

Hon. A. H. Tourgee,  
Mayville, N. C.

My dear Sir:

A passing indisposition has prevented an earlier acknowledgment of your favor.

And first let me thank you for your suggestive words (the bitter no less than the sweets), and thank you still more deeply and gratefully for the inspiration your whole life & personality have been to me.

I can understand and appreciate, I think, the dissatisfaction with which you view results as regards individuals of the race for which you have stood so heroically and unflinchingly, so devotedly and unshrinkingly. It is ever thus, it seems to me, with those who struggle to make men better and to have them see truth more clearly. The prophet is seldom a satisfied man. He cannot bask in the sunshine and flowers of the present as often does the poet.

The fact is, I think, human nature - as well as Negro nature - is an unsatisfying commodity to manipulate. It is much easier, and far less exasperating, to deal with clouds and fancies.

Carlyle, perhaps, would never have grown cynical, had he never loved humanity and

wrought for its betterment. It is disappointed love that sours. Only indifference can afford to be always placid.

But once in a while, a pitiful Providence lifts the veil for the tried and despondent soul and shows, for its comfort, that there are still a few thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. And I hope you will believe there are a few true hearts yet— quiet bodies, who are not sent for by the President in the distribution of patronage, nor do they seem to make much capital of the woes and wretchedness of their brethren: but in their earnest, unobtrusive way, they do the thing that comes to hand, and they appreciate their friends.

As regards our review of Pictorius Prime which you shot a tardy notice of your generous and dauntless advocacy for my race, I must make a little explanation. The simple truth is the "Southland" was, a short time after its birth, in a state of suspended animation due to a "shortage of funds" which you may have observed is an affliction somewhat chronic among "colored" periodicals. My review of your book, as well as the article on "Higher Education of

"Women" was written nearly a year ago. I spent the Fourth of July with some friends and we read Racolus aloud at one sitting barely stopping for lunch. The same night, while the inspiration was fresh, I wrote those few words for the "Southland" expecting it to come out in the next (last Aug.) issue. We were then coming out monthly, but found it necessary to change to a quarterly. It took some little time to perfect our present adjustments by which a few of us engage to stand under with our personal little earnings till the magazine is able to float. We intend, God helping us, it shall come before the country and voice the cause of the colored people. And we hope to see it a permanent institution.

Allow me to beg for it your sympathy and your hearty cooperation. I meant long ago, as soon as we should be well enough under way to warrant my approaching you, to ask a contribution from your pen (or should I say type writer?). Your kind letter makes what I had almost dreaded as too bold an undertaking, an easier task.

May we not number you among our contributors? Poorer than Peter, we have neither gold nor silver. Nor can we promise glory in our humble endeavor. But we do promise a loyal, a respectful, an appreciative hearing for whatever

you may say, and deep and genuine gratitude for what you have already said  
for the furtherance of our cause in this country.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Sincerely and gratefully yours

Anna J. Cooper.

1706-17<sup>th</sup> St. N.W.

Washington

D.C.

June 5<sup>th</sup> 1891.

I hope you will read Dr. Brummell  
in the July Southland on the Contribution  
of the Negro to American Civilization.