

FAREWELL ADDRESS,
OF THE
REV. ROBERT L. STANTON, D. D.,
ON RESIGNING THE PRESIDENCY OF
OAKLAND COLLEGE.
DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT,
JUNE 29th, 1854.

ADDRESSES, &c.

*Gentlemen of the Board of Directors and Trustees,
Gentlemen of the Alumni Association, and
Ladies and Gentlemen:*

As I am about to vacate the office which I have held for three years past, it has seemed to me becoming the occasion, that I should address a few words to the friends of the Institution now assembled. The theme which is naturally suggested by the circumstances under which we are met together, is *SOUTHERN EDUCATION, as connected with the condition and prospects of Oakland College*. Upon this theme, I aim at nothing more than a plain, practical, business speech.

The Institution was founded in 1830, and has been ever since steadily accomplishing its mission, furnishing the means of education to a large number of young men, and sending out into the community many who now fill distinguished positions in the several learned professions. It has encountered the various vicissitudes of fortune incident to similar Institutions in new sections of the country, — now, from a full tide of prosperity elating its friends with high hope, and then, from unforeseen reverses, depressing them to the very borders of despair. The occasion of this fluctuating feeling has, at one time, been the large amount of funds raised towards an endowment, and the subsequent failure to pay, and the unfortunate investment and consequent loss of large amounts actually paid; or, again, a large accession of students through some favoring breeze in the public mind, followed by diminished numbers, consequent upon some unfounded prejudice, or it may be some particular case of discipline; and, finally, and most sadly of all, as a depressing cause, the violent death of its venerable founder and President, who stood at its helm undaunted, alike when the billows rocked and the tempest howled around it, as when the sun shone in his brightness, and who would

have continued at his post, had God permitted it, as long as there should have remained a plank above water. It was his child. He watched it for long years with more than parental solicitude, and freely poured out for it his prayers, his tears, and his blood. His character and fortune were embarked in it, his whole energies were identified with it; hence, there were peculiar reasons why himself and brother, for several of its earlier years constituting its entire Faculty, should have recognized an obligation to stand by it, which cannot reasonably be predicated of any other men.

But, whatever may have been the reverses of this Institution, however just or unjust may have been their causes, and however confident may have been the predictions that each crisis would prove the final and fatal one, it still exists, by far the oldest College in the State which has been in continued operation, accomplishing its good work begun almost a quarter of a century ago, while within that period several other Colleges have been founded in this and the adjoining States, had an ephemeral and sickly existence, passed away and been forgotten.

Whether Oakland College is destined longer to continue its name and good offices to the community, whether it shall do this for a few years or for many, and whether it shall now take on the vigor of manhood, or drag out an imbecile life, or hasten to a premature death, is left to its friends to decide. This is precisely the question which presses us to-day. That a crisis has now arrived, and such as is believed to be more serious than any which it has hitherto encountered, is evident from what is upon the lips of many of its most devoted friends. What are the causes which have led to this crisis—how it may be met—and on whom rests the obligation to do what is required?—are the questions which I propose to discuss.

In order to understand the true nature of the present crisis, it may be well to advert to the condition of the College at the time of and immediately subsequent to the death of its late President, in September, 1851. That event caused a thrill of apprehension as to the possibility of its continuance. The effort to sustain it further was

deemed an experiment, by many of its warmest friends. The chief cause of this was its pecuniary embarrassment.

