AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

The Philosophian and Adelphian Societies

OF THE

FURMAN UNIVERSITY,

AT

THEIR ANNUAL MEETING,

GREENVILLE, S. C., JULY 18, 1855,

BY

HON. J. L. ORR.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Furman University, July 19th, 1855.

DEAR SIR: In behalf of the Philosophian Society, we earnestly solicit for publication the able and instructive Address delivered before the Literary Societies of the University on the 18th instant.

Expressing the wish that you will comply with our request,

We are your most obedient servants,

J. K. McIVER,
J. H. NASH,
T. G. PEGUES,
} *Committee.*

HON. JAS. L. ORR.

Anderson, S. C., August 6th, 1855.

GENTLEMEN: I have received your note requesting a copy of my Address before the Literary Societies of Furman University for publication.

I accede to your request, and transmit you herewith the manuscript.

Accept my thanks for the complimentary terms adopted by you in communicating the action of the Society whose organ you are

I am, very respectfully, gentlemen,

Yours, &c.

JAMES L. ORR.

MESSRS. J. K. McIVER,
J. H. NASH,
T. G. PEGUES,
} Committee.

ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Literary Societies
of Furman University:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The day is bright and joyous for the patrons and friends of this University. The fourth year of its existence is now terminated. That which, in its inception, was considered an experiment full of temerity, has demonstrated its entire practicability. The halls have been crowded with matriculates; and this intelligent audience is here to felicitate Professors and Students, respectively, on their triumphs of teaching and learning. Parents and guardians, friends and spectators, with smiling faces and cheerful hearts, are here to congratulate proficients and graduates on the trophies that industry and assiduity have enabled them to bear away.

And, yet, there are some heavy shadows cast over the retrospect of the past session. Death has stolen into this campus—has seized upon his victims; and fond affection, with all its kindly solaces, has been impotent to stay the fearful tragedy which he has enacted. Maturity and youth have alike withered beneath his chilling embrace. In the prime of manhood, and in the midst of his usefulness, Professor Mims has sunk into an untimely grave. "A great man in Israel has fallen!" Long will his death be felt as a severe blow on this Institution; but longer still will his memory be cherished by love, friendship and veneration.

Youth, too, in its innocence and buoyancy, has been stricken down by the destroyer; and the earth has gloomily closed over the fair features and elastic forms of those who came here, less than one brief year ago, full of hope and life and promise. Friendship has already moistened with tears their graves, and

poured the balm of generous sympathy into the souls of bereaved parents. Their hearts bleed! Let us not reopen afresh those wounds which time alone can heal. These dispensations teach the living "what shadows we are and what shadows we pursue," and admonish us to prepare for that solemn change which awaits all mankind.

With these sad exceptions, the retrospect is pleasing to patrons and students. The machinery of organization has been put fully into motion, and its workings are harmonious and encouraging. Some of the members of the University now end their collegiate career, to enter upon the stern and rugged duties of active life. To such let me say: You go forth with weighty responsibilities upon you. You are the first-born of this noble Institution, and the critical eyes of the public will be fixed upon your progress. Have you qualified yourselves, by your acquisitions here, to give her reputation and influence? Will your career be so upright and renowned as to inspire admiration for and confidence in your *Alma Mater?* Will your example be so bright and distinguished as to induce anxious parents to commit to these walls, and to your honored preceptors, the guardianship and culture of the minds and morals of their sons? Will your aspirations be so pure and exalted that your cotemporaries will emulate, and your successors here be incited to imitate you? If you have, perchance, neglected to partake of the rich intellectual repast spread so bountifully before you here, then should you be painfully and promptly assiduous to repair elsewhere the deplorable omission. It is not yet too late to reclaim lost hours and neglected opportunities. The destiny of Furman University is to be fixed by her Alumni; and how ungrateful, if there were no higher considerations involved in your failure, that *her* sons should blight her fair fame and mildew her budding prospects! But, young gentlemen, I have no forebodings in regard to your future. You will honor, and not abase, this Institution. You will go out into society her friends; and your successes will be her highest commendation.

The establishment of this University by the Baptist denomination in South Carolina was wise, benevolent and tolerant

Its effect will be to raise the standard of attainments in your clergy, and to enlarge the intellectual accomplishments of your laity. When you became the patrons of a high seat of learning, you did not restrict the enjoyment of your fountains of knowledge and science to the members of your faith only. It was a generous liberality which you exercised, when you invited the youth of all tenets to come and drink at your unpolluted fountains, without exacting conformity to your opinions — thus actually waiving the right to teach your peculiar religion, whilst allowing them to slake their thirst for knowledge. Your enlightened liberality endowed it, and yet no sectarian text-book has been introduced into the course of study; no sectarian dogma is inculcated from the professor's or chaplain's desk. You have enlarged the field of letters. The policy you have adopted will induce thousands to cultivate it who would not otherwise have ever crossed its hedges. You have removed all impediments, and have proclaimed that here education shall be free to all sects. This toleration is honorable to your profession, and you will have an abundant reward when the garnered treasures of this place shall be scattered by your pupils throughout the length and breadth of the commonwealth. You will see it in the ameliorated and exalted moral and intellectual condition of the people; you will see it in your high schools — in the pulpit — at the bar — beside the bed of sickness. You will see it in the increasing dignity of the public press, and in the elevation and refinement of literature.

