William and Mary College

AND THE

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RICHMOND:
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1879.
To the Hon. JAMES LYONS,
Rector of “William and Mary College,”
Richmond, Virginia:

The undersigned, profoundly interested in the union of “William and Mary College” of Virginia, with the “University of the South,” the proposal of which was duly presented you during the past winter, desire to supplement that proposal by the following statement:

The University of the South is the joint property of the following dioceses of the Southern branch of the Anglo-American Church, viz: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, (the Missionary districts of) Western and Northern Texas, Arkansas and Tennessee. The remaining Southern dioceses, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri, may enter into joint ownership whenever they see fit.

The University is designed to be, in all respects, a University; and nothing but the pecuniary depression of the dioceses since the war has hitherto prevented the full realization of this design, which, in a few years, will no doubt be an assured if not an accomplished fact.

Perfect freedom will be given to research; but this freedom will be exercised in an atmosphere of historical Christianity, represented by the American Branch of the Anglican communion as it exists in the dioceses of the Southern States, and which is indebted, under God, for her first foundation, and a long continuance of nursing, care, and protection to that Church of England which founded William and Mary College.

WILLIAM M. GREEN, Bishop of Mississippi.
ALEXANDER GREGG, Bishop of Texas.
RICHARD H. WILMER, Bishop of Alabama.
CHARLES TODD QUINTARD, Bishop of Tennessee.
JOHN FREEMAN YOUNG, Bishop of Florida.
HENRY N. PIERCE, Bishop of Arkansas.
ALEX. C. GARRETT, Miss. Bishop of N. Texas.
WM. FORBES ADAMS, Bishop, Vicksburg, Miss.
GEORGE PATTERSON, Priest, North Carolina.
JAMES J. VAULX, Priest, Arkansas.
D. B. RAMSEY, Priest, Arkansas.
W. C. STOUT, Priest, Arkansas.
JAMES A. MATTHEWS, Priest, Arkansas.
D. McMANUS, Priest, Arkansas.
T. C. TUPPER, Priest, Arkansas.
J. T. PICKETT, Priest, Mississippi.
JUDGE J. B. KERSHAW, South Carolina.
JUDGE E. D. FARRAR, MISSISSIPPI.
C. A. BUNGE, Esq., Arkansas.
GEO. E. MANN, Esq., Texas.
J. J. DANIELS, Esq., Florida.
R. W. TRIMBLE, Esq., Arkansas.
SILAS McBEW, Esq., North Carolina.
L. L. RAYFIELD, M. D., Texas.
LOGAN H. ROOTS, Esq., Arkansas.
J. J. FINLEY, Esq., Florida.
SIDNEY PERNOT, Esq., Arkansas.
ARTHUR W. ANDREWS, Esq., Texas.
LAUNCHLOT MINOR, Esq., Arkansas.
ALBERT T. MCNEAL, Esq., Tennessee.
P. K. ROOTS, Esq., Arkansas.
JAMES H. RAYMOND, Esq., Texas.
WILLIAM C. WILLIAMS, Standing Com. of
BENJ. CONLEY, Diocese of Ga.
Z. D. HARRISON,
THOS. E. WALKER,
E. G. MEED,
R. C. FOUTRE,

I hereby certify that each and all of the persons whose names are above written have given their hearty assent to the proposal and statement made in this address to the Hon. James Lyons.

W. M. GREEN, Chancellor,
of the University of the South.

JUNE 30, 1879.
WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE

AND THE

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH.