At the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, in April, 1852, as seen in their Annual Report, it appeared that the College was indebted to the Faculty in the sum of \$23,604 42 (nearly \$14,000 of which was due the estate of the late President)—a sum which, if properly invested at the time when the debt began to accumulate, would have prevented it altogether, prevented the serious embarrassments which arose from it, and been still remaining as a partial endowment. Besides this, the same report mentions other claims then pressing to the amount of \$4,449 91, making a total amount of over \$28,000. Besides these sums named in the report, there were other debts amounting to about \$3,000. And added to this, there was a debt due the Commercial Bank of Rodney, for stock, amounting, principal and interest, to \$30,000. At the time of presenting their report, the Board stated that all these claims were urgent, and that they saw no immediate prospect of meeting them. This state of things exhibits something of the pecuniary embarrassment of the College within six months after the death of the President. And beyond all this, it had no available means from even a partial endowment, having lost invested funds several years before to the amount of some \$60,000. Well might its friends be discouraged. But at length, the very magnitude of the difficulties under which the Institution labored, served the more to awaken them to the necessity of a vigorous effort for its relief. The result was that by the 1st of June, 1852, or a little later, these debts were fully liquidated, entirely through the liberality of individual members of the Board of Trustees and a few other gentlemen; so that within a period of about two months from the exhibit made of this alarming indebtedness, its friends could say that the Institution did not owe a dollar—a striking contrast between the discouraging language of the annual report, and the prompt action and complete success of the same gentlemen who adopted it, and furnishing a good illustration of what may be done when a large hearted liberality and determined energy are combined. It should be stated

also, that, at the same annual meeting, in April, 1852, an effort prosecuted mainly by one of the Trustees, had resulted in securing a fund for the support of the Presidency for five years on an independent basis, so that the tuition fees would fully pay the other members of the Faculty. Thus, the Institution was not only relieved entirely of debt, but its revenue was sufficient to pay all its expenses; and such, with a small exception, has been its condition up to the present time. It should further be mentioned, that, within the period of five years, during which the support of the Presidency was provided for, it was believed that a full endowment might be raised for this department, to be called the "Chamberlain Fund." Within about a year after my accession to the office, I was assured by the agent that \$10,000 of this amount had been secured. What has been done since, with the exception of \$1,000 secured by myself, in August last, I am unable to say. Beyond all this, during the last year, chiefly from lands sold within the State, donated to the College by a benevolent gentleman of Natchez, the Trustees have expended about \$9,000, in completing the Chapel and main College edifice and two Society Halls, and in repairing other buildings. The total amount thus expended within a little more than two years, in liquidation of debts and completion of buildings, by which, at this moment, the College is entirely out of debt, and all its main buildings are in good condition, and are equal to any buildings in the South, is fully *seventy thousand dollars*. This amount does not include what has been paid for the current expenses of the Institution, and for sundry minor expenditures; and it is independent of what has been realized to the "Chamberlain Fund," and for other objects. This showing exhibits the fact that the Trustees and other liberal friends of the Institution have not, within the last three years been idle, or indifferent to the wants of the College and the welfare of the public, but have evinced their zeal by that species of effort which is commonly regarded as the surest test of sincerity in any enterprise—they have freely, and as is believed judiciously, expended their money, a large portion of which has been taken from their own pockets.

In other points of view, the Institution has shown during the past three years as much prosperity as in any former period. There has been as large an average attendance of students in the College proper; the number entered for the present term being precisely the same as the number in attendance during the first term after my connection with the Institution. The Preparatory Department has been more fluctuating. It is believed that a larger number would have entered both departments had it not been for the frequent changes in the Faculty, tending to create an impression in the public mind unfavorable to the stability of the Institution. If, furthermore, we may take the statements of those most competent to judge, the discipline and order which have prevailed during the same period, have been an improvement upon former times. There has been no case of expulsion, and no cause for it. While within the year past, there have been, in many Colleges, both North and South, rebellions, duels, and other highly disgraceful scenes, followed by expulsions of whole classes, nothing of the kind has occurred here; and on one point, certainly, great commendation should be bestowed upon the students of this Institution, in the fact that during the year past no collision tending to the disruption of good feeling among themselves has occurred—a fact which the oldest Professor states cannot be predicated of former years. Offences have occurred, and discipline has followed, and other offences have transpired of which complaint has been made, that have escaped our vigilance; but I doubt whether there has been less serious infraction of College rules in any College in our country. To this may be added the fact, which is verified by the testimony of those who have attended our semi-annual examinations, that the progress in study and attainment in scholarship which have been made, for the time referred to, have fully equalled, and in the judgment of others surpassed, what have been accomplished here at any former period. This is said, not in disparagement of any who have gone before us, but in simple justice to ourselves, founded upon the testimony of competent and impartial judges.

