

120 BROADWAY NEW YORK
ROOM 2555

May 16, 1933.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Here is a copy of Mr. Young's speech. I made no special distribution of it because this office had nothing to do with the publicity. The press reports this morning seemed to me somewhat misleading in their emphasis and omissions, so I think you may like to read the complete text.

It was very nice to see you again the other day. Both Josephines send you their love and say they want to see you again soon too.

Sincerely yours,

Edward C. Calver

Miss Ida Tarbell,
120 East 19th Street,
New York City.

Address by Mr. Owen D. Young
at the
Annual Conference of the Association of Junior Leagues of America,
Hotel Bellevue-Stratford, Philadelphia, Pa.
May 15, 1933.

Ladies of the Junior League.

Having said to all who asked that I would not speak during these coming months, I find myself here about to speak to you. How does this happen? Well - some of my wise and perhaps envious fellow-men would make the simple, if not indeed cynical, observation that I was not the first man to break resolutions at the request of the members of the Junior League. Some of your fellow-women might well say with greater truth and less charity that if I were not weak-minded at least I was weak-willed. Neither explanation is right. It is not the charm of the members of the Junior League, great as I admit that to be, which brings me here. It is not my own susceptibility to the compliment of your invitation that brings me here. It is a much deeper and more fundamental thing, and it suggests the theme on which I wish to speak - the obligations of relationship. It is true that the cordiality of your invitation, the distinction of this occasion, and its significance are important, but the enthusiasm of my daughter for the Junior League brought me here. May I repeat that I shall speak to you on the subject of the obligations of relationship as distinguished from the letter of the bond.

Up in Van Hornesville, where I live, something like a tragedy occurred this spring. An old friend of mine and his devoted wife, prudent and careful people, had, in anticipation of their death, erected tombstones in the cemetery leaving only the date of the demise to be filled in by some loving hand. The wife died during the winter and the surviving husband instructed the stone-cutter to fill in the date. The stone-cutter, conscientious workman though he was, did one of those unexplainable things which now and

then happen to all of us. He cut the date on the husband's stone. The consequent remarks were such as I would like to apply to some of the things we are saying now.

Today you hear on every hand about the threatened disaster to our civilization. Perhaps these carping people are cutting the dates on the wrong tombstone. Perhaps it is the enemies of our civilization that are dying. Our worst enemies are not men, but false notions. Of these we are all the victims. If getting rid of them is a painful process - and it always is - it is also a highly educative process. We are learning, for example, that you can not dispose of living questions merely by writing a treaty, a constitution, or a statute.

We are learning it in reference to prohibition. England is learning it in her relations to her dominions beyond the seas. France is learning it with reference to armaments and her relationship to the countries on the eastern boundaries of Europe. The world is learning it in connection with the war treaties. I venture the statement that the lamentable things happening in Germany today have their seeds in unfortunate clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. But Germany will learn too that she can not disfranchise many hundreds of thousands of her citizens, among whom may be counted her oldest families, her most productive students, and her most effective and loyal workers both in peace and war, by an ordinance or decree. The whole world is learning that treaties, constitutions, statutes, ordinances and bonds are good only to the extent that they are made coincident with basic human relationships which have the approval of that sensitive, quick acting, and dominant power, the public opinion of the world.

The question I put to you is whether we have been relying too much on the letter of the bond and not enough on those basic obligations which must

always underlie it. The inquiry is not without significance in these stirring times when we pass in review the things we have done or left undone. It is futile to look for a scape-goat on whom to cast our faults. It is very human for us to pass the blame along. Perhaps it would be better if we all accepted our own share and then resolved to profit by our own mistakes. If this is true of individuals, it is equally true of nations. In spite of Burke, we are indicting other nations daily and they repay us in kind. This form of international exchange is wholly vicious. Barriers to it rather than to trade would be helpful. Can it not be replaced everywhere by a little self-examination? Suppose we begin by looking at a few of our acts as a nation, acts authorized and till recently sustained by the votes of large majorities, so there can be no question of individual responsibility.

When we refused to sign the Covenant of the League of Nations we escaped from the letter of the bond. What a glorious achievement, we thought, to be free from entanglements abroad. How secure we were in our self-satisfaction and isolation at home. Contentment and happiness were to reign while we mixed those two ingredients so essential to them, prosperity for ourselves and pity for them less well off than we - the most insidious and satisfying form of self-adulation that I know. And as if that were not enough, we added a little seasoning by advising everybody else in the world what they ought to do. To be sure, we broke down the barriers of our isolation sufficiently to suggest to our allies in the war that they should return the advances which we had made to them. We even suggested that in that respect the letter of the bond would be very satisfying. When, having signed the bond, they said that due to their stress and the ravages of the war, they could pay only by collecting from Germany, we lifted the high moral standard that we at least, perhaps the first in the history of the world, would not, as victors, impose penalties on the vanquished. To keep the standard pure, it was necessary to

say that reparations had no relationship to the debts. We were right by the letter of the bond.