William and Mary College was founded by the Sovereigns whose joint names it bears, for the promotion of education in Virginia, which was the head-quarters of the Church of England in America, and in the reign of Charles II, the site of a proposed bishopric for all the colonies, New England included, though the bishop was not to exercise his authority in New England until ordered by the Crown. From the circumstances of its foundation, William and Mary derived a peculiar character, one of its express objects being to educate a clergy for the Anglo-American Church planted with the colony in Virginia. From its foundation William and Mary was thus a Church college, and this feature in its constitution cannot be effaced without destroying its idiosyncrasy and transforming it into a mere Americanism. Just as Harvard was the exponent of Puritanism, William and Mary was the exponent of the Church of England. So marked indeed was the religious character of William and Mary that Jefferson, though one of her alumni, was an infidel hostile to her, and secured her ultimate ruin by building up at Charlottesville a university on the basis of no religion. Not even Jefferson, it is true, could perpetuate infidelity in Virginia; but he succeeded in perpetuating hostility to everything which, like William and Mary College, was specially marked with the stamp of the Church of England, so that even Virginia churchmen have, in days gone by, vied with each other in making the Church of Virginia as unchurchlike as possible, and have left William and Mary to die by inches. Its endowments, its faculty, its students, have little by little disappeared, until now each of them differs from zero by an infinitely small
quantity; for notwithstanding the dexterously worded assertions about the high standard of William and Mary, and concerning the kind consideration accorded its degree by the triumphant con
descension of Jefferson’s University at Charlottesville, it is certain that one, two or three men, be they who they may, cannot teach all the languages, all the mathematics, all the philosophy, and all the sciences required by modern education. This is the A. B. C of the matter, and if there is to be an honest discussion of it, no more dust should be thrown in people’s eyes as to the present condi
tion of the College.

William and Mary College is virtually defunct, and Virginia knows it. It is a college in name only, and has no standard; yet the highest standard it ever had the University of the South will raise still higher.

William and Mary is virtually dead, and yet there has been no effort to revive her until quite recently, when the aid of the South was sought in supplanting the United States Congress in her behalf; the strongest appeal for her being made by Massachusetts, the premordial antithesis of William and Mary. Even here the poor old College was pitilessly snubbed, and got nothing by humbling herself before the United States Congress, Massachusetts and the Puritans.

Meanwhile, the University of the South, seeing that it alone of all the institutions in the country has any real sympathy with William and Mary, determined, if possible, to save her, and made to the visitors the only practical suggestion to that end yet made.

Like William and Mary, the University of the South is constitutionally a Church of England institute of learning. It is the joint creation and property of all the dioceses save one of the Anglo-American Church in the late Confederate States. That one exception is Virginia. The Dioceses of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and Tennessee, shortly after the war applied themselves to the task of fulfilling, as far as the depressed condition of the South would permit, the promise they had given to the South, of establishing an institution of learning under the influence of the Anglo-American Church in the Southern States. If it is asked, why did Virginia alone of the Confederate States fail to be represented by her diocese in the University of the South? we reply, by asking why Virginia has starved William and Mary College to death...
The reason of the one is the reason of the other. The place for Virginia in the scheme of the University of the South has always been prepared for her, and nothing is needed but her own action to enter and possess it. Whenever Virginia chooses she may enter as of right, upon simple notification of her desire to do so. But seeing that this was Virginia's right, and that Virginia disregarded both it and William and Mary College, the University of the South made the entirely practicable and wholly honorable suggestion, that William and Mary, being now a private corporation, should, without sacrificing an iota of her peculiarly Virginian and peculiarly Church of England character, enter upon a new career, and collect students from every part of the South by taking the place reserved for Virginia herself in the University of the South. In case the Diocese of Virginia should thereafter see fit to claim her place in the University there could be no serious conflict of any kind; for the Diocese of Virginia could all along, had it so chosen, have entered into possession of William and Mary, and could do so with the same facility under the new arrangement. The origin of the right of the Diocese to William and Mary is the same as that of her right to the University of the South. By the proposed arrangement the two rights become identified.