On the whole, I am confident in the position, that when a just view

of the real nature of the case shall be taken—when the difficulties incident to a comparatively young and unendowed Institution, its limited resources, its location, the competition encountered, and the prevalent disposition throughout the South to send young men to Northern Colleges, shall be duly weighed—the public at large will agree in the opinion now entertained by its Trustees and others whose opportunities enable them to form a correct judgment, that the Institution has accomplished as much for education as could reasonably have been expected. It has kept on the even tenor of its way, quietly, honorably, usefully, without intermission, during nearly the full time allotted to a generation of mankind.

The question very naturally arises, suggested by the facts just noticed—If such is the condition of the Institution, why is it deemed that a serious crisis is at hand? The solution is easy. The salaries paid for Professors are not sufficient to induce competent men to remain permanently connected with the College. As the College has no available endowment, the only reliance for payment of salaries (except that of the President), is upon tuition fees. There is no earthly reason for supposing that men competent to fill places in a College Faculty will be content to receive the amount paid here for salaries, with the expensiveness of living encountered in this section of the country, with prices advancing as they have been within a few years past, and with a demand for good teachers in every part of our country, never so great as at the present moment. On such a stipend men with families must necessarily run into debt; and men without families will not be content long to remain in this secluded spot; and even if they would, I doubt whether it is wise to enforce upon them the necessity of perpetual or even temporary celibacy. But beyond this, there are wanting suitable houses for Professors. If competent men could be found, with families, (and no others, for permanency, is it desirable to have,) there is no adequate provision made for their accommodation. The consequence of this state of things is, that frequent changes occur in the Faculty from resignation. From various

causes, within the three years since my connection with the College, there have been four resignations from the Faculty of the College proper, and including those who expect to leave at the end of the present session, there will have been six, constituting the entire Faculty. These constant fluctuations tend to impair the confidence of the public in the stability of the Institution, to decrease the number of students beyond what it otherwise would be and thereby diminish its revenue, and in many other ways to cripple its energies, to impede its usefulness, and to discourage those who are engaged in giving instruction. This condition of affairs—with no rational prospect that a remedy is near at hand—has constituted the prime reason why members of the Faculty, including myself, have determined on vacating their chairs. For one, I have never been accustomed to shrink from duty, where duty is plain. But I cannot perceive it to be my duty to remain in the post I have filled, at the head of the Institution, with the prospects which have seemed to be before it for some time past; and I am also firm in the conviction that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a competent Faculty, unless ample provision shall be made for their support. I utter no complaint for myself. My own salary has been sufficient. But in other departments, so frequent have been the changes, arising from this want, that the consequences to all concerned have been disheartening. This very fact will render it the more difficult in future to fill the vacancies, unless a change for the better shall occur.

This brings me to the inquiry—How the present crisis should be met? On this point, I will barely name, what, in my judgment, is essential to the prosperity of the College. 1. The salaries of the Faculty must be raised to a point commensurate to what is needful for their comfortable support, and the increased expensiveness of the times, and payment must be made punctually. 2. Additional houses must be erected for their accommodation. 3. Permanent and comfortable buildings must be provided for the students, as those which they now occupy are fast going to decay. 4. The Preparatory Department, according to the recorded opinion of both Boards, should be

removed to the point indicated by their action, or to some other suitable place. This change is demanded by the interests of both Departments.

These, among other measures which might be named, are deemed essential. The reasons are obvious; and until efforts are made for the accomplishment of these objects with a reasonable prospect of success, it is my deliberate opinion—and in this strong friends of the College coincide—that the cause of education would be ultimately better served by closing the College buildings for the present—until an endowment could be secured—than by attempting to continue the Institution through the liberal contributions of a few friends, which will, as heretofore, be soon swallowed up in a constant struggle with emergencies.

