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A Souvenir of
Prof. J. R. Blake
and His Friends
1878

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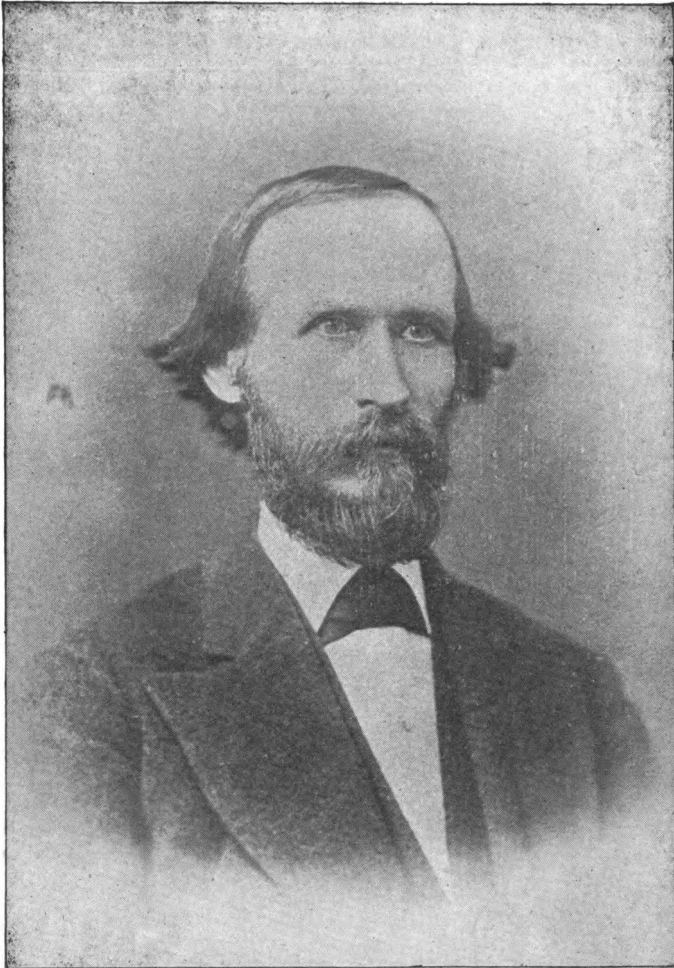
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Princeton University.

Estate of
Stockton Axson

For my dear Pupil
G. S. K. Ayson
with affectionate regards
from his old Teacher,
J. R. Blake
Greenwood S. C.
Dec 6th 1898.



JOHN RENNIE BLAKE.

A SOUVENIR

OF

PROF. J. R. BLAKE,

AND HIS FRIENDS.

COMPILED BY ONE OF THEM.

“ There comes a voice that wakes my soul
It is the voice of years that are gone!
They roll before me with all their deeds!”
—*Ossian*.

“ Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou has brought me hitherto? And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, oh God, for Thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, oh Lord.” “ There is no God like Thee in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before Thee with all their heart.”—2 Sam'l 7 ch. 18 v.

“ We have not climbed by any ladder of our own; God's daily Providences, like great arms of His, have stooped and lifted us.”

DEDICATION.

To the Students of Davidson College

from

1861—to—1885,

This little tribute of love is affectionately dedicated.

6-20-35 Estate of Stockton, A. J. W.

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PREFACE.

The correspondence below furnishes the explanation for the publication of this little volume.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Greenwood, S. C.

Dear Sir:—I have been asked to prepare a series of sketches of men who have become prominent in Science, among the names given me was yours: I trust therefore, that you will be pleased to aid me, by sending such data, as is indicated by the enclosed sheet.

Very respectfully yours most truly,

MARCUS BENJAMIN, 47 Bond St., N. Y.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Greenwood, S. C.

Dear Sir:—The biographical material of your life which we have for publication in "The National Cyclopædia of American Biography" is too brief, and we beg to ask, if you will kindly send us a longer sketch. We are making genealogies and family histories, a special feature of the work, and we would like to have further details in that regard, as well as any other facts to bring the sketch up to date.

We are arranging to illustrate the group of sketches connected with Davidson College, and would like very much to have your portrait. This being a national and permanent work, we are making our portrait illustrations, an important feature. We trust you will co-operate with us in having this biography as complete as possible, by the insertion of your vignette portrait and facsimile autograph.

Very truly yours,

JAMES T. WHITE & CO.

“This work aims to present to the world as has never before been attempted, life-like and vivid pictures of the men who founded and are building up a great nation, setting forth their efforts and achievements which have so largely added to the advancement and civilization of the world. American Universities are given prominence, and their history outlined in the lives of their founders, presidents and prominent instructors.”

The London Times says:

“The National Cyclopædia of American Biography is one of those monumental publications, which are characteristic of American Literature. It is the history of the United States as illustrated in the lives of its founders, builders and defenders of the Republic, and of the men and women who are doing the work and moulding the thought of the present time. It is edited by distinguished biographers, selected from each state and approved by the most eminent historians, scholars and statesmen of the day.”

A dear friend writes:

“To me Biography is one of the most charming forms of literature; it really seems singular that in the making of books, of which there is no end, so few should be biographical. In all departments of life, we are more influenced by illustration, than abstract truth. Miltiades said, it made him *great* to read of heroes, and before going into action he always recalled the story of some warrior who preceded him. Thus may this sketch, give impetus and inspiration to other young toilers in Life's Labyrinth. Success attend it, and God bless the effort in doing good to all who may read the interesting narrative of a life nobly planned, and nobly ful-

filled. To live thus, is not to live in vain, or even to wonder why we were born. It is a truly deserved tribute to worth, nobility, and to the consecrated talents of a life time."

To collect, arrange, and revise the material for this little volume, originally prepared for the "Cyclopædia of American Biography," has been a labor of love, refreshing the memory of the compiler with many treasures from the storehouse of 'auld lang syne.' May the spirit of the pilgrim be revived "ere the silver cord be loosed," as he quaffs one more draught from the crystal stream which flows by the shrine of friendship. It was compiled not for the critical public, but for the members of that cherished household, who gathered within the halls of the dear old college in the years that are gone!

Ancestry and Early School Days.

CHAPTER I.

The Rev. F. W. Farrar in his "Church Fathers" says, "Although great books should occupy the main attention of every student, yet I would by no means exclude the reading of other books which may be useful, though we may not call them *great*. Many a book which is not *great*, may still tend to elevate human nature by exhibiting high ideals."

Such is the brief history which is offered to the friends of Christian education to-day ; not a "great book," but the simple record of a life passed in the class room, without the prestige of wealth or family influence, without ambitious seeking of worldly honor but whose highest aim was to serve his Master Jesus Christ. "Him first, Him last, Him midst and without end."

Dr. Howe, in his History of the Presbyterian Church, says, "Our own individual history is invested with the deepest interest to each of us ; and to retrace the path by which God has led us, that we may remember His faithfulness, and profit by our own success, and failure, is rewarded by the richest fruits of knowledge."

So it is instructive to survey and perpetuate the

history of those whose lives are worthy of being recorded.

In the striking language of Dr. McPheeters, "There are monumental names, as well as monumental tablets and marbles. There are names which stand for principles, and are arguments for incentives to the cultivation of the noblest virtues. I do not envy the man or woman who can read these names, and feel no thrill of holy aspiration, no impulse to holy endeavor, no quickened sense of responsibility to the past, the present and the future."

Such a name is the subject of this little biography, John Rennie Blake, who was born in Greenwood, South Carolina, December 6th, 1825.

He was the son of William Newton Blake, and Elizabeth Witherow Weir, both of whom were descended from Scotch-Irish parents emigrating to America and locating in Laurens District, S. C., in the year 1786. His grandfather Blake was born not far from Belfast, County Downe, Ireland, in the province of Ulster, his father having emigrated from Scotland about the year 1642. He says, in a sketch of his grandparents, "My grandfather Blake was named John, and was a man of marked character, having a very decided literary taste, as well as a more conspicuous mathematical talent, being equally ready to originate problems to be solved by the teacher or his grandson, or to compose a stanza

of poetry for the lads to give their "lasses." He was so familiar with Burns, as to repeat it from the beginning to end, in the native dialect, with genial humor and quaint drollery.

Few persons could so attract the young, as my grandfather, especially on festive occasions, as Hallow'een or Christmas, his store of folk lore, legends and traditions being inexhaustible. His piety was of a quiet rather than a controversial nature. I can well remember his private oratory in his workshop, where we would watch him kneeling in prayer, with reverential awe, as we passed on our way to school. Only one check did he ever place on the frolics of the "childer," when they practiced singing, he would not allow them to use the words of the Psalms, as he thought it profanation of the name of God.

"My mother's father, Thomas Weir, was born in the province of Ulster in County Tyrone, Ireland. He was of Scotch-Irish ancestry and had, in a marked degree, the characteristics of both people. He was self-reliant, and independent, doing his own thinking and minding his own business, quiet and retiring in his habits, and, like all Irishmen, fond of a joke. He offered me a trip to the "Auld Countrie" if I would take his cotton to Liverpool and get his price, (he always refused to sell till he got his own price), using as much of the proceeds as would be necessary to visit the "kith and

kin" and come back and tell him all about them. "Then, John, if ye have ony left, ye can hand it to your old grandfather." I often regretted that my youth, being only 16 years of age, made me shrink from such an undertaking. He called me to him one day, saying, "John, I want ye to write my will"—but grandpa, I don't know how to write a will. "Write what I tell ye, can't ye?" So after getting a sheet of paper and marking it off, I put the portion of each child as he directed. A lawyer pronounced it a "legal document."

Much is said at present about heredity, nor do we underestimate the importance of training in the development of character, thus we discover that the qualities of self-reliance, devotion to principle, and steadfastness of purpose—which shone conspicuously in the life of Prof. J. R. Blake—were inculcated by precept and example, as he "rose up, or sat down or walked by the way," as well as having been inherited from a Scotch-Irish ancestry, a "heritage which included the very essence of truth, reverence for God, and fidelity to duty."

His own father William Newton Blake was also a man of upright character, indomitable energy and persistence of purpose. By close application to his farming interests, he accumulated an excellent landed property and gave his children the best educational advantages within reach, stimulating them to improve these to the uttermost.

He was a man of strict piety and adherence to the faith of his fathers.

While on a visit to his son during the chairman-regime at Davidson, he was congratulated by one of the Professors, on the prominent position his son had attained and his qualifications for it. With natural Irish humor, he pleasantly replied "Why, I have five sons at home just as fine as he is," yet he was much gratified by his son's success, and never failed during his life to inspire him with continued devotion to duty.

Greenwood, South Carolina, was originally settled as a health resort, by wealthy planters who owned large estates on the river. Being located on the highest ridge in the Piedmont Section, between the Savannah and Saluda rivers, it soon became attractive as a dwelling place, for families, to enjoy its pure waters and salubrious climate.

Such a body of men having united their fortunes in one community, at once set about the establishment of schools, forming an association, for which a charter was obtained under the name of the "Greenwood Educational Association."

Being men of ample means, and liberal education, they knew its value, and employed the best teachers in the country, whose success gave to the "Greenwood High Schools" a reputation and patronage extending beyond the limits of the State. Of the numbers who received training here, many

have risen to distinction. Among them Judge McGowan, George Tillman and Preston Brookes, Senators, Moraigue, a distinguished lawyer in Edgefield; Dr. John Henry Logan, Profs. Simon P. Boozer and J. R. Blake, all laid the foundation of future eminence in this school.

This small village of Greenwood was not far distant from what was known as "Calhoun Settlement" in which was the celebrated "Willington Academy" where so many men of national reputation were instructed by that grand old teacher Rev. Moses Waddel, D.D.

In describing this Section Dr. John Waddel, D.D., L.L.D., writes in his "Memorials of the Waddel family," "It was composed of the Scotch-Irish and Huguenot element who had emigrated from Europe to escape persecution. They were high toned Calvinistic Presbyterians." Rev. T. A. Hoyt, D.D., wrote recently an article in the N. Y. Observer, in which he states "that it is doubtful whether any other territory of as small size and population in the Union, could make so conspicuous a showing, as to the number of national characters it has produced, being near the birthplace of John C. Calhoun, of Andrew Jackson, of William Crawford, George McDuffie, Preston Brookes, James Pettigru, Alexander Stephens, and others less conspicuous."

There must have been something in the environ-

ment of this region, which made *men* in those days of sturdy faith, primitive tastes, and adherence to principles, for which their ancestors fought and died amid the bloody persecutions of Europe. A writer remarks, "The Shorter Catechism has done more than anything else to put iron in the blood and high thought in the brain of the Scottish race to give them that strong character which has sent them to the front in every land beneath the sun."

The first teacher who inspired the youthful pupil John Rennie Blake with a laudable ambition to obtain an education, above the common school, was James Lesley, a famous educator in this region, at a time when the school was largely patronized. The public examinations drew crowds as large as now assemble at our college commencements. There was a searching examination of the pupil, by a committee of gentlemen selected for the purpose, to whom the text-book was handed, and they were urged to test the scholar *ad libitum*.

On one of these public occasions, the class in Algebra was called: John Rennie Blake took a straight course to the rostrum, when there was a sudden pause. Looking around wistfully for his classmates, Mr. Lesley asked "where are the rest of the class?" "I don't know, sir." "We will proceed with the examination."

The gentleman conducting the examination was a prominent teacher from an adjoining town who

asked an elementary question to re-assure the nervous and lonely lad, who replied, "I haven't gone that far, sir." With gentle words and kindly sympathy, he relieved his intimidation, so that he soon recovered his equanimity and proceeded through his solitary ordeal, in which a problem was given him to solve on the blackboard.

Having finished it, he quietly waited till the examiner said, "you have the wrong answer, my young friend." Mr. Lesley came to the front to look over the work, pronouncing it correct. So the decision was, that the book was wrong, to the inexpressible delight of the frightened pupil.

On his way home he was accosted by Mr. Morigaigne, a prominent lawyer in Edgefield, who congratulated him on his performance, saying, "you have made a noble beginning; continue as you have begun, and you will make a scholar." Several years afterwards this gentleman urged him to accept a school in his town with a salary of \$1,000 and \$400 additional for an assistant.

