

August 2, 1890.

Hon. A. W. Bourgee,
Mayfield, N. J.

My Dear Sir and Bro: - Mutual
desire to help the downtrodden shall be
my excuse for addressing you at this time.
I once hastily sketched "The Poor's Errand" and
a short time after came south and observed,
then after returning north again read it with
renewed interest, and now after being here
nearly two years engaged continuously in
the same work, am prepared to empha-
size the statements contained in that work,
and to further affirm that the situation here
in Louisiana has not materially improved
since the book was written, so far as the "excep-
tion of northern misdeeds" are concerned. So
thoroughly impressed am I of the value of
your works on the "negro problem" that in
behalf of our School Library I would like

to ask if there is any source of benevolence, so far as you know, whereby the School Library could be put in possession of a set of them? Our more advanced students would be greatly benefitted by using such works as supplemental reading to the study of current or recent history.

We are building up an interdenominational school on the self-supporting plan, and on the evergreen principle in that the calendar year and school year are coincident, being divided into two sessions of 26 weeks each, the last session closing on the 27th of June, with an enrollment of 163 and a daily average attendance of 70+. The second session began July 7th and will continue, day and night - as heretofore - until Dec. 24th. The Bible is a text book in all grades and every student must read it or memorize a part of it every school day. As we are working unconnected with any of the denominational benevolent societies we are dependent on our own energies and

what we can influence from Southern friends. Ours is the only school of its kind, so far as we know, in the South, and the success we have met with thus far encourages us to believe that it is on the right line, as we believe in accomplishing something enduring in intellectual advancement rather than piling bricks too high. These people can get along with very modest buildings, but they do need very thorough instruction on all lines. And I am persuaded that all through the "black belt" hundreds of just such schools will be none too many to do down the horrible iniquities, vices and immoralities attendant on the ignorance with which we are surrounded, and which increases faster than the population, if the recent state census of Louisiana is to be believed. But pardon me for enlarging on this topic. 'Tis me very near to my heart, and the situation here is so much worse than the friends at the North imagine that it seems sometimes as though the truth never would be known. The main object

I have in writing you at this time is for advice, or your opinion on a matter that I have thought of in connection with the education of the colored people. Let me see if I can make the matter plain:

The colored people as a rule are anxious for education, and also for the accumulation of property. Now, why wouldn't it be a good plan to form something like joint stock improvement company, secure a tract of land in some eligible quarter, plat it out in various sized parcels (reserving say 40 to 80 acres for a school house), then sell the plots to actual buyers or settlers on the installment plan, giving them an opportunity to school their children and at the same time acquire a home. Having the school as a nucleus would attract the better class and more progressive ones among them. Every actual settler would increase the value of the unsold land; then if carefully located in a very short time factories could be inaugurated by the land company which would be a profitable source of revenue from the stock

as the larger part of the operating labor would come from the students at the school as a part of the trade or manual training instruction. With real estate as cheap as it is in this section but a small sum would be needed to start the project, and in a very short time 'would be at the self supporting or even dividend-paying stage. Please give me your views on this matter, and if this is not plain enough will write more fully what I think of the movement. Be assured that any advice or assistance of any kind will be helpful and appreciated. Give these people a fair show and they will settle a good many disputed points without bloodshed or harming any one.

Yours in this cause,

Frank C. Blanton,
Baton Rouge,
Box 313. La,