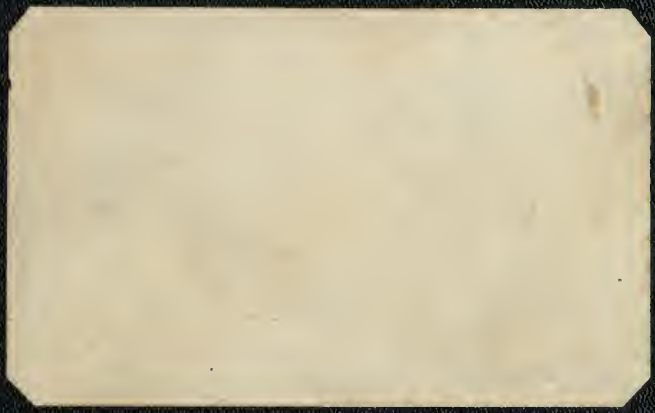

# "A Joshua in the Camp,"

OR, THE LIFE OF



## Booker T. Washington,

TUSKEGEE, ALABAMA.

COMPLIMENTS OF

**H. RUFUS WHITE,**

Editor of "The Suburban Enterprise."

# "A Joshua in the Camp,"

or the life of

# Booker T. Washington,

of Tuskegee, Alabama.

By H. RUFUS WHITE,

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW and Editor of THE SUBURBAN ENTERPRISE,

TOWSON, MARYLAND.

1895.

## *DEDICATION.*

*To the young manhood and womanhood of the Colored Race which Mr. Washington is laboring to promote, this work is respectfully dedicated*

*By the arthur.*

# A JOSHUA IN THE CAMP.

BY H. RUFUS WHITE.

## INTRODUCTORY.

That there has never lived in this country a colored man so prominent, at least, as was the late lamented FREDERICK DOUGLASS goes withoutsaying, and there is no doubt that in many respects he was the greatest man the race in America has produced. Much of his greatness was, during his lifetime, partially obscured by the prejudice agaiust him on the one hand and jealousy on the other ; but, dispite this, Douglass was a great man even in the eyes of his enemies. He was a leader. While the ordinary mind was dealing with a single problem, Douglass' great mind, like that of the philosopher, was unraveling a chain of problems whose effects were universal. While the ordinary or private soldier was trying to climb a single craig, Douglass, like Napoleon, was planning the entire conquest and subjugation of Italy. A causual perusal of his life's works and utterances will show the truthfulness of these comparisons. It was Douglass who, when Lincoln was pondering over the advisability of using colored men to garrison forts and dig trenches, urged the placing into their hands the muskets and enrolling their names as regular full-paid soldiers, and the same extremes characterized his views on the questions of emancipation, suffrage, and the efforts of the colored man regarding his own advancement. It was these things which made Douglass the leader of his own people and the peer of the leaders of the white race. Having completed his work, we were not surprised to see him hand back to General Harrison the portfolio of the Haytian ministry and settle down in quietude among the cedars of Anacostia, from whence, like the exiled and regicide Colonel Goffe, he came out once in a while to do "one more good deed for God's people." Over his bier men will uncover and call him Douglass the leader, Douglass the great !

On the day following his demise it was said that there would probably never be again a concurance of the circumstances which made Douglass great, and I believe it is true.

Douglass was a creation of a certain age, it seems fitted and moulded in the moulds from which iconoclasts come, and designed to give to the world a living object lesson on the subject of man's Brotherhood. When this was done "God touched him and he slept."

Israel is still in the wilderness. Moses has been taken away, and some seem to think that there is not even a Joshua in the in the camp. The purpose of this pamplet is to show that there is a Joshua in the camp, and that he is receiving that "good success" which God promised.

