Fords, Howard, & Hulbert,

No. 47 East Tenth St., New York.

May 24th, 1897.

Hon. A. W. Tourgee,

Mayville, N.Y.

My dear Judge:-

A severe bereavement in the family of my sister, Mrs. King of Brooklyn, - the death of her daughter Ethel, nineteen years old - took up much of my time during the latter part of last week; so that I did not get to an answer to your recent letter.

With reference to the French book that you speak of for the training of your ear to the French lingo, by having your eye on an English translation while the French book is read to you, I don't know but it's a good idea. I suppose the very best thing is to get into a place where you have to speak and hear French all the time. Asto the books themselves, you speak of the Testament, but I presume not with an eye to practical use in this way, as I very much doubt if New Testament French would help you much in current talk in that lively country. But I find in Westermann's Catalogue a large number of the best French writers, both in French and in English, although in no case that I notice are the two in one volume. Here are of course Edmond About and Balzac and François Coppée; but I should think the very best thing would be to get one or two of Paul Bourget, a brilliant, up-to-date,

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cosmopolitan Frenchman, member of the French Academy, with a good deal of the newspaper reporter about him and his books. His "Cosmopolis" costs $1.00 French, $1.50 English; his "Outre-Mer" (notes of his trip through the U.S.) costs $2.00 French, $1.75 English. He has also a novel called "Love's Cruel Enigma" $1.00 French, 50¢ English. There would also be several from Alphonse Daudet, although perhaps he is rather more polished in style than you would care for (for your special purpose). Of course the Dumas books, the "Erckmann-Chatrian", and those of Feuillet, Flaubert, Henry Greville and other contemporaries, can be had in both French and English. As this is a foreign house I do not know just what discount they will make to us on their books, but will of course do the best I can if you will tell me about what you want and about how much you want to spend. As for standard works, I guess perhaps the best thing would be for me to send up to these people for a copy of their catalogue and then you can make your own selection.

With reference to the books to put on our list, you know of course that our using the "Sunset Sea", etc. depends on our getting "The Dragon"; and that, you know more about than we do. "The Man Who Outlived Himself" has evidently got to travel a bit yet, and I suppose even when he is accepted for periodical issue it may be months before we could get at him for a book; so we will let him wait, as we have to. With reference to the

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"Story of A Thousand" I have to repeat what I have said to you before, that with the exception of a few sample pages I have never seen that book and really know very little about it. I should be interested to see it, at all events.

With sincere congratulations upon your success, and a hope that you will have the hard sense to commit your material affairs to Madame, while you peg away at your writing, undisturbed by such small things as coming consulates, I am

Faithfully Yours,

J. R. Howard

Dr. Albert Shaw (Rev. of Revs.) told me that he didn't doubt you would make a good consul, but he declined to add to the President's worries by asking for the appointment. He hoped you'd get it, & if you did would say something nice about you. I sent him the recent Mayville Sentinel & some points; he asked for a portrait, & I had none but the old steel, so I sent him that. It will "do you up handsome"! A propos of literary consuls, he said that the man who preceded Bret Harte in his English consulate turned over the affairs of the office, accounts, cash on hand &c. all in exact business shape. And some months afterwards he had a letter from Harte asking how much cash it was that he turned over, as he had got things mixed, somehow! So, keep a sharp Eye on the accounts.

J. R. H.

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