

MAY • 1908

From Alfred M. Colby¹

Dayton O May 1st 1908

Dear Sir, I have long been an admirer in your work and a believer in your efforts to show your race wherein lies its real salvation.

After the unfortunate exhibition which took place in New York a few days ago I feel very much in the mood of telling you that your work is admired and appreciated by the great mass of American citizens both black and white. You have heard that before and from men whose judgment is worth much more than mine but as a representative of the *average* man I feel like saying to you that we believe in you.

A colored man has been a servant in our family for twenty years. He had no early educational advantages but has taught himself to read. He is an intelligent upright man and he may be fairly considered as typical of the average better class negro of the North. Here is what he has to say about the Cosmopolitan Club affair:

“Now, that’s all foolishness, those people whoopin’ and hollerin’ about race equality and intermarriage. If those negroes go on about their business and quit making fools of themselves the negro race would be helped lots more that they will by all that fuss.

[“]What the negro wants is to quit botherin’ about the negro problem and go on about his business. Let the white folks worry about the negro problem. Every negro ought to have his own problem: how to be a good citizen, how to be decent and how to help somebody else get a start.”

So you see he has the common sense view of it. He lacks the learning of some of the Cosmopolitan Club folks but he has what they need somewhat, common sense. With best wishes, Sincerely,

Alfred M. Colby

ALS Con. 368 BTW Papers DLC.

¹ Possibly the Alfred M. Colby listed in the 1910 Dayton city directory as a travel agent.