

DECEMBER · 1900

From William Torrey Harris

Washington, D.C. December 3, 1900

My dear Professor Washington: I have read four chapters of your new autobiography "Up from Slavery" and I am anxious to tell you how much pleasure it gives me to say to you that you have made one of the great books of the year. I predict for your book a wide sphere of influence. It will be a great blessing not only to your people but also to all the other part of the Nation, for it will help to guide the Nation out of its difficulty.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and thereby produced a civil war in the Nation. You have written a book which I think will do more than anything else to guide us to the true road on which we may successfully solve the problems left us by that civil war. I have always admired your work and looked upon you as a benefactor both to white and to colored people, but I think that in writing this autobiography you have come upon a method by which you can increase your usefulness tenfold and a hundredfold by revealing in a book the spirit of your methods.

I congratulate you for what you have done and for what your book will do. Very sincerely yours,

W. T. Harris

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From Mary Thorn Lewis Gannett¹

Rochester, N.Y. December 4th 1900

My dear Mr. Washington, I cannot tell which is most deeply interested in the story of your life, coming out in *The Outlook*, our children, to whom I've been reading it, or their mother — but I want to tell you what an immediate influence it had on our nine year old boy. He showed me with great pride, the other day, a rack for his jimlets² he'd been making of hard wood, and said "I'd never have got that more than half done, mother, if I hadn't kept thinking all the time how Booker Washington made up his mind he'd *do*