College Course and Early Experience as a Teacher.

CHAPTER II.

After having been prepared for college Mr. Blake entered the University of Georgia where he was graduated in 1846, with the second honor in a class numbering twenty-three, he, delivering the Latin Salutatory. This institution was at that period, in the front rank of Southern colleges, having been elevated to prominence by that great "pioneer in Christian education," Rev. Moses Waddel, D.D.

"During the time of his Presidency the college sent out a class of Alumni whose record illustrates the glory of their alma mater."

When we read among its graduates such names as Alexander Stephens, Judge Longstreet, Hons. Howell and Thomas Cobb, Profs. John and Joseph LeConte, distinguished scientists, Rev. B. M. Palmer, D.D., L.L.D., and his brother Rev. Edward Palmer, D.D., Rev. T. A. Hoyt, D.D., Ben Hill, George McDuffie and Lamar, we must believe that the University of Georgia was a glory to the State. When we read further that the administration had been controlled for sixty years by Presby-

terian Presidents, we may well understand why Christian parents of this section patronized the University of Georgia, instead of that of South Carolina, which was then controlled by skeptical influences.

Immediately on completing his college course, a position was secured for Mr. Blake by his life long friend and advisor Dr. E. Calhoun, of Greenwood, who advised him to accept a private school in the family of Ex-Governor Hammond, residing on his plantation near Augusta, Ga.

Traveling at that early stage in the history of our country was primitive. No railroads, no telephones, no telegraphs, no bicycles, only country roads, enlivened by an occasional mountain wagon hauling produce to market. Greenwood was directly on this thoroughfare from the mountains to Augusta and the home of Mr. Blake was near the public road. So a plan as unique, as it was determined, was set in motion by the young tutor, as the time for the opening of the school drew near, and no conveyance at hand to make the journey of 60 or 70 miles. He quietly packed his trunk and deposited it at the front gate where he watched for a wagon approaching in the distance. He hailed the honest driver, entering into a contract with him to carry his trunk while he kept him company and assisted in the domestic duties needed during the long and fatiguing journey.

Having safely arrived at the city he hired a buggy and drove out to the Governor's residence, reporting for duty promptly at the appointed time. On being interrogated as to his mode of travel, he replied, "I walked all the way." The Governor said, "You are the teacher I want; you'll be apt to succeed in life."

Here he instructed the four sons of the family, with other pupils from the vicinity, which was at that period, a popular plan for educating the children of the wealthy landowners, who resided at their country seats. In this home of refinement and luxury, he was associated with the most elegant society of the old Southern regime, where acquaintance and friend were welcomed with the proverbial hospitality of the lordly entertainers.

These country gentlemen indulged in varied sports and games, even literary "clubs" were then in style. We find our young tutor taking part in the discussion of questions of public and private interest. At one time it was "slavery," at another "nullification," then a point of divergence in religious belief, as the guests were not always orthodox believers in the faith of his fathers. Doubtless this mingling with gentlemen of intellectual culture, in a social sphere entirely diverse from his home and college life, had great influence in broadening his views and widening his horizon.

Mr. Blake continued to teach private academies,

for several years, being much sought after, at salaries ranging from \$800 to \$1,200 a year, at ante bellum specie rates.

In 1852 he was appointed by the Synod of South Carolina to complete the endowment of a professorship in Oglethorpe College, Ga., which had been established by the joint Synods. While discharging this arduous undertaking, which he did with patient and painstaking effort, he visited all the churches in the State, and was thus drawn within the charmed circle of the ministers, especially the Professors in the Seminary at Columbia, who became his life long friends. Several years after this he was offered a Professorship in this college, which was controlled by Presbyterians in South Carolina and Georgia who were his best friends.

In 1853 he was elected Professor of Natural Science and Mathematics in the Synodical Female College of Georgia, in connection with Rev. I. S. K. Axson, D.D., afterwards for twenty-five years the beloved pastor of the Independent Church, Savannah.

It was to him indeed a labor of love to be thus intimately associated with this godly man, and to be brought into contact with the choicest society in the State, while engaged in instructing their daughters.

During this term of service, he obtained leave of absence to pursue a post-graduate course at Har-

vard University in geology and chemistry, under the great scholars Agassiz and Horsford. He enjoyed familiar intercourse with the renowned materialist in his private laboratory, where he studied geology on the rocks and fishes on the seashore, at Nahant near Boston.

While thus engaged he attended the Natural History Society of Boston, and was elected a corresponding member, on the nomination of the great Agassiz, who was always a kind and genial instructor and steadfast friend. For many years he continued this connection, sending specimens of rare insects and plants from the South.

He also became intimate with Agassiz's assistant, a German student, who was his microscopist, himself an original investigator with whom he enjoyed familiar intercourse, taking a tour of observation and exploration through Western New York and Niagara, which proved of immense value to him throughout his career as a teacher.

He also became a member of the American Association for the advancement of Science, often attending the meetings in the large cities of the North. In 1884 he was elected a Fellow of this body of distinguished scientists.

In 1857 Prof. Blake was elected to the Chair of Natural Science in the college established by the Synod of Memphis, including the Presbyterian Church of the Western States. It was under the

supervision of that renowned educator Rev. J. N. Waddel, D.D., LL.D., who was then Chancellor of Mississippi University. This young institution had ample equipment, and seemed destined to become a growing power in the wide Western field; but the black cloud of war burst upon it with ruthless force, and swept its very foundations, so, at the close of that terrible struggle, there literally was "not left one stone upon another," the very buildings being razed to the ground by Grant's hordes on his march to Vicksburg.

Dr. Waddel writes, in his "Memorials of the Waddel family:" "The Federal soldiers who were left in LaGrange, when the main body of the army were ordered South through Mississippi, tore down the college building, and used the bricks to build huts and chimneys to their tents, until there was hardly a vestige left to indicate the spot where it once stood."

Prof. Blake's home was headquarters for the Yankee General, it was robbed of the entire furnishing and the bare walls of the house remained to tell the story.

Characteristics and Testimonials from Friends.

CHAPTER III.

A prominent trait of Prof. Blake's character from early boyhood was his natural selection of the best associates, many of those prominent in the church were attracted by his elevated principles and purity of character.

He was honored when a young man with intimate association of Rev. Drs. Howe, Adger, Axson, Hoyt, father and son ; Drs. Kirkpatrick, Plummer, A. W. Miller, Waddel ; Gen. D. H. Hill, Profs. John and Joseph LeConte, C. F. McKoy and others.

On his graduation at the University of Georgia he received flattering testimonials from the Faculty. The President, Rev. Alonzo Church, D.D., writes : "Mr. John Rennie Blake, sustained a high character for scholarship. He was one of the best scholars in his class, and was all the faculty could desire, leaving with the highest esteem of every member of it. I do not doubt he will ultimately become a distinguished teacher. He was a gentleman of con-

ciliatory manners and of irreproachable moral character.

ALONZO CHURCH,
President University of Georgia.

J. W. Waddel, Professor of Ancient Literature, says:

“An intimate connexion with John Rennie Blake for the past three years, has, in the minds of the Faculty, gained for him a high reputation both for intellectual and moral excellence.”

When only 22 years of age, Dr. Howe called on him, while in attendance on a meeting of the South Carolina Legislature at Columbia, and urged him to undertake the agency for Oglethorpe. He says of him, “My personal acquaintance with Mr. Blake has been confined to business matters rather than to those which relate to the man of science or the scholar. I have found him an agreeable Christian gentleman, skillful and prompt in the conduct of matters, trying and difficult, in a very eminent degree. From those who know, I learn that he has been remarkably successful as a teacher and has unquestioned ability.”

GEORGE HOWE,
Columbia Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Hoyt, pastor Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ga., writes: "I have repeatedly been a member of the Board of Visitors of the University of Georgia, and once the Chairman appointed by the Governor. I have heard examinations in Mathematics and the Physical Sciences, when the learned C. F. McKoy was Professor in that department, which would have done honor to any college in the United States, yet I assert that never have I heard any examinations so thorough and exhaustive as those conducted by Prof. Blake. His power of illustration is great, his talent for imparting instruction of the highest order. I know him intimately. He was a member of my household much of the time he was in college. I know him to be a most admirable man.

NATHAN HOYT,
Pastor Presbyterian Church.

Rev. I. S. H. Axon, D.D., writes: "I have read the certificate of Dr. Hoyt testifying to the fitness of Prof. Blake to fill ably the Chair of Physical Science, and it is my honest conviction, that as it respects talent, acquirement and a most happy art of communicating knowledge, he has not been overestimated by Dr. Hoyt. Prof. Blake is a man of piety unfeigned, of honor high toned, of learning varied and thorough, of zeal in his vocation intense, apt to teach, with large experience, always

commanding the respect and winning the affection of his pupils—of whom his fellow teachers will never be ashamed, and the Trustees may confide, as a courteous finished gentleman.

I. S. H. AXON,
Pastor, Savannah, Ga.

Rev. J. B. Adger, D.D., writes from Columbia Seminary: "My opinion of Prof. Blake as a man and a Christian is very high. Of his qualifications to teach, I am not acquainted, but from his reputation and all that I have seen of him I consider it as well founded as it is high. He is young and enthusiastic in his studies and I doubt not will rise to prominence in his profession. It was Mr. Blake who acted for Oglethorpe and gave so much satisfaction to us and the churches."

J. B. ADGER,
Columbia Seminary.

Rev. A. W. Miller, D.D., writes: "I believe Prof. Blake to be a high toned Christian gentleman, and an able professor from what I have seen and heard. He is destined to prominence in those departments of study to which he has devoted himself, for besides the requisite ability, he possesses that enthusiasm which prompts ever to higher attainment. He has a ready facility for imparting

knowledge, while his suavity of manners renders his intercourse with students pleasant."

A. W. MILLER.

Rev. J. N. Waddel, Chancellor Mississippi University, writes : "Prof. Blake is a graduate of the University of Georgia of the class of 1846, closing his term of scholastic training with high distinction in a class remarkable even then, for ability. No man with whom I have ever been associated was more zealous and successful in imparting the benefits of his own acquisition for those under his instruction. But the crowning excellence of such a teacher as Prof. Blake is not simply that he be a learned man, a splendid scholar and a successful instructor, important as these qualities are, but that he be a man of earnest Christian character, living out in his daily intercourse with his pupils, the life of Christ and thus training them not only by conscious, but by unconscious tuition.

J. N. WADDEL,
Chancellor U. M.

Trustees of Greenwood High School: "We do most heartily concur in giving this testimonial in favor of Mr. J. R. Blake. He is the son of one of our most efficient elders, growing up in our midst with an unblemished character, is a graduate of the

University of Georgia, and has for several years past taught in this and other districts of the State. He has often been solicited to take charge of our male academy and did serve us for a time with more acceptance than any teacher we ever had. He was invited to a Professorship in Austin College, Texas, with a fine salary, Dr. Baker offering to defray his traveling expenses, so anxious was he to obtain his services. We most cordially recommend Mr. Blake as a ripe scholar and a successful teacher. Dr. E. R. Calhoun, Dr. John Logan, Rev. John McLeese, Gen. James Gillam, Greenwood, S. C.

Rev. J. Kirkpatrick, D. D., Lexington, Va., Professor Moral Philosophy and Belles Lettres Washington and Lee University, writes: "In all my intercourse with Prof. J. R. Blake, I have found him a representative of the highest type of Christian gentleman. As far as I was capable of judging, and on the report of those who had the best opportunity of judging, he was an able, thoroughly versed and successful teacher in the class room, and it would be difficult to conceive how any one could be more diligent, painstaking and laborious. From the beginning of his connection with the college his interests and its interests were identical. I can truly say, I never saw him evince the slightest reluctance to assume any labor, which

the good of the college seemed to require, and this too when he was aware that no extra remuneration for the extra service would be expected. And yet the crowning excellence of his character was his piety, so uniform, consistent and enlightened. The example of his daily life, his wise and affectionate counsels, his zeal and prayers for the spiritual welfare of the students made him an ornament and a blessing to the college and the church. I consider Prof. J. R. Blake one of the truest men and purest characters I have ever known.

J. L. KIRKPATRICK.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Davidson College, N. C.:

My Dear Friend :—Your kind letter gave me great pleasure. Let me assure you that the satisfaction you have in falling in with such a fellow pilgrim as I am, was more than matched by my delight in your friendship. You know that men are sometimes forced together, at other times they fall together sweetly and naturally, as water drops, that roll into each other in the cup of the flower.

I send you a copy of a sermon I recently preached to our young people.

Work still presses tremendously!

To get a little relief, do not be surprised to see me run down for a day or two to North Carolina.

Mrs. Wilson joins me in sending kindest regards to you and yours.

Affectionately, your friend,

J. D. WILSON.

348 W. 57th Street, N. Y.

Dear Bro. Blake:—I thank you with my whole heart for your kind and tender letter, so full of love of Christ. I can say amen to every word of it—it is one of the letters I intend to keep. The Master has been with me through all my suffering. He is dearer to me now than ever before. Pray for me.

With warmest love, your friend,

W. A. WOOD,

Statesville, N. C.

Beginning of Professor Blake's Life Work at Davidson College, North Carolina.

CHAPTER IV.

But the chief work of Prof. Blake's life was at Davidson College. To it, he devoted twenty-five years of the fresh enthusiasm of his young manhood. It is not always that a man lives to enjoy the fruit of his labors. Scripture tells us, "They rest from their labors and their works do follow them." Dr. Palmer says to Dr. Waddel, on his retirement from the Chancellorship of the Southwestern University, "It is not given to many men to know that they belong to history"—yet who can read the history of Davidson College, and fail to recognize the influence of this man. Dr. Kirkpatrick writes, "If Davidson College shall have a history in future years, Mr. Blake's name will occupy an honorable place on its pages. He has a record on earth, that no man can impeach."

The college, so prosperous to-day, with its array of Ph. D.'s would not exist, to exhibit their advanced scholarship, had it not fought the stern battle with adversity in its early history, and won the

victory, when its resources were poorest, its sphere of influence the narrowest. The secret of its glorious record lies in the fact that the men who steered it in those days which "tried men's souls," were men whose highest aim was to build up an institution for the attainment of the loftiest ideal of manhood.

