

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers

To Jacob Godfrey Schmidlapp

[Tuskegee, Ala.] January 12, 1910

My dear Mr. Schmidlapp: I thank you very much for your letter of January 3d,¹ also, for yours of December 7th, which I did not have the privilege of answering in person.

We thank you for your subscription of One Hundred Dollars toward the Repair Fund. This will help us much.

I am very much interested in what you say concerning your son's impression of Prof. Willcox of Cornell University. I would state, that while Prof. Willcox and I are good friends, his brother being one of our Trustees, we do not agree for the most part on many matters touching the Negro, in fact, I think Prof. Willcox rather takes a hopeless view. On several occasions, he has strongly stated that the Negro would disappear as a race by death within a few years. Notwithstanding Prof. Willcox's prediction, the race continues to increase in numbers. In some way, I think Prof. Willcox got started sometime ago on a false scent and has been following it ever since.

I am deeply interested in the institution to which you refer to be started in Cincinnati to improve the condition of the Negroes there. I might say to you in confidence that I have studied the condition of our people pretty thoroughly throughout the country and there are few, if any, centers where in my opinion the Negro is worse off than he is in Cincinnati. Cincinnati, in a large sense, is the dumping ground for a class of Negroes who desire to get out of the South, but have not the money or the energy to go further than the Ohio River. Consequently they stop in Cincinnati and the average white man living in Cincinnati, I think, is likely to get a false idea of the race, if he takes the Cincinnati Negro as a fair type.

I wish very much that you could come to Tuskegee and spend some days with us in studying our work here. I think you would find many things to interest you.

I am going to fulfill my promise within the near future to stop in Cincinnati for an hour or so and have a conversation with you.