The intrinsic fitness and ultimate practicability of this suggestion was at once apparent to some at least of those who best knew the old College, its circumstances, and its serious dangers. The plan proposed provided at once for the preservation and the prosperity of William and Mary, and insured that it never should be any less a Virginia College than it is to-day. The whole plan of the University of the South is one of confederation, in which each State (as a diocese) enters, but remains distinct, and can, if it so chooses, withdraw. The purpose of confederation is to effect by united means and effort what isolated attempts could never accomplish—the building up of a University resembling in fundamentals the Universities of England; a University without limit in freedom of research, but organically under the influence of the American branch of the English Church, so that freedom of research should be exercised in an atmosphere of historical Christianity. Any one who reads the terms of the proposal made by the University of the South will see that William and Mary in the University would be still governed by its old Board of Visitors, with the same constitution as it has always had, and with the same power
to perpetuate itself and maintain its thoroughly Virginian composition forever. If its church tradition and its Virginian character were lost, the University of the South would not want William and Mary, for, as a mere college, it has neither wealth nor students.

Opposition, of course, was expected. Time must always be consumed before even broad-minded and great men can receive a new idea; and in Virginia, as elsewhere, there are great men and there are men who are not great; there are minds as broad, not as Virginia only, but as the whole of that South which has shed so much of its best blood to defend Virginia’s soil; and there are minds besides as narrow as the Pan-handle. It was to the great Virginians, whom all the world knows, that the University of the South made its proposal, and it still has confidence that the offer will receive such a careful, dispassionate and unselfish consideration as the mother of States may fitly be expected to bestow upon the interests of all her own children.

In any case the University of the South has done nothing but good to William and Mary and to Virginia—such good indeed as nothing but littleness would repay with abuse. But for the University’s proposal it is safe to say that William and Mary College would have been suffered to die without notice, and perchance have been buried without an epitaph. By it Virginia has been roused to the consciousness that something yet may perhaps be done, and possibilities, before unrecognised, have found a voice. Two anonymous suggestions have been made, neither of which would have seen the light but for the proposal of the University. Both nevertheless would equally, though in different ways, fail to attain the desired object, viz: the preservation of William and Mary in its traditional integrity—as a Church of England College.

The first suggestion was that William and Mary be made a College in the University of Virginia. The very idea of thus saving her is of course taken from the proposal of the University of the South; and if she could be thus saved her salvation would be due to the University of the South, notwithstanding the abuse which the author and editor are not ashamed to heap upon the source of their inspiration. But William and Mary College could not be saved by removal to the University of Virginia. The mere proposal is enough to make the founders of both turn in their graves. Such
a union must destroy the distinctive characteristics of one or both. The University of Virginia was created in antagonism to William and Mary. Its basis is education without religion; the students are expected to get religious instruction, if at all, elsewhere. Unite them, and one of two things must happen: either the Jeffersonian plan of the University must be abandoned for the Church of England system, or William and Mary must be made Jeffersonian. The first of these alternatives is simply out of the question; the second alone would be thought of, and that would leave of William and Mary nothing but the name. As a Church College contrasting with the Puritan College at Harvard, and so reflecting the distinctive character of the cavalier colonists of Virginia, William and Mary would cease to be, and the so-called William and Mary in the University of Virginia would be a sham—a spurious article palmed off under a venerated name on the descendants of the cavaliers. The proposal therefore will not hold water. If it is desired to enlarge the Faculty of the University of Virginia, it would be easier and better to do so directly; and there is plenty of room for such enlargement, especially in the Natural Sciences.