Education of high order always makes the deepest footprints on society; without it, there can be but feeble progress and imperfect civilization. The State that expends judiciously the largest sum for its dissemination is certainly to be recompensed in the exaltation of its members; and hence, the State is deeply the debtor to its individual citizens who voluntarily contribute and combine their private means to promote public education. You have served the State in creating and endowing this Institution. The extent of that service can be more fully understood by explaining the precise relation of the Institution to the public. It is endowed by the Baptist denomination and their

friends, and they are all its pledged patrons. But in the collegiate or literary department it is organized with peculiar caution to abstain from teaching a single dogma of Baptist faith. This being true, can any objection be raised, in the mind of the most bigoted sectarian of any other denomination, to placing his son or ward under its pupilage? The trustees have eschewed the inculcation of religious tenets in its organization, and the faculty in its operation.

It is true that the student may breathe a moral atmosphere having more elements of the Baptist than any other religious persuasion, for most of the faculty are of that faith, and there is also a theological school, designed to prepare young men for the ministry, attached to the University. It is equally true that young men preparing for the ministry in *all* the orthodox Protestant churches are admitted to the collegiate and theological departments free of all charge for tuition. It is equally true that all students are at full liberty to attend Divine service on the Sabbath in any church — no rule prescribes attendance on a Baptist chaplain or in a Baptist church. Those great truths of the Christian religion, only, in which all Protestants concur, are expounded in the college walls — all controverted doctrines and principles are studiously avoided by chaplain and professors.

And yet, it is urged, as a potent objection to this and similar denominational institutions, that they are sectarian. Is it just to Wofford, Erskine and Furman University, to assail them, and war upon their usefulness, by an imputation so unfounded in fact?

What constitutes a sectarian college? Surely, not its endowment. It is the inculcation, by the faculty or chaplain, as a part of the education of the pupil, the peculiar tenets of the religious faith endowing and controlling the institution. There is, doubtless, a more rigid observance of Christian duties — of the holy Sabbath — of culture of the moral sense — a more elevated and high-toned morality — in denominational than in other colleges where no religious influence is exercised through their organization and practice; and who will have the temerity to object that it is so?

No parent, certainly, who builds hope, in confidence, upon the future of his son, should oppose the operation of such influences. Any religious impressions made from the teachings of the Holy Scriptures are preferable to infidelity; and all should feel a lively interest in bringing their offspring under the restraining precepts found in the cardinal principles of all Christian faith.

The evidences of Christianity are taught here—but the text books negative the suspicion that such teaching is designed to proselyte students to Baptist faith. Their pages are equally adapted to an Episcopal or Presbyterian as to a Baptist or Methodist college, and only seek to convince the youthful mind of the grand truths of Christianity.

But, it may be urged that the impressions are insensibly made on the minds of students through the Chaplain's teachings, at prayers, and, on the Sabbath, in his lectures and sermons. A Chaplain who enjoyed the triumphs of proselyting more than the convictions of the heart in true piety, might, perhaps, give a partizan color to his ministerial exercises, and thus, indirectly, bias the sentiments of the hearers. But such hypocrisy could not long wear the mask; it would be torn from his face, and he held up to the scorn of all honest men. Can the insinuation be justly indulged in against this Institution? All who know your distinguished President and Chaplain will scout the imputation. He has built his reputation for virtue and piety upon a basis too enduring in the hearts of his countrymen for such a suspicion to be harbored against him; he can never stoop to an unworthy artifice to proselyte to Baptist faith.

There is, however, another answer which is conclusive in the defence of denominational colleges. Every college in the Union having a Chaplain is obnoxious to the same objection; and in each of them the son is equally liable, through such an agency, to be seduced away from the religion of his fathers. In our own State there is a Methodist Chaplain at Wofford, an Associate Reformed at Erskine, an Episcopalian (I believe) at Charleston, and a Presbyterian at the South Carolina College. Does this fact furnish any well-founded objection to either of the Institu-

tions enumerated? The danger is imaginary, not real, and envious tongues should never wag in magnifying its consequence.