One of these men was J. R. Blake, and he may spend the evening of his days in serene and blessed repose, as he quietly surveys the work of his life, in the person of more than *one hundred* ministers of the blessed gospel whom he aided in training for the Master. Surely those sheaves gathered in the "great Harvest" will bring him the "well done" faithful servant.

John Rennie Blake was Scotch-Irish by descent ; a South Carolinian by birth ; a Georgian by education ; and a North Carolinian by special Providence. These combinations had much to do with his facile adaptation to the varied State influences which dominated Davidson College. Prof. Blake entered on his work here in 1861, and he threw himself into his new field with all the zeal and enthusiasm of his ardent nature, where, for five eventful years by the side of his devoted co-laborer Dr. Kirkpatrick during those direful days of war, he toiled bravely on, teaching in every department from the arithmetic of the Preparatory youth to the astronomy of the Senior.

“Davidson was the only college in the Confederacy which was not closed during the war. Her wise and patriotic guardians persisted in keeping her doors open, as the location, was a quiet country village, remote from the field of strife, serving as a safe refuge from the storms of the war, to many who were exiles from their own homes all over our bleeding Southland. These refugees gladly availed themselves of this retreat to educate sons of immature development, of whom the President of the Confederacy said, “It would be like grinding seed corn to send into the army.”

Thus was a most needful work done at a time of delirium and demoralization, and many noble youths were there trained to steer the ships of Church and State, when the war was over, and the wisest, most conservative counselors were needed.

“Davidson College was just entering on a new era, by the princely munificence of Maxwell Chambers who had recently bequeathed \$258,000 to it, inspiring new hopes, and filling the hearts of all interested with glowing anticipations of its enlarged prosperity and usefulness. Rev. J. L. Kirkpatrick, D.D., whose elegant social culture, his high position in the church as an able theologian, and pulpit orator made him the unanimous selection of the Trustees for the Presidency at this pivotal crisis in the history of the institution.”

In 1871 Davidson College, by the decision of the

Board of Trustees, changed the policy of the administration by substituting the chairmanship system for the Presidency. Prof. Blake was nominated by his colleagues for the new office and elected by the Trustees.

He served six years in this office, "with signal ability and phenomenal success, in which he exhibited great executive ability, skill in organization, and wise judgment in discipline, making this era in the college administration unique in its character and remarkable in its results." "Many wise and practical measures" were originated during this period, when the old regime was being transformed and merged into the new order brought about in our social and intellectual status, after the close of the war, "most of which are now incorporated in the life blood of the institution and are in great measure the ground for the high claim the college has for public patronage and favor."

When Prof. Blake resigned the chairmanship, the President of the Board in delivering the keys to Dr. Hepburn said, "Davidson College owes its present prosperous condition to Prof. Blake's wise and judicious management."

Dr. Rumble, for 25 years a trustee, said, "Prof. Blake's administration was characterized by excellent order, attention to study and thorough scholarship among the students, the college never enjoyed a more satisfactory and successful period than

those six years of the chairmanship. Another said, "His promotion to the Presidency sufficiently evinces the fact that his chair was ably filled."

After Prof. Blake's resignation he was urged to accept the permanent position of President, which he had always contended was the best form of government, but the constitution required that an old school Presbyterian minister, should fill the President's chair ; to change it would require an act of Legislature, so Prof. Blake with his accustomed wisdom, persisted in returning to the old policy, while he resumed the duties of his professional work, which had been much interrupted by his official engagements.

In 1884 he tendered his resignation of the chair, he had so long filled, but was induced to withdraw it, at the earnest solicitation of friends. In 1885 he returned it, which the Board reluctantly accepted "with expressions of esteem and regret, at the severance of a term of service lasting a quarter of a century."

Professor Blake's Resignation from his Professorship, and Protests from Friends.

CHAPTER V.

Rev. J. F. Latimer, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Polity in Union Seminary, Va., writes :

"I presume that during the eleven years of my association with Prof. Blake at Davidson College, I knew him as intimately as any colleague he had. I knew his aims and purposes, and have no hesitation in asserting that the college never had a more efficient laborer and friend than he has been. In his professional work proper he kept up with the advance in Science, and no professor was ever more diligent to do faithfully his class room work. As to his management of affairs as Chairman of the Faculty, I do not believe any institution was ever better controlled. His aim was single, it being to serve the best interests of the college. The discipline was as nearly perfect as it could be, and I know whereof I speak.

J. F. LATIMER,
Hampden Sidney, Va.

Prof. John R. Sampson, Pantops, Va., writes :

“My acquaintance with Prof. Blake began when he was Chairman of the Faculty. His admirable record as an executive officer, will live forever in the remembrance of his colleagues and students. I have never seen an institution in Europe where I studied four years, or any college in America with which I am familiar, a more studious, orderly and respectful body of students than Davidson could boast at this time. It was my privilege to have much personal intercourse with Prof. Blake and I can truthfully say, that he always evinced that wisdom, consideration and good judgment which made him a safe counselor and efficient officer. His eminent fitness for the duties of the class room speak for itself in the enthusiasm he shows in all matters connected with his department. He has ever been ready to encourage every scheme looking to the advancement of scholarship and every plan calculated to extend the patronage of Davidson College.

JOHN R. SAMPSON,
Pantops, Va.

Prof. W. W. Carson, University of East Tennessee :

“Davidson College owes more to Prof. J. R. Blake than to any other man, from the fact that it has survived all its trials and stands where it does to-day in the estimation of the people. It does

not seem probable that another man can be found to take his place who could serve it so efficiently. I want to reiterate what I have said : The college would lose more by Mr. Blake's leaving than any other man in the Faculty.

W. W. CARSON,
Knoxville, Tenn."

P. P. Paisley, Tutor Davidson College :

"I have known Prof. Blake eight years, four of which I was his pupil. I can most sincerely testify to his success in the class room, a success due not only to broad and thorough scholarship but quite as much to his painstaking habits. If a student was not accurately acquainted with the subjects taught him by Prof. Blake the fault is his own. I regard him as the wisest man I know, one who has endeavored to do his whole duty under all circumstances and with the highest success. His gentlemanly conduct won for him the esteem and confidence of his pupils and he carries that influence wherever he goes.

P. P. PAISLEY,
Union Seminary."

Col. W. J. Martin writes after Prof. Blake left the college, which he did under the Colonel's most characteristic "protest." His friends will recall his

look of utter dejection as he was moved beyond expression on bidding him farewell at the depot :

“Dear Blake, Davidson College—I have just returned from Cleveland Springs, and hear that you have not the necessary time to collect material to prepare a paper on Dr. Kirkpatrick’s regime at Davidson, and that you may not come at all to Commencement. I want to enter my protest and you know with what vehemence of voice and gesture I can “protest,” so just imagine me before you protesting like “a house afire.” I seriously think it would be a pity not to have Dr. Kirkpatrick represented at our semi-centennial, and you were so lovingly loyal to him I know you would speak from the heart. But a much greater pity would be to have you absent from this important meeting of the Board. If you are afraid of the excitement I will reserve you the “Prophet’s Chamber” all by yourself. Please don’t decide till God lays his hand on you and says “be still.” * * * * Well, Dear Blake, Commencement has come and gone and you were not here. We missed you and missed you sadly. I never saw such a crowd in the chapel Wednesday. The Alumni proceedings passed off well. The memorial addresses were read and Banks gave you an elegant send off, decidedly the best performance of the day, and it brought down the house. It was a capital showing for the chairmanship system and for your handling. Write to

me at Blowing Rock and join us there, thus delighting down to his toes, your fidus Achates,

W. J. M.

“Dear Blake—It was a pleasure to me to receive your letter of the 26th, and yet there was an element of sadness in it, for it seemed to dispel the hope that I would see you again in this world. Year by year we have been hoping you would come to see us and your old friends at Davidson, but your letter holds out no such hope.

As for myself, I have been on the down grade so unmistakably for the last six months, I should not be surprised any time if the end should come. I have still kept at work, but, oh, it is a labor and a weariness to the flesh.

Well, I ought to be thankful and hope I am, that the Lord has given me strength three more years to do my work. I did not expect it, nor did any one, when I was brought so low five years ago.

Yours most affectionately,

W. J. MARTIN.”

This was the Colonel's last letter, “the end did come” in a few weeks.

Prof. W. D. Vinson, Davidson College :

“Dear Prof. Blake—You have been selected by the Committee of Arrangements to deliver an

address on Denominational Colleges next Commencement.

You will at once see the propriety of this theme in our coming semi-centennial celebration. It is important to be able to show a *raison d'être*. We all hope that you will consent to deliver this address, knowing no one else who could do it so well as yourself.

Col. Martin is still quite sick. The doctor thinks he may possibly recover, but it will require considerable time. In McKinnon I can see no change for the better. The rest of us are doing our best to keep above water. Mrs. V. and I will both be glad to have you with us next Commencement. We speak in time, so that others may not get ahead of us. Hoping that you may long be spared to us all,

Yours very truly,

W. D. VINSON."

He, too, has gone to render his account.

Rev. Charles Phillips, D.D., Chapel Hill :

"My Dear Blake—Well, on the whole I congratulate you and your good wife on the step you have taken, and on the prospect it opens before you. I write to you what I wrote to my brother in Washington when he was preparing his resignation last fall; then he was persuaded to retain it till "called for." Let us surrender to the young Melancthons, even if protests are piled up against our proposals.

You have worked long and hard from early manhood with patience and skill for the youth of our Church. You have won honor. You have the "mens conscia recti," the right before God and man. Why should you not enter into rest? Seniores ad honores, Juniores ad labores, is old Matthew Henry's pithy remark. If you go, you go not to cease from work, but from anxiety therein, you go when duty calls you to work for Christ and his Church, where you began to live. May the years before you be as those behind you, full of faith and love and charity.

With assurances of continued and high esteem,
CHARLES PHILLIPS.

Prof. Kerr, Tampa, Fla., State Geologist :

"My Dear Friend—Your letter was very welcome indeed ; it did me much good ; it helps one to be made to feel when he has dropped out of the busy career and activities of men, and begins to feel like a "dead man out of mind," that he is remembered and thought of sympathizingly by old true and tried friends, who are doubly dear at such seasons.

I have heard a rumor of your resignation. Am distressed that the college, with all it signifies and represents and is, with all the beneficence of its promise should be so wrecked. "'Tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

Well, my friend, I envy you the prospect of re-

tirement and rest. If I had halted and taken rest this enforced idleness might have been avoided. Yes, my friend, you and I are growing old. I have much time to think of these things and to use myself to the signs of the loosening hold of "things seen and temporal" with less regret than I ever thought possible.

Most affectionately your friend,

W. C. KERR."

Rev. S. Taylor Martin, Dublin, Va.:

"Dear Bro. Blake—Hearing there was a hopeful outlook for the future of Davidson College, I felt assured that the Board would not accept your resignation. I was pained to learn from Lacy that you had asked your friends not to oppose it.

So great is my friendship for you personally, my interest in your welfare so profound, I recognize the fact that it is not easy for me to separate my interest in you from my interest in the college. Yet, after making full allowance for this influence, I must say out of regard for the future of the institution, I implore you not to take this step, but if the way be clear for you to remain with any prospect of approximating in the future your work in the past, do by all means bestow your services where you have done and endured so much in the past. You must not forget that it was your administration which brought Davidson to the highest

position it has ever attained. I beg you to consider this as a question of duty.

Your friend,

S. TAYLOR MARTIN."

Rev. A. R. Kennedy, Little Rock, Arkansas :

"My Dear Professor—Allow me for the sake of my dear Alma Mater and my dearer friend to beg you to reconsider your resignation. You are worth a thousand ——— to Davidson College. May God bless you and dear Mrs. B. and crown the boys you have taught with his richest blessing, and may your life be as useful and happy in the evening as it has been in the morning.

Yours as ever,

A. R. K."

Letters from Trustees of Davidson College.

Rev. Dr. Robert Morrison, first President Davidson College :

My Dear Friend—The decision of the Trustees in regard to yourself was peculiarly gratifying to me, and I hope that you and Prof. Martin will hold to your important labors and that we may see brighter days for the college than ever before. If, however, you feel it to be your duty to leave the college, I wish to express my sincere and deep regret. I have regarded your long and faithful labors for our be-

loved institution, as signally blessed by wisdom, zeal and pious consecration. I do pray that you may long be spared for important work in our Master's cause and a happy retirement in your new home. I was much gratified that the Alumni selected you as a Trustee, and that the dear boys gave you a token of their regard for you. I ask an interest in your prayers that God may prepare us for an inheritance where trials and sorrows will never enter.

With high esteem and sincere affection, I am truly your brother in Christ,

R. H. MORRISON.

Cottage Home, N. C.

Rev. Robt. Reid, Reidville, Spartanburg County, S. C. :

Dear Brother—The Board returned your resignation with wonderful unanimity. We felt that in view of your long and faithful service to the college and your eminent qualifications for the duties of your Chair, we could not accept it. I could not for two reasons, vote for it. 1st. The welfare of the college. 2d. Your own usefulness and comfort. I know you are a true man, and all these years have had the interest of the college at heart, and you are at that period of life when you cannot afford to make a change, so you ought to remain where the studies of your life so eminently fit you to discharge

the duties of the office which you have so faithfully performed. You ought to be President and would have been elected but for the clause in the constitution requiring a minister.

Very truly yours,

ROBT. REID.

Rev. G. D. Parks, Charlotte, N. C.:

Dear Brother—Your resignation was declined by an unanimous vote. I think it evident the Board feel that your services cannot be dispensed with. Let me express the earnest desire that you withdraw your resignation. We need you to harmonize by your wise and prudent counsels. For your long and faithful life as a Professor, your self-denying devotion to Davidson, your pure and high toned character, all combine in building around you such a wall of defense as to be impregnable.

Your sincere friend,

G. D. PARKS.

Rev. W. W. Pharr, Mooresville, N. C.:

Dear Bro. Blake—It is the purpose of the Board to send a committee to insist on your withdrawing your resignation; this will be an endorsement of your faithful services. I wish to say to you, it is my honest conviction that you have been for 25 years regarded by the great mass of the Board, the students and those who have patronized the college,

the Professors and Presidents, as one of the ablest Professors the institution has ever had. I have been a Trustee for 25 years and have seen a number of Professors come and go, but in my judgment the college has never suffered more in the loss of a Professor. I have weighed my words well and know whereof I speak.

