Maple Bluff Farm,
Madison, Wisconsin,
26 November 1912.

Dear Miss James:

I have felt so pressed for time trying to get material ahead for the magazine before leaving for Washington, that I have not dared to tackle my correspondence, although your letter, along with a few others, has been on my conscience. It was announced that I was going to Philadelphia. But I wrote Mrs. Dennett before I left Washington that I could not attend. She appears not to have received my letter.

In regard to a union of the two suffrage organizations in this state, I know nothing of the inwardness of their mutual attitude. On general principles, as in other organizations for a specific purpose, there should be, it seems to me, one head. Two state central committees for a political party could not be as effective as one, even if perfectly harmonious. I think that this is the idea that women should have in mind when they ask that the two organizations come together. There could be and ought to be supplemental organizations adapted to all the various needs of the state, such as you suggest.

Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Colby urged me to accept the presidency of the old organization. I told them I could not possibly undertake it. I suggested that I thought the two organizations should come together in conference. Perhaps this plan is not feasible, but I have great confidence that there will be satisfactory adjustment. Miss Stearns is sound in heart and judgment. I cannot believe she accepted the office with any other purpose than the best interests of the cause.

I believe you should go on with your plan for a big conference in December. The spirit of the letter you sent out was fine. I wish you could have Charlotte Anita Whitney of Oakland, California
here at that time, and to stay a while to wake up the college women of the state. She is not a great speaker but she has genius for organization, and she is very tactful as well as wise. She convinced me that in a suffrage campaign we must employ all legitimate means of reaching the people, and experience in this state has confirmed me as to the wisdom of her judgment. I notice she was mentioned for one of the auditors of the National Organization. I wonder if she is attending the convention if you might not get her on the way home? I tried to get Dr. Shaw to send her here this last summer, but did not succeed.

As you will see from the enclosed account, the sending of literature and letters to our lists cost $200 of which you furnished $150. I applied $25 sent to me by a man in Massachusetts to be used as I thought best. This leaves $25 due me. The list of names we secured belong to the League. They ought to be helpful for future work.

I hope you stay on the staff of managers of the state central committee for suffrage under whatever name it be known. (Perhaps an adjustment may be reached by the creation of such an organization.) Your experience is invaluable, and I think you have shown great skill politically, and a patience, forbearance and caution along with your zeal and enthusiasm that makes it most important that you should remain in the service and in authority where all your rare qualities will count for the future.

Need I add that I appreciate the spirit of your request that I take the Presidency of the Political Equality League. When Mrs. Brown put it up to me that I might bring the two organizations together by taking the office she held, I fought it all out with myself. I long to be of service, and the
proposition that some one else shall do the work is always plausible and tempting. I yielded to that kind of persuasion when I went on the National Board, from which I was compelled to resign because I could not meet the demands at all. It never works. There should be no figure heads in positions of responsibility. It is wrong in principle. I shall do all I can to secure the submission of the amendment by the next legislature and if we get it, I hope I may give at least six months to the next campaign before the people.

Yours always,

Belle C. La Fette

Miss Ada L. James,
Richland Center,
Wisconsin.