

Cedar Rapids June 18 1893

I see Judge A. W. Tourge.

I see in Byrd's note that you take me up pretty sharply and you will pardon me for saying that I don't think you quite meet the points in question. An example, the white man because I do not bear him out in doing injustice to the negro? you ask, no, but if you will remember in the Paris episode for instance, no pity was manifested, no word of sympathy spoken for the victims of that awful crime. I need hardly call your attention to the fact that the negro possessed no inherent right to citizenship before the Constitutional amendment, which enfranchised him. I think it was Grover Cleveland who speaking of this investiture, said "it was a gift which the beneficiary had not the intelligence to use, nor the courage to defend." A sadder comment to those who hoped for better things could scarcely be made. Sen. Ingalls, in speaking to this question in the Senate said "we have tried every remedy except justice, why not try that?" Why not indeed? Because the remedy was

not at hand, in fact, under existing cir²
cumstances was an impossibility. The Gen
has come to see it later, I do not remember
I have seen a more concise terse, statement
of the temperance question than you give I
of course fully appreciate the difference between
restriction legislation and the withholding of the
inherited rights of the citizen. I simply alluded to
the losing fight in Iowa to call attention to
the fact that any cause is hopeless, which has
not behind it a solid backing of public opinion.
To disturb the Constitutional amendment at this
late period would I doubt not create as great
an upheaval as did the final partage of the
secession war, which culminated in open
rebellion, just the same however, it is commonly
generally accepted that a gross blunder
was made when the negro was invested with all
the rights of citizenship. He should be a ward,
not a Sovereign. There is one way by which the
negro can if he will conquer a place for himself.
In an article in a local paper is the follow-
ing speaking of the situation as viewed from the in-
ternal point. They can conquer the respect of
the whites, by self-culture, by diligence in

diligence in business by the quiet observance
of all duties pertaining to citizenship, and by that
course alone. The writer adds, "Since the above
was written I notice that a negro conference has
been held at Tuskegee, Al. and a policy outlined
which if followed by any considerable number
of colored people will prove in my opinion of
importance second only to the great emancipation
proclamation which tore off the shackles of slav-
dom. No doubt you are conversant with the
action referred to. The idea is this, force and
strife will fail to accomplish the end sought,
while a blameless quiet life will make head
against all opposition. Not in the arena
of politics, then, not in frantic appeals to pec-
tionism, but in the quiet observance of all the
duties of citizenship, as quoted above, lies
the way out of the difficulties which beset
the colored people's path. In the history of the
French peasantry since the breaking up of the
large land holdings, may be read what can be
achieved by industrious application to business.
The condition of the French peasant previous to
revolution, was if any thing worse than that of the
negro slave. The slave's life was of value to
his owner, and so he enjoyed a certain amount

of protection from that fact, as well as from the fact that statute law looked to his safety. On the contrary. Hazlitt in his history of the French revolution tells us that a french peasant was killed by his superior with perfect impunity and with no fear of being brought to account before the law. But virtuous of oppression, in his case tended to develop qualities which with the opportunity came to him made him the wealthiest of his rank in the world. Verily, he profited by his hammer and grinding experiences, which had taught the fourest possible minimum of endurance for the body and might nojolly has he improved by his his son & not so the negro. Improvident as a child, he has little more sense of responsibility. To gratify his appetite, and his desire for idleness, he is at maturity, just about on the same plane as the average school boy. But just the same, he is the profoundest problem in American politics to day. and the question what to do with him is of greater import than any or all of those which confront our states men at this time. I hope you will forgive this second attack. I do not want to be troublesome, but the subject is of deep interest to me.

Respectfully

S. P.