These denominational colleges are engaged in educating our youth, and in inculcating a wholesome morality, without attempting to teach peculiar tenets; and are, therefore, free from objection to all just minds. Their mission is full of philanthropy, and has already accomplished much for science and philosophy. I venture the opinion, based upon inquiry into the facts, that there are, in the States of North and South Carolina and Georgia, not less than five hundred young men enjoying, annually, the high privileges of a collegiate course, who otherwise, but for denominational colleges, on leaving the grammar school, would have had the doors of all learning barred against them. The establishment of one has incited other denominations to an honorable emulation, which has multiplied extensively the facilities for general education. In their efforts to secure their endowment, the advantages of liberal education have been portrayed, by their clergy and agents, to the members of all the denominations. This secured subscriptions, and identified every contributor with the institution which his means aided to create; and, when his son was prepared for college, it made each one the patron of his institution. And here it must be observed that the endowment has generally come from those who have not heretofore patronized any college—from substantial farmers, with means to live comfortably and independently, yet apprehensive that they were not equal to the cost of a liberal education for their children. But when they became identified with the new work, and learned more of its purposes, their opinions have undergone a change, and their sons are now reaping rich harvests from intellectual culture prosecuted in these denominational institutions.

The colleges have been erected in rural districts—removed from the fashionable vices of large cities—and placed in localities where the expenses of living are so moderate as to reduce greatly the cost of education. They have been brought into the vicinage of populous communities, and opened wide their doors, to woo the neighboring youth to enter their classic halls.

They have, by their organization, induced many fond parents, who were deterred from exposing their sons to the temptations of college life, with unformed habits and no special religious influence to guard them, to commit them cheerfully to these institutions, in the pleasing confidence that their habits and morals would neither be corrupted or defiled.

From the considerations enumerated, many have attained a liberal education, whose career will reflect honor on humanity. No small number of young men, with stinted pecuniary means, have been enabled to "drink deeply" from the fountains of knowledge opened by these denominational colleges, whose future lives will be a shining record of usefulness and renown.

If these institutions have accomplished thus much—if their future is so full of promise—if so many intellects have been illuminated, by their grateful agency, which would otherwise have remained shrouded in dark ignorance—if their organization guides and guards the morals, and does not sectarianize the religion of their pupils—if their locations make them easy of access to large communities of our citizens—if they enjoy the confidence and patronage of the people—if their influences are elevating the social, moral and mental condition of the State—if all their aims and purposes are for the good, greatness and glory of South Carolina, why does the State neglect to aid them, by annual appropriations from the Treasury, in their useful, and benevolent, and patriotic mission of educating, exalting and refining *her* citizens? Why has there not been a concerted appeal to the Legislature from Furman University, Wofford, Erskine and Charleston Colleges, for an annual contribution to the great cause of learning? Can the Legislature, in common justice, refuse to heed the reasonable prayer of the petitioners? Would it be wise statesmanship to neglect the opportunity of placing so many high seats of learning on a permanent and prosperous basis?

That all opposition may be silenced, annex, as a condition to the appropriation, that it shall only be expended in sustaining the collegiate department of the respective Institutions, and that no sectarian tenets shall be taught in that department to any

student. An annual appropriation of eight thousand dollars to each Institution enumerated would relieve them of all embarrassment, and enable them to enlarge and extend, very greatly, their facilities for imparting thorough education.

But if these inducements should be held insufficient to authorize the appropriation, then let it be made with the additional condition, that each of the Institutions shall board, lodge and educate a certain number of indigent young men, to be selected in such manner as the Legislature may prescribe. The scheme is neither new nor theoretical — it works admirably in practice. It has been tried by Virginia, in her noble University, and has realized more than was promised for it. That Institution was the darling child of Mr. Jefferson's old age. Ripe in years and wisdom — having long before retired from the stormy seas of political life — he turned his thoughts to the education of young Virginia. His brain conceived the University; and his appeals and arguments carried it through the Legislature. He watched its organization and inauguration with more than paternal solicitude. It was aided by an annual appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars, to pay professors, officers and contingencies. At the present time each professor's fixed salary is one thousand dollars; but he receives, in addition, the tuition fee, for attending his school, from each student. This contingent compensation run up some of the professors' incomes to more than five thousand dollars. It is now, however, provided that any excess of *tuition* over two thousand dollars shall pass to the University fund, to erect and repair buildings, and to meet contingencies. The income of every professor in that college, now, amounts to three thousand dollars, the maximum sum allowed. The average of tuition fees paid by each student is seventy-five dollars. The first student matriculated in 1825, and the session just closed exhibits upon its catalogue the extraordinary number of five hundred and fourteen students. What wondrous success has crowned Mr. Jefferson's last labor! Before the limitation was made on professors' incomes, some persons, whose motives, I fear, were not worthy, began to assail the annual appropriation, on the ground that the tuition fees were adequate

