

**Columbia University
in the City of New York**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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September 13, 1909.

Miss Ida Tarbell,
40 West Ninth St.,
New York City.

My dear Miss Tarbell,

The Department of English of Columbia University is planning to offer next year to graduate students a course of fifteen lectures on contemporary literature, to be given by men of letters not holding academic positions at Columbia. I am writing to ask if you will give a lecture in this course on the Magazine of Today, or on some aspects of magazine literature.

This course is, I think, a novelty in the University curriculum and may require a little explanation. The purpose of the course is to present some of the principles and achievements, or at least certain aspects, of the literature of today. The lectures will not be open to the public; the audience will be restricted to students specializing in literature, and mainly to graduate students, with perhaps the admission of a few undergraduates who have elected largely in literature courses. The lectures will be held in a room in which it will be easy for the lecturer to talk, and we should be glad to have the speakers depart as far as they choose

from the formalities of public lectures. The plan is for the lecturer to sit down and talk to a hundred people or so, who are students keenly interested in his theme.

It should perhaps be added that the graduate work in English at Columbia has increased very rapidly of late, so that we now have about 130 graduate students each year who are taking their major work in English toward the higher degrees. Students in comparative literature and to some extent in modern literature in general would be interested in these lectures. These students, of course, come from all parts of the country, and many of them hope to accomplish something in the practice as well as in the study of letters. The course proposed will contain lectures on various forms of literature, as the drama, the novel, historical writing, and on the various fields and aspects of literature, such as its popular appeal, or its standards and ideals, or perhaps some particular department, as journalism, the magazine, or the connection of the publishing houses with literature. We believe that at Columbia we have especially favorable opportunities to attempt the experiment of enlarging the curriculum in this direction.

The lectures will be held at four o'clock in the afternoon, probably on Thursdays, from February 1 to May 15, 1910. The date of your particular lecture can probably be arranged to suit your convenience. The honorarium which the University offers is fifty dollars.

President Butler and the members of the departments of English and Comparative Literature are, I may add, very much interested in the success of this plan, and we are all

very desirous that you will see your way clear to aid us.

Truly yours,

A. M. Thordike

Secretary,

Dept. of English.