

CHAS. W. CHESNUTT,

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THE SOCIETY FOR SAVINGS BLD'G.

Cleveland, O. September 3rd, 1895

Hon. A. W. Tourgee,

Mayville, N. Y.

My dear Judge:-

A little business and a good many Summer distractions of one sort or another have prevented my answering sooner your letter of some weeks since enclosing three additional certificates of stock in the BASIS. I have not sold the stock, but I enclose herewith a check for the \$15.00 necessary to pay for same. I also enclose five of the coupons, for which please send the BASIS for one year each to the following addresses:

A. J. Chesnutt, Fayetteville, N.C.

T. J. Shauter, 615 Society for Savings Building, Cleveland, O.

Mr. J. E. Benson, 45 Henry Street, Cleveland, O.

Mr. W. T. Boyd, 33 Maple Street, Cleveland, O.

Hon. John P. Green, 121 Quincy Street, Cleveland, O.

I shall probably be able to add to this list in the course of time. I am not surprised that you should have felt a little disappointment at the apparent lack of zeal for the BASIS among the colored people. I think it is accounted for not by indifference to their own fate or a lack of appreciation for those who are trying to serve their best interests but by the fact that their own efforts in behalf of their race are distributed over so wide an area. Every step they win is by hard work, and there are many

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ways and places where they can inch their way along on a much lower plane than the high moral level on which the BASIS finds its field. Quite a number of them, realizing the fact that they are poor and that poverty is almost a crime in the United States, are doing their best to rise above that reproach. They are working along the line of their schools and churches and their own newspapers -- which, though they do not begin to compare with the BASIS in literary quality, are already in the field. I see they have just secured the indictment of the proprietors of a place of amusement in Pittsburgh where discrimination was practiced against them. In politics they are kept on the alert to secure the few offices and appointments they are able to get. They are traveling and lecturing at home and abroad, and are securing a respectful hearing in many quarters.

I think that as the BASIS becomes more widely known, it cannot fail to take rank as an authority -- as the authority -- on all matters pertaining to the rights of the citizen. The colored people do not quite well what their wrongs are, and can imagine in a crude way, the remedy for them. But if the BASIS can in any degree move the white people of this country from their open hostility or shameless indifference to the rights of the colored people, it will have justified its existence and won the lasting gratitude of all who are connected with or interested in this class of our citizens. If they will not listen to the burning words of the BASIS, it is simply because they do not wish to hear.

Since I last wrote you the BASIS has appeared regularly every Saturday and has been my most welcome visitor.

*Cordially yours,*

*Chas. W. Chesnutt.*

Chas. W. Chestnut:

My dear Sir: Yours will check for \$15. and new address of 18 subscribers received. No doubt what you say in explanation of the colored people's course is entirely correct. The causes are not <sup>as</sup> important as the fact. It seems to me needful that they should embrace every chance to acquire white association — become familiar to white people's thought as operative, business, literary and every other sort of associations. I think it would have been worth almost everything to have had a colored associate editor on the Basis, &c, &c.

The distrust and jealousy among the most successful prevents their taking hold of any such thing. They insist on going alone and then find fault because they are not helped along and given better terms. I am sorry for it, but I can't help it. ~~then~~

Well, I suppose it is much better for me. To show you the contrast, however, let me say that a good woman has lately put into my hands quite a sum to be used for the Basis, because it is an effective champion of the rights of all without regard to race or color.

We are getting on nicely and may be said to have safely passed the shallows. Yours  
(over) \_\_\_\_\_