Times have changed and with this change have come new measures and new problems which demand new men to deal with and solve them. The uniting of beligerent fragments into a German Empire required the hand of a Bismark, but the meeting and settling of questions pertaining to the devolopment of German manhood and resources requires a bold, jovial and fearless William. Colored men have their freedom (some have, possibly, too much of it) and citizenship for which Douglass labored, but they have not grasped the new ideas which these changes brought about, viz: the nobility of labor, the rigid application of theory to practic, and the judicial use of the almighty dollar, "which alway elects its candidate," be he white or black. This is the condition which Douglass could not change, but which he left as a legacy to his successor when he "handed back to his people the tiara of leadership;" and it is upon the successful meeting of these issues that the future success of the colored man in this country depends.

The colored race at this time needs no iconoclast. What it needs is a leader and a teacher—a leader broad and liberal in his views, well versed in the relation which the races sustain to each other; a lovor of his own race, a respecter of what is noble and good in the other and a friend of both. A teacher who thoroughly understands both the subject and the pupils which he teaches simple in precept, profound in reason and gifted with the tact of impressing the truthfulness of his teaching upon the minds and hearts of his pupils. Such a man we have in our midst, and un-

consciously to himself the mantle of Douglass fell upon his shoulders, and he is wearing it with becoming dignity and grace. This man is Booker T. Washington, Principal of the Tuskegee, Alabama, Normal and Industrial Institution—a Joshua in the camp.

## THE MAN.

Having made a lengthy introduction, we shall in this and the following divisions consider the man, his work and what others say of him, then we shall leave our readers to judge whether or not we have established our claim.

Booker T. Washington was born a slave at Hale's Ford, Va., April, 1858. The place of his birth and early childhood was the old conventional one room quarter-house with a dirt floor and a "potato hole" in the middle of the room where sweet potatoes were kept during the winter. He was the "chattel" of a family by the name of Burrows, but being young he experienced little of the rigors of slavery. Soon after the war he went with his step-mother to Malden, W. Va., where he worked in salt furances for nine months in the year and attended school for three months. After spending several years in this manner, young Washington secured work in the house of a kind but exacting New England lady where he remained until 1871, attending night school under a private tutor and picking up information in whatever way he could. At this time, having heard of the Hampton school, he resolved to go there and make his way as best he could; accordingly taking what little money he had been able to save from his wages ($6.00 per month), he started for Hampton. When he reached Richmond, Va., he found himself friendless, homeless, shelterless and penniless. After looking around he found a hole in the sidewalk and in this hole he spent his first night in the Confederate Capitol. As luck would have it, on the next morning when he awoke, he found himself near a vessel that was unloading pig iron. He made application to the captain for work and it was given him. Mr. Washington worked there until he had made money enought to pay his way to Hampton, and to use his own words, he reached Hampton with but 50 cents in his pocket and nothing in his head. He remained at Hampton until he graduated with the honors of his class, having worked his way through. After graduating he returned to his old home and

taught school for a while then further pursued his studies at Wayland Seminary, Washington, D. C. While at Wayland, Mr. Washington was invited to become a teacher at Hampton which he did. In this capacity he remained at Hampton two years, until 1881, when application was made to Gen. Armstrong by citizens of Tuskegee, Ala., for some one to start an institution at that place on the plan of Hampton. With hundreds from whom to select, Mr. Washington was the one selected. The wisdom of this choice will be seen by generations yet to come.

Mr. Washing is a teacher in all that that term implies He is not only a teacher when in his school room he is knocking the rough bark off a sapling cut from the forests of Alabama, but among the foremost educators of this country, Booker T. Washington is known and honored as an able and distinguished educator whose work has been the subject of articles published in some of the leading magazines both of this country and England.

In its issue of August 19, '93, the "Out-Look," formerly Christian Union (New York) paid a high tribute to the Negro race. The "Out Look" published the pictures of 28 of the leading college presidents of this country, and among them, by the side of President Eliot of Harvard, President Timothy Dwight of Yale, President Potter of Princeton, President Harper of Chicago University, was the picture of President Booker T. Washington of the Tuskegee Institution, (Tuskegee, Alabama), a young man who was born a slave 38 years ago, who worked his way thorough the Hampton Institute and now presides over the largest Negro Institution (where teachers and pupils are all colored) in the world.

