1725-17th Street
Washington

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I am ~~no letter~~ waiting for me tonight and I hasten to tell you that Mrs Greene has displayed a constant irritation to me due to several things

(1) She objected to my collating for the publicity department. She wish to do all collation. With every admiration expressed and felt for her faithfulness and industry, she simply could not do what was needed for us. I had early in the fall to take a definite stand, even before you

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explained to me in detail how much you wanted. The material made available and how it should be kept. I had to insist to Miss Patterson that we have the material and when she said Miss G. got it all, I had to show her that the additional material I had collected came from the very letters Mrs Green thought thoroughly covered. Mrs Green had been at Miss Patterson continually to get the collation entirely into her hands. I do not want to do it at all: but I do want and need material on community markets, deliveries, public kitchens, speakers' bureaux, information bureaux and many kindred topics which she did not care to start and has only (in some cases) reluctantly adopted as she saw that there was real sense in having them separately reported & classified. Finding her very sensitive, ready to interpret as criticism any suggestion of a new head she - I simply dropped all discussion of it with her and delegated to Miss Nims every matter dealing with cards. Miss Nims had no difficulty - but when a little conference was held

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at Christmas time on the matter of classification, which was to be revised, her opinions and suggestions were not regarded and the result was a classification which could not be used without a key. We have been obliged to re-sort all our cards on an alphabetical subject classification and to add some new heads for our own use. As they do not use the cards we have lettering and we are not making a great many cards the slight breach from uniformity is not serious. The only trouble now comes

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2/ from the Letters - and this is really another matter.

(2) Filing. You remember that there was a very fragmentary system about sending all mail downstairs last summer. Mrs Green, absorbed in perfecting the filing system, wanted the mail to come down every day. I wanted to oblige her but often the mail was the source of the only material we had for the News Letter and some important letters and material had to be

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held because, in the early fall there was no stenographic force to get all material that we needed out, and I simply had to ask that I might hold this for use till ~~the~~ each News Letter was complete. The mail wasn't heavy. It meant only 30 or 40 pieces of mail at one time periodically, for some went down every day. But Mrs Green perceived only her own difficulties, not mine. She seemed to feel that I was not cooperating

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3/ and the Kept at Miss Patterson eternally until I was worried and vexed within an inch of my life. Miss Patterson finally settled on the scheme which is at present in operation, sending down all letters at night in manila folders, marked "Finished" or "Unfinished" which are due to come back to us on the publicity floor by 2 P.M. the following day. As strictly as I could — and that is with but few lapses — I have followed this rule. Get

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Mrs Green, who had maintained that the reason her collation was incomplete was that I had held up letters, still found that we made cards, as it was necessary. And she has repeatedly told our staff and her own that our letters did not come down. That we must have other sources she did not see. Now the stenographers are not always careful about just how the cards are made out, in spite of instructions. Mrs Green has a right to be particular, perhaps. She is meticulously so. But this week she sent back a large batch of our cards saying she had been none of the sources of the information, not one of the letters. This was really the culmination of a long series of small episodes of the kind, each of which she always seems to have spoken of to Miss Patterson. I didn't bother to refute because the whole thing seemed to me petty. This time, however, I had the girls do the pot up from. Every source was looked up. Every one before Mrs Green's own hand writing upon it - in blue

pencil, marked for the collator. The one exception was 1½ days old.

I kept my temper. The circumstances had been irritating. But I went down personally and showed Miss Green her own handwriting. She was considerably surprised. She fell back on criticizing the cards, which promised to have the stenographers rectify. But as the matter had gone about far enough, I took the whole business to Miss Patterson so she could see with her own eyes those documents.

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4/ I did not complain of Mrs G.
Of course there is
another phase of the
matter we must go into
when you come again
— the filing. Mrs G
has authority to take
"reports" of any sort
permanently from the
Pub. Dept. file. This is
construed to mean
any sort of a letter
containing information.
There is confusion. The
three letters we most
needed — this week turned
up in the domestic file. But

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the discussion of that can wait till you come. It seems a question whether we should not ask for centralization unless they return all letters.

(3) The remaining source of some difficulty is that Miss Green covets our library. She is quietly getting up a rival collection. Duplicates when received are not sent up to us. I think I can straighten out the duplicates because we need them for the bibliography. But really this is not fair to Miss Mims. And Miss Mims, who has been our reference person upstairs, to look up stuff in our own cards, and who has been getting information for us when we wanted it in a hurry, has been asked not to write for any information. I don't think Miss N. is getting a square deal in any way. She is not recognized, her field is being encroached on with Miss Patterson's knowledge, and the fine work she has done bids fair to get little credit — and

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in all probability her little department will be taken from her unless a definite stand is taken.

If I have held myself a little stiffly with Miss G. it has been for causes you can guess from this. Also there was a complication because of Mrs Taylor and the fact that Miss G. had promised copies of all cards to Mrs T. — the complete collation, and was withholding them from the pub licity department. This was fundamental and you and Mrs Patterson

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5/ upheld my opinion in that. Mrs Green reluctantly gave in. But she never understood the situation with the C. of P. D. and it was not a good thing, in my opinion, to discuss Mrs T. with Mrs Green, owing to the fact that I knew Mrs T. had not been either fair or kindly in what she had said about me. So — Mrs Green has never understood, and still regards me as

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more or less of a pretender
to the rope of Mrs Taylor.
Now, that's all I can say
in any kind of condensed
way. But I am putting
quotations up to Mrs L.
daily when I want help.
I am sending her anything
I think she might care to
see. Our casual relations
are pleasant. But I do
not know what I can do
more than I am doing
without leaving the way
quite open for a complication

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of the Inf. Bureau with the Library which will leave Miss Nims out, as Miss Green will be chief. Or, if Miss Nims is taken in some minor capacity our department will lose a mainstay. Miss N. is quite capable of directing helpers and could handle more of a job than she has. I do feel that the Library is mainly used by our dept. and the Ed. Prop.: and that the whole crowd is pretty lazy of ~~it~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ cant come upstairs when ~~it~~ they want reference books. Or they could be sent down.

Miss Patterson is starting conferences for staff on Thursday mornings. I must go to bed now or I'll never wake up in time tomorrow. But please, Superior Officer, do know I'll try as before, or harder, to comprehend Miss Green, appreciate her strong points and use as well as augment the little Bureau. I certainly have

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6/

at heart the good of the organization. The misunderstanding comes mostly from the fact that Mrs Green is a little blind and very gossipy about her prejudices. She makes it extremely difficult for me at times with Miss Patterson — not about minute matters. I was not aware that you had been spoken to about affairs at the time you were here. There seemed reasonably adjusted

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and you were too busy for me to bother you with past history. But you asked for it — so I have given it. And I think Martha Martin will confirm what I have said about the way Miss G. reports to Miss P. Miss Martin has found like the rest of us that all small doings — or large ones, get to Miss P's ears before they are intended.

Do you remember the way Tom Sawyer said to the cat he eyed the "Painkiller" medicine bottle

"Don't ask for it, Peter, unless you want it, Peter!"

I hope this reply to your

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7/ inquiry won't drive you to Peter's petition for receiving the Painkiller He broke the glass getting away through the window and didn't appear again for some time. And I want you to come back soon.

Lots has happened at the office — but that will take another letter

Tomorrow night I am having Clara and

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her new husband to dinner
I think I am sad for her.
She probably never
would have been
happy if she had not
tried it. —

Affectionately,

Gertrude

Feb. 6, 1918

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