

JANUARY · 1898

From William A. Pledger

Atlanta, Ga., Jan. 6th 1898

My Dear Mr. Washington, I have your letter or rather telegram of this date and shall try to be in your town on Saturday morning. If I should have to go on to Washington without seeing you you must bear in mind that I will be at your command when there as same as if I had seen you before going. You must in the future feel that I can be commanded by you without being seen by you. I told Fortune that I was satisfied that his theory of you was the correct one. I am your friend and when you need me call me. I shall stand by you in the future and you shall see it. I think that I shall get over on the Saturday morning train, but if I should not — talk to me freely by letter. Fortune will tell you that I am no hypocrit. What I am I am. You take care of the youth at your school and I will take care of the wise-acres. You see me work and when you are pleased remind me that you are a prop. Yours Sincerely,

W. A. Pledger

TLS Con. 144 BTW Papers DLC.

From William E. Benson

[Kowaliga, Ala.] Jan 7th 1898

Dear Mr. Washington: I herewith enclose the endorsement which you gave me some time ago. I endeavored to have you feel my exact position this afternoon, with regard to your withdrawing the endorsement which I have so extensively advertised and honorably sustained, and which now, because of these facts, to withdraw at so critical a time would be unpleasant for both of us, because I cannot have your letter to back up the footing that I have even *already* made. In this case it were better that you had not given me a letter at all; and even though I had not made so great headway as I have with your endorsement as a basis to work on, however poorly I might have succeeded it would have been *genuine*, and I should not now find myself standing in space with no conceivable support, nor evidence of any by which I could