

Columbia City, Indiana,

March 13, 1893.

Mr. Albion W. Tourgee:

Dear Sir,

For a long time I have read with interest and approval your "By-stander" notes in the "Intelligencer," but your views in the issue of March 11 were particularly welcome for northern voters, I think. I am now an influential citizen. I live by the labor of my hands, but I have one opinion and one vote, and I wish to have both rights. While the race question is by no means the only question that presses for immediate settlement, it is one of the most urgent in its demands, perhaps the one claiming first and chief attention. I want to see it resolved of, and that cannot be until the rights of all are recognized and sustained. I have some sympathy for the Southern

whites who still carry the cross of the slavery system, in their souls, but we both evens are without excuse. Now I am a Republican, was born so, bred so, and have voted so. But I am frank to say that the course of the party during the last three or four years has cooled my ardor very perceptibly. I want to vote with a party that will have the courage as well as the wisdom to lead public sentiment toward the right. I shall be very reluctant to break with the old party, for it has been almost my ideal, but if it try to evade these vital questions, or get on both sides at once, or fails to redeem its pledges, one humble voter will seek other political lines and lights.

Now, what shall we of the rank and file do to make our scattered power felt in the righting of the wrongs that so intensely appeal to the men of America for settlement? I can partially answer but not wholly. I have neither time, talents or inclination to enter the political arena. In that field the dust is chiefly raised

about the banner of protection ³ as a tariff issue.
So my mind protection of voters in
their rights, protection of homes and human
narity against violence and intem-
perance, protection of public morals and
public health against the dangers of im-
migration, and several other forms of
protection, are of higher importance and
of far greater urgency than the tariff ques-
tion. I believe in the tariff doctrine of
the Republican party, but that is not at
present of paramount importance. I am
a Republican but at the same time
I claim to be a live Christian, and do
not know how I can keep still in the
crisis of such questions as beset us. I
can talk, distribute pertinent tracts, and vote.
Is there anything more for such as I?

Yours sincerely and hopefully,

John C. Keith.