

NOVEMBER · 1912

feel that you can do it, we beg you to tell us so frankly and put an end mercifully to our expectations. Cordially yours,

W McKinlay  
Francis J. Grimké  
Archibald H. Grimké

TLS Con. 58 BTW Papers DLC.

### Extracts from an Address at the Opening of the Mound Bayou Cotton-Oil Mill<sup>1</sup>

Mound Bayou, Mississippi Nov. 25th, 1912

I count it a great privilege to be permitted to take part in the formal opening of the Mound Bayou Oil Mill and Manufacturing Company. The opening of this Oil Mill marks a unique and distinct step in the progress of the Negroes of America. It represents, in my opinion, the largest and most serious undertaking in a purely commercial and manufacturing enterprise in the history of our race.

I congratulate Charles Banks and his board of directors and the stockholders on account of the success that they have attained to in bringing this enterprise to its present degree of completeness. Mr. Banks and those who have stood by him in this movement are entitled to the lasting praise of the people of this country.

In the same spirit I wish to congratulate the white people of the state of Mississippi and at the same time to thank them for the encouragement and assistance which they have given to this enterprise. Further than this, I wish to congratulate and thank the white people of Mississippi because of the fact that they have been liberal and far-sighted enough to encourage the building up in the heart of the state of this distinctive and unique Negro town, a town that is a credit to the people who live in Mound Bayou, to the Negro race in Mississippi, and to every white man in this commonwealth. I need not add in this presence that just in the degree that the Negro in this state is given an opportunity to become prosperous, intelligent, happy and contented, in the same degree will the white man prosper, and [in] the same degree will peace and good order be maintained between black