

AN EXTRACT FROM
"THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE," DECEMBER 1907

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I remember that when I came to Hampton [Dr. Washington entered in 1872] there were just three industries for young men. One was farming; the others were carpentry and shoemaking. Aside from my entrance examination, to which I often refer and which consisted in dusting a room, my first industrial lesson was in shucking corn. One of the boys had a shoemaker's bench in the hall in Academic, and that was the shoemaking department; and the carpentry, I think, was in the charge of one person. When I came here there was just one brick building, the old Academic Hall. What changes have taken place since that time in order to make the institution more instructive and more useful! I remember that when I was here all the boys, with few exceptions, slept in Academic Hall; we had our classes there and our chapel; nearly everything was in that one building. I suppose that now there are three or four boys — no more — in a room. Then there were often as many as ten and we had a pretty good time. I remember one winter we got so crowded that General Armstrong put up some tents. When the General got hard up for a building he would go out and dig a hole, then when people came to the school he would show it to them and say that he had got that far and could not go further without money. One winter he had done this but had not received money enough for a building, so he put up a number of tents and called for volunteers to sleep in them. I had the privilege of being one of the boys who volunteered to sleep in one of them. I remember one cold night the wind got under that tent and lifted it completely off. We

Southern Workman, 36 (Dec. 1907), 684-88, an informal chapel talk to Hampton Institute students, Oct. 13, 1907. Only the autobiographical portion of the talk is included.