Yours most truly,

W. W. PHARR.

Rev. J. C. Alexander, Greenboro, N. C.:

Dear Brother—I am informed that your declination to grant the request of the Board to withdraw your resignation is confirmed. If you could have remained one year longer, it would have been of great value to the college. The best friends greatly regret your decision. I am certain that the Board were sincere in returning your resignation unanimously. There were several complimentary speeches made in your favor. Col. Martin is deeply concerned about your leaving. You have many warm friends.

Yours very truly,

J. C. ALEXANDER.

Rev. J. Rumple, D.D.:

My Dear Friend—I have been requested by the Board of Trustees of Davidson College to return to you the enclosed resignation of your Professor-

ship, with the request that you reconsider the matter, and if you can see your way clear to remain at your post. This was done by an unanimous vote, after mature deliberation. This action of the Board is the best endorsement they can give of their appreciation of your long and faithful services and of their earnest desire to retain those services and your influence for good in the college.

Very truly and fraternally yours,

J. RUMPLE,

Sec'ry Board Trustees, Davidson College.

June 11th, 1882.

Prof. J. R. Blake :

Dear Sir :—In looking on the minutes of the Board of Trustees of Davidson College, I find that the thanks of the Board are tendered to you for the handsome present of “Crookes Tubes and the Bi-chromate of Potash Battery.” As I do not feel sure that I tendered the thanks to you I send this notice thereof, feeling that if it has already been tendered, it will do no harm to thank you twice for such a valuable present.

Yours very truly,

J. R. RUMPLE,

Sec'ry Board.

To Prof. J. R. Blake :

Dear Sir :—Allow me to place in your hands the

following extract from the records of the Trustees of Davidson College, with the hope, that you will accept the office tendered and that the action will promote the interests of the college: "The recommendation of the Executive Committee to appoint a Vice-President of the college whose duty it shall be to act as President, during the absence, or inability of the President to serve, was adopted, and Prof. J. R. Blake was appointed Vice-President."

A true extract from the records, page 118.

J. RUMPLE,
Sec'ry, June 18, 1879.

Resolved that the thanks of the Board of Trustees of Davidson College are hereby tendered Prof. J. R. Blake for the faithful discharge of his duties as Chairman of the Faculty.

E. NYE HUTCHINSON,
Sec'ry Board.

June 28th, 1877.

Letters from Students.

CHAPTER VI.

Rev. A. M. Frazer, Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Staunton, Va :

For four years I enjoyed at Davidson College the class room instruction of Prof. John R. Blake. He represented a type of instructors which we are possibly in danger of losing, namely, those who combine broad learning with a thorough mastery of a particular subject. In a sense, Prof. Blake was a specialist, because he had his own preferred department, upon which he made all his wide study to converge. Back of this, however, lay a thorough and elegant scholarship, which enabled him to teach his specialty, with the greater lucidity and completeness and to illustrate it very richly and judiciously. When occasion required it, he could take the classes of other professors and teach them, as if they had been his own. He thus sought, as Mill says, every man should seek not merely to "know everything about some thing," but also to "know something about everything."

We shall never cease to need that sort of scholarship, but if we are to have it, our teachers must be models of it.

The Davidson College of twenty-five years ago was in a large measure the Davidson of Professor Blake's making. He was the senior professor, the presiding officer and the controlling spirit. The following tribute to the college of those days was spoken to me a few months ago by one who has a high standing among the ablest ministers in the country: "I have visited many colleges and some of them are wealthy and splendidly equipped, but I have not been led to envy the students their advantages. I shall always thank God for the kind of instruction I received at Davidson." I heartily concur in that sentiment.

Respectfully,

A. M. FRAZER.

Rev. J. E. Fogartie, D.D., Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy S. W. P. University:

Warm affection and sincere gratitude dictate a slight expression of a debt and a claim of privilege, a tribute to the worth of one who in an eminent degree realized the standard of the ideal teacher, Prof. John Rennie Blake. As an instructor his teachings, whether in class or on the platform, were characterized by magnetic charm of manner, nervous energy and incisiveness of speech, great variety and vividness of illustration, breadth of information and originality of conception. His lectures in the "old chapel" on astronomy and

kindred themes are recalled as masterpieces of their kind. Keeping in sympathetic touch with the rapidly growing sciences of his department, his instructions were far removed from the mechanical iteration and dull routine of the average class room exercises, added freshness and variety of interest were secured by disclosures of the most recent development of science illustrated by curious and instructive experiments. As a disciplinarian Prof. Blake exhibited a rare combination of firmness and gentleness of spirit. Never indulgent towards wrong doing he won the respect and confidence of the wrong doer by his wise and efficient method of securing self-reformation. Thus the esteem and admiration of his pupils, elicited by his attainments as an eminent scientist, and his skill as an instructor, were enhanced by the lustre of his character as a Christian gentleman.

His many years of service as a teacher of science in an ecclesiastical institution affords a happy exemplification of the essential harmony of a truly scientific spirit and genuine evangelical zeal. His prayer meeting addresses, pregnant with spiritual fervor and characterized by an epigrammatic putting of ethical truth that made its mark on heart and conscience are gratefully remembered and cherished by the alumni of Davidson.

The attitude of this venerated and beloved preceptor towards his students was invariably that of

a warm hearted friend and wise counselor, always abounding in practical manifestation of kindnesses, ever solicitous for the comfort, well being and advancement of those entrusted to his keeping. Nor did this generous solicitude and kindly interest cease with the severance of college ties. His ever responsive sympathy and self-sacrificing effort on behalf of his former pupils, "his boys," is gratefully attested by one who esteems it an honor to subscribe himself a former pupil, a perpetual debtor, a grateful friend and brother of Prof. J. R. Blake.

J. E. FOGARTIE.

Rev. W. W. Moore, D.D., LL.D., Professor
Union Seminary :

It was my good fortune to become a student at Davidson College during the administration of Prof. John R. Blake, as Chairman of the Faculty, and to enjoy the benefit of his instructions throughout my college course. Coming to the college in 1861 when its affairs were at the lowest ebb because of the civil war then beginning Prof. Blake showed through the trying years which followed such devotion to its interests, such versatility as a scholar and teacher and such skill in administration that in 1871 he was made the official head of the institution. He speedily vindicated the wisdom of his appointment by guiding the college out of the difficulties which for years had thickened around it, and

laying down the lines on which its prosperous and beneficent career has since been pursued.

Once or twice before my matriculation in 1874 I had seen Prof. Blake and heard him deliver popular addresses, such as his lecture on the "Sunbeam," so had received a strong impression of his genial spirit, polished manners, varied learning and felicitous literary style. But not until I became one of his students was I fully aware of the greatness of his heart, the wealth of his attainments, and the scope and skill of his work as a Professor and executive officer. No one who knew him can ever forget his affectionate personal interest in his students, his quick sympathy with those who had involved themselves in trouble, and his fatherly counsel to those who were disposed to be indolent or wayward.

In the class room he was dignified, courteous, animated, exact and properly exacting, and had that saving sense of humor without which no man can attain the highest success as a teacher. In the emergencies which had frequently arisen in the preceding thirteen years he had shown repeatedly his ability to take up and teach successfully all the departments of the curriculum as well as his own. In short he was that priceless boon to a struggling literary institution, the "all-round man."

I have heard a gentleman who was a professor under Mr. Blake's chairmanship, and a thoroughly competent judge of the matter of which he spoke,

say that he had never known a man who succeeded better than Prof. Blake in making his Faculty a unit in spirit and purpose, and getting out of it, the best work of which it was capable. It is cause for profound gratitude on the part of all thoughtful Christian people that the leading Presbyterian College of the South should have received the impress of Mr. Blake's wise and skillful administration at the critical juncture when our country was beginning to recover from the great cataclysm which shook it to the foundations and when our disturbed institutions were beginning to reorganize and establish themselves for the great work of the future.

W. W. MOORE.

Professor Henry Louis Smith, Davidson College,
N. C.:

My Dear Professor—I return a heartfull of thanks both to you and Mrs. B. for your kind words and wishes. My life, both at Davidson and since leaving it, has been a very happy one and singularly favored by a kind providence. I have every reason for anticipating a pleasant life at my Alma Mater. You inducted me into the study of Natural Philosophy and I have ever since regarded it as the most fruitful and fascinating of all the departments of human study and research. First, Latin, then Mathematics, then Greek fell into the background, as I pursued the study of nature and its workings.

Much of the collateral pleasures of my college life I owe to you and Mrs. B.

With many thanks for your kindness, past and present, and many good wishes for yourself and my dear friend Mrs. B., I am very truly yours,

HENRY LOUIS SMITH.

Rev. E. B. McGilvary, Professor University of California:

I took work under Prof. Blake all through my college course at Davidson, and now look back upon it with pleasure and appreciation of the profit I received from his instruction. He may be sure that in the work I have done under other instructors and in association with other teachers since my days at Davidson, my opinion of his instruction has not suffered any decline. He was a most lucid expounder of abstract subjects, having a choice command of language and a power of happy illustration. There was a touch of magnetism in all his scientific work which raised one out of the region of mere fact hunting, and suggested broad rational interpretation of fact, and yet there was a conscientious adherence to fact, as the basis of interpretation. Prof. Blake's influence on the students was always exerted in behalf of high honor and strict morality, and many a student can date back to the time of his contact with him, a quickening of earnest resolve to make the most out of the ethical

opportunities of life. He was always generous in aiding students financially; many men can look back to him as the friend who made a college course possible. I remember with deep gratitude the kindness I received from him at Davidson.

E. B. MCGILVARY.

*Professor of Logic and the Theory of Knowledge, University of California. 2,200 students. 140 teachers.

Rev. B. F. Wilson, Converse College, Spartanburg, S. C.:

It is a real pleasure to add a few lines in part token of my affectionate regard for Prof. Blake and in acknowledgment of the debt I shall always be glad to owe him for inspiration and aspiration. In the fall of 1880 I entered Davidson College and met Prof. Prof. Blake for the first time. He soon became one of my best friends as well as my honored preceptor. My regard for him began by faith and sight, but I am sure his kindly interest in me began and continued for some time by faith only, and certain am I that it "was the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen."

As a teacher Prof. Blake was always exact and exacting. There was great sympathy with earnest effort, however clumsy and crude, but small tolerance for any infidelity to duty or waste of opportunity. He was solicitous that we should know the

facts of Science and Astronomy. His explanations were always lucid and clear, but he was equally concerned that we should see behind the facts, the "Eternal" of whom they are but manifestations. "Chairman Blake" as the boys facetiously called him, was always the student's friend, and his hand and heart were ever open to them.

He was the patient hearer, the wise advisor and no honest effort of any student, no struggle, no aspiration, no disappointment but found sympathy and encouragement. He sometimes appeared sharp and severe, but we learned that the sharpness was not for the individual, but for the real or supposed appearance of indiscretion, or untrustworthiness in duty or conduct. Small patience had he with intellectual astigmatism or moral squint. In that he helped some of us to rectify the common boy error that one code of ethics can be applied to college life and another to Christian society, that college trickery or college sharpness or college lying can never be christened as hypothecated morality.

Prof. Blake has left a strong and distinct impression upon his pupils, and as the years go apace, it must be a joy to him to see the best in himself struggling for development and realization in those he has aided to a stronger and nobler life and that the clear slanting of his westerning sun still gives us light and guidance.

B. F. WILSON,

President Converse College, Spartanburg, S. C.

Hon. J. S. Verner, Ex-Comptroller, S. C., Master,
Richland County, S. C.:

I entered Davidson College in the fall of 1865, immediately after the close of the civil war. It was then that I first came under the influence of Prof. Blake. A large part of my time I was a member of his family and learned fully to appreciate his great ability, his power as a teacher and his goodness of heart and fine Christian character. I did not then fully realize his great influence, and it was not until I became a man with all the cares of life, that I could look back and see how much I owed him.

He had the rare gift of controlling young men with gentleness of manner, and commanding their attention in the class room in such a way as to develop all that was in them. His uniform courtesy, and never failing personal interest in each student, gave him an influence and power over them I have never seen equalled or surpassed by a teacher. The student felt that in him he had a personal friend to whom he could go without reserve and find a welcome, and the very best counsel he might need.

To this personal influence he added careful preparation of everything he taught to the end that he might meet the necessity of each pupil. He did not, as is too often done, teach a class, but he had the gift to gauge the capacity of each student and prepare to meet the varied wants of each. His

way of teaching was searching and the "why and wherefore" was always thrown at the student in such a manner as to make him solve for himself every problem taught.

His "why" was sometimes a source of amusement. On one occasion while at his breakfast table I related a dream I had, he asked me to have a piece of chicken and when I said yes, thank you sir, he asked, "why?" Mr. Blake's teaching power was equalled by his social gifts; genial, pleasant, good tempered, with rare conversational powers, he drew all who came in contact with him closely to him. So proverbial was this happy influence, that he was called by students "Felix."

The good he did with this social gift, and his loving acts of charity to students and kinsmen came from a heart that never let the "left hand know what the right" was doing. In a public life of over twenty-five years I have never met as well rounded a man as Prof. Blake. As a teacher he had the rare gift of commanding obedience and loving respect, with the power of imparting knowledge to each of his pupils of whatsoever temperament or capacity.

As a friend he was ever faithful, true and kind; as a citizen, progressive and broad; and as a Chris-

tian, active in his benevolence, full of good works and charity to all with whom he was associated.

