

1  
Raleigh, N. C. Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 1890  
Hon. A. W. Tourgee

Dear sir; I have  
just read with pleasure, your address  
as made before the "National Conference  
on the Negro Question". I think that  
no man living has said more quietly  
and unbiased concerning the Negro  
than yourself. Great good doubtless,  
will inevitable come out of the  
frank discussion at the conference  
I have read all the addresses and  
have profited thereby. However  
biased or prejudiced one may be,  
when brought to face the truth, to hear  
it elaborated, backed by the force

of intelligence, he must step aside,  
 or be crushed by the can of progress.  
 Heaven's order is go forward, when once  
 Providence has indicated his purpose,  
 there is no draw back; the conference,  
 notwithstanding some conflicting  
 views and experiences, will have a  
 good effect, a bright future is in  
 store for the Negroes. Knowing  
 you to be among the large hearts  
 and kind toward the Negro  
 My purpose in writing <sup>to elicit your sympathy</sup> you was  
 Perhaps you know of some  
 large hearted christian people  
 North, who would be willing to aid  
 a worthy cause. The colored people  
 here are indeed in great need of  
 a suitable house of worship; they  
 are struggling now to build, but

but owing to the poor crops for  
 several years, and the unsettled  
 condition of things, they have not  
 been able to do much themselves.  
 The old building used by them now  
 is one they bought of the white people  
 before the war; it is an old dilapid-  
 ated frame building which cannot  
 be used much longer. They have  
 a brick building in course of  
 erection, exposed to the weather.  
 We are of that class to whom poverty  
 sticketh closer than a brother. We are  
 not able to finish the work without  
 help from some where. As our  
 object is the glory of God and the  
 good of humanity, we humbly ask  
 aid of any, who may be disposed  
 to hear and favour us.

4

The white people are very kindly disposed towards us, and are doing what they can, but we are all poor. We are now crowded to the wall. A few hundred dollars would put us in a condition, thereby we would be able to struggle through, & would not make this appeal; if we were not trying to do for ourselves, and had come to the place where we are not able to carry the burden. I have no doubt, but there are those, who if they could but truly realize the conditions, the struggle, would be willing to give the needed aid. The Negro needs his church to lighten his burden, to comfort and bury his sorrows. The church is his all

5

Now comes the question, who is this man or woman writing to me thus? I desire to say truly and soberly, that I am a poor man indeed, so far as this world's goods are concerned. When I consented to come here to this place, I was pastor of the largest and most wealthy <sup>called</sup> congregation in Brooklyn N. Y. which was paying about 1400. dollars per year. I was urged to come, because it was thought, as I had had the advantage of some training at Lincoln University I could be of more service to the <sup>people</sup>

I knew before coming that I am here and mean to "fight my salary, would of necessity be small, but in God's name I came, Now shall the cause of God be hindered; I am determined to do all I can to stir an interest, that I may make the condition of the people here better, and put them on a higher plain of elevation. I seek through you some friend, able and willing to bless these poor people. Many have become discouraged because of the surrounding condition, and get dissatisfaction when it does not give way, is a good sign, I feel like spending and being spent for this people

I am here and mean to "fight it out on this line". I find plenty to do, My heart, head and hands are full, and kept busy all the while, I don't want any one to send me a dollar at random, I want you to inquire and find out whether I am telling you the truth; and I would have you send to some worthy and responsible person, who would see that any gift was properly applied. It is rather strange for me to make a request for aid, and at this time, so many years after freedom. But this spot of ground is dear to this people

because it was theirs before they were emancipated, and now that they are not able to redeem their pledge, it is a sore thing to them. I hope I have not worried you. I refer you to Bishop B. J. Tanner D.D. 2908 West Park Ave Philadelphia Pa, Joseph Pogue, and A. A. Thompson, Mayor of Raleigh N.C. The Mayor of Raleigh will receive for my church or give you further satisfaction about the condition of things. Yours for God and humanity

J. S. Thompson  
 Pastor St Pauls A. M. E. Church  
 Raleigh N. C.