In personal appearance, as we saw him eleven years ago, Mr. Washington is tall in statue, somewhat slim with a clean youthful, almost boyish face, high forehead, piercing eyes looking out from under heavy eye brows and firm lips which seldom relax into a smile, A stranger would take him for an Episcopalian minister instead of a teacher. A perfect gentleman, modest, unselfish too busy with his life's work to think of himself, Mr. Washington goes right on doing all the good he can for his unfortunate people. Mr. T. L. Mann says of him in the Indianopolis Freeman : "It seems a direct act of Providence that the field should be kept open until this Moses should come to lead his people out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge. The man was called, his mission came from on high, and should you

visit his great school, you would exclaim with the "Sage of Anacostia" "I see a change, a great change. I can exclaim like John in the apocalatic vision, I see a new heaven and a new earth."

## HIS WORKS.

There can be but one standard by which the claim of any man upon greatness and leadership can be successfully established, and that is through his works ahd their results. The prophet is known by his prophesies and their fulfillment. The great man must secure his title by deeds of greatness, and the leader by performing the functions of leadership. That Booker T. Washington has secured both of these titles is an undisputed fact, and therefore admits no argument. But some dispute the extent of his leadership; they said it is not universal as was that of the lamented Douglass; they say that, like T. Thomas Fortune, the gifted writer and editor of the NEW YORK AGE, he is a specialist, and thus imply that the work which he is doing in his school and on the rostrum is not universal in its comprehension and far-reaching in its influnce. This we deny, and we think, with good reason, which we shall endeavor to show further on.

It is no our purpose to cut down any tree in the forest that ours may appear the more towering; but we can, with a single stroke of the pen, show the fallacy of the claims to leadership of all those great men whose names have come to us in connection with the position which Douglass so ably filled for more than a quarter of a century; yet we admire each man for those accomplishments which have redounded to the good of the race.

Now there is one Mr. Cuney, of Texas, who is simply a 19th century American politician--no stateman, no diplomate no scholar, no orator, simply a politician. Bishop Lee, a refined Christain minister, honored by his church. Here his star descends. Hon. John Mercer Langston, a text-book oratorial egotist who has been honored by several administrations, and this is enough said, if you have read his book. And lastly, there is T. Thomas Fortune who without a doubt is the most gifted writer the race has produced since the war, but you known that the man who simply writes must be cold in death before this "sin cussed" world can properly appreciate his writing. Either of these gentlemen might die to-morrow and the loss would be local. Not

so with Booker T. Washington, for his is a work which effects not only his own race but alike the Cancasian, for its chief object is to show (which is admirably being done) that whatever vocacation is honorable enough for an honest man to pursue in order to win his bread and butter, imposes upon the man the duty of dignifying that vocation. This is not only in keeping with the most advanced and practical ideas of to-day, but it reaches back to the duties imposed upon man when he was driven away from Edenic bliss.

Now we come to the plain questions of industrial and business education, both of which were touched upon by Mr. Douglass, the first when he asked his colored brethren if they got up as early to work for themselves as they had done to work for their masters, and the latter is shown in his purchase and improvement of property at Baltimore and Bay Ridge—the accomplishment of his letter-day dreams.

Mr. Washington's work comprises these two questions, and with them unites economy, the judicious use of money, the abolition of the mortgage system, a proper regard for hygenic laws, and suggests what to our minds is the only true solution to the race question--the possession by colored men of that which white men will respect. The man who is ignorant of these facts is indeed unqualified to hail any one as the leader of the race.

In all of these things the work of Mr. Washington is universal in that it effects the whole race. Everywhere reading men and women have read of his Farmer's Conferences, his plain common-sense utterances, and his noble work in his school.

