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Sunday evening

My dear Miss Tarbell

I am hurrying your February chapter back. I have given it my undivided attention since Saturday noon. Never mind the facsimiles. Their absence has not interfered with your understanding of the article. Some months ago I studied much of the testimony upon which this installment is based. I feel acquainted with the facts.

Indeed I shall be candid. I found long ago that it is easy to be candid with you. You take and give freely. Dealing with you is all straight sailing.

GENERAL.

1. This chapter is clear. A ten year old boy could grasp it. There isn't anything intricate about it. Not only I--but any other average reader--could understand it perfectly with the facsimiles left out.

2. It is dramatic. It is a "McClure story." It is even a drama in which we all have speaking parts. Which of us, pray, has no place in this story? Rockefeller's amazing grasp of things big and little--his ability to show the world a perfect organization, absolutely perfect--his power to surpass any in the development and maintenance of legitimate trade devices--and then, the ceaseless and wicked vigilance exacted from employes--their ~~and~~ ~~rush~~ ~~to~~ ~~feel~~ ~~an~~ ~~avarice~~ ~~that~~ ~~must~~ ~~but~~ ~~never~~ ~~will~~ ~~be~~ ~~gratified~~--the ~~deadening~~ of old men's consciences--the destruction of young men's ideals--the public degraded--disbelief in righteousness extended--the money cost of savage warfare beat from the hides of the poor and innocent--the weary appeals from servants to be relieved of their damnable tasks--and finally, a little silver, wasted powers, abandonment to mediocrity and distrust for those who have taken the greatest risks.

We are all accounted for in this reckoning. Dramatic, and packed with important human experience.

3. I predict that this chapter will have a wider appeal than any so far published. The interest in it may not be reflected in newspaper comment, and may not be communicated

*Feb. 2  
sent to 290  
Perrin*

*See A. next page*

to your office, but it will be deep and lasting. This interest will only be surpassed by what may be expected from your paper on "The Price of Oil," and by your "Character Sketch of Rockefeller." And why shouldn't it? We are here brought face to face with the fact that we have all been hit squarely on the jaw. Do we need more than that to interest us? Hard earned, carefully counted pennies have been going with two gallon oil cans to the corner grocery. How we may get it though our heads what the crop has been--that crop indicated in the latter part of the preceding long paragraph.

A An exposition of such a condition--made ably, persuasively, calmly, steadily,--as you have made it--will interest people. My good old mother will be interested. Haven't she bought enough coal oil to float her house in? She'll be mad clear through. I know. I've heard the rumblings. This will be her first chance to get to the bottom of the thing.

Special #

1. I am not satisfied with the first sentence on Page 20. It seems to me to be too flippant. This awful story is more than "a tale," and it is more than "interesting." I should say that this terribly significant story should be told with all the seriousness and dignity at your command. You can sum this thing up with your customary tranquility and judiciousness, and at the same time tell it so that it will burn into the minds of your readers.
2. On page 18 I raise the question whether it is advisable to use Mr. Wall's name. I have carried the impression that he does not desire to be mentioned. You know best however, having talked with him several times.
3. On page 3 the following sentence is not actually true. "Agents so inspected, are held to their business, are bound to sell goods in large quantities." Of course they are bound to get the most out of their business, but of course they are not necessarily bound to sell goods in large quantities.
4. On page 1 I raise the question whether it is best to designate Mr. Rockefeller's mind or head by the phrase "headpiece." It occurs to me that this word must either be a term of endearment, or a phrase of contempt. Jacob A. Riis could call Roosevelt's mind or head a "headpiece" and do it affectionately. Miss Tarbell can scarcely call Mr. Rockefeller's mind or head a "headpiece" without do it contemptuously.

5. There is, I think, slight but well founded objection to the introductory phrase at the bottom of page 2---"to those who know anything of the way in which Mr. Rockefeller does business, it will go without saying, that this marketing business is conducted with the greatest efficiency, economy, and promptness." Why not make the statement straight that "this marketing business is conducted with the greatest efficiency, economy, and promptness" and not to the special few "who knew of the way in which Mr. Rockefeller does business?"
6. On page 11, I should say that E. P. Pratt should be definitely labeled as a Standard representative.
7. At the top of page 9 there is a little awkwardness in the two uses of the word "writer."
8. On page 3, I think that a little strength would be added if the words "in New York City" could replace the words "at 26 Broadway," which you have stricken out.
9. On pages 4 and 19 I prefer the word "man" to "gentleman."

Yours very sincerely