

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers

upon Tuskegee, I mean to write you. Until that time, I don't care to have the school hear from me at all. I am going to try to do my best.

Please send me a catalogue, your last financial report and one of those financial statements which I think was prepared when Mr. Smith was at Tuskegee auditing the school's accounts.

Believe me Mr. Washington, I am your sincere admirer and friend,

Isaac Fisher

ALS Con. 703 BTW Papers DLC.

¹ Isaac Fisher was born on a cotton farm in Outpost, La., in 1877 and moved to Vicksburg, Miss., in 1886. At Tuskegee he received much personal help from Margaret Murray Washington and graduated at the head of his class in 1898, having won all the school's top honors during his last two years. Because of his outstanding ability, BTW sent him to teach at the Schofield School in Aiken, S.C. There Fisher organized farmers' conferences similar to those held at Tuskegee. In the late 1890s, taking advantage of Fisher's oratorical skill, BTW appointed him Tuskegee's agent for New England. After two successful years, Fisher requested transfer to the South, where he directed the Tuskegee farmers' conferences. He was principal for a short time of the Swayne School in Montgomery before moving to New York City, where he studied the public school system. On BTW's recommendation he then accepted the presidency of the Branch State Normal School in Pine Bluff (Arkansas State Normal School for Negroes), which he held from 1902 to 1911. While there, Fisher won nearly thirty national essay contests. In 1911 he was principal of the East Carroll Baptist Normal and Industrial Institute at Lake Providence, La. In 1914 Fisher became the first editor of the Tuskegee-based journal *The Negro Farmer*. About 1916 he became editor of the *Fisk University News* and taught journalism and debating at Fisk. He was subsequently general secretary of the Hampton Institute YMCA. BTW frequently pointed to Fisher as one of Tuskegee's outstanding graduates.

² Martha Schofield, a Pennsylvania Quaker, founded in 1868 a school at Aiken, S.C., that became the Schofield Normal and Industrial School, under the auspices of the Freedmen's Commission of Germantown, Pa. It used a frame building erected in 1870 by the Freedmen's Bureau until 1882, when a two-story brick building was erected. By the turn of the century the school offered secondary academic training and also courses in carpentry, agriculture, harnessmaking, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, shoemaking, sewing, cooking, millinery, and laundering. (Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes*, 224.)

From Timothy Thomas Fortune

New York, Oct 1 1898

My dear Friend: I was unable to go to New Haven today as I wished and the doctor advised, because of the mixed political situation here