How, then, is this crisis to be met? What can accomplish these objects, and remedy the evils mentioned? There is one thing which can, and only one—a *large expenditure of money*. The first point to which the friends of the College ought to direct their attention, is to provide for it *an ample endowment*. I have heard that the remark has been made, though not to me, that if the College could not support itself, it ought to go down. Just as certainly as that position is taken by its friends, it will go down, do what else you may. Was the instance ever known, on either side of the Atlantic, where a College prospered for any considerable time, which was worthy of the name, without an endowment of well invested funds? I venture to say that one cannot be named, unless it be of that class termed State Institutions, and their endowment is the public treasury. Nor do the friends of Colleges ever dream that any Institution can have a vigorous existence without this. All other provisions are but temporary expedients. The friends of Oakland should look the fact in the face, and ponder it well, that it has not one dollar of permanent fund which pays anything towards the support of its Faculty, except three scholarships, of one thousand dollars each; and even they only yield five per cent. interest—just one-half what the State now authorizes as legal interest for money loaned.

What would be the manifest advantages of an ample endowment? Among others, I will barely name three. 1. You could in that case make the standard of scholarship just what it should be, and demand in every instance that the standard should be reached, at each step and during each term of the course to the end, on pain of immediate removal—just as is done in every high-toned College in the land. 2. You could in that case, and upon the same penalty, maintain proper discipline—a feature in education which is second to no other. And I venture the assertion that, in regard to these two points—scholarship and discipline—it is not within the compass of human possibility to reach the proper standard in either, with any Faculty selected from the fallen race of Adam to instruct the children of Adam, without that ample provision which shall place the Institution, in respect to all its wants, moral and pecuniary, entirely above the ever ebbing and flowing surges of the public opinion. I am a firm believer in the reign of the people, in all matters appertaining to man's political welfare—and would give them, as a certain class of politicians style it, "the largest liberty"—but I am as firm in the conviction that there are some things appertaining to our moral and social welfare, of which the people at large are not as well qualified to judge, and among them I place all that concerns the management of our higher educational Institutions. 3. The third advantage I name, which would flow from an ample endowment—and I name it last, because with many it is the most important, though with me it is the very least of the three in moment—is, in that case you can furnish education at a cheaper rate. If the Professors were supported upon an ample endowment, you could then reduce tuition fees to a point which would compete with other Institutions. Our State University furnishes instruction in the full College course for less than one-half of what is charged here. It is able to do this because the Professors are paid from the State treasury. While this is so, and tuition thus reduced, it cannot be expected that our numbers in College can equal theirs. Most gentlemen will be directed in the education of their sons by the same principle which directs them in the purchase of their plantation supplies—other things

being equal, they will purchase where commodities are the cheapest, whether material or intellectual.

I think it must be conceded—all experience shows it—that an ample endowment is the only sure basis on which the prosperity of a College can be justly placed. And what hinders this being done for Oakland? Were its friends ever more numerous? Were they ever more able? Was the country generally ever more prosperous? Is it not conceded on all hands that education is essential to the highest good of the country? Will not the untold wealth which is flowing into the coffers of the people, in such abundance as was never before known, be sure to prove the ruin of the young men who are to inherit it, unless their minds shall be imbued with the principles of a sound education? Where, then, shall this education be furnished? Where shall Colleges be sustained? Will you always consent to be tributary to other sections of the country?—forever to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the North? There is no difficulty in raising funds for railroads, even in Mississippi. Only let it be known that an important road can be run through this or that particular county only on the condition that the people raise several hundred thousand dollars, and it is no sooner announced than the money is forthcoming. People will consent to be taxed to almost any amount for such works; and perhaps will, in the same breath, object to the rates of tuition which a dependent College demands for a bare subsistence. And what will this surprising external prosperity avail—what will all the railroads of the world avail for the country—unless the minds and hearts of the people shall be trained in the elements of a sound Christian education? Without this, these greater facilities will only enable them to move all the more rapidly on the high road to ruin! The wealth and prosperity of the country will prove its destruction, unless the salutary influences of a Christian education are thrown around its young men, on whom the hopes of the country depend. The means for this are in your own hands. An Institution worthy of their bestowment is in your midst. Its massive walls rise before you. Its deep and broad foundations were laid one-fourth of a century ago. It has done much good. It may

do much more ; but its best friends believe that it cannot do this unless it shall be fully endowed.

