

THE LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE.

STATE OF LOUISIANA. OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE. New Orleans, July 28, 1880.

W. H. GOODALE, Esq., Baton Rouge, La.

DEAR SIR—I see that you published in the CAPITOLIAN the proceedings of our meeting in which you published a resolution introduced by Mr. Walton as to the course of Gen. Graham, Mr. Gunby and myself. I think it is but just that you publish Gen. Graham's letter, as well as the reasons, herewith enclosed, of Mr. Gunby and myself in the same paper. You will also please file these reasons, and let me hear from you immediately, as I leave here for home on Saturday.

Respectfully yours, etc., WILL A. STRONG.

To the Honorable President and members of the Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College:

GENTLEMEN—I beg leave to submit the following reasons for my withdrawal from the meeting of the Board during the vote upon the resolution introduced by Mr. Walton to proceed at once to the removal of the present professors by declaring all the chairs of the faculty vacant, and to the immediate election of a president of the faculty of the University. This being the first session of the Board, and many of us entirely unacquainted with the workings of the institution, I considered it unprecedented that on the fourth day of the session a resolution should be offered to declare all the offices in this institution vacant and to elect at this time a president. A motion to refer the resolution to the Committee on the State of the College was defeated; the resolution coming up on the next day, a motion was made to postpone until our meeting in August, upon which discussion arose, and it was generally stated in argument by the advocates of the resolution that its sole object was the displacement of Col. Boyd, the president, by another, and many complaints were made against him, which he was not allowed an opportunity to refute, as he was at that very time busy making the certificates of distinction and graduation for the cadets this evening (this being commencement day of the University), and his duties made it impossible for him to attend the meeting of the Board on that day. The motion to postpone to such a time that he could be present was defeated, thereby virtually refusing to give him a hearing. Under the circumstances, I felt bound by a sense of justice to myself, to the people of Louisiana, to the absent members of the Board and to the good of the institution to withdraw from the session of the Board during the vote on the resolution for the following reasons, to-wit:

First—I believe it utterly wrong for a new Board, at its first session, to set the precedent; declaring all the offices vacant without a full investigation from all sources. Second—I believe that the passage of the resolution would be an unprecedented injustice to the president and professors of this University without a just and reasonable hearing on their part. Third—I believe that as there was only a bare quorum present of the Board, we owe to the patrons of this school the delay asked for, and to give an opportunity to the other or absent members of the Board the right to have a voice in the selection of the officers and professors of this institution. Fourth—I believe it disastrous to the interest of the institution for the Board even to remove any officer without just cause and a full hearing of said officer, I could never take part in the removal of an officer without giving him a full and complete hearing. Fifth—I did not believe that I would be justified in dismissing the present faculty without, at least, giving them a chance to resign their positions; and further, I believe that we owe as a duty to the people of Louisiana notice that such was the intended course of this Board. Sixth—I believe that the position of president of this institution is one of great importance and involving grave responsibilities, and that it was but due to the public that notice should be given of the intended change, so as to admit of competition for that position. I, for one, did not have in my mind anyone that I could conscientiously have given my vote. Seventh—I believe it due to the members of this Board who are absent to give them notice of such intended change, that they might be able to choose from their knowledge some one to compete for the position of president. I am satisfied that they, like myself, never dreamed of this change until the introduction of the resolution by Mr. Walton.

I withdraw for the further reason that the action of the remaining six members might be reviewed by a full meeting of the Board at a subsequent meeting. Respectfully submitted, WILL A. STRONG. Member of the Board of Supervisors of the L. S. U. & A. & M. C.

To the President and members present of the Board of Supervisors Louisiana State University and A. & M. College at Baton Rouge, July 28, 1880.

GENTLEMEN—A sudden attack, induced in a great measure by the weariness and fatigue from the extremely late hour (one o'clock) of our session

last night of a painful and prostrating nature, to which, however, I am much liable, precludes my meeting you today, and compels me to take this mode of making my earnest protest and remonstrance, asking that it be entered on the minutes, against the resolution offered by Mr. Walton yesterday for the vacating of all the various offices of this institution and Board, the immediate re-filling of three of them and the prospective re-filling of the others, a measure which I can scarcely trust myself in my weak condition to characterize the wrong of further than to express my conviction of the injurious effect it will have on the character and standing, at home and abroad, of this institution in the creation, organization and interests of which I have earnestly and zealously labored for twenty-seven years, as well as on the reputation and character of the Board itself.

Here are a set of gentlemen in the faculty and its branches who have been invited here from various States to fill these positions, all of whom, with one single slight exception, have been shown to us to be the equals, in their positions and for the faithful and earnest discharge of the duties of those positions, to any similar set of men in the country. The resolution in question casts on those gentlemen, their families, their connections and their friends our official stigma of dissatisfaction and want of confidence! and this stigma follows them to their homes, in this and other States, and throughout the country! In the case of the honored and respected President of the institution this stigma is still worse, and, if possible, more undeserved. If we did not know it otherwise, his competency, zeal and devotion has been shown to us by the concurrent testimony of all the professors and cadets whom we have examined. We have seen from the testimony of the cadets that they look on him, and up to him, as their counselor, friend and guide, that "they go to him in their troubles," and that he has constantly encouraged the same kindly intercourse between them and the members of the faculty.

