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Although I was beginning my second year with no money in the bank I had friendly relations with two publishing firms who seemed to see a possible something in my work. There was Scribner's Magazine, a relation of which I was justly proud; not only had they encouraged me about my book, but they had asked me to let them consider magazine subjects which interested me and that I was doing. But while it was the relation on which I hoped to build serious work in the future at the moment I must share it with something of quicker return and that seemed to be the McClure Syndicate. I felt surer of this after my first meeting with its founder, S. S. McClure. That meeting had been just before my vacation in the summer of 1892 Mr. McClure had dropped into Paris in the meteoric fashion I found was usual with him and came by appointment to see me at my new address in the rue Malbranche, a crooked and steep passage from the Rue Soufflot to the rue St. Jacques, unknown to half the cochers of Paris, but Mr. McClure found it and arrived bare-headed, watch in hand, breathless from running up my four flights - eighty steps.

"I've just ten minutes," he announced, "must leave for Switzerland tonight to see Tyndall."

A slender figure S. S. McClure, a shock of tumbled sandy hair, blue eyes which glowed and sparkled. He was close to my own age, a vibrant, eager, indomitable personality that electrified even the experienced and the cynical. His utter simplicity, outrightness, his enthusiasm and confidence captivated me. He was

so new and unexpected that practical questions such as, "Would you be interested in articles on?"- "How much will you pay?" etc., etc., dropped out of mind. Before I knew it I was listening to the story of his struggle up. How as a peddler he had earned money for college - who could have let him go without buying? - his vast schemes of learning undertaken when a Freshman at Knox College, one of which was to study every word in the English dictionary, its start, its development, its present stage, its possible future, his beautiful romance with Hattie, his wife, the story of the Syndicate and of John - always John this, John that, and last a magazine to be - soon. And here I was to come in. While he talked I was managing somehow to tell him the story of my life and hopes and to fit things together.

What was to have been ten minutes stretched to two hours or more. "I must go," he suddenly cried, "could you lend me forty dollars? It is too late to get money over town and I must catch the train for Geneva."

"Certainly," I said. I had forty dollars there in my desk, the sum set aside for my farewell vacation. It never occurred to me to do anything but give it to him.

"How queer," he said, "that you should have that much money in the house."

"Isn't it?" I replied. "It never happened before." But I didn't mention the vacation.

I had some bad moments after he was gone. "Will-of-the-wisp," I said, "a fascinating will-of-the-wisp. I'll

never see that money. He'll simply never think of it again. I'll have to give up that vacation. Serves me right."

I did see the money promptly for Mr. McClure did not forget as I expected him to do, but wired his London office that night to return the money.

What the new magazine would want from me I gathered in my long and exciting interview with Mr. McClure was articles on the achievements of the great French and English scientists. Not history, not literature, not politics, but science, discoveries, inventions and adventures.