The present time is somewhat remarkable for the successful efforts which have been and are being made for the endowment of Colleges. Some which have labored under great embarrassments have succeeded in raising large amounts, and others which have stood foremost in the ranks, are increasing theirs with great facility. Lafayette College, in Penn., has lately raised \$100,000, and aims at increasing it to \$150,000; Dickinson College has raised \$100,000 within the year by scholarships; Washington College, has lately secured \$130,000 upon the same plan; while Jefferson College, is aiming at a large endowment. These four colleges are in the same State. Their calls have been met with the most liberal responses. The College of New Jersey, at Princeton, is at this moment successfully engaged in adding to its present large endowment \$150,000; while old Yale, one of the pioneers in education, is adding \$100,000 to hers. It is also stated on good authority, that several Baptist Colleges, in our country, have, within six years, raised \$1,500,000. All these Institutions; and many others, have seized on the present wonderful prosperity of the country as the very time for them to exert themselves. The results show that they have done wisely. Why should not Oakland follow their example? If the bard of Avon were here he would tell you that

" There is a tide in the affairs of " Colleges as of " men,

" Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;

" Omitted, all the voyage of their life

" Is bound in shallows, and in miseries :

* * * * *

" And we must take the current when it serves,

" Or lose our ventures."

Can there ever possibly be a better time for the friends of Oakland to act, than to avail themselves of the present flow of unparalleled prosperity? You could go before the community now as you could not formerly when oppressed with debt. You would not be obliged to solicit indemnity for the past; you would only ask protection for the future. Every dollar now gained and well invested would tell on all coming

generations, provided an ample endowment were secured. And what hinders it being done? *Only one thing.* The people have money enough—but *they love it too well.* They are guilty of that sin which the Son of God pronounced—"the root of *all evil.*" Is it not a shame and a reproach to humanity, that, in a section of country of such abounding wealth, where the benefits to society which education confers are admitted, an Institution capable of so much good should be continually kept in a state of absolute want, while other Institutions are counting their endowments by hundreds of thousands?

There remains the inquiry—If this College must secure an ample endowment in order to insure its prosperity, on whom rests the responsibility of contributing the funds? On this point I shall express my own views. If any persons dissent from them I shall not complain.

In answer, I say, that—*Not on the Church, as such,* rests this responsibility. Oakland College is under the control, to a limited extent, of an ecclesiastical body, the Synod of Mississippi, of the Presbyterian Church. This body appoints the Board of Directors; the Board appoints the Faculty; and to the Synod, annually, the reports of the Board are made, showing the condition of the Institution. The only requisition in the Constitution of the College, of an ecclesiastical bearing, is, that the President shall be a minister in good standing in the Presbyterian Church. Others of the Faculty may be, and practice shows that they have been, in some instances, members of other churches, and of no church. Besides this, the Constitution expressly prohibits the Faculty from teaching anything of a sectarian character. These things show, that although this is a denominational College, yet it is not so in any objectionable sense. It has no Theological Department, and its curriculum is substantially that of Colleges generally in our country.

But, yet, in consequence of its connection with the Synod, many of its friends have supposed that the *Church, as such,* and every member thereof, is especially charged, by virtue of membership therein, with the duty of providing for its pecuniary wants. I have never been able to see the justness of this conclusion. The Synod of Mississippi

