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Evansville, Indiana,

Dec. 14, 1925.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 E. Nineteenth St.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Yours of December 11th received, for which I thank you. Ordinarily I would not have made this suggestion of your coming West, and did not really believe that you would be able on such short notice to come, but I thought perhaps there would be a possibility and I would take the chance, and in any event your attention would be called to this situation, though not definitely outlined to you, and that you would appreciate it just as you do appreciate it, so well stated in your letter.

James Madison said he would rather walk a hundred miles than write a letter, and this is one of those cases.

While you are an honorary member of this Society, and our workers all appreciate most fully your attitude to our work, I take the attitude generally that we are dealing in a public work that belongs to the world, and we should offer equal facilities to all persons who want our aid. Unfortunately, those persons who are in the act of writing or have written histories of Lincoln just out of the press and some just going into press cannot tolerate the fundamental maxim laid down by us that the history of the people and institutions of southwestern Indiana is an unwritten chapter, and that until this missing chapter is written the missing chapter in the life of Abraham Lincoln, who found his environments here during the period of his intellectual awakening, as you call it in your chapter 12 of your last book, cannot be written until these environments are described, which this Society is now rapidly doing, and without any provocation on our part there is a very marked rivalry.

If you have not seen the sixth annual bulletin of our state historical societies, let me know, and I will send it to you. You do not have to read much to see the point I am making, and I appreciate that as you state you are engaged in other things, and that the matter in which we are especially interested will have to wait its time.

Mrs Ida M. Tarbell,
#2,
Dec. 14, 1925.

We appreciate your sympathy with us, and there are some matters worth while to talk about in which I know you would be deeply interested, but if you are not ready to go into those things they will have to wait. Had I seen you for an hour, I perhaps would have taken your opinion on one or two matters, but that will keep. I am not able to visit my daughter in New Jersey these holidays, which I regret, possibly may be able to later, though I question whether I will come down for some time to come.

Within a short time I will see that you get two or three of our state publications directly to the points upon which you are interested.

Sincerely yours,

John E. Ireland

JEI:MM