

The Outlook

287 Fourth Avenue
New York

Office of
Theodore Roosevelt

May 6th 1911.

Oh! Miss Tarbell, Miss Tarbell!

How can you take the view you do of the Herald ! You compare it with the Tribune. It is perfectly legitimate to compare the Tribune with Mr Watterson's paper, the Courier-Journal. Honest people could agree or disagree about those two papers. Personally I think that during the last thirty or forty years the Tribune has been infinitely more helpful to good causes than the Courier-Journal, but, as I say, people can differ on such a subject; and I should be very glad to meet at any time either Henry Watterson or Whitelaw Reid. But to compare either one of them with the Herald is literally and precisely as if I should compare either the American Magazine or The Outlook with Town Topics. As you know, I believe the American Magazine has done, on the whole, great and real good; and I am associated with The Outlook because, as the result of a number of years close observation, I became convinced that I had far more sympathy with their ideals and purposes than with those of almost any ^{other} body of men that I had ever encountered in any walk of life. Now people can differ about The Outlook or the American Magazine; but when any person compares either of them with Town Topics, or the Police Gazette, the comparison is of interest only as affecting my judgment of the person making it; and my dear Miss Tarbell, you must permit me to say that the same thing applies

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to a comparison of either The Tribune or the Louisville Courier-Journal with the Herald.

Now as for what you say about The Outlook's publishing "The Truth about K". In the first place, I admit at once that the title, the type, and the placing of this advertisement did make it look to many readers like an editorial article. We used the same title, type and placing that had been used for similar articles for twenty years; but our attention was *subsequently* called to the fact, to which you now call my attention, i.e. that some people were misled in the matter; and in consequence we at once abandoned this twenty years' custom. From now on, every article of the kind will appear under the heading of "Advertising Department" or "Advertising Section", so that there cannot be any possible mistake in the future. As for the publication of the article itself, I most emphatically think that it was not only justifiable, but commendable. The Outlook publishes continually letters from people upholding policies or views with which The Outlook diametrically disagrees. (For example, The Outlook has on several different occasions published letters taking a very dark view of my own character and achievements, whether at San Juan Hill or elsewhere.) This particular article by Spencer I should have been glad to see published as *in the regular section of the Outlook* putting forth his side of the case, just as I am now trying to secure publication in The Outlook of an article from the North Western farmers

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giving their side of the case against Canadian reciprocity. Spencer's article, however, was too long, and such being the case, as I say, I was not merely willing but glad to see it put in (I did not know it had been put in, of course, until long after it had appeared; but when I did see it, I was ^{that it had been} glad ~~it was~~ put in.) Probably you know that on April 8th The Outlook editorially took up this question, stated that the American Woolen Company was entirely justified in printing their article as an advertisement, and that The Outlook violated in no degree the ethics of journalism in ^{and expressed its total disagreement with} ~~admitting the advertisement to its pages.~~ ^{its views expressed in the article.} I would have gone ^{I would have} further than this, ^{and} stated that The Outlook did not violate the ethics of journalism, but rendered a great and needed service ^{as} ~~and~~ an example in showing its willingness to accept the statement of a case with which it did not agree, to put it in exactly as it was written, and then itself to comment with absolute freedom, as it has done, upon the arguments made in the advertisement. Let me repeat that if The Outlook had had space, which it unfortunately did not have, I should have been glad to see Spencer's article inserted, not as an advertisement, but as a communication signed by Spencer, and avowedly stating his side of the case. We have even gone further on certain occasions. We have actually sent out a member of our own staff to write up the Standard Oil Company, and show the good it was doing; and this notwithstanding the fact that, as you doubtless know, we

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have been among the bitterest opponents of the Standard Oil Company when it has done wrong. There is not a trust in the United States for which I have a more contemptuous abhorrence than the Sugar Trust, but if the Sugar Trust desired to state certain facts in its defence, I should do my best to have them published in the editorial columns; and if the article was too long and was not of sufficient interest to warrant putting it in the editors' section, I should be entirely willing to have it go in the advertising section; and then I should answer it or not just according as I did or did not think it necessary to do so.

My dear Miss Tarbell, The Outlook and I do not agree on certain vital points. For instance, I very strongly believe in a ship subsidy for South American and Australian lines. The Outlook does not; but The Outlook would not in the least object to my publishing articles on my side of the question, if, as happens not to be the case, I wished to do so. On the contrary, I think that in a fine sporting spirit The Outlook would welcome my doing so, and then writing withering editorials in the same number to answer mine. There are convinced Free Traders who regard Protection as immoral, and convinced Protectionists who regard Free Trade as immoral. Personally I think one class just exactly as foolish as the other; but I think it desirable that each side shall have every opportunity fully and fairly to state its case.

Sincerely yours,

Miss Ida M. Tarbell.

Theodore Roosevelt