

*The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers*

From Lyman Abbott

New York October 1, 1900

My dear Mr. Washington: I have read with great interest the first pages of your Autobiography, which I return to you herewith. I do not think there is any danger that you will go too much into detailed facts. The pictorial side of your life, the experiences through which you have passed, the incidents which you have seen, out of which your own generalizations have grown, will be of the first interest and the first value to our readers. I, for example, would like very much to know more of your boyhood life in the slave days, if it were possible for you to give it. Did you have any sports, any education, any work to do before emancipation? Probably all this lies back of your recollection, but if it did not, it would be of great interest; and the answer to the same questions within the range of your recollections and after emancipation, would be almost as interesting.

So would your personal recollections of the Reconstruction period and of the way in which that period looked to the just emancipated slave. It is generally looked upon wholly from the white man's point of view, sometimes the Southern white man's, sometimes the Northern white man's. How did it seem then to the Negroes, how does it seem now to one who has the interest of his race at heart and sympathizes with their point of view?

As to style, I have the impression that this manuscript has been dictated, and that if you were to go over it carefully, you would condense it somewhat by cutting out some repetitions. I have hinted at some of these with my own pencil, and I have made a few verbal alterations which I am sure you would approve, & suggested a change in the order of incidents. In order to get this manuscript into *The Outlook* the first week in November, we ought to have a good instalment in hand by the last of this week, or the first of next week at the latest. Yours sincerely,

Lyman Abbott

TLS Con. 188 BTW Papers DLC.