

*The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers*

Jamestown Exposition. It was near this spot, nearly three hundred years ago, that the first representatives of our race were brought into America. It is especially fitting, therefore, that since here we entered slavery that on the same spot we should show results of improvement both in slavery and in freedom. When our first representatives landed we were only 20 in number, now there are nearly ten millions; when our first representatives landed here we had no uniform language, now we speak the English tongue. For the most part, we were pagan, now, we profess Christianity.

More and more as a race I believe that we should emphasize our opportunities, as is being done at this Exposition, rather than our disadvantages. In the fundamental things of life we have great opportunities before us as a race, in this country. No one who would be honest should deny or overlook the fact that we have disadvantages with which to contend and that acts of injustice are often perpetrated on us, as a race, but in spite of all this, in the fundamental consideration of securing a home, of earning and saving money, of finding employment, either in skilled or common labor, in entering into business or professional life, no one can deny the fact that in America, and especially in the South, that we have a rare opportunity. These are the things in hand, and we should get all out of them, possible.

In the matter of securing and using education we have, in this country as a whole, an opportunity which we should highly value. While in many sections there are discouragements, acts of unfairness, yet taking the country as a whole, the public school system is wide open to our race; further, without hindrance, we are at liberty to establish private schools, industrial schools, colleges, and professional institutions. One of the peculiar advantages presented by the South consists in the fact that we are at liberty to use whatever education we receive in promoting our own welfare, as well as the welfare of others.

No one event during the past year, has been so important as the magnificent gift of \$1,000,000, by Miss Anna T. Jeanes, of Philadelphia, the interest of which is to be used in promoting rural schools. So long as the race finds such friends we need not despair.

Again, we not only have an opportunity to make progress in material and educational lines, but we are in a position where no man can take from us the privilege of living a high moral life. No