

FEBRUARY · 1898

At the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute a few days ago we had the annual opening of our new agricultural hall. The secretary of agriculture, a republican, was present and spoke; the governor of Alabama, a democrat and ex-Confederate soldier, was present and spoke; also the State commissioner of agriculture. Besides, there were hundreds of the best white farmers, together with hundreds of colored people. There was the most friendly feeling shown throughout the day. These are only a few of the many evidences of the growing friendship of the two races.¹

Southern States Farm Magazine, 5 (Jan. 1898), 496-98. An AMf of this article is in Con. 864, BTW Papers, DLC. BTW capitalized "Negro" throughout; the magazine editors printed the word in lower case.

¹ Charles William Dabney, president of the University of Tennessee and an editorial contributor to the *Southern States Farm Magazine*, wrote to BTW praising this article. "I am glad that you have spoken out so plainly and strongly," he wrote. "What a pity," Dabney lamented, "that all of our institutions for the 'brother in black' are not upon the same basis as yours." He told BTW that "I am convinced that your policy is the only true one, and that they must all come to it." He believed that "a vast deal of money and honest work has been wasted in trying to make literary men, or teachers, or preachers out of colored boys which should have been expended in teaching them how to be independent." (Dabney to BTW, Dec. 30, 1897, Con. 127, BTW Papers, DLC.)

From George Washington Henderson

New Orleans, La., Feb. 2 1898

Dear Mr. Washington: Last Spring when I started a series of meetings in the interest of the common people you were kind enough to say in response to an invitation, that though prevented by prior engagements from accepting, you would come another year, should the invitation be re-extended.

I write you now to claim the fulfilment of this promise.

Our movement has now assumed an organized shape under the name of the Society to promote the public health, the public morals and popular education and general progress. Our central idea, however, is education in its various forms, and in line therewith our first task is to secure from the state the establishment of a normal and industrial school. Not much can be done for our public schools till we have more and better qualified teachers.