According to nature's laws, the water of a stream can be no purer than the source from which it comes. The proper way to purify the water is to clean out the spring. Mr. Washington is doing more than this. In his conferences and on the rostrum he is purifying the homes of his people, while at his school he is putting the streams through filters of charcoal in order that the coming generations may trace their parentage to sources as pure and as clear as sunlight.

This is not the work of Douglass, the iconoclast. This is not the work of an orator "whose eloquence burst like a clap of thunder from a clear sky." But it is the work of the leader and the teacher that Mr. Washington is. It is the work of the man who first takes high ground himself, then by appealing to the under-

standing of his followers leads them step by step onward and upward to something nobler and better.

## HIS SCHOOL.

In the heart what is known as the "Black Belt" of Alabama is an institution at which nearly one thousand colored boy and girls are being yearly led further and further away from ignorance, idleness and vice, and whose minds are being impregnated with nobler conceptions of what is truly great and good in life. This institution--grand and magnificent in all its proportions--is a living, animated monument to the ability, genius, greatness and leadership of its worthy principal and founder, Booker T. Washington.

No doubt Holmes had in mind such a man as Mr. Washington when he said that no man who deserves a monument should ever have one.

When Mother Nature shall have reclaimed Mr. Washington as her own, what nobler monument could he desire to his memory than Tuskegee with her various departments, her boys being made intellectual men and skilled mechanics, and her girls cultivating every virtue and learning every detail necessary to the development of the successful woman?

Aside from these, there have already taken their places in the world men and women filled with the inspiration of Tuskegee principles and teachings, who in years to come when the claim of some man will be brought forth as the greatest of his race, will rise up with voices pathetic and hearts filled with devotion, call to memory Booker T. Washington, his works, his school, his conferencee, and the testimony of others as to his greatness and leadership.

The Nashville American, in its edition of March 12th, last, speaking of industrial education, said among other things: "The Tuskegee Institute was founded for the purpose of giving industrial training and education to colored pupils, and the entire State of Alabama is now experiencing great benefits from the good work done at the school."

General Armstrong, founder of the Hampton Institution, said of Tuskegee: "The Norman and Industrial Institution, with its six hundred students, $200,000 worth of land and buildings, six-

ty-two teachers, twenty-five of whom are graduates of Hampton, and an annual expense of $65,000, so far secured, is a wonderful growth, (about equal to that of this school in the same period), and is, I think, the grandest and noblest work of any colored man in the land. What compares with it in genuine power and value for good. It is on the Hampton plan, combining labor and study; commands high respect from both races: flies no denominational flag, but is thoroughly and earnestly Christain, is out of debt, well managed and organized. Mr. Washington deserves cordial assistance. Should not good people consider that he is made of flesh and blood, and unite to see him through, and fix forever a great light in the "Black Belt" of Alabama? Next to Frederick Douglass, Mr. Washington is the ablest negro in the country, and is doing the grandest and most successful work of any colored man in the land."

This last quotation is the expressed opinion of a man who devoted his life's labors to the education of black boys and girls, and the man to whom Mr. Washington is greatly indebted for what he is to-day. The recommendation of any institution or any man coming from such a source can be but beneficial and helpful.

Tuskegee, like Hampton, differs from so many institutions for colored boys and girls in that it impresses upon their minds the fact that they are preparing to lift burdens from the shoulders of their brethren, and in order to do this they must not be afraid to come in contract with those who are less fortunate than themselves. In short, Tuskegee teaches its pupils to speak, read and write English before they attempt Greek, Latin and Sanscrit; it puts common fractions in the young man's head before it puts Cæsar under his arm; it teaches him to hoe corn before it takes him into the region of stars; it teaches him the truthfulness of the maxim "*Labor omnia vincent.*"

Tuskegee fails wherein so many of our institutions succeed, that is in putting big heads on its students, thereby unfitting them for life's battles. Too often we have heard young men quote Cicero to unculivated audiences when they ought to have been using those plain, common-sense expressions which have placed Mr. Washington among the formost orators of the day.

