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STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FREE EMPLOYMENT BUREAU

THOS. WILEY,
SUPERINTENDENT

MUSKOGEE 9-11-1916

Miss Ida.M.Tarbell,
New York Cy. N.Y.

Dear Miss Tarbell:—

In reply to your kind favor of the first, I hardly am able to call to mind what matter furnished you,through the kindness of Mr.Dawson of this City,something like 18 months back,however,since that time our work has been routine,and to a great extent follows out the ideas which I believe presented to you at that time.

The detail work of our offices,in Okla,are now being reported in the Monthly Review of the U.S.Bureau of Labor Statistics, and I am inclined to believe that there is nothing in these figures,which would be of any greater value than showing the number passing through our offices.This is a very poor criterion to judge the value of work by,as a large number of casual and floating laborere may be supplied,and still the general condition in regard to unemployment may not be bettered to any great extent,in fact I believe the facility with which a man can secure temporary work encourages some of our laborers not to make any particular endeavor to secure permanent employment. It is true that there will always be a demand for men for temporary or seasonable work,but I am a great abvocate of working along the line of securing a balance in supply and demand along these lines. To illustrate,our greatest seasonable proposition,in Okla,is our harvest,requires thousands of men for about 15 days.Three years back something line 13.000 men passed through the offices during harvest,this year anout one third that number,but things worked better on account of a system of balancing we have been bringing into operation,to illustrate in an individual case,and the entire proposition is made up of individual cases, three janitors in schools in Muskogee,go each summer for the past three years back to the same farmer for harvest in Western Okla. Harvest work occurs during the school vacation. The balancing of thousands of cases like this,and thesame is to a great extent practical,will have a great effect in stablizing seasonable employment,the effect is quite noticable in our work here.

In regard to Federal aid in the work,I still,after observing for the last three years,believe that the most practical way would be,to establish Federal Clearing houses,and give the States who operate Free agencies,Federal aid,as proposed by the Comm. of Ind.relations,and for the same reasons I gave you some timeback.

During the year 1916 thus far,our problem has not been to secure employment for the idle,but to secure help for our employers,the indistral develpment in this section,caused by our oil and gas,has created an abnormal demand for help,which continued up to about the first of Aug. The drougbh in this section at that time,and continueing up to now,has caused the suspension of many of these industries, temporary,and also cut down the demand for agricultural labor,however there is no great amount of unemployment,conditions are very good.

I am pleased to learn that you intend to publish a work on the matter, The Free or Public labor exchange posses great possibilit

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as an ecnomic institution,the greatest factor which we have to contend with,is lack of coperation from our working people. A Labor Agency is like any other business,if it can ### give the service,it will bget the business,if the working people could be induced to acquire the habit of keeping regestered in our offices,and wecwere in position to asupply a large variety of help at short notive,our work would be vastly increase it is no trouble to find the work,if we cannsupply the right kind of help, and in addition,there are many parties who would undertake work in defelopment or improving in our agricultural and undustral lines,who do not now by reason of the fact that the supply of help cannot be relied upon. The securing of this coperation is a matter of education, the more publicity we have the better it will be for the development of the institution,

Will be pleased to be of service at any time,

Very truly,

Thos. Wiley.

Spt.

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