J. S. VERNER,
Master's Office, Richland Co., S. C.

Rev. B. P. Reid, Pastor Presbyterian Church,
Pendleton, S. C. :

Channing says it is the chief function of a statesman to watch over the outward interests of a people, that of an educator to quicken its soul. The statesman must study and manage the passions and prejudices of the community, the educator must study the essential, the deepest, the loftiest principles of human nature." On this ground, Channing rightly maintains that higher ability is required for the office of teacher of the young than a statesman. Davidson College has exerted a wide influence in several states, a great number of young men studied physics and astronomy under Prof. Blake. We look back with pleasure to our personal contact with him and his instruction. He had a high ideal of the teacher's work, and brought to his class room a wide range of knowledge gathered by great industry and that singularly clear and interesting method of imparting instruction which comes only after hard and clear thinking. He was not through with us when we left his class room, but watched our spiritual and moral development, giving us oftentimes wise and thoughtful counsel, even follow-

ing us into life with a kindly interest in our welfare, which we learn more and more to appreciate as the years move on.

B. P. REID.

Rev. F. P. Ramsay, Assembly's Home School, Fredericksburg, Va. :

Allow me to offer a special word concerning Prof. Blake's super-eminent success in discipline in the best sense and in holding not only his special department, but the whole college work up to a remarkably high standard of thoroughness. To me personally he was one of the wisest and most helpful friends I ever had.

REV. B. F. RAMSAY.

Rev. B. W. Mebane, Pastor Presbyterian Church, Fredericksburg, Va. :

"Honor to whom honor." With me it is both a pleasure and an act of justice to speak a tribute of one who so richly deserves it as Prof. J. R. Blake. I was a student at Davidson College from 1871 to 1875. We had an able Faculty, amongst whom none was more efficient than its accomplished Chairman.

In his administration he was firm but full of tact and wisdom. Only those whose hearts were set on mischief dreaded him, all others looked up to him as a friend, and often the offender was drawn to

him by his gentle discipline. His teaching was thorough work ; if a student was prepared he was encouraged to do better. But woe to one who went to class unprepared, there was no chance for him to escape ; few attempted it more than once. Prof. Blake was a power felt in every department of the college by his moral influence. He could do more than any man I ever knew to correct an abuse or restrain an evil on the campus. In my opinion few men have been more efficient and successful than our honored Chairman. I owe him a debt of gratitude as one who did much to mould all that is best in me and to repress all that is worst. May God bless him richly and fill his heart in his old age with the richest comfort and the peace which passeth understanding.

B. W. MEBANE.

Rev. Jesse Siler :

I must tell you, my dear teacher, how much true riches I gained from you as a man ; as a teacher I learned useful and necessary knowledge in a pleasant manner ; from you as a thinker I imbibed a breadth of view, a liberal conservatism and a common sense reasoning which shall be my guide in thinking. As a man I learned lessons of Christian charity and steadfastness which will be the secret of any success I may have. You taught me uncon-

sciously and I count these lessons the most valuable acquisitions of my life.

J. SILER,
Union Seminary, Va.

Rev. Aleck Phillips, D.D., Stillman Institute,
Tuscaloosa, Ala.:

I remember as though it were yesterday the great revival at Davidson College, during which I was made conscious of my lost estate. I was in great bitterness when Prof. Blake came to me at the inquiry meeting and talked gently, pointing me to Jesus. He asked me to come to see him, I promised, and went with much fear and hesitation. He talked and prayed with me, and on parting insisted on my promise to tell mother all about my feelings. I promised and did tell her. In token of the performance of that promise I was to shake his hand after church the next day. What a grip he gave me! I'll never forget it. This meeting was probably the occasion of my new birth, so if there is a soul in heaven through my poor work good Mr. Blake has a share in its salvation.

Yours most truly,

ALECK PHILLIPS.

William Phillips, Ph.D., Chemist, Birmingham, Ala.:

I hope the Professor enjoys good health and a well

earned repose. If at his age I can look back upon so useful and honorable a life I shall be content.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS.

Rev. J. C. Oehler, Pastor Aiken Presbyterian Church :

Prof. Blake was possessed of a scholarship which was at once exact, and extended over a wide field, both intensive and extensive. He was eminently painstaking and happy in imparting what was in his own mind. In him were prominent three qualifications which, combined, never fail to make a most successful teacher, namely, a strong grasp of the subject in hand, intense love for his chosen profession, and judicious enthusiasm in devoting himself to the instruction of the individual class. As the years pass and the weight of responsibility increases, the impression deepens that when we were under his tuition we were sitting at the feet of a master. But superb as he was in instruction, perhaps his greatest work lay in the part he had in shaping the character of the students. Those in need of help of any kind naturally turned to him, because he was assured of a sympathetic hearing.

One picture every appreciative student of Davidson College bears in memory, that of the scholarly, conscientious, successful teacher and the kindly, fearless, uncompromising Christian gentleman. We have had the privilege of knowing many grand men,

but none superior to Prof. Blake. May Davidson be ever blessed with such professors!

J. C. OEHLER,
Aiken, S. C.

Rev. Alexander Sprunt, Pastor, Rock Hill,
S. C.:

There are so many conditions which render the pupil a partial judge that his estimate of his instructor cannot always be considered with confidence. But when this judgment is formed after years of intimate association and careful and even critical observation in the class room, upon the campus and in the quiet walks of life, and confirmed by years of trial and experience, there can be little question of the honesty and accuracy of such judgment. Upon this basis the universal estimate which is had of Professor Blake, is that he was a typical instructor and an upright, conscientious and respected Christian gentleman. The pupils to this day revere and honor him for his sterling qualities of heart, mind and character. He has always been a man of exceeding tenderness of heart, and sympathetic regard for his pupils, who were ever disposed to recognize in him one to whom they could look for advice confidently. In the class room we felt that he was thoroughly prepared and was master of the situation. He was dignified yet easily approached, and was always consistent in his

professions. It is a delight to all who know him that his life of usefulness at Davidson has been continued in other spheres—when he laid down the active duties of his professorship and gave himself to the cause of his Master in the quiet walks of life. Though his eye is dim, his bow yet abides in strength.

The writer esteems it a privilege to have been one of his pupils and now to claim his personal friendship.

ALEXANDER SPRUNT.

The North Carolina Experiment Station, W. A. Withers, acting director, Raleigh, N. C. :

It gives me great pleasure to add a line in regard to my friend and teacher Prof. J. R. Blake. It was my pleasure to know him before my admission to college, and also since my graduation. Of course while a student I was brought very close to him. Professor Blake exercised a very great influence over the student body, in the Faculty and on the destinies of the college. He was connected with the institution one quarter of a century, and the character of the instruction, the attendance and the moral tone were the result largely of his influence. It was due to him that Biblical instruction was first imparted there as part of the college course. He always took an active interest in the affairs of the village, in the church and Sabbath-

school. He was kind to poor, deserving young men, and doubtless there are many of whom I have never heard, who will be glad to say that but for Professor Blake's interest and fatherly care they would not have enjoyed the advantages of an education. Professor Blake has now reached an advanced age, which is itself a high testimonial. He has a privilege not granted to many of looking back on a well spent life, with little regret. Those who know him are his friends. He has no enemies.

W. A. WITHERS,
Chemist.

Hon. F. L. Fries, President Loan & Trust Co.,
Winston, N. C. :

I recall with pleasure very great the hours I was permitted to spend in Prof. Blake's class room while a student at Davidson College. I can sincerely say that he was a competent and faithful instructor. The influence he exerted for good on the young men in college during the troubled times succeeding the war not only as a Professor, but as Chairman of the Faculty, will never be known and can never be estimated.

F. H. FRIES,
Pres. Wachovia Loan and Trust Co.

Rev. W. H. Davis, a student, a life long friend,
whose father D. A. Davis, a true and tried friend,

and trustee, was one who stood by the college through its darkest days, said, "I owe what I am and what I have been able to do in life to the influence of three men who were my instructors, Prof. J. R. Blake, Rev. G. W. McPhail, D.D., and Rev. R. L. Dabney, D.D., LL.D. My obligation to Prof. Blake is greatest because I came first under his influence while a student at Davidson."

Letters From Lady Friends.

My Dear Friend:—

When — told me that Prof. Blake had resigned, my heart died within me. Alas! I thought, that will be food for my midnight cogitations, and sure enough, when I awoke, sleep would not come to me again. Woe is me! Our only refuge is in the assured faith of the little hymn "He leadeth me, Oh, blessed thought."

It seems to me that in a storm the best thing for the old sailor is to stand by the ship, and pilot her through the rough waters—and then when the sky is clear and sailing plain, he may have liberty, and let the young tars take a lesson in navigating. If Mr. Blake goes, I fear we shall miss the wise counsels of Ahithophel. Can't spare you anyhow. You must "bide a wee."

Yours most affectionately,

M. DUPUY,
Davidson College.

Oh dear! Poor old Davidson! I cannot bear to think of Prof. Blake giving up the ship; he who has stood by so bravely, in all these stormy years—whose example, whose instructions, whose prayers, are worth a thousandfold more to this nursling of our Church than all Maxwell Chamber's thousands.

Most affectionately, your true friend,

EMMA KERR,

Raleigh, N. C.

How shall I find words to add my testimony to the estimation in which my dear old friend is held by all who have the privilege of knowing him. I loved him from the first moment of our meeting and my respect and admiration grew day by day till I can truly say, I know no man more worthy of the esteem in which he is held.

Our first meeting was somewhat farcical; I was not fairly settled in our new home at Davidson College, just at the close of the war, and my baby, not quite a year old, had the freedom of the sitting room, when I heard a tap at the door, which I opened, and lo! there stood one of the Professors, and there was my baby with all her playthings scattered over the floor! What was I to do? I greeted him politely, saying "Come to the fire, if you can find your way there." "Madam," he replied, "I am one of twelve!" That one sentence put me at ease, and from that day to this, there has never

been a break in our friendship—or a time when he has not felt more like a brother than a friend. May God bless him and make his last days to be his best days, to the end, prays his old friend,

Laura C. Phillips.

Prof. Blake, My Dear Friend :—

I have long had it in my mind and heart to ask you to address a class of young ladies who are scarce more than children in years, or more than a score in number. But, as my head and heart are full of my work, I have ventured to beg you to come down and deliver your beautiful lecture on "Light," which I enjoyed so much while at Mr. Burwell's.

Our plan, provided you do not "despise the day of small things," is to have the entertainment in our parlor, with an audience of not more than sixty persons, confined to my pupils and their parents. Dr. Jones and Mrs. Jackson whose daughters I teach, have both encouraged my idea very warmly.

Very sincerely and respectfully yours,

SALLIE CALDWELL WHITE,

Charlotte, N. C.

Dear Mrs. Blake :—

I am glad to think that you and Prof. Blake have enjoyed ten quiet years undisturbed by Sophs or Fresh, the college bell, or the Board of Trustees.

Your long and faithful friendship for my dear brother and his dear wife, would make me love and value you had I never met you. Please present my cordial remembrance to Prof. Blake.

Yours sincerely,

C. P. SPENCER,
Cambridge, Mass.

My Dear Friend :—

I was so sorry to hear that my dear Professor is so feeble. I wish I could help you take care of him. What an exquisite pleasure it would be to run in and spend an evening with you both as I used to do long ago. It is hard to feel the limitations of earthly friendship—how little we can help each other, and yet a little can go a long way sometimes as you and Professor proved to me many times. I would love to break an alabaster box for the dear Professor's feet, as my grateful appreciation of the kindness you and he showed me while in Greenwood.

With warmest love, your true friend,

ANNIE RANKIN,
Charlotte, N. C.

My Dear Friend :—

I write this line just to assure you and dear Prof. Blake of our unchangeable affection, and to wish you very heartily all happiness in the New Year.

He whom you have both served so long careth
for you, and I have no fear, but that goodness and
mercy will follow you all the days of your life.
We are all led by ways that we know not.

Affectionately,

ANNIE SAMPSON,
Clifton Springs, N. Y.

Prof. Blake's Influence in Behalf of Davidson College in the Church Courts.

CHAPTER VII.

Prof. Blake accomplished a good work for Davidson College by representing her interests at the various courts of the Church. We read in the religious papers of addresses he delivered at the different Synods, which attracted attention to the institution, widening her area and enlarging her patronage.

Davidson College and the Synod of Georgia.

“A very interesting incident in the recent meeting of the Synod of Georgia in Savannah was the appearance before that body of Prof. Blake, the Chairman of Davidson College, N. C.

In welcoming him, we felt a peculiar pleasure, as we recognized him as one we had known in former years, as a graduate of our State University, and afterwards associated with our beloved pastor Rev. I. S. K. Axson, D.D., in the Greensboro College. The purpose of Prof. Blake's visit was to turn the

attention of Georgia Presbyterians to Davidson College and enlist their co-operation in its control. It will doubtless gratify him and the friends of that institution to know that the object of his visit has been accomplished.

We will not attempt even to give a synopsis of that excellent address but we are quite sure that it had the effect of awakening in the Synod of Georgia an interest in Davidson College never felt before, as well as of inspiring the purpose to send their sons to the college. The Trustees, in order to draw Georgia Presbyterians to their institution with tighter cords of interest and sympathy have conceived the plan of offering to the various Presbyteries the appointment of two Trustees from their respective bodies. Two have already accepted the offer, appointing Trustees, and others will probably do so at the spring meeting. We recall a remark of Dr. Thornwell when a representative of Oglethorpe appeared on the floor of South Carolina Synod. "Brethren you know my views on this question of secular education ; but if the Church is going to commit herself to this policy for heaven's sake let us have a college of which we may be proud." So I say, if we are going to take hold of Davidson College, let us exert our influence to make it the best institution in the South. To aid us by his counsel, we trust that Prof. Blake will often attend our Synods. We will assure him beforehand of a

cordial invitation to a "seat on the floor."—Southern Presbyterian.

N. C. Presbyterian—W. S. Lacy.

Prof. Blake made a very able and interesting address at Synod in behalf of Davidson College; those who had the pleasure of listening to him are to be esteemed very fortunate. Among other points he stated that the educational work done at Davidson is of a superior quality. There is no curriculum college in the land which has a more extended or thorough course in the scientific department. A double course in Natural Philosophy and Chemistry is furnished with extensive philosophical and chemical apparatus, also geological cabinets of minerals. In the Sophomore year students are taught in the line of general and experimental Physics and followed up with Astronomy during the Senior year. Johns Hopkins University is placed on a higher plane than any in the South; it is largely a post-graduate institution; a recent report shows that graduates of 29 colleges in this country and Europe are found within its halls; of these 29 institutions only 3 have as many graduates as Davidson, and none has more. Harvard, Yale and the University of North Carolina each has 4, while Davidson has 4. The entire State of North Carolina only sends 4 students to Johns Hopkins, of these, 3 are from

Davidson. Nothing can more certainly prove the extent and thoroughness of the educational training at Davidson College.

