

SEPTEMBER · 1900

ex-students working at trades or industries learned at Tuskegee; and it was further discovered that in one county in Alabama there are thirty-five graduates and ex-students of the same institution who are engaged in farming or working at trades.

On the whole, I cannot but feel convinced that this conference is going to serve a good purpose, and that in future meetings, more than in the first one, the wisdom of the movement will be demonstrated. Among other things likely thus to be accomplished is a larger measure of first-hand investigation of the negro's real condition. The negro suffers very often in reputation because few of those who make damaging statements have ever taken the trouble to visit him in his place of business, his home, his school, and his church, where the higher and more encouraging side of his life may be seen. More and more the American people must come to judge the negro much as they do other races — by the best types, and not by the worst.

*Century Magazine*, 60 (Aug. 1900), 630-32. An undated typed draft is in Con. 959, BTW Papers, DLC.

From John Coburn<sup>1</sup>

Indianapolis, September 3rd 1900

Dear Sir, I expected to see you & talk to you when you attended the Convention here. But you came so late that I could not see you before you spoke — I fear you made a mistake in not giving us your full address.<sup>2</sup>

That was & will be held to have been a memorable Convention: possibly as much for what was not done, as for what was done.

Your speech I could not hear; having got in too late for a favorable place on the floor. But I read what was published in the Journal.

That was, every word, to the purpose & excellent. Strongly suggestive to the men of color of how to take life, in earnest, with a steady practical purpose; how to climb; how, in the long run, to dominate.

But the tacit admission that the race was *practically* a failure,