



# THOMAS TRAVELOGUES

AUTHORIZED BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

LOWELL THOMAS

PRINCETON, N. J., U. S. A.

LOUIS B. BLAN, MANAGER

August 20, 1917

My dear Mr. President:

Early last Spring I worked out a plan, in conjunction with the Interior Department, for spending the Summer in the principal National Parks, accompanied by an expert scenic motion picture photographer, in order to prepare a series of illustrated travelogues on the Parks to be presented this Winter in the largest auditoriums of the twenty leading cities of the country.

Then came the declaration of war with Germany and I decided the American people were not in any mood to listen to talks on the quiet charms of nature. So I temporarily abandoned the National Park plan and started making arrangements for a trip to Europe to gather material for a series of war-travelogues, in order to do my "bit" toward arousing the American people to a whole-hearted support of the Administration and the war.

Since the death of Mr. Roberson and the recent retirement of Mr. Elmendorf and Mr. Holmes, I have the travelogue-lecture field almost entirely to myself and am the only man of the younger generation prepared to go on with their work.

In order to assist me in preparing this series of patriotic-travelogues, Princeton, instead of permitting me to resign, has appointed me a non-resident member of the Faculty; The Chicago Daily News, The New York Globe, The Philadelphia Ledger, The Montreal Star, The Pittsburg Dispatch and 15 other leading newspapers have appointed me as one of their European staff correspondents; Dr. Louis B. Blan, present publicity expert for the New York City administration is resigning ~~in~~ order to assist me; and sixteen Chicagoans, including

*members*  
Mr. Arthur Meerk of Armour & Co., Mr. W.V. Kelley and Mr. R.P. Lamont of the American Steel Foundaries, Mr. Edgar Bancroft of the International Harvester, Mr. Silas H. Strawn and Mr. Wm. B. McIlvaine, attorneys, and Mr. E.P. Ripley of the Santa Fe, are backing me financially to the extent of \$100,000.

I expect to gather my material, subject to the rules of the censors, in all parts of France, England and Italy, and not solely in the war zones. My travelogues will be delivered on my return four months from now, in Carnegie Hall, New York, and the largest auditoriums of all the other principal cities of the country, under the auspices of the one leading newspaper in each city which I now represent.

The ambassadors of the Allied countries have expressed enthusiastic approval of my undertaking and have given me valuable letters of introduction. Passports for myself and three assistants have been issued on the recommendation of Mr. Creel and Secretary Lane. The Committee on Public Information has very courteously expressed complete approval of my plan and is co-operating with me.

It is my desire, as well as the wish of my backers and the twenty newspapers co-operating with me, that I return within three or four months in order that my travelogues may play a part in stimulating and sustaining the patriotic devotion of our people at a time when such work may be most vital.

If in the multitude of your cares you could find a moment's time in which to write a brief letter of introduction for me, similar to the enclosed letters by Mr. Creel, Mr. Baker and Mr. Daniels, I am sure the mere possession of such a letter would be of the greatest assistance to me. Of course all of my material will have to be submitted to the censors, but a letter from you will aid me a great deal in expediting the work of myself and assistants, and will help make it possible for us to get started on the lecture tour here in this country early in the Winter.

Hoping my modest undertaking may commend itself to you, believe me to be,

Very respectfully yours,

*Lawell Thomas*

The President.