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In Regard To: Your letter 5/21/17

Typed (F) May 28, 1917
Dictated - same date

By Boyd Fisher

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
Woman's Committee,
1814 N Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

Nothing but wounded soldiers returning, nothing but short rations, nothing but the still more horrible confiscation of private automobiles, will suppress the blather and waste effort of idle people with money who are trying to help Uncle Sam immortalize them.

I do not mean precisely to include Miss Keep's local organization of the League for Women's Service in the objects of my scorn - I do not particularize at all, because when you are challenged you must admit some merit and value in almost the worst of these volunteer efforts, and a good deal of frenetic folly in the activities of the best. I suppose that the church bazaar on Witherell Street, which is known as the League for Women's Service, has its merits in advertising the need of doing something, particularly to the ladies engaged in it, and inasmuch, as later, they will be called upon for practical service, it is well that they be prepared. But when I see behatted ladies rise up from their card catalogues to foregather for a lecture on wireless or truck driving and then flutter back to their card catalogues I am reminded of the island whose inhabitants supported themselves by taking in each other's washing.

The point is, there can be for the time being only a theoretical unification of effort. The anti-suffrage women, martialled mainly under Miss Keep, must continue to organize their chauffeurs and housemaids for war-duty till necessity gives them something real to do, and then, I imagine, we shall be surprised at how well they do it. There will be no attempt to interfere with the most idle enterprises of private initiative, but an authoritative organization of women is already existant and, in course of time, it will engage the attention and secure the obedience of all organized women.

Under the Rev. Caroline B. Crane as State Chairman for your committee and Mrs. G. E. Allen as city chairman, all organizations are already theoretically in line. Miss Keep will probably be a state vice-president and she is already on the Executives' Club's advisory committee. Most of Miss Keep's board and committees are on the authoritative committees.