

JANUARY • 1901

From John Edward Bruce

New York 5 Jan 01

Dear Sir I have another occasion to write, same as before. I hate to; it seems mean. But it isn't; you have a right to it.

In your *Outlook* paper, this date, you say: "We tried several locations before we opened up a pit that furnished brick clay."

"Opened up" is bad. Again: "By this time, it had gotten to be pretty well advertised throughout the state that every student who came to Tuskegee, no matter what his financial ability might be, must learn some industry."

I think "gotten" is bad. I cannot say with sure knowledge that it is so; but I feel confident of it. Got is a good word; in my judgment, gotten is not. Gotten has been rated as obsolescent; it is more in use now; but, I think, not by very good writers in general; and it is decidedly in general use by poor writers. I think it a word to be avoided, as almost unclean; but my feeling outruns my knowledge.

My admiration for your writing grows; but that is decidedly second to my feeling that writing is by no means of first consequence to you. You are entitled to the feeling that makes big head. I see not the least sign of it. It is almost absurd to speak of it; not quite. Big head afflicts some very considerable persons.

I heard you speak once; have not known very much of your work; enough to have an impression of it. Now I have an opinion.

I said of you the other day: He seems to me as important as anybody. I have held, till lately, that E L Godkin was the most important man in U S. I fear his work is done. I am not sure that you don't come next. Yours truly

J E Bruce

ALS Con. 206 BTW Papers DLC.

From Hamilton Wright Mabie<sup>1</sup>

New York January 8, 1901

My Dear Mr. Washington: You know, I presume, something about the new work of Thomas<sup>2</sup> on *The American Negro*, just published