

Mayville-on-Chautauqua, N.Y.

Nov. 20th 1893.

J. Thomas Fortune Esq.

New York:

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 13th inst is rec'd.

I quite agree with your view that the management of THE NATIONAL CITIZEN, must be in trained hands.

It is because I paid \$100,000, for my tuition, that I have the fullest confidence in my judgment. THE NATIONAL CITIZEN, must be made profitable in order that it may accomplish good, and must accomplish good in order to be profitable. That is my view of the situation, and its inevitable logic.

Your allusion to Garrison seems to me without force. Conditions have changed. It is as if you should caution one contemplating the invasion of Turkey to beware of the fate of Peter the Hermit. But even then the old NATIONAL ERA, was a very profitable thing though a profligate son was too much for it at last.

THE NATIONAL CITIZEN means profit for its owners; reputation for its contributors; better conditions for the colored man and better government for all through a better citizenship.

It will not be a newspaper in any sense except with regard to events bearing on these subjects. It must be of the highest literary tone and quality, so as to command a hearing. It cannot accomplish results either by antagonizing those to whom it must appeal or assuming that what it desires to accomplish already exists. It must be wise as well as firm in its treatment of prejudice which however deplorable is still a fact and like all prejudice must be overcome by patience and example quite as much as by argument.

It must not be a race journal. For that reason it could not combine with THE AGE, without spoiling both. THE AGE has its own field; and a most necessary one it is. Race-journalism is the only effective substitute for a race religion. As long as the colored man is distinguished against in any way, he must keep up his distinctive sentiment, organization, speciality of interest in sheer self-defense. As soon as he ceases to do that he falls back into helpless nonentity as an element of collective life. This can only be done through the race-journal. The limitation of the race journal lies in the fact that it cannot reach those it is desirable to touch until the evil they represent has been overcome or greatly ameliorated. and value

THE NATIONAL CITIZEN will be of great importance to race journalism by bringing its utterances into notice. It will for instance make liberal and frequent excerpts from race journals upon subjects of special interest and so bring them into notice by people who do not now, and would not otherwise see them. Going as it will within a year to 100,000 people who occupy a position very like my own upon this subject so far as inclination is concerned, having a sincere desire that the colored citizen should have every right of any other citizen, absolute security with even handed justice and equal opportunity, but who are perhaps troubled as I am not, by the constant assertion of savageness and inferiority which fill the public press this journal will naturally attract their attention to race journals and lead them to patronize and read them.

By associating a colored man editorially, THE NATIONAL CITIZEN will make plain disapproval of race distinctions and thus gradually accustom people to disregard such prejudice; and if it should become simply a race journal, it would defeat its own purpose, and, I think be an injury rather an aid to the cause of equal rights and justice. It must be a journal of equal citizenship without regard to color; the race journal must stand especially for equal rights and integral unity of the colored man upon all questions of right, opportunity and advantage to them, as a distinct class. When the necessity for such a journal is over, the evil which makes it necessary will have been overcome; but then the need of such a journal as I propose will be no less great than now.

I should be very glad to see you and talk the matter over with you, but it is quite impossible for me to go on to New York now. If you could come here, I do not think it would take very much time for each to get a just comprehension of the other's notions of the matter and I should be glad to entertain you during your stay; or I might meet you in Buffalo on the arrival of the Empire State Express and you could return the next day.

Sincerely yours,

P.S. I find I shall have to go west for some lectures next week, and I suppose you will be going to Cincinnati as early as Saturday or Sunday next. Did Embry send you my letter to Bishop Turner?