Now, may I ask, with great respect for the letter of the bond, did we escape our obligations to the world by refusing to sign the Covenant of the League? We escaped the bond to be sure, but did we escape the obligation? We escaped the bond to be sure, but did we escape the penalty?

We face a world disturbed economically and politically, each reacting on the other, where the costs of armaments threaten the economic life blood of the nations, and where armies endanger their peace. We do not have to wait for war to reap the bad effects of these. They create by their existence fear instead of faith, and we only need to look at the problems in our country, the problems in our own community, the doubts in our own homes to realize what fear can do. It is a dangerous ingredient in an orderly world, and particularly so in a closely integrated and interdependent one. Frontiers are always nervous because of their contiguity to danger, but our modern weapons and our new communications on the surface of the earth, under it and over it, have brought the risks of the frontier, whether it be to life, property or happiness, to everybody, everywhere. So long as the world lived in compartments separated both in time and space, it could better rely on the letter of the bond, because relationships were less intimate and less important. The freedom of action which one had on the farm must be restricted in the congested areas of Broadway and Chestnut Street. It has to be restrained, not alone by statute and municipal ordinance, it has to be done by courtesy, by good feeling, and by faith that if you behave well your neighbor will also. Is that a lesson which nations must now learn too? If so, it becomes all the more important to stress our education in international courtesy and good faith, those relationships which, after all, must, in the long run, govern our present behavior and our ultimate fate.

At the University of California, three years ago, I said

"Let no man think that the living standards of America can be permanently maintained at a measurably higher level than those of other civilized countries. Either we shall lift theirs to ours or they will drag ours down to theirs."

That involves a question of relationship. And I repeat the statement now to see whether it will receive as much criticism and the same kind as it did when made.

On the debts we got the bond to be sure, but did we get our money? On the debts we said they had no relationship to reparations, and it was true as written in the bond. But what happened when reparations failed? Perhaps you will permit me to follow this a little further. We insisted, as I said, that our allies sign the bond to return money which we had advanced - no, not money even, but goods which we had contributed to a common cause. We asked them to sign the bond. They could only repay that debt by sending us their goods. To the extent which we would not accept sufficiently of their goods, they could only pay by sending us their gold. So having refused their goods, we took their gold until we ruined the currency and banking systems of the world, including our own, until international exchanges and trade were paralyzed. The fact about it is - the sad fact, the indicting fact - that we insisted upon the bond, we insisted upon the performance of the bond, and then we made it utterly impossible for the bond to be performed. We violated that basic obligation of relationship which underlay the bond itself. And we pay the penalty now. Had the commerce of the world been developed and enlarged, had barriers to trade been diminished rather than increased, had our efforts and our capital been applied to productive ends, had we not tried to gain by speculation what we did not earn, the normal indebtedness resulting from such

extensions of credit would not have been burdensome on the borrower or insecure to the lender, because every dollar would have paid its own way and more. Have we learned the lesson that we can not lend at home and then close the bank where our debtor has his money? Have we learned that we can not lend abroad and then destroy international trade, which is the only bank out of which our foreign indebtedness can be paid?

Great nations sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact and celebrate in every capital in the world the significance of that signature. Still war goes on. The letter of the bond is not effective unless it is coupled with those obligations of relationship to which the bond itself must always be related and must be subordinate. You can not escape entanglements by mere refusal to sign the bond. You can not collect debts or get disarmament by writing the formula on a piece of paper. You can not escape wars by the magic of the bond.

Even at home we must be careful with our bonds. They must be interpreted liberally and handled generously. With debts high, with price levels low, with homes threatened by mortgages, with farms denuded by them, with jobs destroyed by want of consumer buying, with political stability and courts of justice threatened, it may well be wise and fundamentally right for us to consider ^{our} obligations of relationship one to another as superior to the letter of any bond. Perhaps we should not be too critical of the transfer of powers from the legislative to the executive department in order that prompt, effective and unified action may be taken. Perhaps we should not be too assertive of our individual rights to hold gold or hoard currency if the result be to threaten our currency and credit structure. Perhaps we should not be too insistent on the letter of the bond that obligations be payable in gold, if that would endanger our financial machinery and work immediate hardship on him who has to pay and ultimate disaster to the holder of the bond. These are

days particularly when the obligations of relationship must alleviate the rigidity of the bond.