Who that heard Prof. Blake's ringing speech will forget it? All that is needed is just such an exposition at every meeting of Synod. Turn on the light.—N. C. Presbyterian.

Those who had the pleasure of hearing Professor Blake's address at Synod must have been gratified to hear that the course in Science has been enlarged. In Mathematics and Science the course is specially full and the college is amply furnished with apparatus. One friend contributed last summer to the Physical Department of the college some new and valuable apparatus to illustrate the "fourth state of matter" called "Crookes Tubes" which were imported from Europe expressly for the college, being only the second set in the United States. Another friend of higher education has sent his check for \$100 to be used in like manner for increasing the efficiency of the college. We can hardly refer to the Faculty by way of individualizing, but we must be allowed to mention specially the admirable management of the department of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy under Prof. Blake. Those who enjoy his acquaintance can appreciate his qualities of head and heart as well as mind, and those who have heard his superb lecture

on Astronomy will feel that we may be pardoned for this allusion.—N. C. Presbyterian.

Davidson College and South Carolina.

From my own experience I know that many South Carolinians do not know the claims which Davidson College has upon our Church and State. It is situated beyond our borders, and many of us know it only as a North Carolina enterprise in which South Carolina is interested only as it suits her convenience.

It is due to Davidson that we should know not only its intrinsic merits as a seat of sound learning and genuine piety, but also its special claims upon us. From its first organization it has been partly under the control of South Carolina Presbyterians and at present its organization is such as to command our confidence and sympathy. Twelve of its Trustees are now regularly elected from this State. Of its seven Professors four are directly or indirectly South Carolinians, and at the last meeting of the Board a native of our State was elected Chairman of the Faculty.

Brethren, you have a right to know everything about us. You have a right as Presbyterians interested in whatever proposes to promote the prosperity and usefulness of our Church, as well as honored brethren co-operating with us in the glo-

rious work of providing moral and intellectual training for our youth.

The day has passed when we can afford to rely on State institutions alone in so vital a matter. There was a period when the Church could look to the State to educate her sons. When the College of South Carolina was dominated by the mighty influence of a Thornwell; the University of Georgia moulded by such spirits as Moses Waddell and for 60 years under the control of Presbyterians, and the University of North Carolina had among her Faculty the Phillips, father and son. I repeat, when this state of things existed we had little more to desire for the training of our youth. We must have an educated ministry and if we are to depend on the State alone the first turn in the wheel of political fortune may blast our hopes.

What is the condition of our Church colleges at this time? Oglethorpe is dead; Oakland, Miss., turned into a negro college; LaGrange Synodical College torn brick by brick by the ruthless ravages of war; Austin College, Texas, crushed with debt. From this gloomy outlook let us turn our eyes to Davidson as the one ray of light piercing the gloom. Let us concentrate our zeal, our energies, our money, and our patronage on her, the favored child of our adoption.

I will not detain you with a detail of our work, the reputation of its Faculty, its laboratories, its

cabinets, its libraries, are too familiar to be itemized in this presence. I propose rather to invite you behind the scenes by introducing you to something of the the inner life and practical daily working of our system. I do this the more cheerfully because I know it will bear examination. What then is peculiar about Davidson College? 1st. It is denominational, as are Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Amherst, Dartmouth and Brown. 2d. It is non-sectarian. 3d. Its standard of education is elevated. Of her Faculty we need only say, we have three of the most distinguished educators of the old Chapel Hill Faculty, four of our number are University of Virginia trained scholars, two are graduates of European Universities. 4th. Its religious training. Of this I will only draw a picture which is familiar to any one who frequents our college society.

It is the custom of our students to assemble at the ringing of the 9 o'clock bell every evening for prayers. When I have sometimes been strolling through the building at this "sweet hour of prayer" and witnessed these little family groups quietly gathering in numbers of a dozen or more in a room, with solemn earnestness and Christian zeal, while some young brother leads in devotion—or when I have been walking through the campus at this 9 o'clock prayer hour and the songs of praise ascend from group after group, my steps are ar-

rested, while I stand listening, to the music floating out upon the darkness, my own heart goes out in praise and thanksgiving to the gracious Father who has poured into this fountain so much of the salt of living grace to purify and sweeten the streams that flow over the Church and world.

My heart glows and warms, as I am carried back to the sweet memories of a quiet home, with its family altar, perfumed with the sweet incense of prayer and praise. And who, my brethren, may tell how far the Blessed Spirit uses these precious memories of home at this precious season to recall wanderers from the paths of sin and folly to re-consecrate their young lives to His service. Brethren; if you can do nothing else pray for us that God would bless our labor yet more abundantly, and these young men coming up to this seat of learning, accompanied by the tears and prayers of pious mothers, may grow richer in faith, more consecrated in life and purpose, returning to their homes fully equipped to magnify the glory of the grace of God.

J. R. BLAKE.

Yale and Davidson College.

The following paragraphs are taken from a late number of the *Christian Era*, a paper published in Boton, Mass.:

“Look on this. Yale College this year graduated a

class of ninety-five, only three of whom, it is stated, are preparing for the ministry.

Now look on this : Out of 136 students who have graduated at Davidson College since 1867, 108 left the college as church members and 60 are preparing to preach. What is the difference? There is an educational treatise in these two facts. The "educational treatise" contained in the "two facts" furnished by the Christian Era deserves to be studied by our people, carefully. A large portion of our Southern Church is now connected organically with Davidson College.

Georgia, Florida, South Carolina and North Carolina are united in the control of this institution, and as curators of the college the brethren should make a special study of these two facts which contain the treatise, and which by their contrast have compelled the attention of our enemies themselves. I do not propose to write out the treatise supposed to be contained in the Era's "facts," but only state a few facts which have contributed in making Davidson what it is.

1st. The discipline is firm but mild, not only paternal but fraternal ; and the intercourse of students and teachers is that of personal friends respected by and respecting each other, and this personal element enters largely into the moral and religious culture of the campus. This relation is impossible in colleges like Princeton and Yale, and

others where the numbers are so large that the Professor does not even know the members of his own class and much less the whole college.

2d. The educational standard of Davidson is high, in the estimation of some of its friends, too high, as many young men go to other colleges, because they are not prepared to enter Davidson College, but this is not so much in the requirements for admission, as in the thoroughness and accuracy required in the class room work, where each student is brought under daily inspection and examination and held to a strict account for his recitations. This daily drill is an effectual stimulus to study, and thus a valuable check upon idleness, which is the parent of disorder and immoralities. This daily class-room inspection of each pupil is almost impossible in larger colleges like Yale where the classes are unwieldy. Dr. Wayland used to say that if the best results are desired there should never be congregated in a college more than 150 boys at one time. The character of the discipline, the freedom of intercourse, and the daily contact in the class room at Davidson all combine to give the Professors the mastery of the situation and enable them in kindness and affection to apply the proper remedy at the proper time, and thus to prevent, rather than to cure, the aggravated evils which might otherwise arise.

3d. And chiefly the Professors at Davidson are

not only the teachers and friends of the students, but their daily companions and religious advisors, who in many ways, direct and indirect, strive to promote their moral and religious welfare.

J. R. BLAKE.

Professor Blake's Lectures.

CHAPTER VIII.

Professor Blake's Lecture at the Bingham School.

The public lecture having been added to the culture heretofore offered at Bingham's School Prof. J. R. Blake of Davidson College lectured on the 4th of March before the students and a number of visitors. His subject was the "Sunbeam." This lecture has been noticed before in your columns.

While it is highly scientific, giving a vast deal of new and very interesting information as to the present status of the philosophy of Light, it is at the same time eminently practical, highly poetical and fervently religious. The impression made upon the audience was profound. That one of our North Carolina colleges has a man in the chair of Physical Science capable of producing such a lecture, and of producing such a practical effect with it, is surely a good omen, not only for Davidson itself, but for the general cause of education in the State.

The educational outlook is gloomy enough as North Carolina is actually reckoned in the official reports made to the United States Government as the least enlightened portion of the United States.

In the midst of the gloom comes a sunbeam, a ray of the purest, strongest light from Davidson, and as Presbyterians and North Carolinians, we should rejoice.

ROBERT BINGHAM.

Rev. Charles Phillips, D.D., Chapel Hill, N. C. :

We also have heard of Prof. Blake's charming description of a sunbeam, its nature, its beauty, its power, its length, its speed, the grandeur and delicacy of its revelations, while starting from the infinitesimal and reaching out into the infinite.

This lecture has made a profound impression wherever delivered, leaving thousands who hear it full of complicating emotions of amazement at the wisdom of Him who created light, of gratitude for the goodness which makes us to enjoy it, of awe at the extent of the dominion it measures and of ecstasy at the dazzling glory of Him who clothes Himself with light as with a garment.

CHARLES PHILLIPS.

Professor Blake's Lecture Before the Vesper Reading Club at Lenoir, North Carolina.

The theme of the accomplished scholar was a single sunbeam. For an hour he held the rapt attention of his auditors, amusing, instructing and entertaining them. He said he had intended to speak of the literature of the sun, its photosphere,

its chromo-sphere, its corona, and the wonderful storms which swept ever and anon over its face; but the subject was so vast he would confine himself to a single sunbeam.

He then began its analysis, showing it had a color ray, a heat ray, a magnetic ray, a chemical ray, all combined in a single ray of white light as it appeared to the naked eye. He showed the wonderful power of the prism, the astonishing relations of spectrum analysis, which could detect the presence of the smallest conceivable atom of any substance when reduced to the gaseous form, not only on the earth but the most distant star.

He illustrated in a striking manner the velocity of light so inconceivable, showing by familiar examples its astonishing power in the economy of nature, at one time lashing the winds into the resistless fury of the tornado, at another fanning it to the gentlest breeze, now lifting the soft vapors again loosing the mighty avalanche and hurling it on its career of destruction. It paints the rainbow, colors the most delicate flower and pencils the maiden's cheek with blushing beauty.

All this, and more, the distinguished lecturer gave in a clear, concise form, yet so popularized, as to be free from the dryness of purely scientific discussion. If we take Prof. Blake's lecture as an exponent of the learning and culture furnished at Davidson College the youth of our country should flock to its

halls, till they are full to overflowing.—Piedmont Press.

Professor Blake at Peace Institute.

The subject of this lecture was the "Moral and Physical Unity of Nature." The title seemed somewhat uninviting, the theme abstruse, the discussion scholarly and scientific. But the subject covered the great battle ground of thought and research in physical science and was therefore deeply interesting if not popular in the ordinary use of the word, and while the lecture was full of details of facts and scientific results, there were also beautiful illustrations and groupings and splendid generalizations.

The discussion of course touched the points of controversy between science and revelation, but with the patient research and bold teaching of the philosopher was blended the sincere humility of the learner and the reverent faith of the Christian.

Prof. Blake might not be called an orator. This was strictly a lecture, not an oration, nor has he a commanding voice, but he had something to say, and he said it well, and every word could be distinctly heard. The rhetorical movement of the discourse was admirable, and there were passages of real eloquence. He made a most fitting and eloquent close by a beautiful citation from the German poet Rich-

tar. Full justice to the lecturer and his work could only be done by its publication. I have given the impression made upon a deeply interested listener.

W. S. LACY,
Raleigh, N. C.

Professor Blake's Lecture, Kingston.

Mr. Editor :—It has been my pleasure to read in last week's copy of the Presbyterian a sketch of the admirable lecture delivered at Peace Institute by Prof. Blake of Davidson College. In my humble opinion such literature when heard and read is productive of much good. Those of us to whom the author is known cannot fail to recognize in the course of the lecture that refinement and scholarly ability which so marks the man. Can you not give us a sketch of the lecture he delivered at Bingham?—N. C. Presbyterian.

Prof. J. R. Blake recently delivered an able and eloquent plea for the study of Nature before the University Normal School at Chapel Hill.

It was the last of this unparalleled course of lectures, and it was one of the best, some thought it the best. For the momentousness of its theme, it stood by the side of Judge Dick.

His subject was the "Educational Value of Scientific Studies." The Natural Sciences as an instrument of mental training are unsurpassed in the

symmetrical and vigorous growth they impart to the intellectual and moral being. Unlike the pure mathematics, dealing only with absolute truth, they often give a one-sided development resting satisfied with nothing short of absolute certainty.

On the other hand, the classics have been considered deficient as a means of imparting that sharp incisive logic, sometimes needful in the affairs of life.

But the natural sciences develop all the powers through the mathematical conceptions they involve, imparting to the mind that needful precision and certainty, while in the weighing and balancing of hypothesis we have ample scope and "verge enough," for the fullest play of every faculty, so we have as no where else in any single department, that healthful mingling of mathematical certainty with the varying shades of doubt which so eminently characterize the problem of human life.

The most of this thoughtful discourse was of course didactic, but it was listened to with the closest attention, frequently receiving hearty applause. The large and intelligent audience cheered with marked applause the eloquent appeals to our maidens to cultivate nature and deny themselves the dangerous fascination of fiction.—N. C. Presbyterian.

Georgia Teachers Association, Atlanta.

The first paper presented to the Convention was that of Prof. J. R. Blake of Davidson College, N. C., "How our Teachers may Themselves Best Contribute Towards a Deep and General Interest in Education by Better Courses of Study." Prof. Blake's reputation as a practical instructor was fully sustained by his paper. His knowledge of the needs of modern teachers was evident in every sentence ; his suggestion of reform in the profession is worthy of careful consideration of all interested. Prof. Blake's paper was scholarly, pointed and eloquent. Right richly did he deserve the hearty congratulations showered on him and the beautiful bouquet of flowers presented by his lady friends.—Atlanta Constitution.

**American Association for the Advancement of
Science.**

Mr. Editor :—In your reference to the Scientific Association which held its annual meeting recently in Boston, you requested your correspondent to furnish for the North Carolina Presbyterian a paper submitted by him to that body. Perhaps it may serve your purpose as well, and the interest of the general reader better, if in place of a formal scientific paper I should send a running sketch of the

meeting itself, and some of the science gossips connected therewith.