to support the University, without the aid of a dollar from the State Treasury. These assaults made an impression so decided on the public mind that the appropriation was imperiled, and the friends of the University in the Legislature, with the assent of the Rector and Board of Visitors, consented to accept the appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars, on condition that the University should *board*, *lodge* and *instruct*, free of any charge whatever, one indigent young man from each Senatorial District in the State. There are thirty-two Districts in Virginia. The appropriation was accepted with the condition; the young men soon filled up the places; the appropriations have been continued on the same terms; and thirty-two young men, destitute of pecuniary means, are now, and have been for some years, the recipients of all the knowledge so freely dispensed by the able Faculty of that Institution.

Was ever money so wisely expended? Virginia, by the appropriation, props her Institution with the moral power of her great name — secures its continued success by maintaining its high character — witnesses more than five hundred young men, annually, flocking to its classic walls — and opens up, by the most efficient training, the minds of thirty-two of her promising sons, who would have lived and died in the shades of ignorance; and all for the moderate sum of fifteen thousand dollars.

If the scheme has succeeded so well in Virginia, what difficulties can exist to defeat it in South Carolina? Should the Legislature wisely make the appropriations indicated, and extend its conditions to the appropriation made to the South Carolina College, it would educate more than one hundred young men, free of all charge, too poor to pay for their education in the higher seats of learning, and yet constituting the very finest material from which our most useful and valuable citizens are fashioned. Let the Legislature impose on the young men thus educated an obligation to teach a certain number of years, in consideration of the high privileges they have enjoyed through the munificence of the State. This scheme would give you able and accomplished professors and

teachers for your colleges and schools, public and private; and in a few years, when the bud that you have nursed and cultivated shall have become full-blown, it will deck, with beauty and magnificence, every highway of intellect.

With all the conditions annexed, it will be vain to object to the appropriation because of its uniting church and State, in violation of the fundamental principle of our Government separating them. The honor and good faith of Trustees and Faculties will be pledged to observe the conditions, when they accept the appropriation. The appropriation cannot be refused, either, on the pretext that all the principal denominations have not colleges endowed. Let the Presbyterians and Episcopalians endow their colleges, and then appropriate to them the same sums, respectively, that is given to their elder sisters. It may be the means of inciting them to endow other new colleges. I trust it will; for the absurd idea that one college in each State is all that is required has been fully exploded — establish as many as the number of students requires for education.

Upon what principle can the Legislature refuse the appropriation? For two years past seventy-five thousand dollars have been expended on free schools; and, in a period of forty years prior, the sum of thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars was annually consumed, in the delusive hope that every child in the State would receive an elementary education; and yet the census furnishes the proof that it has fallen lamentably short of the benevolent end contemplated by its authors. Until some system, uniform and practical, can be introduced, reforming greatly existing irregularities in its disbursement, it would be wise to reduce the sum to the former amount, and appropriate the excess to the colleges just entering upon their career of usefulness. Give them now a permanent foothold, and it will guarantee their enduring and increasing success. They will polish into brilliancy and beauty many a rough intellectual diamond. Genius, thus cultivated, will rise up, and, in "words that burn," will pour the thanks of big hearts, swelling and gushing with gratitude, on the names and memories of legislators who had the sagacity and philanthropy to provide for its

development and enlightenment. What greater boon can man confer on his brother man than to knock off the shackles of dark and dreary ignorance, and invest him with diadems of learning and wisdom? The State can do it all now, by becoming a patron to that temple of learning which your liberality has reared and endowed. The small appropriation indicated above will enable these colleges to enlarge their present corps of professors. More of their private means may then be devoted to the completion of their buildings; to the collection of complete apparatus, chemical, philosophical, mechanical and astronomical; and to such other objects as may be of benefit to the student in prosecuting his studies.

Let the Legislature remember that the intellectual renown of Carolina is the justest and noblest boast of their constituency; let them remember that many of those whose mental achievements have been pre-eminent, emerged from those walks in life which this appropriation is intended to reach and guide to the paths of usefulness and distinction. Make the appeal, then, frankly to the Legislature for aid; make it earnestly; make it with a fixed purpose to succeed. It is just, and failure, therefore, cannot be anticipated. If it should, however, fail, make it to the people, and your appeal will not be made in vain.

