

CHAS. W. CHESNUTT.

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW.

30 BLACKSTONE BUILDING.

736 Soc. for Savings Bld'g.

Cleveland, O. November 27, 1893.

Hon. A. W. Tourgee,

Mayville, N.Y.

My dear Sir:-

I am in receipt of your last letter, to which I did not respond by telegraph, as I could not assume the responsibility of raising the sum you mentioned. As I said in my former letter, I cannot see my way to furnish it myself, and it would take some time to communicate with others in reference to the matter. A newspaper venture, even under the most favorable auspices, is always a speculation, and if this one should not succeed, there would be nothing whatever to show for the money, except the memory of an effort in a good cause. Nevertheless, I am willing to risk something, and I presume there are others who will do the same. But I would regard it as a risk and would prefer to confine my investment to what I could afford to lose. While you have infinitely better opportunities for feeling the public pulse than I have, yet in my intercourse with the best white people of one of the most advanced communities of the United States, with whom my business brings me in daily contact, I do not remember but once of hearing the subject of the wrongs of the Negro brought up, except by myself; and when brought up by me, as it has often been, I have observed that it is dismissed as quickly as politeness will permit. They admit that the present situation is all wrong, but they do not regard it as their personal concern, and do not see how they can remedy it. They might subscribe to such a journal, if personally solicited, a number of them, but I fear that a publication devoted entirely to a discussion of one topic, so to speak, even so important a one as citizenship, would have a tendency to repel the average white man rather than attract him.

I quite believe that you could make such a venture successful, if any one could; but I am free to admit that I have been somewhat discouraged at the outlook in the Southern States. As to the Northern States, it seems to me that the people have about made up their minds to give the Negro equal rights so far as the laws can effect it, and then to let him paddle his own canoe.

I can quite appreciate your reluctance to go into such an enterprise without ample capital. As I have said, I am willing to do something and to urge others to co-operate. But I am very busy at present; in fact, this is my busy season and I am just now busier than usual; and to assume the responsibility of saying I will raise the sum of \$2,500.00, especially in view of the present

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"hard times", would be undertaking more than I can see my way clear to doing.

There are several colored men of my acquaintance who have more means than I, and who are just as deeply interested in this matter. I think it will be easy to secure their co-operation. One of these is Mr. S. R. Scottron, 598 Monroe Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. Mr. S. is a man of some means, has a proprietary interest in some patents for inventions of his own, and travels for a brass fixture manufactory in New York. He is a man of intelligence, of ideas and of considerable culture. He has always read your letters in the Inter-Ocean with eager interest.

Mr. F. J. Loudin, Ravenna, Ohio, is a man of comparatively large means. He is the principal stockholder in a shoe manufactory at Ravenna, and has for many years managed a troop of jubilee singers, having spent a number of years in Europe and Australia in that business. I know that he is very much interested in the welfare of his race and liberal of his means in promoting it; and I am informed by his most intimate friend that he is a constant reader and admirer of all you write on the question of citizens rights.

I will write to these gentlemen, and think if you will do the same, they can be induced to subscribe for stock.

Regretting, dear sir, that I cannot immediately and fully accept the very flattering offer you make me,—for I consider it a great honor to be asked to co-operate with you so closely,—and assuring you that I will do all I can without assuming any burdensome responsibility, to forward your plan, I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

Chas. W. Chesnutt.