter, and saved us all three from seeing the shadows meet, and this most terrible time, so you can judge of the double bond ex-

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isting between us and my feelings at seeing her so cruelly browbeaten In all her life which has been one of endless toil and many hardships (she being left in New Castle Pa with six children to support) she was never treated so barbarously. She is of the old school and tries to think everybody honest, and it is in her name and in that of my minor children that I ask your aid in bringing this to the notice of the right thinking people. Also in the name of my dear dead who died a martyr to science paying for his knowledge with his life, and forgetting more than this man ever knew of human nature. If he were living he would have laid this brutes power on the shelf forever, so well was

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He
beloved by one and all Richard Foos.
There has been a good bit of criticism here regarding your recent articles on Pittsburg, and while I am well satisfied that our disgrace is not any worse than other cities principally New York and Chicago still there is an endless feild for work, and earnest workers here will find all they can do, if they will only follow in the footsteps of Mayor Guthrie, the very best most courcientious man we ever had at the citys helm, and who was so shamefully handicapped and thwarted, especially during the last year of his reign.

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I am satisfied that you told the truth without any exaggeration as you did in many other instances and I for one do not think from my own experience and what I have seen of indifference not to say criminal negligence of the men worst to protect the peoples interest, that too much notoriety cannot be give some of the transactions here for in that way only will the people ever get any permanent relief I beseech you to accept this letter in the spirit in which it is written and do what you can in the name of God and the commonwealth. Let every man be known by his works regardless of creed or political affiliations. and let him observe the Golden rule above all other things. Sincerely Yours

Mrs S. E. Walters 2036 5th Ave Pgh.

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In order to convince you that my motives are pure that I have no grudge against any man and that my love for my fellow creatures and pity for them is my first first consideration, I will willingly submit acknowledgements from an even dozen public spirited men Clergymen and men high in the esteem and confidence of people here and elsewhere, who would like to see the day of the plunderers come to an end and the people be given a square deal. Now I do not belong to any clubs or organization of any kind and am standing absolutely fearless and alone. Am only a poor wage earner and

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have nothing at all to give lawyers. My oldest son is helping me now being a messenger at the Post Office for going on three years, Special Delivery No 21. Before that in order to raise my children and be honest I have went out at the risk of my life, toiling at any thing I could get to do and with mothers help being enabled to keep my children from want, and am now working for less recompence than I ever did owing to business depression and the general conditions here as well as in other parts of country. Yet I do not think there is a city in this United States where rent and provisions come so high, and people given less for their hard earnings, It will take a poor man a life time to recover from the Panic.

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On the same night that we were so foully dealt with there was a poor young Jew on trial for Assault and Battery. His case was called after ours and I was too overcome to listen to the evidence against him, but at the conclusion I could hear the Alderman shouting at him asking him if he had any money, and as we left the office he passed us at the entrance in charge of a Constable and on his way to jail, but I did not know it. He laid his hand on my shoulder and said that I deserved credit for trying to save mother from such cruelty and I begged for his name and address,

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the constable was dragging him past and he just had time to pass me an envelope, and after a sleepless night Mother and me started out to get a Lawyer and see what we could do. I placed mother in the hands of one of our best lawyers here Seward Thompson, and he told me that I could bring three different charges against Mr. Dowell, but failed to inform me that there was a limit of 5 days for taking an appeal for which he is now very sorry. I started out to look for witness and wound up at County Jail where I found he had been given a 20 days sentence and I felt so bad for him knowing that no one could have recieved a fair trial at the hands of this man in the condition he was in that night,

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that I went home and wrote to him offering to do anything I could for him providing he had committed no felony and he was so overcome at the kindness from a total stranger, that he sat down in his cell and cried, but did not need my help for his friends were working for him, and got him out at the end of 3 days. He made his way out to the office that evening on being released and was ordered out by McDowell, but produced my letter, and as soon as the old brute saw the signature, he changed his face altogether, offering to do anything to peacify this man H. Shapiro.

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going so far as to make out a commitment for the incarceration of the prosecutors chief witness, he being afraid to take the person of the prosecutor a Mr Whitenstein who was in good standing. He sent a drunken Constable out that saturday night (Jews Sunday) and this other poor man was dragged along the streets, and past places where he could have gotten bail and was landed about nine o'clock without ever being told what for. All this done after extracting a promise from Shapiro that he would not come to me which it is needless to say he did not keep, coming the next morning to thank me and assure me that he would be on hand when needed him. Now just think of this diabolical treachours dobble dealing, and

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judge if you can of its consequences. I ask you is it any wonder that our jails workhouse and Peintentiary is so disgracefully overcrowded when men like this are allowed to commit such depredations.

So deep was the sense of wrong with both these men that they both came to me urging me to do all I could, saying they would stand by me and tell the truth in its entirety. But owing to my ignorance of the proper steps to take and not being able to find an honest Alderman and Gochrings delay in taking me right into common plear court the time for appealing was passed,

and I was left protesting and begging and beseeching first one man and another from the President down. Oh, do not laugh at me or turn a deaf ear for it is crimes like this that calls upon Allmighty God for forbearance, and if I had it to do over again knowing the futility as well as I do now of trying to get justice without money, I would take the law in my own hands and place my life and liberty against that of this most notorious infamous confidence man. I know that had either one of my brothers (who are honest working men of the middle west) been there that blood would have been shed. And they will have to pick me up and carry me if they ever get me fore another Lilly Alderman

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I did not know this man before that awful night, do not know him now but on all sides I have heard him condemned for his wanton cruelty He even when he was coroner here was charged with many offenses, chief of which was the burying of people whose friends and relatives had died under suspicious circumstances The right to hold Post Mortem I told him that night when I got so I could speak, that he would be the sorriest old man in Allegheny county, and he laughed at me, but I feel that I have made my words good for there are enough good people who know of it here

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to have taken away his commission if they would get together and make good the many promises given. I say with Thomas Carlyle a noted writer and critic of the last century "Give me a man who has a principle and will not get up in the middle of the night and fight for it if need be." And it is borne in upon me now that a great many of our so called public spirited men are that in name only, or they would all get busy and take up the peoples cause. And at least extend that protection to the widow and orphan, that we stand so much in need of. Now I would be overjoyed to hear from you and I beg your pardon for encroaching on your most valuable time, which I trust will be cheerfully granted considering the urgent need of reform.

S. E. W.

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