I am not saying that the bond is of no service in the world. It must exist to provide both a definition and a perpetuation of understanding. On it rest all structures of orderly procedure of business, government, yes, even of our civilized society. So don't think for a moment that I fail to value the importance or the sacredness of the bond. What I am trying to say is that the bond must be handled with care by him who holds, for he who is bound has no option but to perform. Misuse of it brings its penalty. In these difficult times, individuals, guided by their own self-interest, are learning that the letter of the bond is not supreme. If that be true of individuals, how much more should it be true of great nations. The large self-interest of the creditor requires him to take account of the basic obligations of relationship. If anger and prejudice be substituted for patience and understanding, the bond will not succeed - the basic obligation will be violated.

It was touchingly said when we were at war that it was its purpose to make the world safe for democracy. It has been cynically said since that the purpose of war was to make the world safe from democracy. I confess that I had great hopes of the wide extension of democracy following the war. I felt that the instinct and sympathy and understanding of vast numbers of people dealing with each other through a democratic form of government meant a keener appreciation of the obligations of relationship and less emphasis on the letter of the bond. Until now I have been disappointed. Our democracies, instead of gathering up the best with charity toward all, have, like our mobs, developed the worst, governed as they seem to have been by prejudice not understanding, by selfishness not sympathy. So democracies

in their wild rush for their own advantage have contributed too in bringing a world of plenty to a state of penury.

Well, why speak of all this to the Junior League? A sluggish man, when asked by a solicitous friend whether sixteen cups of coffee a day did not keep him awake, replied - Well, it helps some. I have a feeling that the world needs to be kept awake in these times in order that through our most sensitive reactions we may find the solution of our serious problems. Perhaps you can administer the coffee to a hardened and sluggish world.

And so I make this appeal to you women of the Junior League that you consider something more than the letter of the bond. I am not suggesting that you fail to respect the bond, but I am saying that it is not the end of the obligation, that it is not the whole of the obligation, and that you can never escape an obligation of basic relationship by signing or refusing to sign the bond. You are learning after all that there were some things in the Victorian age which could not be safely discarded whatever you did to the long skirts of that day. I have often wondered, as I have observed these fashions change, whether the length of your skirts tonight may not be significant of the reaction which you feel in the wholesale discard of some things of great value to you - basic obligations in human relationships. Neither the letter of the bond, the decree of fashion, the biting satire of the superficial, the impatience of youth, or the cynicism of age can destroy the basic obligations even though they may temporarily dim their significance or blind us to their true values. So may I not suggest to the Junior League, and through them to the women of America, and women everywhere, that they exercise their great influence to guard at home and abroad those obligations of relationship which underlie our bonds, our treaties, our constitutions, and every other formality in life, and which, as Portia said of Mercy, "'Tis mightiest in the mightiest."

Owen D. Young's Philadelphia Talk

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PHILADELPHIA, May 15.—The text of the outstanding part of the speech delivered tonight at the convention of the Junior Leagues of America by Owen D. Young follows:

Today you hear on every hand about the threatened disaster to our civilization. Perhaps these carping people are cutting the dates on the wrong tombstone. Perhaps it is the enemies of our civilization that are dying. Our worst enemies are not men, but the false notions and destructive prejudices by which men are misled.

Of these we are all the victims. If getting rid of them is a painful process—and it always is—it is also a highly educative process. We are learning, for example, that you cannot dispose of living questions merely by writing a treaty, a constitution or a statute. We are learning it in reference to prohibition. England is learning it in her relations to her dominions beyond the seas. France is learning it with reference to armaments and her relationship to the countries on the eastern boundaries of Europe. The world is learning it in connection with the war treaties.

I venture the statement that the lamentable things happening in Germany today have their seeds in unfortunate clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. But Germany will learn, too, that she cannot disfranchise many hundreds of thousands of her citizens, among whom may be counted her oldest families, her most productive students, and her most effective and loyal workers both in peace and war, by any ordinance or decree.

The whole world is learning that treaties, constitutions, statutes, ordinances and bonds are good only to the extent that they are made coincident with basic human relationships which have the approval of that sensitive, quick acting and dominant power, the public opinion of the world.

The question that I put to you is whether we have been relying too much on the letter of the bond and not enough on those basic obligations which must always underlie it. The inquiry is not without significance in these stirring times when we pass in review the things we have done or left undone. It is futile to look for a scapegoat on whom to cast our faults. It is very human for us to pass the blame along.

Self-Examination Urged.

Perhaps it would be better if we had accepted our own share and then resolved to profit by our own mistakes. If this is true of individuals, it is equally true of nations. In spite of Burke, we are indicting other nations daily and they repay us in kind.

