INTERVIEW WITH MR. ROGERS.

As soon as my account of the Buffalo Conspiracy case was ready I sent it to Mr. Rogers. This was just before Christmas. About the 4th or 5th of January I received a letter from him, saying that he would like to see me. I went to the office. Mr. Rogers came in with a large pile of manuscripts. He told me that he had gone over my article very carefully and had compared with it certain papers in his possession, and that he had written me a letter in which he stated his criticisms. This letter he handed to me and said, "I think it will be a good plan for you to read that out loud, so that we can talk it over here." I began to read, but broke off with the first sentence. Mr. Rogers had written that he appreciated my request that he should make the story correspond with his knowledge and opinion of the case. I said, "Mr. Rogers, if you will look at my letter you will see that I never suggested that you make the article correspond with your opinion of this case. I feel convinced that I could never do this. I asked you to examine the article and see if I had made any errors in statement or had omitted any essential testimony on either side." He smiled, and said, "Never mind, go ahead." The letter was an admirable one, and almost every one of his points well taken. There was nothing which it was not proper for me to consider at least, and with certain of his points I said at once that I was willing to comply. I told him frankly in regard to his objection to my statement that if Matthews had been guilty of blackmail, which I did not admit, it

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was only the inevitable result of the claims they made to own the actual business. We debated this in rather a lively way, but I did not yield my point though I was willing to drop the remark out of the article in that connection. After we had finished the discussion of the letter, he asked me to examine certain documents. One was the statement drawn from six jurors that they had not convicted the Everests because they believed they had attempted to destroy the refinery but because they had attempted to entice Miller away. Another was the certificate of character which the Standard had gotten out of the people of Rochester for the Everests. Neither of these documents seemed to me very impressive, and I should have been ashamed to have presented them I think, if I had been in his place.

His last paper did stump me. It was the report of the receiver appointed in the Buffalo case. Rogers said, "Now you do not believe that it was a blackmail case. I have evidence here that will show you that the lawyers themselves were in the blackmailing case. There is no other way to show you." The receiver's report which he then gave me contained on the last page a sum paid to the lawyers amounting to $20,000. "There," Rogers said, "You can see why they were so eager to convict us. They were making a raid on the Standard, and you see it was the Bench that united in this. Two men who were down in the receiver's report as receiving large sums of money were Judge Hatch and Judge Lewis." My first idea was that there could be no other explanation than the one that Rogers was giving. I sat for a long time with my head bent over the document, forgetting his presence and wondering to myself

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whether there was any other way of interpreting the money. I looked up rather suddenly and for the first time in my experience with Mr. Rogers, caught him looking at me with narrowed eyes and an expression of great cunning. He straightened his face out at once, but rightly or wrongly I immediately jumped to a conclusion that I had better be on my guard. "You see we are not the only ones, Miss Tarbell," he said. And I said, "No, if this means what it seems to mean, I should think you were not." I told him that I could not accept the copy that he had as it was not certified. That I would send to Buffalo and see if I could get a certified copy. He consented to this. I told him also that I would get what consolation I could in regard to the matter.

Rogers was most exultant when he found that I evidently accepted the interpretation. "There," he said, "I knew that that paper would come your way some day. It was to get that paper that I consented to our people buying the Buffalo refinery. We did not want it, but I wanted to get that receiver's report and know just what they had done with that money. I knew it would come in well some time." I have never seen him better pleased than he was with himself at that moment.

In the course of conversation he referred to the fact that he had always been candid with me, to which I assented, saying, "I feel convinced, Mr. Rogers, that you are the only man in the Standard Oil Company with whom I could have talked over these matters at all. I know that I could not have done it with Mr. Rockefeller." He said, "You are prejudiced against Mr. Rockefeller." I said, "As I told you at the start, Mr. Rogers, when I began this work, the more

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I have learned of him the less I have liked him. You know as well as I, Mr. Rogers, ~~what Mr. Rockefeller is like.~~ like him and that- He is a hypocrite." He turned his head away with a curious smile. I could not tell whether he was pleased or whether he was smiling because he had caught me in a violent remark. He said, "Now, Miss Tarbell, that isn't a Christian remark." I said, "I do not suppose I am a Christian in Mr. Rockefeller's sense." He said, "Why you are a Presbyterian, are you not?" I said no, that I was not a member of any church. He said, "Why, I thought you were a Presbyterian. Don't you go to church?" I said, "Yes, sometimes, but for the most part I do not find that the ministers interest me." "Well," he said, lowering his voice, and with all signs of taking me into his confidence, "do you know, they don't interest me very much. But you ought to come and hear my pastor Dr. Savage." I said, "I have heard him." "Why,", he said, "I never saw you there! Why don't you come?" He remarked that his wife was a Presbyterian and liked to have him go to church with her, but his dislike of her pastor was such that she did not often persuade him.

We parted on very good terms after this discussion of our mutual religious views, and he gave me a cordial invitation to come back, which I told him I should do as soon as I had investigated the matter of the lawyers in the blackmailing scheme.

The correspondence with Mr. Crane in Buffalo gave me the information on which I framed the paragraph which appeared in

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the March article 1904, in regard to the money paid to the lawyers. I wrote Mr. Rogers from Washington what my conclusion was: that the moneys were paid in accordance with the receiver's report which had been passed on by the court. Two weeks afterwards, when I returned to New York, I got a note from him asking me to come to the office as he had new information to show me. I went there on the afternoon of February 2. The February article† had been out several days. I felt very confident that this article would make them all angry, and it was evident when Rogers came into the room that he was furious underneath. He was almost pale but perfectly polite, though a little brusque. He threw down a letter as he came in, saying "Read that!" It was from Mr. Barstow(?), saying that Buckley, the man who was mentioned in the February article, had been in the employ of the Atlantic Refining Company, but had afterwards been arrested for larceny, and imprisoned. I said, "Of course he was a rascal, Mr. Rogers, or he would never have done the things that he did." I also remarked that that was not the only testimony I had concerning Buckley,- that I had the letters of the negro who had been his catspaw.

† Espionage system

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