

CHAS. W. CHESNUTT.

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW.

~~OF CLEVELAND, OHIO.~~

736 Soc. for Savings Bld'g.

Cleveland, O. November 21, 1893.

Judge Albion W. Tourgee,

Mayville, N. Y.

My dear Judge Tourgee:-

I received your letter of several days ago, and it has been the subject uppermost in my mind ever since. I am also in receipt of your note this morning requesting an immediate answer.

It is needless for me to say that I recognize the need of such a journal. The demand for it, however, is a different matter, and were it not for the large roll of the Citizens' Rights Association, I would doubt the existence of such a demand, so far as white people are concerned; although I am well aware that colored people who think at all, are interested in whatever favors them. The only question for me, therefore, is whether I shall take a certain amount of the stock, with the prospect or the certainty, as the case may be, of becoming associate editor of the National Citizen.

As to the editorship, I am free to say that I should like it, and should manage to find a certain amount of time to devote to it. My business, on the scale on which I conduct it, is very absorbing, and will be especially so for the next eight

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months, unless all signs fail; yet in this cause I would be willing to sacrifice somewhat of comfort and leisure. I have always looked forward to the literary life, although not specially in the direction of journalism.

This leaves only the financial part of your proposition for consideration. As to my investing \$2,500.00, that is out of the question. I have been earning money in excess of my expenditures for only the past five years. With my savings I have purchased a comfortable home, which is worth some four or five thousand dollars. And my surplus since paying for that, I have invested in other ways.-- in land and in securities of other kinds, never keeping more than a few hundred dollars in the bank to meet current expenses. My investments, while conservative, are nevertheless to some extent of a speculative character, and while I expect them to be very profitable in a comparatively short time, yet I am sure I could not close them out at present without loss rather than profit; and I am only just now started in on what I hope to be a profitable season's business, after my regular dull season during the Summer time, which always depletes to a large extent my current expense fund.

With regard to the least sum which you mention, \$500.00, I

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should feel somewhat differently. If you had written to me without reference to the position of associate editor, I should have subscribed for one or two hundred dollars worth of stock and sent in a subscription for some five or ten copies of the paper. I do not suppose you want an associate editor merely for ornament. I certainly would not care to be a mere figurehead in such an enterprise, even for the honor of having my name coupled with such a distinguished one as your own. I am willing to put in my work and take my chances in that regard, and to contribute to the capital to the extent of the \$500.00, provided the same can be paid in several instalments, in the manner in which stock subscriptions to new enterprises are generally paid; provided I am named as associate editor, and that in reply to this you tell me you have received such responses to your circular as would justify me in taking that course. In saying this I have in mind the sentence in the printed circular in which you state that "you are not putting in any money and cannot advise others to do so without positive assurance etc." Five hundred dollars is not a large sum in the abstract, but it represents a good deal of hard work in my case, and the magnitude of my family makes me perhaps unduly cautious in disposing of it.

I shall await a reply, and give you a definite answer imme-

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diately upon hearing from you. If I had known of this matter several months ago, I would have had more available cash, and would have had time to see you and talk with you. I might have come up to Mayville last Saturday, when I could have discussed the matter more fully; and I should like to come toward the end of this week, say Saturday, if the matter is not too pressing, and if you are inclined to consider my proposition at all favorably. In any event, I will take \$100.00 worth of stock, and guarantee at least ten subscriptions. I have not had time, since receipt of your letter, to work up the matter among my friends, as your letter caught me at a very busy time.

Very respectfully yours,

Chas. W. Chesnut