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Grinnell Iowa Aug. 23 1895
Albion W. Tourgee Esq.
Dear Sir,

In your comments on my communication, which you were pleased to give a place in the Basin, you say "We see in this how hard it is for a man to cut loose from old ideas." I feel in some doubt precisely what you mean in my communication by "old ideas." I suppose you must refer to the importance I attach to the ~~importance~~ new birth as applied to the individual. That is an old idea as old as the time in

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which Nicodemus came to Jesus by
night, and was told by him
Except a man be born again he
cannot see the kingdom of
God." It is an old idea that
men in their natural state are
lost in sin and Christ died to save
them, and that without repen-
tance and faith in him they
cannot be saved. These old
ideas and that other old idea
the command of Christ to his
disciples to go into all the world
and preach the gospel to every
creature & expect to hold on to
as long as I live. But if you
imputate to me the idea, that
habit of some ministers of ex-
horting men to become Christian
merely to be saved from hell,
that is an idea that I never pos

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sand
in the course of a ministry of more than twenty years, and in a christian life of more than sixty years, and I do not understand how any part of my communication led you to say "that the christ rule of conduct applies to citizenship, just the same as to the care of one's children, and for the same reason, is so never thought so." That is a thought my dear sir, which I have entertained for threescore years past and my sermons especially in the time of the great rebellion will testify, or that that is not a new thought to me and I have been at the head of a dear family of nine children, who all became christians in early life.

You do not as it seems to me attach the same importance which I do

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to regeneration as influencing good citizenship. You say on page 616 of the last Basis "Another most serious error is the idea that regeneration is essential to good citizenship". I do not say that a person may not be a good citizen without being a regenerated person, but I do say that if he is a good citizen without regeneration he will be a better citizen with it. And I mean by regeneration not merely a profession of Christianity but a sincere and hearty Christianity. And I think your own view of Christianity as expressed in your own words on page 517 in Basis of Aug 7 means as much as I mean by regeneration. You there say "The true function of Christianity is to obey Christ's two new-

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commandments. First to love the Lord thy God and second which is like unto it, that is equal in force and obligation, and love thy neighbor as thyself." "This you say is Christ's testimony." I say amen. Now show me a man like unto these two commandments and I will show you a man who is a regenerated person. Unless a man is born again according to Christ's teachings he cannot be saved. Therefore I do not see how you consistency in saying that regeneration is not essential to the best citizenship. I admit that one may be a good citizen and not be a Christian, but true Christianity as you represent it, that is obedience to these two commands of Christ will make him a better citizen.

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Now I admit that a professing christian may be a very poor citizen and he may be a very poor christian too. And I maintain that obedience to these two commands of Christ will constitute one the best style of a citizen. Of course he must receive proper instruction in regard to his duties as a citizen.

Now my dear brother, for I regard you as a christian brother. I pray you do not depreciate the need and importance of urging men to become christians. Paul was so absorbed in this work that he warned "men night and day with tears" and he urged that "others be saved with fear pulling them out of the fire".

Your object in the Basis is a

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obedience to the one implies o-
bedience to the other. Exhort men
to do to others as they would have
them do to them which, Christ
commands and they will have
no heart to do it unless they
first love the Lord and if they
love the Lord, the naturally car-
nal mind which is enmity
against God and is not subject
to the law of God, neither indeed
can be, has been removed, he is
recommended by the spirit of God.
It follows that men should be
earnestly exhorted to "love the Lord
with all the heart," which is the
first commandment & stands first in im-
portance and also that they "love
their neighbor as themselves."

Respectfully & truly yours &c.

A. Lyman

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