When the masses of our people shall have become thoroughly imformed as to the needs of to-day; when colored men shall have learned wherein their great strength lieth, then the work of Tus-

kegee will be more appreciated and the greatness and leadership of Booker T. Washington will be universally acknowledged and conceded.

## HIS CONFERENCE AND SPEECHES.

Probably in no phase of Mr. Washington's work, not even in the building and management of the great institution, at whose head he stands shows his greatness and power of leadership more than the Annual Conferences which he holds at Tuskegee. These Conferences unlike political and other clans which are wonted to assemble having in view a single purpose, are shorn of politics in its narrow sense, but attempt to make men better citizens in the fullest sense of the word. They are broad in their conceptions for while the invitation is addressed to the colored men as the class most needing their help, white men are extended a cordial welcome, and many have expressed themselves as having been benefitted by their attendance. This phase of Mr. Washington's work shows his greatness and leadership because in this he has not only successfully called together large bodies of men of various minds and circumstances, but he has succesfully shaped a policy or course of action for them which has far removed them from their former condition. To substantiate this last statement we need but cite a quotation from a letter written by Miss Alice M. Bacon, a teacher at Hampton and published in the "Congregationalist," and used by Mr. Albert Shaw, in a letter to the "*Review of Reviews*" on "Negro Progress on the Tuskegee Plan." This estimable lady who attended the last Conference and wrote: "It was interesting to notice during the discussion how many changes were said to have taken place since the last Conference or since the first Conference. The Tuskegee Farmers' Conference evidently furnishing an incentive to whole communities, and a date from which events were to be reckoned. Many had been putting up school houses since the last conference. So great a change in the matter of one-room cabins was noted as dating from the Conference, that the original fraction used in the declaration that four-fifths of the people were still living in one-room cabins, was changed after the discussion to two-thirds as nearer the present state of affairs."

Here, then is an institution "furnishing an incentive to whole communities," and like the Olympiad, "a date from which events were to be reckoned, and a continual decrease in the value of the fraction representing the destitution of space necessary to the possession by every home of the privacy necessary to its highest and purest moral atmosphere. Such an accomplishment as this alone would be calculated to make Mr. Washington a leader, but this, as all who have followed my week and imperfect presentation of the subject so far will recognize, constitutes only a portion of the excellent work which this grand leader has done and is doing.

Aside from all this Mr. Washington is an orator of the first magnitude. His is not the thundering voice of Douglass as aimed at the bulwarks of slavery, which had enslaved all black men of the South and were fast making the white men of the North the sleuth hounds of Soutnern slave-drivers, but it is the calm, gentle voice of Lincoln at Gettysburg which arouses patriotism and inspires pride; it is the voice of the great Hollander counseling his people not to invade the sacred and vested rights of others, but to force back the ocean from their own shores and thus, by overcoming nature, increase their domain. Want of space prevents us from saying more in this connection. So we will close this part by quoting from a letter from Mr. Henry McFarland, to the "Philadeiphia Record," in which he says: "Booker T. Washington delivered in the hall of the Colored Y. M. C. Association, Washington, D. C., the most sensible and practical talk on how his race should work out its own material salvation which I ever heard or read. * * * Washington is indeed a remarkable man, intellectually, in several different ways, but not even his executive ability, marked as it is, is so extraordinary as his common-sense. This was so evident in his talk the other night that he carried his audience with him from beginning to end, and even men like Douglass and Langston were forced to applaud utterances, which, when they did not run counter to what they themselves had said, put them to blush by contrast. He indulged in no flights of rhetoric, but his cold facts, with homely but striking illustrations, were more convincing than eloquence."

## WHAT OTHERS SAY OF HIM.

That I am not alone in the opinion that to-day Booker T. Washington is a great man and the leader of his race, is, I think, well attested in the qoutations below, may of which were written while the blood still circulated through the veins of the "sage of Anacostia." The Washington News said of Mr. Washington: "The colored man who can persuade any number of his fellows that there is as much dignity in munual work as in preaching a sermon or being an attorney-at-law is a real benefactor not only to his own race, but to the whites."