This I have known and seen much of at the Seminary in Rapides parish.

I have had much, and most anxious occasion, in the interest of the school and its immediate and prospective effects and results on the character to be given by it, to the people of the State to observe closely his course in regard to it and its management, since he was entrusted with the reopening of it in the autumn of 1865, and I say most conscientiously that, in my acquaintance and experience, I do not think another man could have been found who, in his educational qualifications, the results derived to himself from his own experiences, his ingrained nature as a pure, clear, bright, honest and honorable man and gentleman—a model for the youth of our State to form itself on—was better qualified to be entrusted with the management of this institution and its destinies, and of our youth.

Of his self-sacrificing devotion to the support and preservation of this institution and the minutest item of its property in the darkest and most gloomy days of its destitution and poverty, I have had many illustrations, of which I will mention one: On a railway train in Albemarle county, Va., in October, 1873, I made the casual acquaintance of another passenger, who, developing himself in course of talk, told me that he was now a citizen of that parish, but was originally (a native of Georgia) from Claiborne parish, in this State, where, in his school at Homer, he had been educated by David F. Boyd; that he had married wealthy in Albemarle; that he then had four boys to educate, and that he had written, some time before, to Col. Boyd, whom he would rather have take the entire charge of their education than anyone he had ever known; that if he would consent to come there, he would buy Monticello and establish him in a school, and impressively requested me, then on my way home, to urgently repeat the offer for him to Col. Boyd; that he would not accept so tempting an offer, which would have carried him to the home of his father and friends solely, as I believe, because it would have compelled his abandonment of our institution at an unpropitious moment for it, you have the evidence from his being still here.

I am too weak to add more than to say that if I was well enough to attend the meeting to-day, I would not—could not—even by my presence—sanction the adoption of that resolution. Very respectfully, G. MASON GRAHAM.

To the Honorable Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College:

GENTLEMEN—I beg leave to assign the following as my reasons for withdrawing from the Board, during the vote on the resolution to proceed at once, to remove the Faculty and to elect a new President of the Faculty of the Institution under our control: This is the first session of our Board, all the members having been appointed within the past few months. Most of the members at the commencement of this session were entirely unacquainted with the condition of the University.

On the fourth day of our session this resolution, to declare all the offices vacant, etc., was offered. A motion to refer said resolution to the Committee on

the State of the College was defeated. The resolution being called up the fifth day, it was generally stated in argument, by the advocates of the measure, that its sole object was to displace Col. D. F. Boyd, and many rumored complaints were stated against him. Col. Boyd having been excused from the meeting of the Board, owing to the pressing duties of his office, I asked and obtained permission to invite him to come before the Board and answer or explain said complaints. Col. Boyd, whom I found in his office preparing certificates to be presented to Cadets this evening, replied that this being Commencement Day, he could not possibly come before the Board except by neglecting his duties to the Institution; but he authorized me to request the Board, in his behalf, to postpone the matter until he could have time to come before them and answer the charges against him. I communicated this request to the Board but it was not granted. I then made a motion to postpone the final consideration of the resolution until the matter could be discussed by the press throughout the State and members could be prepared to vote deliberately and intelligently on the subject. This motion was lost.

Under these circumstances, I felt bound to withdraw in order that any action taken on this important subject at the present session, might be revised and reconsidered or ratified by a subsequent meeting, for the following reasons:

1st. I believe it is utterly wrong for a new Board of Supervisors to inaugurate its administration by declaring all the offices of the University vacant.

2d. I believe the passage of said resolution, an act of unprecedented injustice to the Faculty, and especially to the President, Col. Boyd, whose heroic self-devotion in the cause of this institution deserves well of Louisiana.

3d. I believe it ruinous to the University for the Board ever to remove an officer without just cause and a full hearing has not been granted in this case and no charges have been specified or established.

4th. I consider the President of this University as one of the most important officers in the State and he never ought to be removed or elected without reasonable notice to the people of the State whom we represent and a full discussion of the fitness and merits of candidates for that position.

5th. I believe it unjust and discourteous to the patrons, alumni and friends of the University to remove the President thereof, for whom they have such high esteem, without consulting or at least notifying them.

Believing as an alumnus, a patron and a Supervisor of the University, that the action is precipitate and unjustifiable and that it will be in the last degree detrimental, if not disastrous, to the best interests of the University, I cannot be, even tacitly or constructively, a party to the passage of such a measure. Therefore, it is my duty to the State and to this institution and to myself to withdraw. Respectfully submitted, A. A. GUNBY, Supervisor.

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