The other proposal has at least the merit of good taste. It is that Virginians should re-endow William and Mary College as it stands; should rejuvenate it on its own ground. If that can be done the University of the South says, God speed to the doers of it. It would be the next best course to that proposed by the University of the South, and the rejuvenated College would be an ally to the Church institution at Sewanee. The difficulties in the way, however, are serious indeed. Virginia cannot re-endow William and Mary without revolutionizing the whole course of the people of Virginia towards that college from the days of Jefferson inclusive to the present time. Now a revolution is not got up in a day; especially unlikely is such a sudden revolution in Virginia, where the very idea of it has reached Richmond only a few weeks since from the University of the South. But get it up if you can. The University of the South will hail with profound satisfaction such an evidence that she has taught Virginia the value of William and Mary College. But, again, suppose the revolution successful, the College re-endowed, the empty chairs filled, and the doors opened for students, will students go there? With reason or without reason, they will not. The site of William
and Mary College is in the low country—"the tide-water country" of the South, against the healthiness of which a powerful and inexpungable, because absolutely unreasonable, prejudice exists throughout the whole interior, from Texas to Maryland. From Chesapeake bay to the Rio Grande not a single collegiate institution within tide-water limits has succeeded in attracting a sufficient number of students; none but medical students go there, and they do so under the delusion that they will find diseases there to study. Another revolution, then, would be required by this aesthetic proposal; for without a revolution the prejudice against the tide-water country cannot be overcome. Now, a suggestion which, for its realization, requires the organization of two entire revolutions of sentiment in the course of a few months, may well be dismissed to revolve itself out of existence in its own fantastic impracticability. But for this prejudice against the low country, and the great distance of Williamsburg from the far West, the University of the South might perhaps have proposed to go to William and Mary, instead of asking William and Mary to come to the University of the South. Such a transfer would be quite possible to the University, for it belongs to the whole South, and its location at any particular point is but a question of health and convenient access. Sewanee was chosen merely as an approximately central point, with a mountain climate of unquestionable salubrity, and the University has no other connection with the site.

Now, had the University proposed to save William and Mary by establishing itself at Williamsburg, the Virginians who are not great would doubtless have made no opposition, and instead of the abuse lavished on the University we should have heard equally intemperate laudations of it; more especially since at least three of the professors are Virginians, and one of the three a former professor of William and Mary itself, while a fourth professor is a Master of Arts of the much vaunted Jeffersonian University at Charlottesville. It may be that the University of the South might prefer the transfer to Williamsburg as a matter of taste, because it would preserve, not the traditional character only, but the traditional site of William and Mary, and the actual landmarks of the first foundation of English Church education on the soil of America. But as a matter of common sense there is no use in discussing a plan which involves a revolution of almost universal senti-
ment like this against the tidewater country. Let the sentiment change; let the prejudice cure itself naturally, and no doubt the University might consider the advisability of such a remove; it would be easy to do so. The University belongs no more to Sewanee than to any other point in the South.

There are no greater men than the great Virginians; none who better understand that a seeming sacrifice of one's own interest is oftentimes the actual salvation of it. The proposed contribution of William and Mary College by Virginia as her share in the University of the South, may be such a seeming sacrifice it will be an actual gain. The College now on the brink of dissolution will be preserved; preserved as a Virginia College, immediately under Virginia influence; preserved as a living witness of a cavalier origin of Virginia herself, and of the whole South; preserved to infuse the influence of Virginia's thought and Virginia's training into every part of the South among people, thousands of whom trace their families back to Virginia, and who are proud of their origin. The great battle which the South has now to fight is the battle for its own home education, colored by its own home traditions. There is no way in which she can fight this battle for conservatism so effectively as by developing to its utmost such a confederate university as the University of the South. Such a University to be conservative must be professedly Christian, and definitely, not vaguely, Christian; to be truly Southern it must have that form of Christianity which distinguished the Cavaliers from the Puritans; it must be based, in fine, upon the Church of England, which rocked the cradle of Southern civilization in Virginia and the Carolinas. Let Virginia take her place in this Confederacy of Education, and she may yet control a great movement involving the whole South—a movement which will not be stopped whether Virginia come or no.

