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THE BASIS—Albion W. Tourgee,
Editor.

11 March 1896.

Hon. Thomas B. Reed:

My dear Sir: Your telegram just rec'd.

It is a bitter disappointment. I had arranged to make the current number of The Basis a distinctively Reed number in a way — directing attention to what seems to me the most essential thing at this time — your self-control, originality, dislike of the mere showy and perfunctory phases of public life, ~~originality~~ moral courage and intensely practical statesmanship ~~qualities~~.

As I understand your decision — the last one — in regard to the photograph, you do not desire

(over)

such a course to be pursued, but prefer to have the present policy of hunting a "sit-still's nest," which has hitherto prevailed in regard to your canvass, continue. You are the doctor and ought to know what you want. I do not wish to do anything that may embarrass ~~th~~ you or tend to conflict in any way with the accepted "plan of campaign," I will "fit" my matter therefore and take my cue from others who claim to be favorable to your nomination and studiously re-

refrain from saying anything about Reed.

I don't like such a plan of battle and I do not believe it will win; but I do not wish to take a course in conflict with your wishes or at variance with those who have the charge of your interests.

I think I have a right to protest, however. A still hunt is well enough for a man who is little-known — say one of the Hayes type — but for a man who for eight years has been the most prominent figure in American politics, it is absurd and in my opinion

ion, cannot be successful.

The clam-like silence of those supposed to be your friends, in regard to you, your qualities, character and action, is unquestionably fixing in the public mind the impression which your enemies are assiduously endeavoring to create, that you are a "barren" candidate, defiant of the will of the people but relying on the trickery of a few men to manipulate the convention in your favor. This impression is make

against you very powerfully and unless counteracted, will, I believe render your nomination an impossibility. If the people get an idea that they are being cheated or tricked they will make the air too hot to permit the convention to take such a course.

Thus far, the "Reed Press", is eloquently silent about Reed. So far as I can see I am about the only one who has taken up the exploitation of your merits. If you were a "black-horse" this would be good policy: but for one on whom the sun has shone so strong and so long as you it seems to me in the highest degree absurd.

Do not think me meddlesome: I am merely in earnest. Of course, I wish to do whatever will promote your success because I have the utmost confidence in your practical sagacity and exalted sense of duty but I do not think it would be right to conceal from you my anxiety or my doubts as to the course apparently decided upon for perpetuating your nomination.

I think you are being choked to death by the silence of your friends. There seems to be an notion that Blaine was hurt by too much booming and that what would have been good for Blaine

must be good for you. That is very often the mistake of the more manipulative politician. He relies upon specifics rather than individual diagnostics and fails from lack of differential capacity. I do not know anything about what is being done except what I gather as an onlooker, & does not expect you or any one to accept my opinion, but if it is worth considering, you know one thing — it is sincere and disinterested.

Yours truly,