

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers

world that the Negro is ostracized in labor, people are going to ostracize him more than they are at present.

In connection with such a meeting, if possible, I should also have a physical exhibition of the products of Negro labor.

In all cases, my experience teaches me that it is better to attack a problem from an affirmative direction than from a negative, critical one.

I should be glad to hear from you after you have had time to read these suggestions. Yours very truly,

Booker T. Washington

TLpS Con. 912 BTW Papers DLC.

¹ James Samuel Stemons (1870-1959), born in Clarksville, Tenn., was editor of the Philadelphia *Courant* in 1906. In 1907 he became editor of *The Pilot*, another black weekly in Philadelphia. He opposed political and civil rights agitation and favored instead efforts to improve black employment and promote economic advancement.

² A letter to Stemons dated March 28, 1910, signed for BTW in E. J. Scott's hand, agreed with Stemons that exclusion of blacks from the building trades and other established industries was a serious problem, and urged Stemons to secure the support of the Armstrong Association of Philadelphia and the Committee for Improving Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York City. (Con. 912, BTW Papers, DLC.) It is clear that in this case Scott misread BTW's views. Stemons wrote back that the letters of March 28 and 29 were so conflicting that he did not know how to reply to either. Stemons criticized BTW for his complacency and failure to face the seriousness of the black labor problem. He declared the Armstrong Association's efforts inadequate to cope with the employment problems of 100,000 blacks in Philadelphia, the city having found intermittent employment for only 300 blacks. (Apr. 7, 1910, Con. 912, BTW Papers, DLC.)

To James A. Cobb

Tuskegee Institute, Alabama April 1, 1910

Personal and Confidential.

My dear Mr. Cobb: I meant to have written you several days ago to say that I wrote to the Attorney General in the way you suggested and I hope some good will result.

I think it is exceedingly important at this time that the true friends of President Taft not permit him to be deceived concern-