Oxford, Ga.
11/23–'94.

Hon. Albion W. Tourgee.
Mayville, N.Y.

Dear Friend:—

Having for many years read your very interesting articles in the "Inter-Ocean" and observing your persistent and constant efforts in defending the cause of the poor and weak, striking down injustic, exposing fraud where ever found, and bravely demanding justice, equal opportunity, equal privileges, equal rights (I mean that what it may), and the protection of life in the pursuit of happiness— having noted all these things, so long, I feel at liberty to address you as a dear friend.

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I have no knowledge of a man I regard so highly as I do you; and it is not because you are a white man and I a black man, but rather that you are an honest white man — I say honest, because you have proven, as few men have done, to be a sincere man.

I would to God that all white men and all black men for that matter, were fashioned after your work — that is, if there is no danger of a superfluous number of good men.

Having passed two twenty-four summers of my life in the South, I am well acquainted with Southern life and manners, which in my case, ~~I~~ set off

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to the best advantage by Northern training given by Northern instructors of the highest order and character. Thank God for the very name of the North and her generous souled woman ought to be more grateful that there is a North than the humble negro, & thank the North for what it has done, and full sorry that it has failed to do what it might have done in utilizing the opportunities and advantages it has over any other section of Country.

I know, judge, what it is to be a man of Color in the South more than you could possibly imagine in the personality of a white man living in the North. You must bear

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lived a number of years in some of our Southern communities and enjoyed the luxury of being a Negro so you can think and feel and know what the Negro does about Southern life.

Generally speaking, to be a Negro is to be deprived of all the common and decent rights of man, to be inferior to other men, if they be whitemen; to be proscribed to suffer any fate.

That the Negro had a hard lot & sometime think is, indeed, fortunate; for it required any amount of suffering and hardships, patience and endurance to make any people.

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The Negro has distinct ideas of right and wrong. He knows when he is treated unjustly, but is too often as silent as the grave. He goes on patiently and uncomplainingly and bears his burden. He has a loyal and true heart. He knows and loves his friends; and he has many in the South. He does his duty as far as he knows.

Ignorance is the Negro's greatest curse as it is of any people; it makes him subservient to the will of his superior that knows it & keep him ignorant is to make him serve any purpose, however base. That this, in many cases, has been done here in the South is too obvious to be denied.

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I suppose you are aware of the agitation of the immigration question now going on in the South.

For sometime, Southern governors have been holding conventions, and appointing special committees, employing the Suthern press and prominent individuals to solicit immigrants to come to the South & settle on the farms that have been formerly held by Negro tenants.

These agitators say that they want white farmers and laborers to come here. They will sell their lands to a white farmer or laborer, but the Negro, in many cases, can not get their land at any price.

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I want to know judge, what position will the negro take when the immigrant comes?

Do you not think it is the intention of the Southern to bring in the South white immigrate, who will not only own the land, but marry their sons and daughters and thus supersede the negro?

The Southern white man has compelled the negro to be a tenant and thereby enriched himself. Now he is ready, having impoverished and robbed the negro to drive him away.

What, in your opinion, will be the result and how will it affect the negro?

This is my first time writing you and I beg you to forgive me for writing so much.

I am, respectfully,
Jas. P. Martin.

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