The establishment of a University in this State is an experiment. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to pronounce it absolutely successful. The indications, in every department, are indeed flattering; and when the experience of older similar institutions is consulted, there is not the slightest danger of failure. It will succeed—the success will be definitely marked and universally conceded. The treadmill curriculum of the college proper, in a few years, will only be known in history. It is destined to become one of the curiosities of literature. It will be a subject of wonder that a system of mental culture prevailed, which, by requiring every student to pursue it, presumed that the tastes, talents, capabilities and future pursuits of all in the college walls were identical; and that each one, at the end of his cycle, was entitled to the same learned degree of Bachelor or Master of Arts in every department of human knowledge pursued during that cycle. The future will wonder

that a system was ever pursued that degraded the highest and brightest intellect from those regions where it was capable of soaring, down to the level of the dullest, by giving each the same mental training, and crowning the exodus of each from college with the same honorable and learned degree! Its inaptitude in preparing youth for the duties and responsibilities of active life is yearly becoming more manifest; and that sound sense that usually shapes wholesome public opinion has already initiated the corrective in converting former systems into the University plan.

For a major part of students, the undue importance given to ancient, classical and to mathematical studies, by the college curriculum, and the consequent imperfect course appropriated to natural and moral science, is a positive evil, which calls aloud for a corrective. There are two classes of students to whom this objection is especially applicable. The first are those who, upon trial, evince neither taste, talents nor capabilities for these studies, and yet possess abilities equal to the task of mastering other departments of human knowledge. The second are those who, upon joining college, have determined their future pursuits, and the successful prosecution of that pursuit does not require extraordinary attainments in one or both these studies. Both these classes are met by the inexorable requisition of the college course, and much of the student's time—precious time to them—is unprofitably spent in gratuitous studies, to the neglect of those sciences which are to subserve absolute necessities every day they live. Nature has clearly indicated, in most men, by their physical and mental constitution, a capacity for eminent success in some one profession or employment. When thus marked, *it* should be most elaborately cultivated. Life is too short and fleeting to master all the departments of human knowledge. Such should be pursued as will enable the individual the better to develope his peculiar endowments, since it is in the exercise of these only that he can possibly achieve, usefully, those duties which shall promote his own success and illustrate the special purposes of God in his creation. Modern languages, valuable alike for utility and accomplishment, are sacrificed in many colleges to appease the

insatiate cravings of the curriculum for Latin and Greek. Is it a wise sacrifice, when every day, in the social circle even, admonishes the uses of modern tongues? The course commences and terminates with the dead languages; and graduating students are often familiar with a despicable and vicious heathen mythology, that brutalizes the imagination and moral sense, who are ignorant of the history and literature of their own country. Many can detail the siege of Troy, who have no knowledge of the siege and capture of Yorktown.

But, let me not be misunderstood. I do not urge the expulsion of the ancient languages from our system and course of education. It is the undue importance given them in most colleges that provokes these observations, and the impossibility of obviating the objection under any other than the University system. A knowledge of the ancient languages is useful—nay, to the professional man, almost indispensable—and every matriculate here should devote a part of his term to their acquisition, as an auxiliary to the proper understanding of our own language, and as an accomplishment—except such as are, from any cause, incapable of acquiring them in a reasonable period, or when the time and means of the student will not permit it, unless at the expense of more useful and important studies.

Your course in this Institution is judiciously defined, and the great majority of your students will master it; but they will not pursue it to the neglect of physical and mental science. The importance of physical knowledge is developed day after day; it is the learning of utility in our day and generation. Its demands upon civilized man are admirably sketched by Professor McCay in his able inaugural address. He says:

"But the study of physical science is not only in harmony with the times and the civilization in which we live; it is of the highest practical utility to every member of society. Has any one a house to build, a room to warm, a clock to regulate, a machine of any kind to construct or repair? does any one feel an interest in frosts or rains, or dews or winds; in soils, or rocks, or drains, or waterfalls; in mills, or factories, or engines, or railways; in manufactures or mechanical trades; in work

or toil of any kind? How imperative is the demand for physical knowledge; how immense the advantage of a thorough and intimate acquaintance with the material things on which his labor is employed!"

How can its utility to man be estimated, in all its relations to society, and yet how little time, in the usual college course, is appropriated to its acquisition, compared with the months and years occupied in antiquated classical and mathematical studies? The text books and the acquirements of graduated collegiates will furnish the answer. The University system is rapidly curing the evil and error, by giving to natural science the dignity and consequence to which its merits entitle it.

