

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers

From Whitefield McKinlay

Washington, D.C., October 13, 1902

Dear Mr. Washington: Yours came to hand. I spoke to Taylor concerning Dancy, who said that he would urge him to stand firm. Gov. Pinchback agrees with me that Dancy would not dare show the white feather in this fight.

I think that we are now in a position to get a colored man appointed Collector of Customs at Charleston. I personally know that there would not be any serious opposition on the part of the business element, and as Crum is the most available man I am urging his selection notwithstanding the weakness he displayed at Richmond, and I am further satisfied that it will serve as a good lesson to him as such breaks are not characteristic of him, for in all the years that I have known him it is the first instance of which I have ever heard.

Mr. H. L. West,¹ whom we bitterly opposed, was appointed Commissioner of the District to-day. The President told him he wanted him to see me as he regarded my opposition as giving him more serious concern than all others, hence he immediately called and explained his letters to the Post which led to my opposition. We talked the situation over as in regard to the colored people of the District for more than an hour, and I hope that some good might come of it especially as it may give our best colored men standing with him.

How about Durham's appointment? It strikes me that now is a good time to press it. Very truly,

W. M.

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¹ Henry Litchfield West (1859-1940), a newspaperman and a commissioner of the District of Columbia from 1902 to 1910, was the only commissioner of the period willing to appoint blacks to positions in the local government. (Green, *Secret City*, 159.) In 1910 he became part owner of the *Washington Herald*. West was chairman of the District of Columbia Electric Railway Commission from 1909 to 1912 and executive secretary of the National Security League from 1915 to 1921.