

His Excellency

Gov. Magrath,

Columbia April 15, 1865

Dear Governor

In your message there is a matter I respectfully submit which should be brought to the attention of the Legislature, tho' it embraces but a small class of public servants. Last Winter the Trustees of the College reported that they had leased to the Confederate Government the College buildings for hospitals, and that the rents would more than suffice to pay the professors' salaries, for which the Legislature in consequence made no appropriation. The Government has not paid one dollar of rent, tho' frequently urged by the College Treasurer, the Pay master alleging that he had no funds. They have paid nobody I believe, not even the Army. Three of our five professors failed to embark in other pursuits for subsistence, because the Trustees agreed to pay their salaries, with a view to retain them in our service. They have received no payment since 1 July 1864, and meanwhile the cost of subsistence being enormous, they must have been put to great shifts. That they have been silent sufferers, and have not chosen to complain, makes it more imperative that we should act upon their case. No doubt the Trustees would urge it but they cannot have a meeting.

As my memoranda in relation to College matters have been burnt with all my other papers. I have to speak from memory, fortified however by the following statement of the College Treasurer, which I called for and procured yesterday.

One year salary of five Professors at \$2500 each due 1 July 1865; no payment has been received by them beyond 1 July 1864 ----- 12,500

Six months salary of treasurer and librarian due 1 July 1865 ----- 1250

\$13,750

The Confederate Government are at this moment indebted to the College for rents to an amount exceeding \$80,000.

Public affairs look gloomy. Our armies retiring before the enemy, their supplies cut off, our railroads and bridges destroyed, the soldiers unpaid, outnumbered, and no recruits going forward. The States are overrun, their capital cities plundered and burnt, scarcity, if not famine at hand; agricultural prospects for 1865 discouraging, slaves carried off, and those which remain

rendering a doubtful obedience; plough horses, mules and cattle carried away; the currency at zero, finances disordered, and taxes unpaid. Our foreign supplies are cut off, and intervention more unlikely than ever. The North is a unit and exultant. The South is despondent, and symptoms of a break in our ranks begin to appear.

This is gloomy enough, yet there were moments during the struggle of 1776 when things looked worse. The currency fell to nothing, our armies were routed, the militia would not stand the bayonets, the country was overrun, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and Savannah were all in the hands of the enemy, and some States were nearly equally divided between Whig and Tory. Louis 16th saved us but lost his throne and life.

But when we consider the consequences of submission who can doubt that we must fight it out. I have no belief that if we submitted tomorrow we should be received into the Union as States. They would hold and govern us as Territories. Our Governor would be appointed at Washington. The proconsuls who plundered the subject provinces were appointed at Rome. Slavery would be abolished by an alteration of the Constitution, our lands subjected to confiscation and thus lands, estates and negroes would all be lost. And what would become of our honor; to what a depth of infamy and disgrace we should sink. South Carolina the first to provoke the contest, the first to quit it. The struggle is nearly desperate but it must be continued. Nothing can be worse than the condition to which we shall be reduced by submission. Let us die at least with arms in our hands.

My nephew Major Ormsby Blanding has just come to my house with a bad wound in the left should, which has paralyzed the arm. He got it at Averysburg. He reports that Gen. Lee told the troops after the great fight at Petersburg, that it was the brightest day the Confederacy had yet seen.

I am ever

with great respect

most truly yours

W. F. de Saussure