This form of international exchange is wholly vicious. Barriers to it rather than to trade would be helpful. Can it not be replaced everywhere by a little self-examination? Suppose we begin by looking at a few of our acts as a nation, acts authorized and until recently sustained by the votes of large majorities, so there can be no question of individual responsibility.

When we refused to sign the Covenant of the League of Nations we escaped from the letter of the bond. What a glorious movement we thought to be free from entanglements abroad! Secure we were in our self-isolation and isolation at home!

Contentment and happiness were to reign while we mixed those two ingredients so essential to them, prosperity for ourselves and pity for them less well off than we—the most insidious and satisfying form of self-adulation that I know.

And as if that were not enough, we added a little seasoning by advising everybody else in the world what they ought to do. To be sure, we broke down the barriers of our isolation sufficiently to suggest to our allies in the war that they should return the advances which we had made to them. We even suggested that in that respect the letter of the bond would be very satisfying.

When, having signed the bond, they said that due to their stress and the ravages of the war, they could pay only by collecting from Germany, we lifted the high moral standard that we at least, perhaps the first in history of the world, would not as victors impose penalties on the vanquished.

To keep the standard pure, it was necessary to say that reparations had no relationship to the debts. We were right by the letter of the bond.

Scores Our Ignoring of League.

Now, may I ask, with great respect for the letter of the bond, did we escape our obligations to the world by refusing to sign the covenant of the League?

We escaped the bond, to be sure, but did we escape the obligations?

We escaped the bond, to be sure, but did we escape the penalty?

We face a world disturbed economically and politically, each reacting on the other, where the costs of armaments threaten the economic life blood of the nations, and where armies endanger their peace. We do not have to wait for war to reap the bad effects of these. They create by their existence fear instead of faith, and we only need to look at the problems in the country as a whole, the problems in our own community, the doubts in our own homes, to realize what fear can do.

It is a dangerous ingredient in an orderly world, and particularly so in a closely integrated and interdependent one. Frontiers are always nervous because of their contiguity to danger, but our modern weapons and our new communications on the surface of the earth, under it and over it, have brought the risks of the frontier, whether it be to life, property or happiness, to everybody, everywhere.

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The freedom of action which one had on the farm must be restricted in the congested areas of Broadway and Chestnut Street. It has to be restrained, not alone by statute and municipal ordinance, it has to be done by courtesy, by good feeling, and by faith that if you behave well your neighbor will also.

Is that a lesson which nations must now learn, too? If so, it becomes all the more important to stress our education in international courtesy and good faith, those relationships which, after all, must, in the long run, govern our present behavior and our ultimate fate.

Currency "Ruin" Laid to Us.

On the debts we got the bond, to be sure, but did we get our money? On the debts we said they had no relationship to repa-

arations, and it was true as written in the bond. But what happened when reparations failed?

Perhaps you will permit me to follow this a little further. We insisted, as I said, that our allies sign the bond to return money which we had advanced—no, not money, even, but goods which we had contributed to a common cause. We asked them to sign the bond. They could only repay that debt by sending us their goods. To the extent which we would not accept sufficiently of their goods, they could only pay by sending us their gold.

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And we pay the penalty now. Had the commerce of the world been developed and enlarged, had barriers to trade been diminished rather than increased, had our efforts and our capital been applied to productive ends, had we not tried to gain by speculation what we did not earn, the normal indebtedness resulting from such extensions of credit would not have been burdensome on the borrower or insecure to the lender, because every dollar would have paid its own way and more.

Have we learned the lesson that we cannot lend at home and then close the bank where our debtor has his money? Have we learned that we cannot lend abroad and then destroy international trade, which is the only bank out of which our foreign indebtedness can be paid?

Letter of Bond "Not Supreme."

In these difficult times individuals, guided by their own self-interest, are learning that the letter of the bond is not supreme. If that be true of individuals, how much more so should it be true of great nations.

The large self-interest of the creditor requires him to take account of the basic obligations of relationship. If anger and prejudice be substituted for patience and understanding, the bond will not succeed—the basic obligation will be violated.

It was touchingly said when we were at war that it was its purpose to make the world safe for democracy. It has been cynically said since that the purpose of the war was to make the world safe from democracy.

I confess that I had great hopes of the wide extension of democracy following the war. I felt that the instinct and sympathy and understanding of vast numbers of people dealing with each other through a democratic form of government meant a keener appreciation of the obligations of relationship and less emphasis on the letter of the bond.

Until now I have been disappointed. Our democracies, instead of gathering up the best, with charity toward all, have, like our mobs, developed the worst, governed as they seem to have been by prejudice, not understanding, by selfishness, not sympathy. So democracies, in their wild rush for their own advantage, have contributed, too, in bringing a world of plenty to a starved and sultry state.