

CORRESPONDENCE.

GREENSBORO, N. C., }
May 15th, 1874. }

DEAR SIR:—The Republicans of Guilford assemble on the 20th inst., to select delegates to the Congressional Convention. Your reticence has been such that many having claims to your confidence are uncertain whether you are an aspirant for the nomination, or would accept it, if tendered to you.

I take the liberty of addressing you this note in the hope that you will favor me with an authoritative statement of your views, to the end that your friends may not act unadvisedly in regarding your claims to the nomination.

I am very respectfully,

THOS. M. OWEN.

TO

HON. A. W. TOURGEE.

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GREENSBORO, N. C., }
May 16th, 1874. }

THOS. M. OWEN, Esq.,
Ch'm'n Rep. Ex. Com.,
Guilford County:

Dear Sir:—Your favor of the 15th inst. is at hand. In reply permit me to say that I am not, in any proper sense of the term, an "aspirant" for the Congressional nomination or any other. Should the Republican party impose upon me the duty of leading its forces in this District in the impending struggle, I shall cheerfully accept the trust and endeavor to discharge it to the best of my ability.

As to my "claims to the nomination" I do not know that I have any—I have certainly none which I desire to press—I have heretofore received at the hands of the party positions of unmerited honor and trust, and have earnestly endeavored to so discharge my duties therein, that neither the state nor the party which was more immediately responsible for my advancement, should receive detriment therefrom. If I have been in any degree successful in such effort, while it is a source of sincere gratification to me, I can only regard it as a part payment for previous favors, and not as an advancement on which any valid claim to future preference might be based. In fact, unless a party has, in any particular instance, a majority so great as to assure its success, I do not think that any person can have any "claim" to a nomination at its hands, except—strength. Of this, he is usually and naturally, the poorest judge that can be found.

In such case, and more particularly when, as in ours, the party is in an apparent minority, it becomes the duty of a convention to consider but one question, to-wit, the available strength of different men as candidates for the place to be filled. This is all that the party has entrusted to their decision. It is to be presumed that the delegates to a convention are, first of all, honest; second, that they have the interest of the party and its success constantly in view, rather than the gratification of personal pride, the promotion of individual interest, or the satisfaction of private malice; third, that they are fully informed as to the capacity, zeal and fidelity of every member of the party likely to be named in connection with the place to be filled. For an individual, therefore, to attempt to secure his own nomination under such circumstances, by endeavoring to influence the selection of delegates, or to bias the action of those already chosen, by eulogy, persuasion or threat, not only argues an utter lack of ordinary modesty on his part, but is a reflection upon either their integrity or capacity, scarce less insulting than a proffered bribe.

It is from an utter abhorrence of any such practice that I have maintained the "reticence" to which you allude.

I am sincerely grateful to my friends for having thought of me in connection with such honorable distinction. Such consideration must ever command my utmost zeal to repay.

If, however, I might be allowed to express a wish in regard to the matter, it would be that prudent and reliable men be chosen as delegates to the District Convention, and that they be instructed to support—first, last and all the time—that man, whom they shall believe, after full consultation and due deliberation, to be the strongest candidate the party can put forward, without regard to any personal preferences or minor considerations whatever. With the action of such men, whatever its character, I for one, will gladly be content.

With the most grateful esteem, I have the honor to be

Your obt' servant,
A. W. TOURGEE.