

PERSONAL.

52 Cours du Jardin Public.

Bordeaux, France, December 26th, 1904.

Honorable Herbert H. D. Pierce,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

Judge Toulgee has been for two weeks very ill, and is to-day in such a critical state that his physicians--a council of which has just left the house--have forbidden me to allow any disturbing element to be brought to his attention, which is the cause of this personal letter to you from his wife re your despatch, No. 186, dated Dec. 14th, 1904, regarding the establishment of a Consular Agency at Biarritz and the appointment of Mr Burdett Mason as Agent of the same. To inform him of this decision of the Department against his protest for which he gave such potent reasons, might snap the frail thread that holds him yet a little longer here.

I hope I may be pardoned for withholding this despatch from his knowledge, until I am expressly ordered by the Department to acquaint him with its contents. Mr Mason is not in the District now, being either in Rome or travelling in Germany, and a week or so of delay may not seem an important matter in acquainting him of the decision of the Department. A cable to the Consul will be at once obeyed, if in spite of this letter, the Department deems I have acted wrongly in my action allowing my heart to dictate rather than official authority.

For two weeks I have watched by my friend's bedside day and

night that my loving care might keep the frail spark of life alight,  
and I thought this Christmas Day was as sad as could be, and now this  
morning's mail brings this added grief to my already overburdened  
heart.

Of course, it is not for me to question the acts of the State Department but it does not seem possible that the contents of the two despatches from the Consul at Bordeaux in reference to this matter, could have been taken as true, --that it was merely the desire of the Consul to prevent such appointment for the sake of the paltry fees which would accrue to him were an Agency not established at Biarritz and Mr Burdett Mason not appointed. Judge Tourgee's long and honorable life, his service to his country and his party should have weighed against such a thought.

If it is the policy of the Department to reward even so slightly unamericanized Americans abroad with favor, whose abuse of President Roosevelt is common report in this Consular District, I have nothing to say. This is not hearsay. My daughter was in Rome at the Hotel de Russie when the matter of the President's persistence in the Crum appointment was mention, and heard Mr Mason at the public dining table utter a tirade against President Roosevelt, calling him everything unpatriotic and vile on account of his "niggerism" as he styled it. No fire-eating Southerner could have used the English language to better effect in this cause.

As to his unamericanism, I wish to give an instance to which the Consul at Bordeaux and his wife were not only witnesses, but victims of. Before the closing of the Consular Agency at Pau, when the scanda-

To receive her illegal, vicious and fraudulent actions of Mr Post--the Agent there appointed and sent to the Consulate--were becoming unbearable against the protest of the Consul at Bordeaux--were becoming unbearable to me as a person.

Judge Tourgee thought of reporting the matter to the Department, thought his action well advised, and asking--if it was still deemed necessary to continue a Consular Path and entered the Paris Consulate--to suppress that at Pau and institut

as I entered the Paris Consulate--one at Bayonne, with Mr Mason as Agent, as he had heard he had objection

to the Consul, who was to be sent to Biarritz, we were invited to Chateau Larondouette by Mr Mason and his

wife that the necessary data, etc., could be taken. We had been there,

perhaps a half hour--Judge Tourgee and Mr Mason seated in the parlor

talking over the details of such an appointment--Mrs Mason and I hav-

ing gone to the garden to fill a basket with roses to take back with

us--when Mr Mason, looking out at the window as a carriage drove up

the avenue, sprang hastily from his chair and exclaimed excitedly:

"There comes the Princess Fredrika and her suite to call! Come

quick, Judge to the dining room!" and seizing him by the shoulder al-

most pushed him out of the parlor, across the hall and into the dining

room, returning without any apology for his brusqueness to welcome hi

royal(?) guests. Princess Fredrika, by the way is the daughter of Ex-

Queen Marie of Hanover, and having married morganatically her father's

secretary, is not recognized by her family, but has lived in a semi-mo-

ral state near Biarritz for many years, and is held in front of the

English Church there of which Mr Mason is a conspicuous member. The

arrival had also been seen by Mrs Mason from the garden, but she, only

expressing concern that she had on an old gown, not befitting in which

to receive her Royal Highness, bid me take the flowers we had gathered, and go to the house while she slipped up stairs by a back way to her room to put on a better frock. As she did look a little bedraggled, I thought her action quite natural, and leisurely wended my way up the path and entered the parlor where we had left Mr Mason and the Judge. As I entered the room three gentlemen arose, a sweet-faced, unassuming lady remaining seated. I saw neither the Judge nor Mr Mason, and turned to retire, when Mr Mason fluttered in and introduced me. I did not go down on my knees to kiss the royal hand, but answered the questions the Princess asked me about the beautiful flowers with which I was burdened, as naturally as I would any one. I then asked Mr Mason where the Judge was. He pointed across the hall and I retired from the room. In a moment Mr Mason again fluttered in, bringing the Judge's hat and cane, saying he believed they were through talking, and he had ordered our carriage around to the side door. It was a rather uncere-  
monious dismissal after an hour's ride to accept an invitation, but Mr Mason's consternation at our presence and so evident a desire to get rid of us, seemed too absurd to be anything but laughable to us personally, but the Judge was furious at the insult he had given the representative of his government by literally turning him out of his house--especially at a time when he was seeking a favor as a repre-  
sentative of that government himself. Of course, the Judge dropped at once the matter of the Consular Agency at Bayonne and Mr Mason's ap-  
pointment as Agent, naturally thinking in his patriotic heart, that such an un-American American was not fit to hold any sort of office.

under a government whose representative he would treat in such a manner, but this incident was never mentioned outside the family, not even to Mr Mason, who since that time has been most courteously received at the Consulate when he comes on business--until the letter received from Mr Mason in some 5 month or two since, saying his friend desired to have him appointed Consular Agent at Bayonne and recalling the fact that the Judge had already spoken to him on the subject. This incident was then recalled to Mr Mason's mind with the remark that he should not recommend his appointment to the State Department, as he did not think so unamericanized an American was fit to be a representative of his country abroad, etc, etc. We have not heard from Mr Mason since.

This may seem a very small matter, but it is small matters which make up the big ones, and this taken in connection with Mr Mason's always "on tap" abuse of President Roosevelt, to our loyal minds, make a big one, and to reward such a person by appointing him to an office which can only be called essential for the more facile accommodation of a few rich Americans who come to Biarritz and Pau,--well, Judge Tourgee's despatches need no addenda from me. If it is considered absolutely necessary that a Consular Agency should be established in this Consular District, why select Mr Mason as a representative of our government? One seldom meets him without listening to a tirade on the protective tariff, the miserable Consular Service, etc, etc. There is Mr Pringle at Biarritz, an American, a lawyer, son of a wealthy family who always goes over to his native land once a year, and keeps full of

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American affairs, who would be much more fitting than Mr. Mason for an a Consular Agent there. Judge Touragee would recommend him, if it is thought that such an Agency should be established, for which to our minds there is not the slightest necessity any more than a thousand other resorts in Europe--and I think we should know both ends of the matter. But of course, this is nothing to the State Department.

I wish to add that in Judge Touragee's serious illnesses, no Consular matter is neglected. I look after that as well as of my sick husband. The Vice-Consul has been with him so long that he is quite efficient as to all routine work. I have always had charge of the finances since being here and am fully conversant with all things pertaining to the Bordeaux Consulate. I went myself to Washington and saw President McKinley and asked him for a Consulate for my husband who was in a very depressed state of mind from large financial losses in April 1897. The President told me to make any selection I chose and if the place was not promised, it should be given Judge Touragee, for whom he had great admiration and sympathy in his troubles and the brave fight he had made in the South. I chose Bordeaux and have myself been "of" this Consulate since that time.

Please, my dear Sir, to pardon my long letter. I feel deeply, and it is the joyous Christmas time, while I with a heavy burdened heart indite these lines. If I have done amiss, I pray forgive me--a loving wife who sees her husband slipping from her--and must do what she can to stay his flight.

Very truly yours,