In the first place to summarize the conspicuous features of this meeting, I will say, that it has never been paralleled in the history of the Association. There were 979 registered members present, from all parts of the Union, and 594 new members were entered. 208 papers were submitted to the various sections and sub-sections, on Physics, Mathematics, Astronomy, Geology, Biology, Chemistry, Anthropology, Entomology, Microscopy, &c., &c. Nor was the physical man less amply provided for than the intellectual. The local committee of Boston served a free lunch to the entire Association every day, which was furnished profusely with the richest delicacies of the season.

Many public receptions were given in the elegant homes of the wealthy citizens. Excursions by sea and land illustrated the princely hospitality of a generous and cultured city. Telegraph companies also gave free use of their wires to the members. This Association is strictly non-sectional and I know of nothing better calculated to break down sectional prejudice and bridge over the bloody chasm than such scientific meetings composed of large minded men of similar tastes and pursuits who eschew politics and who from every portion of the land congregate into one brotherhood for the purpose of diffusing scientific truth.

Many curious and wonderful experiments must be passed over though illustrative of various points in the path of scientific progress. One thing however new to American investigators and unique in character I must not omit to notice.

I refer to the celebrated experiments of Mr. Crookes on radiant matter, by which he claims to have established the existence of another state of matter as different from the solid liquid and gaseous states as these are from each other. These experiments were never before exhibited in America, and it was an interesting sight, to observe the great leaders of Science gathered around the experimenter's table, and gazing into the vacuum tubes, with the freedom and simplicity of little children catechising each other in ignorance of the precise nature of the results they were witnessing.

It may interest our readers to learn that I have ordered a full set of these instruments for my laboratory at Davidson College and this will be only the second set imported to America, which will be another illustration of the fact that we are fully abreast of the advance of Science in that department of Davidson.

A very delightful feature of this meeting, was the formal addresses delivered every evening before the assembly and illustrated sometimes with elaborate stereoptican views. These papers, read in the bio-

logical and geological sections, often had a strong flavor of "evolution."

The address of Prof. Barker on the "Life Problem," seemed ambitious to attain the most advanced guard of materialism, and did actually teach what a prominent Southern Professor not inaptly called "advanced nescience" and a Boston editor pronounced "a thousand years ahead of the age," which last remark, I heard the learned lecturer repeat in private, as though he had not perceived the irony it contained.

Suffice it to say there can be little to fear in this direction so long as the Association has among its controlling members such Christian champions as Principal Dawson of Montreal, and such conservative Scientists as Agassiz, Gray, Wyatt, and many others. If time permitted I should like to refer specially to some valuable papers on the geology of North Carolina by my friend Prof. Kerr of the State geological survey. He took a prominent part in the discussions, and was the only other North Carolinian present. By the way, as illustrating the integrity and solidity of Prof. Kerr's Christian character I know of nothing surpassing the following incident. During the Centennial in 1876, he was one of the judges appointed to award prizes in certain departments. While there the wonders of the telephone were first exhibited to the scientific world, and as profound silence was necessary for

the most critical examination of its powers, an arrangement was made by which Sir Wm. Thompson and many of the most distinguished visitors of Europe and America might assemble to test its capabilities by accurate experiments during the stillness of the Sabbath day. To this gathering of scientists, Prof. Kerr was invited, but declined, as it violated his sense of the proper observance of the Sabbath. Only those who knew his enthusiasm for Science can appreciate such a sacrifice by such a man at such a time. A more severe test of one's Christian integrity can scarcely be conceived.

J. R. BLAKE.

Invitations to Participate in Literary Work.

CHAPTER IX.

Rev. J. B. Adger, D. D., Columbia Seminary :

Prof. J. R. Blake, Dear Sir :—We want to secure your aid as a contributor to the Southern Presbyterian Review.

We intend to elevate the character of it as much as possible and are therefore soliciting contributions from a certain number of writers. How much help will you pledge us for the year? We want your assistance in the Natural Science and educational department.

Ever yours,

J. B. ADGER.

Dear Friend :—You declined to engage to help us on the ground of pressure of duties at Davidson. I take pen to suggest to you whether you might not be doing some good work for your college by writing for the Review. Prof. J. R. Blake ought to show himself in these pages, that people may send their sons the more readily to his college. Verbum Sat. Consider what I say and let me hear from you.

Urge your colleagues to do the same. Davidson might of herself do half the work and help herself thereby.

Yours truly,

J. B. ADGER.

Columbia Seminary :

Dear Friend :—I have heard from several quarters such high commendations of your address at Abbeville, that I must in a word solicit you to give it to the Review. Your reply to my former letter was so modest and self-depreciatory that I fear you will not think your efforts fit to send unless I prompt you a little.

My Dear Friend :—I have just sent your article to the press. I think it admirable, though I don't pretend to be a judge of its scientific merit. I find myself instructed however and feel personally obliged to you. Dr. Lord, I suspect, will not take the same view exactly. You will have seen Woodrow's killing assault on him in the last Southern Presbyterian.

Very truly yours,

J. B. ADGER.

N. C. Presbyterian :

Prof. Blake, Dear Sir :—I would be very greatly obliged to you for any assistance you can render our paper at any time or way. They need not be strictly theological or religious ; a scientific article

would add a desirable variety to the paper and directly from the author would give a freshness not otherwise attainable. I would like to ask you to permit me to announce your name as co-editor of the paper.

Respectfully,

JOHN McLAURIN,
Fayetteville, N. C.

Gen. D. H. Hill, Charlotte Office of "The Land We Love" :

My Dear Professor:—Mr. S. wants an article calling attention to the importance of Lime as a fertilizer. We want the facts of science presented without the theory, something practical which will be read by the farmers. If you will forget that you are a Professor of Chemistry in Davidson and imagine that you are a plain country farmer with plenty of lime to sell, you will suit our readers.

Yours truly,

D. H. HILL.

The article was written and printed in pamphlet form and distributed over the country as an advertisement for the sale of the lime, and was a success.

Prof. W. C. Kerr, Raleigh, N. C., July 20, 1868 :

Dear Friend:—I shall soon be ready to start West ; in 10 or 12 days, perhaps. Shall I have the pleasure of your company? My first trip will oc-

copy 3 or 4 weeks and will extend from Lexington by way of Pilot Mountain to the northwest corner of the State, of which I wish to determine the latitude and longitude. I have only time to thank you for your company and assistance on my last tour. The book of observations came all right. I have just returned from my northern trip and am preparing to resume operations at Salem. I regretted your absence from the meeting of the A. A. A. S. You would have found both pleasure and profit in being present.

Very truly your friend,

W. C. KERR.

Atlanta, Ga.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Davidson College :

My Dear Friend :—The National Educational Association is to meet at Saratoga, the session to begin July 11th. It will be a notable gathering of educators, more so than any assemblage of the kind ever convened in this country. The President of the University of Minnesota is on our program for a paper on the Secularization of Education. It has been determined to have a discussion of each paper, in a fifteen minute speech by some one appointed, whose name is also on the program. Will you do us this service? Do not decline, the time is short. Answer by telegram. I feel sure it would be ad-

vantageous to Davidson College to be represented at this National Assembly.

Very truly your friend,

GUSTAVUS J. ORR,
President National Educational Association.

Chapel Hill, N. C., Dec. 28, 1897.

Dear Professor Blake :—The Mitchell Society is anxious to have a sketch of the life and work of Dr. W. C. Kerr for publication in the Journal for 1896-97.

The committee having the matter in charge have come to the unanimous decision that no hand is better fitted to the task of weaving these materials into the finished sketch than yours. No one had such opportunities of knowing Dr. Kerr and of understanding his life work as yourself.

The intimate friendship existing between you and him for many years will make it a labor of love. We desire that the memorial shall be a fitting tribute to one who so faithfully served his State to the last hours of life, and to a Scientist who did so much to relieve our Southern land from the stigma of intellectual inactivity.

Yours respectfully,

F. P. VENABLE.

Raleigh, N. C.

Dear Professor Blake :—The Mitchell Society could have made no choice, that will gratify my

children and myself in the biography of my husband as yourself. But if your health will not permit you to undertake it I love you too much to have you do it.

Dear friend, there is nothing you can do that will make me so happy as to get well. I pray God's blessing on the efforts of your physicians to accomplish this end.

Yours most affectionately,

EMMA KERR.

Washington, Ga., May 9, 1884.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Davidson College.

My Dear Friend :—Enclosed I send a program of the meeting of the Teachers' Association in Atlanta. I will be delighted to have you attend and meet you there. If there is any special subject you prefer, I will arrange to give you a place on the program.

May 14th, Dear Friend :—I am delighted with your selection of a subject and doubt not, your treatment of it will be interesting and instructive.

Yours, truly,

SAMUEL BARNETT,

Atlanta, Ga.

Chapel Hill, N. C.

Professor Blake, Dear Sir :—The annual meeting of the Teachers' Association will be held here in July next. By authority of the Association, I cordially invite you to deliver an address at this meeting. Any

subject relating to education will be acceptable.

Hoping, sir, that you may favor the Association with an early acceptance, I have the honor to be with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

GEO. T. WINSTON,
Chairman.

Chapel Hill, N. C., Jan. 14, 1875.

Prof. Blake, My Dear Sir :—I beg that you will favor our Normal School with an address or lecture, during the session at any time before the 27th of July. I think you will enjoy a visit to this quiet assemblage of teachers. I know you will give them pleasure as well as instruction. I hope you will let me know what week will be agreeable to you, that I may arrange accordingly.

Truly yours,

KEMP BATTLE.

Raleigh, N. C.

Prof. Blake, Dear Sir :—It gives me pleasure to ask that you will entertain the North Carolina Agricultural Society with an essay on some instructive subject at Raleigh during Fair week. Your compliance is earnestly desired.

Very truly yours,

C. B. DENISON, Secretary.

Charlotte, N. C., April 26, 1874.

Dear Friend :—Will you deliver an address be-

fore the Elders and Deacons Convention to be held here the 3d Tuesday in July?

Yours truly,

D. H. HILL.

Charlotte, N. C.

To Professor Blake.

Dear Sir :—The Mecklenburg Bible Society having requested you to address the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church on the Bible Cause, the Session cordially invite you to occupy the pulpit on Sabbath morning, 3d Sabbath of December.

Yours truly,

T. SCARR,

Clerk of Session.

Peace Institute, Raleigh, N. C., Dec. 5, 1878.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Dear Sir :—We have a plan to lecture to our girls once a month. Several gentlemen have agreed to take part in this elevating means of instruction to our girls. May we place your name among the number of lecturers? The time and subject to be arranged by yourself.

Yours truly,

R. BURRELL & SON.

Prof. J. R. Blake, Dear Sir :—The ladies of the Sumter Institute request you to deliver the annual address at their Commencement. You may select any subject you choose in the 'heavens above or

the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth."

Respectfully,

A. W. EDMUNDS,
Sumter, S. C.

Davidson College, May 25th, 1885.

Professor Blake :

We, the undersigned students of the Freshman Class, having received much pleasure and profit from your lecture on last Friday night, and having heard such high compliments from the Juniors and Seniors to the one you delivered before them on "Light" do respectfully request you to deliver the same before the Freshman Class on next Thursday. Should you comply with our request, we engage to prepare the recitation for that day as usual.

Respectfully,

D. N. McLauchlin,	J. W. Herron,
R. A. Thompson,	C. A. Lee,
J. L. Douglas,	F. P. Tate,
E. F. Alexander,	Jas. A. McAliley,
W. A. Watson,	S. S. Oliver,
E. J. Kergivin,	S. R. McKee,
H. M. Stuckey,	H. A. Banks,
N. M. Faison,	Jas. Wilson, Jr.,
N. N. Baker,	W. J. Martin,
R. G. Sparrow,	D. W. Provence,
G. S. Mayes,	J. A. Harris,
A. H. McArm,	D. M. McGregor, Jr.

Articles Written for the Press Relating to Davidson College.

CHAPTER X.

Professor Blake's whole heart and soul and mind and strength were absorbed in building up Davidson College.

He wielded a great influence with his pen. Being gifted with a classic elegance of style he never failed to adorn any subject he might select, so even the dry details of statistics, or the oft repeated routine of college life, was invested with fresh interest when he took hold of it. Sometimes he assumed the role of defender of the institution against some critique leveled at the interests or progress of the beloved college, and with trenchant pen he would crush the antagonist.

He wrote a condensed history of Davidson from its earliest inception, which was published in Johnson's Universal Encyclopædia ; and he was honored by having his name placed on the front page as one of the editors, a copy of this valuable work being presented to him by the publishers. This article has been re-produced in various forms in other journals. We find in the Augusta Chronicle and Sen-

tinel a synopsis of it from the brilliant pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that city. Dr. Irvine says, "I am indebted to Prof. J. R. Blake, Chairman of Davidson College, for the most part of the foregoing incidents and facts in this record."

Circulars of various forms, sizes and styles were distributed by the thousands. Oh, the labor the wearisome folding and addressing of these little messengers, to names hard to decipher, and illegible postmarks! only those behind the scenes, were familiar with this infinite and laborious toil, to bring students to reap the fruits of this labor.

One of these circulars prepared with great care was disseminated at the North and contains the following testimony of distinguished educators who have examined the work of our students:

Prof. Gildersleeve of John Hopkins University says: "The papers examined do credit to your institution. I only wish I could count on as good preparation here in my work."

Prof. Peters of the University of Virginia says: "The papers examined prove thorough teaching, and an appreciation of this on the part of students which is eminently honorable to them. I cordially congratulate Professors and students on this work."

Prof. Rockwood of Princeton says: "The papers are highly creditable both to their authors and to the mathematical course of which the work is an exponent."

Prof. Humphries of Vanderbilt University says :
"The papers are all of the highest order for students completing the college course."

Testimony of distinguished Divines : Rev. R. L. Dabney, D. D., Rev. Thos. Peck, D. D., Rev. Wm. E. Boggs, D. D., Rev. Geo. Howe, D. D., Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, D. D., Rev. Jos. R. Wilson, D. D., Rev. D. McGilvary, D. D.