embraces nearly all of the State of Mississippi, with the State of Louisiana. Within this whole territory, there are not more than four or five Presbyterian Churches, that would be considered able, by a fair judgment, to contribute much beyond what is necessary for their own organized existence—that is, to erect their houses of worship, and to pay their Pastor's salaries, and other current expenses. At least, this is always their plea, and judging from the scanty stipend which their Pastors generally receive, and from the frequent removals which this occasions, we infer that there is some force in the plea. Supposing these Churches to have some pecuniary ability beyond this, what is the first duty of the people as church members? Unquestionably to contribute to the several causes of benevolence which belong to the Church proper; those causes which have in view the spread of the Gospel, at home and abroad. When I was a Pastor, I always took this view of the case, and my station in the Presidency of a College has not served in the least to change it. When there are so many just and urgent calls upon the Church, as such, for money, for purposes which are strictly of and for the Gospel, I deem it to be the duty of church members to meet such demands as first in order, as they are evidently first in importance. If they have means to go beyond this, and especially if they are blessed with wealth, then devolves the additional duty of contributing to build up Institutions for the advancement of secular learning; and no one can say that Presbyterians, in any part of the world, have ever been behind any others in their zeal for collegiate education.

But waiving this view of the case if you please, what is the actual condition of the Synod in reference to what may be termed its Church schemes? Some three years ago it projected the establishment in New Orleans of a Board of Publication Depository, for the purposes of the Church within the Synod. To carry out this, the Synod, at its meeting in December last, decided that \$40,000 were necessary, and they looked for the completion of the effort to raise it by April, 1856. This amount was assessed upon the various Presbyteries, and it was urged as a duty upon the Churches as such to raise this large sum. Now, to say nothing of other schemes, when we add to this

amount the current expenses of each Church, the demands upon each in building houses of worship, and for other local purposes, and forget not that for the most part the Churches within the Synod are poor, and bear in mind also that every pastor takes the view of a church member's duty which I have here stated, and urges that view upon the people, we may see what hope there is that the Church, as such, within the Synod will feel an obligation to aid largely in the endowment of Oakland College. I deem it perfectly idle to indulge any expectation of material aid from that quarter. While I say this, I fully recognize the duty which sacredly binds all persons as individuals and as citizens, who are enrolled as members in these Churches, who are able to do so, to aid in this work to the full extent of their resources. But more on this point hereafter.

I answer again, that—*Not by the State* is this duty likely to be discharged. You have supplicated the Legislature time and again for aid for Oakland, and you have supplicated in vain. It would be idle to renew the attempt. In so far as this is a denominational College, I seriously doubt the propriety of seeking aid from the State treasury. It opens the door for every sect in the land to follow such an example, and gives strong countenance to the minions of Papal hierarchy, who are besieging every Legislature from Maine to California for a portion of the public money for their worse than sectarian schools. That a most solemn duty rests upon every sovereign State to provide the means of education for all classes of the people, and to provide liberally for all grades of education from the primary school to the university, is a proposition which in this enlightened day will scarcely be questioned. No duty which the State owes to the community can be plainer than this. The general recognition of this duty by the various States of our Union, each in its own way, shows that the point need not be argued. The State of Mississippi is very much behind many other States in providing for primary schools, but in regard to collegiate education she has established her University at Oxford, and it is probably progressing with as much success as any Institution of the same age and opportunities. While the University is thus dependent

on the State, it might not be so easy to make out a case devolving upon the State the obligation of duty to aid this or any other denominational College, even if there were no objection to receiving such aid. At all events the friends of Oakland ought not for a moment to expect aid from the State treasury.

Upon whom, then, devolves the duty of providing an ample endowment for this Institution? I answer again—*Not solely on its Board of Trustees, and a few other liberal friends.* That they have given nearly all its funds heretofore is an honor to them, though a reproach to others. A few friends have done what has been done here for education for twenty-five years past. They have erected these noble halls. They have sustained the men who have here toiled, and struggled, and died in the good cause of imbuing the minds of the hundreds of young men who have been here gathered, with those sentiments which have fitted them for honor and usefulness. They have sent out its one hundred and fifty graduates, many of whom adorn the various learned professions, some of whom are teachers of youth, and others ministers of the Gospel in our own State. They have done all this by their counsel, their time, and their money, without which no part of this good work could have been accomplished. They have kept the wheels of this machinery in motion, through good report and through evil, while other Institutions, like Jonah's gourd, have grown up in a night and perished in a night, all around them. Why, only two weeks ago, a portion of this Board assembled in an adjoining room in this building, in view of the present crisis, gave their solemn obligations to each other, in due legal form, in addition to all they had done heretofore, for \$17,700 towards an endowment. This amount has since been increased to over \$30,000. Had the Institution a few more such friends, I should not have been speaking in this strain before you to-day.