The usual collegiate course is terminated in three or four years. The senior class, if composed of ten or one hundred members, have been taught from the same text books; have heard the same explanations; have received the same instructions; are candidates for the same degree; and it is a rare exception that all are not graduated, and do not become the recipients of the same degree, which thus endorses their equal scholarship to the public. How are they thus brought to such exact equality, when the God of nature himself establishes no such uniformity of excellence; when he creates some the inferiors of others; when their preparation at the high schools has been so varied and dissimilar; and when application in college has drawn even a deeper and broader line in attainments than nature did in capabilities? Is it not clear that this can only be done by making the capacity and acquirements of the inferior the standard of scholarship? If not, the degrees conferred on the inferiors are unmerited, and the faculty make a public endorsement of that which is false. They graduate the whole class, and certify each member to be learned in the liberal arts. What is the necessary effect of such a policy on genius, talent and industry, throughout the whole course? Does it not extinguish the strongest stimulant to man's nature, by withdrawing all incentive to industry and all reward for well-earned victory? Practical experience affirms the baleful influences of this leveling system; effected by pulling down the brightest and most gifted,

and not by pushing up the dull, reckless and incapable. The possession of a learned degree from a curriculum college is not now, in the estimation of the public, any evidence of thorough scholarship. It is not credited by the trustees of your high schools. Many young graduates, who propose to embark in teaching, take the precaution to procure from the individual members of the faculty *certificates* of their scholarship. Is not this necessity a reproach to the college graduating him? If the diploma is not evidence of attainments, has it been conferred for any other purpose than to save the feelings of the student, or to gratify a fond and anxious parent; and is it not thus a fraud upon the public and a mockery of all learning? And yet it is an evil which seems to allow of no remedy, under the college system of teaching. It can only be cured under the University system. There the student graduates in each particular school, and receives his certificate therefor, but does not receive the master's degree until he shall have first graduated in all the schools, *seriatim*, prescribed for obtaining such degree. This leads to separate and rigid examinations in each school, respectively, and the student stands or falls on his qualifications in that school alone. Having previously graduated in five schools will not weigh a particle in his favor on the examination in the sixth, graduation in which last may be absolutely necessary to obtain the master's degree.

Under the college system, every senior receives his bachelor's degree. When the number of students is two hundred, the annual graduates are about fifty—one-fourth of the whole number of matriculates—and yet, in the best organized University in the United States, that of Virginia, the whole number of matriculates the present year, in the literary department, were three hundred and twenty, and there were but nine candidates for the master's degree, though nearly every student graduated in one or more schools. This University, I am gratified to know, furnishes about the same ratio. This is the fourth year of its existence, and the first degrees will be conferred to-morrow. The matriculates number two hundred and thirty, and diplomas are to be conferred on but six young gentlemen. It

is a far better recommendation to the thoroughness of the standard of scholarship than if the graduates had reached fifty. Degrees thus conferred and obtained are of real value—their possession is no fraud upon science, and when they go forth no private certificates of attainments will be requisite to inspire confidence in the public mind in behalf of the graduates.

In the University, no time is prescribed within which the degrees may be obtained; the industry and capacity of the student alone determine the period to be employed in their accomplishment. This is the highest incentive that can be applied to the youthful mind, which is usually so full of aspiration and hope. He embarks in a contest against time; he has competitors of the same metal with himself; and it is diligence alone which can be certainly rewarded. He is not clogged by slowly revolving years in achieving his trophies; delayed in order that dull and idle associates may be dragged, by time only, to that fascinating goal—a degree, and the end of college life. He is individualized in all his schools; which excites him to unremitting efforts to accomplish something, if it be but a graduation or distinction in a single school, that he may carry home and tender to a proud father and loving mother. The ambition of each is thus not only stimulated, but the attention is wedded to the lecture-room, lest, perchance, some explanation may fall from the professor, an ignorance of which, on the day of final accounting, may prove destructive to all his hopes. It is the only system where persevering industry can count upon recognition by adequate reward. The master's degree may be obtained in two years if the candidate passes successfully the ordeal of scrutinizing written and oral examinations; it may be unavailingly sought for ten years if there is but mediocrity in a single school. It is the high standard of attainment that wins the degree, and not the months or years spent in college walls.

The distinguishing feature of the University plan is the privilege extended to parents or students, to select the course of studies; and it is this feature that provokes the strongest opposition among the friends of the old *regime*. The assertion is,

that it leads to irregular and superficial education. It assumes that the parent would not instruct the son to pursue a thorough course of study, or that the student, if the discretion be confided to him, would not do that which he came to college to do—acquire the largest aggregate of knowledge accessible from his course of study.

If the parent desires the son to take a thorough course, it can be done just as well in the University as in the College. If the father omits some branches embraced within the curriculum, he does it for a reason. The opponents of the University assume, without knowing it, that the reason is not substantial, and, therefore, overrule it by saying that the son should, nevertheless, pursue the curriculum. Who is usually the best judge of the tastes and inclinations of the son, the father or strangers? Would the father make the omission if it were to result to the injury of the son? When the father exercises his discretion, and instructs the faculty to educate the son for the master's degree, he is taught in the schools requisite for its attainment, with the same system and regularity as in the college proper, with this advantage enjoyed by the father—that he knows his son cannot exhibit the degree unless it has been earned by thorough scholarship. But, the crowning good derivable from the discretion confided to the father consists in his being able so to direct the course of the son as to develope and cultivate those branches for which he has taste, talent and aptitude.