How much of all that is really and distinctively Southern is really due to the Church of England, has been greatly overlooked. The colonies which established themselves upon the northern coast, were communities of dissenters of various names, who came to America to get rid of the influences of the Church of England, and are only now feeling their way back to that Church after two hundred years of separation. The colony of Maryland was Romanist, and equally opposed to the Church of England, though on grounds so different that the end was practi-
cal identity in political matters with the South. The colonies which really have made the South are those of Virginia and the Carolinas. From these three colonies the great mass of the Southern population has descended, and against all the disadvantages of the condition of border settlers conquering a great realm from the dominion of nature, have still preserved essentially the characteristics of their origin. Now, if we ask ourselves what were the differences between the three Southern colonies and the Northern, we shall find that they reduce themselves substantially to this: that these three colonies brought with them, and planted on the Southern shores, the Church of England. The fact is the outward symbol and expression of all the differential characteristics which underlie it. The religion of a people is that to which ultimately all their peculiarities trace themselves. Atheism gives character to nothing. There must be at least a religious superstition before there can be a character. Just as Harvard, and afterwards Yale College, were the expressions of the educational strivings of the Puritans from their religious point of view, so William and Mary College in Virginia was the expression of the characteristic strivings of the Cavaliers in the same direction. It is true this expression never attained the dimensions in the early history of the Southern colonies which it did in the Northern. The reason of this is also religious. The Southern colonists were one with the Church of England; they had still the great Church of England universities, Oxford and Cambridge, to which they could send their sons, and they had thus already the education they wanted, the only drawback being the Atlantic passage. The Puritan and Quaker colonists—but especially the former—were in precisely the opposite position. Of them, self-preservation required that they should not educate their sons under the influence of the Church of England, and the same consideration forced them to concentrate their efforts for education to the building up of permanent universities of their own on their own soil. Hence, before the Revolution, the Southern colonies made far less effort towards university building than did the Northern. William and Mary is perhaps the only expression of their aspirations in this direction, if we except the College of Charleston, and the long defunct college of Beaufort, S. C. The only one of these three, which can really be said to survive is the College of Charleston, which has still a faculty of four or six pro-
fessors, a museum of natural history, (the only one in the South,) a small observatory, a chemical and a physical library, but which suffers under the same ban which the people of the interior place upon every institution in the tidewater country, and never has more than from fifty to one hundred students collected from the city itself and the coast.

Of these three the only one much more than a hundred years old is William and Mary College, and consequently it is the only one which has stamped upon it the indelible impress of the Church of England. It was founded (as the others were not) with special reference to the training of a Church Ministry, and the ultimate conversion of the Indian tribes. The Church of England had nothing specially to do with the others, nor indeed with any other institution of learning established in the Colonies. William and Mary stands singular and alone in this respect. It represents, as no other College does, the descent of Southerners in general from those who espoused the cause of Church and King. It is the only embodiment of that historical tradition which links the whole South with British conservatism and chivalry in Church and State. Take away its Church character and you take away its idiosyncrasy. Preserve it, and you preserve a landmark which neither money, nor learning, nor civilization can replace. The vulgar talk about sectarianism is important here. We are dealing with a question of historical truth and correct taste. William and Mary is either a Church College, or it is not William and Mary.

Besides, the cry of "Sect" is the cry of Demagogue, who in fact cares nothing about religion. A religion that has no distinctive form is just no religion at all. Nothing formless is capable of living, working, and making itself felt in the world. If higher education is ever hereafter to be imparted under the sanctifying influence of Christianity, it must be so under some definite form of Christianity, and those even who are not Churchmen must see the historical propriety and fitness of leaving a Church of England college like William and Mary in the hands of the American Branch of the Church of England, for the growth of which it was destined from its very foundation. The hostility to what the newspapers call "Sect," is not toleration, for without divisions among Christians, toleration itself would be non-existent in Christian lands. When the friends of William and Mary ap-
peal for the preservation of her Church of England character, their appeal is to the sacred principle of toleration. When others seek to tear the old college from her Church of England tradition, they act on the principle of intolerance, and persecution.

There are two ways, and two only, in which William and Mary can be saved. Either the "Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia" must take control and rejuvenate the College where it stands, or the proposal of the University of the South, modified, if necessary, by mutual agreement, must be accepted. Fundamentally these two courses are far from being inconsistent with each other; and either, if adopted, will probably in the end lead to the other.

In any event, the University of the South has come at the right moment to the rescue of its neutral and only ally, and its venerable senior in arms, just when spent with wounds the old soldier, with the half effaced cross upon his shield, was covering up his face to die with decency. If he dies now, it will be because Virginia turns up her thumb to his last appeal for life. The executioners are ready,—will Virginia let him die?

VERITAS.