But I have said that the obligation to provide this endowment, does not rest upon this Board alone. The question still returns—Upon whom does it devolve? I answer, affirmatively and directly—*Upon the entire community, and especially upon men of wealth, no matter*

what may be their creed in religion, or their party in politics. I think this position can be made good.

What are the great purposes which such an Institution is designed to serve? Is it merely to educate the sons of A., B., and C.—or, if you please, to educate the sons of the entire community? By no means. So far as this goes it is well. But there are purposes which Colleges serve far higher than any benefit which those educated in them individually receive. Colleges are the conservators of the public good in every possible point of view. Men who have been thoroughly and properly trained within College walls are as leaven throughout society. Do you not generally find them on the side of public virtue, defenders of right, supporters of law and order? Does not their education give them stations of influence and posts of honor in the community? Are they not, with rare exceptions, arrayed in behalf of every thing which makes for the peace and well-being of the family of man? But these questions suggest answers which are as trite as they are true. It is conceded, on every hand, that a sound education, does more, under God, for the security of property, for the safety of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, for the promotion of peace, for the advancement of society in the arts, for the development of our resources, individual and national, and for the elevation of man, socially, politically, and morally, than all other causes thrice multiplied. On whom, then, devolves the duty of furnishing the means by which educational institutions may be sustained? *Upon every man who has any thing at stake in society.* And who has not? The man who has the most at stake should feel this obligation pressing him with the heaviest weight. We sometimes hear it said—"I have no children to educate, why call on me?"—or, "I intend to send my sons to the North, why call on me?" If you are not blessed with children to educate, or if you intend to send your sons elsewhere, you yet have other interests to be cared for in the State where you live, and that they may be cared for properly, you must aid in providing the means for educating other people's children. There can be no independent isolation. Every one's interests are bound up in the good or ill which shall befall society.

But go beyond this mere principle of self-interest. Have you no patriotism? What must befall our common country, what become of our republican government, what the hopes of the world which has taken courage from our example in its struggles with oppression, if the means of education be not furnished by those into whose laps the Almighty has poured such abundant wealth? And is there any thing peculiar in your local position, as citizens of one of the Southern States of this Confederacy, which should awake you to efforts in this cause? Then let your deeds attest the sincerity of your professions. Let your money be given as freely to endow Institutions for diffusing all the blessings of peace, as some have formerly said theirs should be for providing the munitions for a civil war. When the people at large shall be moved by such an impulse, the South will be amply furnished with Colleges. There are some things for which the South must forever be dependent on the North. Of her you must buy your flour, as she is dependent on you for her cotton. But in the matter of education, in its higher grades as well as in its lower,—in this most important of all things for your weal—you may be entirely independent if you will. But the price of that independence is the cheerful, the ungrudging, the liberal bestowment of your money. If you withhold this, the appellation, however degrading, of a tribute-paying people, will ever be richly deserved.

If you admit the proposition that you are bound to aid Colleges, for the reasons given, do you ask why you are bound to sustain Oakland? I answer by asking—has it not earned a claim to your patronage? Has not its steady progress for so many long years a strong claim upon your sympathies, and your money? Does any man in the community say, as an excuse, that it is a denominational Institution? The only feature, practically, of this nature, is in the religious qualifications demanded of its President; and if this be an objection, how comes it to pass that so very large a proportion of all the Colleges in the United States have a Presbyterian clergyman at their head? Let no man in this section of the country who has money which he can bestow upon an Institution of learning, hesitate as to

