

*The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers*

women of my race the same opportunity to secure an education by self-help as was afforded me at Hampton.

And now, it is a rare privilege to be permitted to address some of the representatives of that religious body which has done the broadest, deepest, most telling and unselfish work for the elevation of my race. I say unselfish, for I feel that the secretaries of the American Missionary Association will agree with me in the expression that if the value of the work of Congregational churches in the South is to be measured by the number of Congregational churches organized or the number of individuals that has become congregationalists, the work has not been of the most encouraging character. For where you have placed one Congregational minister in a Congregational church, you have placed 20 in a Methodist or Baptist pulpit; where one Congregational teacher you have given a score of Methodists or Baptists education.

(Story — Hard to make a Negro anything but a Methodist or Baptist)

But if we are to judge of the value of your work by the manner in which you have broken through denominational lines by reason of the superior character of your work; placed in every center, at least, one pure Christian church that serves as a light house in its influence and lessons as to what a church should be; educated the Christian leader in all denominations, the teacher, the professional man, the farmer, the mechanic; established the model Christian home and forced a life-giving current into the moral, economic and industrial life of every section of the South — if the value of the work of the American Missionary Association be measured, as it should be, by these standards, I believe it has no parallel in the history of this or any other country.

But, gentlemen, I did not come here to talk in this general manner. Will you forgive me, if for a moment, I take the Tuskegee School in Alabama as an example of the progress of the Negro, and in doing this I use it as an example, not selfishly, but because the work at Tuskegee will represent a similar work being done by a dozen or more of American Missionary Association Schools. Starting a little over ten years ago with one teacher and thirty students in a worn-out church and small shanty, the Tuskegee school has gradually grown during these ten years into 511 students representing every Southern State, the Indian Territory and Africa, and 32 officers and teachers, and so