It is fashionable now for youths to enter college at a very early age—too early to possess that maturity of intellect which is necessary to comprehend readily the text books and the professor's lectures, which expound them. At eighteen (which I conceive to be a proper age for entering college) most young men have determined upon or conceived the profession or pursuit which they intend to engage in when they go forth in the active duties of life. If that question has been settled by the consent of parents, is it not manifest wisdom for each to commence forthwith to shape and fashion his education so as to qualify him, by the highest attainments therein, for its successful prosecution?

If medicine is the selected profession, would it not be greatly to his interest to pursue, with peculiar diligence, those studies contributing to the highest skill and perfection therein? Should mathematics share a moiety of his time with physical science? Should Latin and Greek engross months or years, and chemistry only days or weeks? If the law is chosen, what class of studies should occupy his attention? Should the same importance be attached to chemistry, higher mathematics and ancient languages, as to moral and mental philosophy, rhetoric, logic, belles-lettres and medical jurisprudence? If engineering is fixed upon, would the student act wisely to divide his hours with metaphysics and rhetoric, on the one hand, and mathematics and natural science, on the other? These interrogations compel their own answers. It is not only wise, looking to the future, in thus selecting studies, but it is equally so for the collegiate term — for, the human mind acquires much more rapidly when the subject matter engaging it is intrinsically interesting, and the knowledge attained is far greater, than if kept plodding over subjects to which it is indifferent. Is there not pre-eminent wisdom in the University plan, which invites the student to the prosecution, with especial attention and assiduity, of those branches which are to qualify him for that station in life he means to assume? Is it not a wisdom founded in the philosophy of man's nature, and vindicated by every day's observation? The college system precludes such selection; all must travel the same road, though their future destinies may place them in very different pursuits and employments. In this respect, which is the preferable system?

It was Mr. Jefferson's opinion that the University plan secured more active and efficient teaching. The peculiarity of its organization enabled the trustees to compensate professors partly by a small fixed salary, and partly by tuition fees, to be paid by each student for each school he attended. The separate and independent schools making up the whole, individualized each professor, and he was, therefore, entitled to all the commendation for success, and open to all the censure for failure. His aim is to recommend his school by thorough teaching, exhi-

bited in the superior attainments of his graduates, from two strong, concurring motives—pride of success in his business, and the augmentation of his salary—the natural result of his attracting a large number to his school by his efficiency. It begets a laudable emulation among the professors themselves, and guards against their resorting to mean artifices to increase their numbers, by making their income, in part, a fixed salary. It makes the professor directly responsible to the public for the scholarship of each of his graduates; and thus, each professor in charge of a school required for a master's degree sees that he cannot shelter himself behind the faculty when his graduate proves deficient in the branch he teaches; hence, he makes his a rigid examination for graduation. He selects his own text books, prepares his own lectures, and watches the daily examinations to which his class is subjected in the text books and the lectures explaining them. Hence it is, that good conduct and a high stand in one school is of no avail to the student in another. Each professor carries his student through his own ordeal, on his own merits; if he succeeds, he is worthy of it—if he fails, no *vote of the faculty will graduate* him. The teaching is more efficient for another reason: the entire time of the student is usually engrossed, for the session, in the schools of only three professors. The student's mind is, consequently, not dissipated and wasted, by too many studies pressing him at one and the same time. This enables him, really, to attain comparative excellence in such as he pursues; and, at the end of the session, he, perhaps, graduates in the three schools. The next year he takes up three others, and prosecutes them in like manner. Thus he continues, until he has gone through all the schools, and receives his degree by virtue of his separate graduations.

Under the college system, the consolidation of the professors makes one whole—the single professor loses his individuality, and becomes an element in the faculty. This prevents the adoption of the University plan for compensating professors by tuition fees. The nearest approach is to divide equally the fees, as the curriculum requires each student to attend the lec-

ture room of each professor; hence this means of inciting efficient teaching is lost under the college system. The student's mind is also crowded with too many studies to attain great results in any — the course requiring him to attend the lecture room of all the professors during the same week, and prosecute all the studies of the course at the same time.