"Providence seems to have put Mr. Washington in a place of leadership, and furnished him with an opportunity for pointing to his people the way upward, which makes him a factor of the first importance in the progress of his race," says the Chicago Advance. Prof. Wm. Patterson says: "This man is to the Negroes of American what Arnold was to the Brittish." "The entire State of Alabama is now experiencing great benefits from the good work done at his (Tuskegee) school." The Nashville American: "Surely, if we take into account his great work, it is not going too far to place Mr. Washington among the foremost men of his country and time." says the Boston Courant.

"There is no man in this whole country that has done more for our people than Prof. Booker T. Washington, of the Tuskegee, (Ala.) Institute." Daily Herald, Quincy, Ill.

"Earnestness, simplicity and common-sence characterized the man and his addresses at the Congregational Church January 20th. Very large congregations greeted him both morning and evening, and no one could have more attentive listeners. He speaks with great rapidity, with much emphasis, but weaves in his humor so that it is never wearisome. His stories were full of wit and always to the point. Some passages we exceedingly eloquent, especially one last evening where he described the contrast between the negro when he entered slavery and when he came out. He interested every one greatly on the subject. Mr. Washington goes from here to Chicago, where he speaks in Dr. Gunsaulus' and Dr. McPherson's churches."

The Boston Daily Globe in an editorial in its issue of Aug. 24th, last, says: "The directors of the Atlanta Exposition have done the right thing at the right time. They have invited that

able representative of "the colored South," Booker T. Washington, of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial, to deliver one of the special addresses on the occasion of the opening of the great Fair.

In the development of the resources of the South, the negro is destined to take no small or unimportant part. He is in America to stay, and the more encouragement he receives from the white man in his efforts to advance, the better it will be for both races and for the whole south.

The wise action of the Atlanta directors ought to be a potent factor in allaying race suspicions and jealousies throughout the south, and thus bringing about an era of good feeling between white and black througout Dixie land."

These are only a few of the compliments and appreciative expressions which Mr. Washington's work and character have drawn out, and which we think, justify us in taking the position we have taken.

Prof. Scarborough, who, by the way, can lay some claim to greatness himself, under the caption, "Hunting for a Moses," says in the New York Age of May last:

"There is no Douglass living. This generation has not furnished one, and the generation to come may not furnish one. Perhaps never again shall we see quite so wonderful, so unique a figure among us. But there may be one who can do what the present requires. It may call for some qualities not demanded by the past, during Douglass' lifetime and in his work, for to some extent different methods must prevail. Still the one who is to occupy the place made vacant so recently must be no demagogue, no extremist, no mere office-seeker, not one thirsting for power, possessed of ambition that seeks only self-aggrandizement not one on the sole track of wealth, not one whose destructive powers are superior to his constructive—one who would build barriers by fanning the flames of prejudice even in his own race.

"On the contrary, the leader must, first of all posses elements of true manhood, his integrity must be unquestioned, he must have breadth of views, be open to conviction and have the courage of the conviction he holds. He must be discreet and farseeing with such confidence in movement that he can afford to face criticism calmly, secure in the well-grounded belief that the course of events will in due time prove the wisdom of his action. He must be one who knows when to lead and when to follow,

and with all he must be able to command the recognition of his position on the of other races of men."

You have very neatly drawn the picture, Professor, now take the subject, not as I have imperfectly presented it, but in its perfection of detail, place it by the picture you have drawn, examine and compare them, note that the subject is no demagogue no office-seeker, no extremist, has no thirst for power, no self ambition, no covetousness for wealth, is no destroyer, no build er of barriers, but one who on the other hand, possesses all of those noble qualities and convictions which you claim for your ideal, and you will agree with me that in Booker T. Washington, the race has "*A Joshua in the camp.*"