

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers

A Newspaper Report of an Emancipation Day¹ Address

Montgomery, Ala. [Jan. 1, 1895]

This is the fifth or sixth time we have celebrated the greatest of all great days to the Negro, and I can say without fear of contradiction that every year doubles its interest. The address was delivered by that scholarly and deep thinking gentleman, Prof. B. T. Washington of the Normal school at Tuskegee. The address was as usually delivered by the speaker plain and instructive. The speaker told how a vessel out at sea had thrown up its signal for help from another vessel not far off, saying help, save us or we perish for water, and the captain of the other vessel's reply was, cast down your buckets where you are, and finally after several attempts to get help, and every time hearing the same command, cast down your buckets where you are, decided to try, and in so doing the buckets were drawn up with clear, cool, sparkling water from the mouth of the Amazon. Right here the speaker impresses us to cast down our buckets in the same like manner, and they would come up as merchants, manufacturers, scientific and men of all skillful advantages. The speaker tried to impress his hearers to apply their time and money in giving their children an industrial education through which medium we as a race will gradually grow stronger and independent.

Indianapolis *Freeman*, Jan. 26, 1895, 6.

¹ Emancipation Day, a holiday widely celebrated by black people in the nineteenth century, was Jan. 1, the day the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect in 1863.

From Francis J. Grimké

Washington, D.C., Jan. 6th. 1895

Dear Prof. Washington: Your letter was quite a surprise to me. I had no idea that Dr. Blyden¹ was thinking of leaving Africa for work in this country. He is a man of great abilities, of great learning, and of rare scholarship: in some respects the most distinguished representative of our race now living. As to his character, I cannot speak so posi-