The University teaching is more efficient, for still another reason: When three schools are attended, the same time is employed by their respective professors, as an entire faculty, with the whole course of studies, would occupy; giving to each student, thereby, double the time to make recitations, hear lectures and undergo examinations, that he would enjoy if attending all the professors. This enables the professors to deliver a more complete course of lectures in exposition of the subject and in explanation of the text books, and gives more time for examinations. It also enables them to classify their schools into junior, intermediate and senior, so as to have a class approximating the capacity and previous acquirements of their entire classes. By this means, the professor is in practice what most professors are only in theory — he is the real instructor in his school. Instruction through lectures is of the greatest utility; the explanations precede the study of the given chapter in the text book, and the student then enters upon it with a general view and knowledge of the theories or principles therein taught. It comes at the right time to aid the student. Oral instruction is more readily comprehended and more permanently impressed than the same teaching from dusty books. The student, by such instruction, is accustomed to treasure the *idea*, not the language merely — the chain of reasoning, not the arbitrary result. The great philosophers and teachers of antiquity taught their classes exclusively by lectures, and it is very far from certain that its general abandonment in colleges is any improvement upon their system. Mr. Jefferson was right, then, in attributing to the University system more active and efficient teaching than could be obtained in the colleges.

I might extend the catalogue of advantages of the University over the College system of education. I have not the time, nor

you, perhaps, the patience, for any further pursuit of the parallel. Sufficient has been said, I trust, to confirm your convictions of its superiority, and convince you that a few years will see the college system repudiated as unsuited to the spirit and requirements of the age, and the University plan adopted as furnishing the most certain facilities for the thorough and practical education of our youth.

Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees:

You will pardon me in making some suggestions for your especial consideration. Your organization is judicious, and will command the confidence of the public. The large number of your matriculates requires you to increase your corps of professors; the labor is too heavy to be performed by the existing corps. Your limited means, and the varied calls upon your resources, has, doubtless, prevented you from ordering the increase heretofore. This will be obviated, I trust, through a successful appeal to the Legislature. If disappointed in that quarter, you will make a vigorous effort once again to increase your endowment by private donation; and inscribe upon all the spires of your stately University buildings this motto: "We will not abate our efforts until this shall be made a great temple of learning." Add to your existing schools law and medicine. One professor for the first, and two, in connection with the professorship of chemistry, for the latter, will be the necessary increase. Your school of theology is already in operation, and this addition will complete your University organization, in every department. You can then graduate students in all the learned professions. We have no law school in South Carolina, and very many of our young men are now prosecuting, and will continue to prosecute, the study of the law in the private offices of the State, and at the different law schools in other States. An able jurist at the head of your school would no doubt attract many pupils — a sufficient number to sustain the chair without taxing your endowment. A medical school would, likewise, be a valuable acquisition; and in a short time it would be self-supporting. It would recommend itself to

every student, by its single course of lectures extending through a period of *ten* months, whilst the course in the medical colleges is crowded into *four* months, giving fuller time and opportunities to acquire the profession in the former than the latter.

The professional students will exercise a happy influence over those in the literary department. Their age promises for them steady and studious habits; fixed principles; a proper appreciation of the value of time and opportunities; ambition for literary and professional success; refinement and elevation of aspirations; a high and pure standard of honor and character, and a capacity to resist the temptations besetting so constantly the path of youth. These influences will all be instilled, by example and association, into the juniors, whose inexperience and thoughtlessness make them a prey to evil temptation.

You will give these views, gentlemen, such consideration as you may think they merit. Philanthropy and learning are deeply your debtors for what you have already done in rearing this noble Institution. It will be felt when you shall have been gathered to your fathers. A grateful posterity will rehearse for you high eulogiums on each recurring commencement day.

Gentlemen of the Philosophian Society:

I thank you for the honor of representing you on this occasion. The duty has been cheerfully performed, though other engagements have pressed me greatly throughout its preparation. The topics selected have been presented in very general terms; their elaborate discussion would consume more time than I have to speak or you to hear. Sufficient has been said to excite inquiry in the public mind, and the deficiencies in the picture may be filled up by other artists, to make it a consistent, homogeneous and imposing whole. My object has been to serve you, my countrymen and the cause of education, by suggesting cures for evils in our existing systems.

Young gentlemen, yours is a bright future; panoplied in the armor of learning, you may carve out nobly your own future destiny. Industry and energy, will and purpose, have hewn down mountains and filled up valleys; ploughed the deep blue

sea, and opened to the admiring gaze of an incredulous world the primeval forests of a new continent; prostrated those forests, and converted them into smiling fields; built cities; explored the labyrinths of science and philosophy; advanced the civilization of our race to the towering height which it has already reached. All has been attained by aggregating individual industry and energy. Man, individual man, has made these brilliant achievements, and still has left much for you to accomplish. Go to your respective missions, with industry and energy, purpose and will, deeply graven as your motto, and you will never realize the pangs of shattered prospects and shipwrecked hopes. Go where you may, you will carry my cordial wishes for your success in all the paths of glory and distinction which merit or fortune may decree you to tread.