9240

Willford Scotts Bluff County Nebraska
February 23rd 1897

Hon Albion W Tourgee

Dear Sir

I have been a reader of the Inter Ocean for many years and have always read your articles published in the paper with both pleasure and profit. I have generally been in accord with your views upon the various subjects of which you have written - but sometimes I do not see things as you do. I notice that in your article published in the Weekly of Feb 16th You speak of overproduction as being the cause of the congestion of the labor market. Allow me to suggest, may not the real cause be underconsumption? If all the unemployed could have work at remunerative wages would not their needs for consumption immediately relieve the shop, factory and field, of the seeming plethora?

Can it be fairly shown that there is an overproduction so long as there are so many thousands of people ~~so~~ greatly in need of every useful article produced by labor whether of the shop, factory, mines or field?

You speak of the changed conditions that have become operative since 1870 as producing the sad results that you have

forcibly shown in detail. And I full-
concur with you that we may not reason-
ably expect any immediate substantial
relief from any modification of the Tariff laws
altho' I am a protectionist & sincerely hope
for good results in time, but it does not
seem to me that necessary substantial and
adequate relief can come to our distressed people
through a protective tariff.

Is not the condition of affairs almost inex-
plicable, especially so in this County, where we
have every useful thing in such great abundance,
necessary for the comfort and well being of
mankind, yet so many hundreds of thousands
of our people bordering on condition of Starvation.
I was expecting to find in your article a sug-
gestion as to a way out of these economic
perplexities.

What do you suggest? What is your plan?
It does seem that there ought to be wisdom
enough some where to help our suffering
people? Is there no way except through
Starvation, disease and death for the starving
poor? Is such the deplorable condition
of our people? With all the elements
in great abundance necessary for the use
of man in immediate view - it does
seem there ought to be some way to
make all useful things obtainable -

I believe there is a way these suffering people could be relieved. And I think from the drift of your article that way has already presented itself to your mind.

These willing hands must find employment.

These unemployed laborers must find employment; they must be put in position and given an opportunity to earn wages. They must consume in order to live, and how can they consume without wages?

Who is in the position to employ them? Certainly not the owners of the factories, shops, fields, or mines - because they are all overloaded with goods they cannot sell, and it is ruinous to increase their products.

Now I suggest, and ask you whether there is any body that can employ this surplus labor.

Is not the Government of the United States the only power that can relieve these people, by giving them employment and providing the money for paying them wages?

Could not the Government devise a scheme of useful public works that would give employment to the -

surplus labor of the people of this County?
Is it not the imperative duty of the Government to do so in this grave Crisis we are passing through?
Then your suggestion of legal tender notes is ~~in~~ order. I do not object to the 1 per cent interest - only make enough to pay these people for work while they serve the Government.
Could not such employment be made both profitable to Government and people?
You suggest, we need more legal tender dollars. A new issue of the kind of dollars you suggest to pay for such labor would increase these legal tender dollars to a desirable amount.
This would unlock the hoarded millions, that will not now move, because it is more profitable to hold, than to invest.
Property would advance in price - and it would not be desirable to hoard money any longer - The hoarded money would seek employment - and the whole country would bound into prosperity.
The business conditions are much the same as in 1858 - 59 - 60 - The breaking out of the Civil War compelled the Government to expend a large amount of money in the payment of men - for the purchase of supplies & the whole North bounded into prosperity at once - & like expenditure now would produce like results.

It would not be necessary to continue this kind of employment for any great length of time — just long enough to start things to moving and adding a sufficient amount of money to the volume in circulation.

The wage paid labor would at once obtain his necessary supplies — this would relieve the plethora of field and factory and stimulate production to supply the greatly increased demand — And all the people would become happy and prosperous at once.

If you can see another and better way — I should like to hear from you. through the Columns of the Inter Ocean — Or if you can see any merit — or demerit in the suggestions I make, I would be pleased to have you either enlarge or discourage in accordance with your views.

I earnestly hope in the multitude of counsel there may be wisdom enough to develop some feasible plan that will relieve our suffering people.

Very Respectfully Yours
J M King