

*The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers*

Please remember me to all of your fellow Envoys and let the President know how highly I value his good will. Yours truly,

[Booker T. Washington]

TLC Con. 6 BTW Papers DLC.

<sup>1</sup> Olivia Egleston Phelps Stokes sent \$500 to Tuskegee in August 1908 for Phelps Hall expenses and those of the Liberian students. Her sister Caroline also took an interest in the support of the Liberian students.

<sup>2</sup> The bottom line of page 1 of the carbon is missing.

To Oswald Garrison Villard

Tuskegee Institute, Alabama September 7, 1908

*Personal:*

My dear Mr. Villard: I know your hands are full and I hesitate to call upon you for any additional work or sympathy, or means, but there is such flagrant injustice being done to Colored people in Alabama just now, that I thought you might like to assist in the matter.<sup>1</sup>

Colored people, by recent decision of the courts, are being sent to the chain gang in large numbers for violation of contracts. This simply means that any white man, who cares to charge that a Colored man has promised to work for him and has not done so, or who has gotten money from him and not paid it back, can have the Colored man sent to the chain gang. Many of the best lawyers are of the opinion that such practice is wholly unconstitutional, but it will cost about \$200 or \$300 *now* to have the matter attested before the courts. My own purse has been drawn upon in so many directions, that I can do nothing at present.

The enclosed memorandum was sent me, I might say to you confidentially, by one of the judges. He has done all that he could to break up this terrible practice, but he is compelled to follow the decisions of the higher court — I mean of the State Supreme Court. Please return the memorandum. Yours very truly,

Booker T. Washington

TLS Oswald Garrison Villard Papers MH. A press copy is in Con. 42, BTW Papers, DLC. No enclosure attached.

<sup>1</sup>The Alonzo Bailey case.