May 31, 1938

My dear Mr. Houston:

I was out of town when the issue of The Villager appeared announcing on the very first page what was new to me that I had been unanimously elected the Honorary President of The Villager League of Friendship. If I had known what you Sunday people were doing I should have said, "No, No." I dislike very much to accept honors where I feel I can make no return. I know I shall be nothing but a dummy in your League of Friendship.

However, what is one to do when the headlines make the announcement so conspicuously, so flatteringly? There is nothing I can do but to tell you that if you think my poor name is of any use to you you have it. Certainly you know you have my heartiest approval of the League, my heartiest desire that it be something more than an emotional flash in the pan, that it be a real League of service.

So, dear Mr. Houston, there seems nothing for me to do but accept with pride the position of Honorary President of the League of Friendship, whatever my misgivings.

And believe I shall be glad if I can be of the least service to The Villager and the brave Bryans.

Very sincerely yours

Mr. Herbert S. Houston
10 West 13th Street
New York City

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.