

DICTATED.

Mayville, N.Y.
Sept 16th 1891.

F.L. Barnett Esq.

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 12th inst, with enclosures
rec'd.

You quite misunderstood the paragraph of the Bystander which
you quote. If you will look at the context, you will see that it did
not refer to Mr Fairbanks at all, --but to the even more wonderful
fact of the thousands of young men and women who gave themselves to
the work of teaching your people as soon as the gates of opportuni-
ty were unlocked to them.

I have long wondered that some colored editor did not take up
the record of these true-hearted missionaries, State by State, and
let the world know who and what they were. In my opinion, it would
do more to tie your people to the true-hearted ones of the North,
than anything else, and would be a great stimulus to the young of
your race. These are the two most important things. Aspiration is
the mainspring of destiny, and approval is the great anti-friction
washer which makes the social machine work smoothly.

You know as well as I that the colored people have lost friend
--true friends, I mean--very rapidly during a few years past. The
people of the North do not regard them as kindly as they did. I am
almost the only one except a few teachers and agents of societies,
who keep on fighting their battles for them. And I am regarded as a
"crank", who only gets a hearing because of his boldness, apparent
candor and acknowledged disinterestedness. I have never complained
of lack of appreciation from your people because I saw the reasons
of their failure to manifest approval, but I have been forced to

take note of it by what I saw was its effectx on others. I known many thousands of your people have the same feeling towards me which you express, but I should never guess it from their conduct.

Let me cite you a few instances: I lectured on "The Race Problem" in Chicago last year. There were three colored people present. In Milwaukee there were four. In Minneapolis two. In Omaha one. In Kansas City one.

I will not go farther. Though I have delivered such addresses several hundred times, I doubt if I have averaged one colored hearer. In no case, I think, have there been ten.

Now, when a man is fighting the battles of a people, he has a right to expect at least a manifestation of their approval while engaged in it. You no doubt wonder why I keep on. Candidly, so do I. If you knew the taunts I have received on account of it, you would wonder still more. Said a friend on one occasion.

"I like you, but you are the darndest fool I ever saw. The Negroes are willing you should fight for them, but have not regard enough to show their faces when you speak."

"There are ten thousand Negroes in the city," said a paper, "and there was just one who came to hear Judge Tourgee's eloquent defence of their rights. The Judge might as well give it up. The Negro is--a 'nigger', and always will be."

These things hurt me because they injure the cause of liberty. I do not ~~xxxxx~~ sour on the race because I realize better than others its conditions. But there are thousands who have lost interest in its destiny because of such things. I know people whose hearts have been almost broken by them. Did you ever think how humiliated

Mrs Stowe was at what she thought their ingratitude? Poor woman! She could not understand. So it was with thousands of others true and faithful friends. They did not ask much--only to be appreciated by those they had served.

Now, I know your difficulties--or try to understand them--and know that this expectation was not then reasonable. Ignorance is not made wise or perfect by mere liberty. But it hurts me to see people who need such friends estrange them.

Why does not some colored man prepare and publish in a syndicate of your newspapers and afterwards in book-form, something of this sort: "Our Race's Benefactors." Take up the Abolition movement and its leaders. Leave out their quarrels; extol their merits. Give the stories of those who labored for Emancipation, and then of those who have given themselves to its uplifting since. Do it neatly; don't slobber nor inflate. It is a difficult task and needs a skilled pen but you have some who could do it and do it well. Several might unite in it, but before beginning, one controlling mind should be agreed on, and he be given a gun loaded with buckshot to kill the spread-eagle. Chestnutt of Cleveland, would do for the place if he could afford the time.

I know of nothing that would be so beneficial to the race or more honorable to its promoters. Think of it. I think it might be profitable if well done. It is certainly a good opportunity.

Pardon me for lecturing--or seeming to do so. You understand my motive.

I am glad to receive your kind words and hope I may deserve them always. I expect to be in Chicago soon and shall be glad to

see you. Perhaps, I may even ask you to verify your words in a way that will surprise you. I cannot now say whether I shall or not. An interview to which I am invited by the President will determine that.

I have no doubt Mr Fairbanks received your contribution, though I have no knowledge on the subject other than what you gave me. I do know that some colored people are buying his book and think your race is waking up to his heroic character. Ours is not, to any great extent. I guess among us all, however, we shall manage to lighten the old hero's last days.

With the best wishes I remain

Sincerely yours,