Pleasantville, NY
March 27, 1923.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
New York City.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

May I, as one of your humble auditors the other evening, express appreciation and thanks for your interesting and thought-provoking address on "The New Opportunities of Women Today," and on some of the modern problems that confront us all? I am sure that you did much to challenge all present to a nobler and more painstaking interest in these great problems for which we are all in a measure responsible.

Will you forgive me if I venture to offer a suggestion by way of asking you a question? I am speaking now, I trust, not alone as a minister of the gospel but also as one who is greatly interested in a reconstruction of the world which will do away with war and bring in a universal brotherhood, such as you described ~~last~~ that evening. You suggested as fundamental, the problem of the creation of good will within the human heart. Would you not feel that you could point the way specifically to the creation of good will by saying very definitely that Christianity, - I mean by this the <u>real Religion of Jesus</u> - could make a great contribution to the ending of war by this very creation of good will within human hearts and lives? Is not good will, to a large extent, the product of an inner Religion?

I am wondering if you are familiar with that epoch-making book, "Reconstruction of Religion," by Professor Elwood of the University of Missouri? On page #260 of his book, in the Chapter on "Religion and Political Life," you will find, at the bottom of that page, almost the words you used ~~last~~ the other evening. These are the words, "It is evident that no Association or League of Nations based upon national self interest and force can give the world lasting peace. Peace, in order to endure between nations, as between individuals, must be based upon justice, understanding and good will." Now Professor Elwood speaks as a student of social science, not primarily as a student of Religion. A little further on he says, "Democratic Internationalism is possible, in other words, only if social religion leads the nations into the paths of international justice and good will.

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Thus again we see that the healing of the nations must come through humanitarian religion, transforming our politics from one of power and self interest to one of the service of humanity."

My point is, would not you, speaking yourself as a student of politics and social problems, rather than as a religionist, add a strong constructive note to your address, and would your words not come with peculiar influence, if you would preach this same doctrine that Dr. Elwood does in the words that I have just quoted from his fine chapter, mentioned above? I believe that you would be giving a message that needs to be heard all over America. When you said that good will was the hope of international peace was it not only another way of saying that the Religion of Jesus is really the hope of the world?

Again thanking you for the stimulus that I, personally, received from your splendid words, I am

Respectfully yours,

Rev Lester H. Bent
(Pastor, Presbyterian Church)

394 Bedford Road.

LHB/AS.

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