his duty of bestowing it here, until he can show a College which with its opportunities has done more for sound learning, or until he has seriously made the effort to build up Institutions elsewhere. Do you say that the duty devolves on those in its immediate vicinity? For what reason? Institutions must have some locality, and they cannot be placed in every neighborhood. For reasons deemed sufficient, a College has been founded here. Point to another in the State which has numbered half its years, or done one-tithe of its good. It is not sectarian in religion, or partisan in politics. It holds the dignified position, which is the glory of a College, of pursuing the quiet paths of learning, and reaping those results which infuse into society no disturbing element, but which prepare the way for a higher career of advancement in all that appertains to the welfare of man, now and forever. Who, then, should sustain it? Rather, who should not?

The only criterion, by which, in my judgment, a matter of this importance can be tried, is each one's ability. I say nothing of interest. I put it upon the higher ground of duty. To sustain Institutions of learning is a duty men owe to themselves, their children, their country, and their God. The true measure of their duty is their ability. What a weight of responsibility in this matter, do men of wealth sustain in the judgment of God? They have nothing but what he claims as his. They are his stewards for its proper disposal. If I were possessed of wealth, I would as soon venture into the presence of God with my hands wreaking with the blood of the innocent dead, as to go there with my heart steeled against the demands of those Institutions on which the highest good of mankind for this world and the next so much depends. With the Bible for my guide, I should expect salvation in the one case just as soon as in the other. It was He, who "spake as man never spake," who said, in view of an unwillingness to bestow wealth upon objects worthy of it, "How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!" There is no sin in possessing wealth; but there is a "love of money" which "is the root of *all* evil." A great wrong is done to its possessor as well as to the world, when that love operates to withhold it from objects

eminently calculated to be a blessing to man through all his generations.

A single remark more, and I shall have discharged my duty, but yours will remain. I have been a resident of the Southwest for more than seventeen years. When I left it in the Spring of 1851, I supposed that my work in this section of the country was done. I returned to the State, on business, in September, and arrived at Natchez in less than a week after my early, constant, and warm-hearted friend, the late President of the College, came to his untimely death. I was immediately urged by friends of the College to permit my name to be presented for the station which he had filled with such signal ability. For weeks after my election was named to me I hesitated, and finally accepted the place with reluctance, following, however, as I believed, the leadings of Providence. I now leave the position, after the work of three collegiate years, and intend again removing to the North, believing, for what seem to be sufficient reasons, that the same wise Providence so directs. But I leave both the College and the sunny South with no ordinary feelings, and I trust I shall not be chargeable with affectation in expressing them. For the Institution, I feel a deep solicitude. My most ardent wishes will ever be cherished, and my prayers shall ever ascend to Heaven, for its welfare. I hope I may live to see *your* duty to it so well discharged that its capstone may ere long be laid amidst the shoutings of the whole community.

It would indeed be strange, if a residence of seventeen years in this section of the South, had not created ties which a second sundering must render doubly painful. More than my whole professional life has been spent here. I was ordained to the ministry by the Presbytery of Mississippi, in the bounds of which this Institution is situated. These brethren, constituting, in part, its Directors, have been my ministerial companions, my friends, and my counsellors. The ties which have bound us together are stronger than death. For them all, I shall cherish a deep affection, as the pleasing memories of our former labors shall pass in review in after life. May the rich blessing of God crown their efforts to serve him with the most abounding success.

But my affections are not for them alone. For the people of the South I have formed the strongest attachments. I know their generous impulses, their princely hospitality, their warm friendships, their high, moral bearing. I cannot forget these characteristics of the Southerner, wherever my lot in future may be cast, whether North or South of Mason and Dixon's line. But I cannot hesitate to add, that the ardor of my feelings, as respects those whom I now address, will be somewhat damped, if, with such amplitude of wealth as God has given you, OAKLAND COLLEGE shall be permitted to linger and die for lack of your timely aid. Let yours be the course, rather, one and all, that shall at last secure for each of you at the threshold of the mansion of the blessed—"Well done, good and faithful servant!"