Testimony of the Synods of North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Testimony of distinguished public men of North Carolina : Hon. Z. B. Vance, Governor and United States Senator ; Hon. Samuel Phillips, Solicitor General United States ; Hon. W. H. N. Smith, Chief Justice of North Carolina.

The Presbytery of New York endorsed this circular thus : The concurrent testimony of the most distinguished and competent judges confirms the high value of the literary work done at Davidson College, North Carolina, so that the South is in no small degree indebted to this institution for both its religious and intellectual training. We commend it to the favor of all who have sympathy with the good work in which it is engaged. Signed : William M. Paxton, Howard Crosby, Roswell Hitchcock, S. Iranæus Prime, Thomas S. Hastings, Robt. Russel Booth, John Hall, W. M. Taylor.

Prof. Blake of Davidson College, North Caro-

lina, was heard in regard to the interests of that institution, whereupon it was

Resolved, That we have heard with interest the statements of Professor Blake, and that the applications for funds meets the approval of the Presbytery.

S. D. ALEXANDER, Clerk.

Extract from the Minutes of New York Presbytery.

Among those present by invitation at the recent meeting of the New York Presbytery was Professor Blake of Davidson College, North Carolina.

He comes North to secure pecuniary relief for that institution, which as many of our readers are aware, has a record of great usefulness in the past. The time was when Davidson College did more than any other institution in the South to furnish our churches with a learned and pious ministry. This career of usefulness may be continued, if only a little timely encouragement were extended in this hour of need. The Presbytery therefore did well in unanimously approving the object of Professor Blake's visit to this and other cities.—New York Observer.

Davidson College.

Mr. Editor:—The week just past was examination and hence a week of earnest labor and no little anxiety to all the classes from Freshman to Senior.

This anxiety too, is well founded, for experience has taught the students of this institution that under the present regime, there are cracks in the floor large enough for even a Junior or Senior to fall through and suddenly disappear from their class.

As I strolled through the various examination rooms and looked at the written questions on the black boards bristling with Mathematical formulae, (horresco referens) or demanding complex chemical reactions, or requiring idiomatic Greek and Latin for pure Saxon English, or propounding all sorts of imaginable and unimaginable, (the Professors will pardon the verdancy of the writer) problems in physics and metaphysics, logic and law—when I scanned all these blackboards, then looked at the earnest faces of the students, some of whom had been grappling with these knotty problems for six mortal hours, I sighed involuntarily for the good old days of kind Alma Maters who never troubled their children with writing answers to such impertinent puzzles, but like fond mamas were satisfied with mono-syllabic replies to questions half answered in the asking.

In the Senior class room I saw no ugly black board questions frowning down upon a class of youths sitting pen in hand as serious and sober as if about to sign their own death warrant ; but as I entered everybody looked busy and cheerful, yet earnest and animated. The scene before me re-

called nothing I had ever seen or heard or dreamed of in the days of "auld lang syne" when teachers found it easier to do the work themselves rather than take the trouble to force the pupil to do it.

Had it not been for the good order prevailing amid this scene of apparent confusion one might have imagined from the fumes and odors, (some of them not very savory,) arising on every side from lamps and test tubes and evaporating dishes and re-agent bottles and many colored liquids, that these busy earnest "boys" were apprentices to some "Witch of Endor" by whose magic arts they were striving to work all sorts of weird spells. Twenty-six of them were at the tables, separating, mixing, mingling, heating, boiling, stewing, but with it all there was a "method in their madness," for after a weary search they returned to the Head Magician to report the product of his witchery. This, Mr. Editor, is what they call an examination in Practical Chemistry. Thus to dive far down into the depths of elemental matter and bring up to the surface with a firm grasp the secrets of invisible atoms. Oh ye shades of Chemistry! How changed since we were boys together.

I will only add that if any of your readers wish to send sons to a place of education where work,

work, work, is the order of the day, Davidson College is that place.

J. R. BLAKE.
Dec. 23d, 1872.

Evenings With the Telescope at Davidson College.

Mr. Editor :—The attractions which the season has afforded to all lovers of the stars have been so peculiar as to arrest the attention even of the most indifferent observer. Jupiter, Saturn, Mars and Venus are all in our evening sky and have several times conspired with each other and the Moon to get up exhibitions of surpassing beauty and interest. Since the opening of college in September the interest in the performances of these star actors in the sky has been sustained by a constant change of program each more brilliant than the last.

First came the play of Mars with his two new satellites, a side play it is true, to which only the favored few could be admitted, but yet it was the star of the season, and among the astronomical marvels of the age. Mars has condescended to take his stand nearer to the spectators than ever before in this generation. We could see no satellites, but there stood in the front ground in bold relief the magnificent figure of Mars, his snow capped pole, so distinct and clear that the most inexperienced spectator observed it. There also were his oceans, continents and seas. Week after week our

students and village friends, young and old, gazed at this wonderful exhibition till Mars gradually retired from the field.

Later in the season followed the conjunction of Mars and Saturn, with his crown of rings and retinue of Moons, but only three satellites could be seen, while the magnificent system of rings was projected into a straight line, as if he had laid aside his crown and grasped the sceptre as the fit emblem of his royalty.

The last performance of the season came off Saturday evening, the 8th, in the form of an inimitable play of coquetry between Venus and the Moon, delighting the young folks.

It was early noticed by amateurs that an unusual intimacy was springing up between the celestials, and it was believed that an eclipse would actually take place. The matter was referred to the Professor of Astronomy, who asserted that it was not named in the bill but to all human appearance the climax was inevitable.

Venus was certainly rushing into the arms of the young Moon. The Professor sat steadily gazing into the eye piece of the instrument, while the crowd alternately looked at the eye piece of the "finder" and earnestly debated the possibilities. At first it was asserted positively that Venus would pass straight through the centre into the arms of the young Moon, then that she would pass just be-

low. She approached nearer and nearer, until the "finder" could no longer separate the blended light of the sparkling planet, and the dull unilluminated edge of the Moon; then all gave it up as certain that the coquetry is ended, and the queen of beauty must succumb to the queen of night.

However, the large telescope still maintained a separation, so after remaining for a few minutes within less than half a digit, Venus gracefully glided by, seeming to be almost impaled upon the horn of the new Crescent, as she quietly rounded the corner.

J. R. B.

Eclipse of the Sun on Pilot Mountain.

Go with me to the summit of Pilot Mountain with a select party of Scientists gathered on that lofty watch tower 1500 feet above the surrounding plains to witness one of the most impressive scenes nature ever presents to the gaze of man, a total eclipse of the sun. As the critical hour approaches, we sit anxiously waiting to catch the first moment of contact. The eclipse begins—slowly it progresses, but neither nature nor the merry voices ringing through the mountain top, give any token of the awful solemnity awaiting us. But, although the supreme moment delays, the line of totality is approaching. On the distant mountain tops and over the intervening plains, we see the coming shad-

ows of the night rushing upon us. In the twinkle of an eye, the sun goes out in darkness. In an instant, as if the pall of death had swept over the mountain top, the merry laugh and jest is hushed into silence, or sinks into low subdued whispers with bated breath, and the air of this strange night grows chill and damp. One by one the stars have come out to witness the solemn ceremony, the bats have crept from the crevices of the rocks and flit about in the dusky air. The ravens are hurrying home from the plain back to their mountain roost.

Wood and field and crag and cliff have put on funereal robes. A pale yellow sickly light rests upon the weird scene—whilst around the couch of the departed sun, extending far beyond the intervening moon, is a halo of glory more resplendent than mortal eyes ever beheld around the dying couch of earthly monarch.

This picture defies the powers of fancy, it beggars language. No other department so enriches the imagination.

Think of the infinitudes of space with which the astronomer deals—of the endless durations that enter the calculations of the geologist, of the marvellous dimensions of the stellar masses, of the infinitesimal size of single atoms. Think of the grandeur of this grand whole, the material cosmos, and tell me if there is not enough to task all the powers and capabilities of the mind. Just bask in

the glories of the midnight sky, allow the wings of imagination to have free sweep, to revel amid those stars with their vast magnitude, their immeasurable distances, their complicated movements with all the wonderful glories which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," if you be not more or less than human surely the soul will take fire and mount up with wings as eagles.

J. R. B.

Professor Blake as a Teacher.

CHAPTER XI.

While in any given Faculty there may have been more profound scholars—specialists, who devoted their talents to the pursuit of one line of investigation, which, in these days of “expert” research reduces each department of study to the finest hair-splitting—it is to be questioned whether the old time scholar well versed in each department, by equal study, was not better balanced and able to take broader views and a more comprehensive analysis of the whole range of human investigation. A writer aptly expresses this thought in these striking words :

“Of late the custom has obtained of setting one man to pull at a single thread. And as the specialists multiply, and each one pulls and cuts and slashes into the net in the endeavor to trace out an infinitesimal section of a single thread, and holds it up, and proclaims a new and startling discovery that is to revolutionize thought and correct the hoary errors of the ages, then the next thread that is detached reverses the conclusions based upon the first we can but wonder if, after all, the great net that God is weaving is best studied and utilized by microscopic inspection of its threads.”

Professor Blake's mind was not of creative or speculative originality, but he possessed a most masterful power of systematizing his accumulations and bringing them to bear in ready illustration and practical application to the studies of the class room. He was a close student, ever ready to learn from all sources, frequently an inquirer from masters in his department, and keeping in touch with scientific advances by being a constant reader of the best journals and the freshest literature in the world of Science, as well as often being in attendance on the annual meetings of the A. A. A. S. "In the class room he always preferred the recitation with its questions and answers in which the pupil takes a conspicuous part in telling the Professor what he knows, to the lecture in which the Professor takes the conspicuous part in telling the pupil what he knows. The one is a system of drilling accompanied with illustrations and explanations, and is an intellectual gymnastic exercise in which the Professor draws out all the strength of his pupil, and by the Socratic method of argumentation exposes his errors or enables him to fortify himself in the truth of his answers. The other is too often a system of cramming, and, as generally conducted, the lecturer has too little contact with the pupil. We have heard of students from universities who have attended the Professor's lectures for

months without being called on to answer a single question.

Of course the temptation to neglect studies during the session and attempt to make up the loss by cramming for examination from a neighbor's note book is too strong for the average boy, hence the large number who fail to get diplomas, or what is worse, make a failure in after life.

The work of a college proper is to develop by a wisely selected curriculum the whole circle of a man's moral and mental nature—to educate him into a symmetrical, rounded character. The work of the University proper is to follow up the gymnasium culture of the German system, building special super structures upon the broad foundation laid by the college curriculum. The one thoroughly prepares the soil, breaks up the subsoil and renders the whole field ready for whatever special crop individual taste may select. To reverse the operation is to sow before you have prepared the soil, to build before you secure the foundation, and the result must be a general failure.

The object of true education is not to make a doctor, a farmer, or a lawyer, but to develop a *man*. After the crude material has been wrought into a polished symmetrical manhood, you may chisel it into any structure demanded by the necessities or utilities of life.

The judgment, the memory and the imagination

are the faculties most subject to discipline in ordinary education ; of these the judgment is most fundamental. How is it to be trained ? by discipline in the various processes of reasoning, chiefly by the inductive, the deductive, the analogical and the hypothetical ? All of these methods abound in the physical sciences. The deductive method prevails in the higher physical investigations, where after some general truth has been established by the inductive method the process is reversed and subordinate truths are deduced chiefly by the aid of mathematical physics. Indeed this form of reasoning is eminently that of mathematical science and is scarcely fitted for physical inquiries except where induction has first established some general principles.

Had our Creator planted in the human breast the seeds of all truth like the axioms of mathematics, we might then by searching within ourselves hope to find the foundations, or first principles of things, and deduce therefrom our system of physics ; but as it is, like the ancient Greek, we must utterly fail, unless we lay our corner stones upon broad and comprehensive inductions. With the foundations thus secured, the beautiful temple of Science has received much of its exquisite finish from the hands of the deductive philosophy.

The Natural Sciences simply as an educational instrument should be more extensively introduced

into our curriculum of studies, as they are unsurpassed in the symmetrical and stimulating growth they impart to the intellect. The value and utility of the mathematics, the classics and the study of English are too well known and too exclusively adopted, and they have stood the test of the ages as indispensable to the highest intellectual culture. But the inductive method of reasoning is emphatically the Scientific method. Upon it the vast superstructure of modern Science rests. It is the "Alpha and Omega" without which the Science of today would still be searching for the "philosopher's stone," and the "elixir of life" or with Aristotle prating about the "perfection of the circle," the "quintessence and the Emyrean."

Such is the discipline which Science furnishes, giving to the mind a prescience, that triumphs over time and space stretching backward to the endless past, and forward to the infinite future and outward through boundless space, restoring to fallen man something of that divine knowledge by which the past and future alike may to some extent be grasped in an ever present now."

PROF. J. R. BLAKE AS A TEACHER.

BY REV. J. W. DAVIS, D. D.,
OF SOOCHOW, CHINA.

I consider it one of the greatest blessings of my life that I had as teachers such men as R. L. Dabney, D. D., B. L. Gildersleeve and J. R. Blake.

Prof. Blake was physically a wiry, nervous man, capable of severe protracted labor. He had a finely shaped head, which contained an unusually active brain. His intellect was acute and penetrating; his judgment discriminating and well balanced.

In examining any subject he thought profoundly, looking at all sides of it. Hence all that he said was well considered. He that hath wisdom spareth his words. Prof. Blake was a thinker and, like Dr. Dabney, he made his students think for themselves. Memorizing the statement contained in the text-book, was inadequate preparation for one who had to recite to him. He was a man of fine literary taste. I remember to this day how his rendering of Poe's poem on "The Bell" was to me a revelation of the depth and versatility of the writer. He was a godly man. His teaching was a constant comment upon the assertion that the "undevout astronomer is mad." He saw sermons in stones, and God in everything.

He possessed executive ability in an eminent degree. For six years he was practically President of Davidson College.

He never forgot that human nature is particularly human in a college boy.

On a certain occasion all the college community was annoyed by loud and repeated blowing of tin horns heard from the woods by which the campus was surrounded. A few evenings after the nuisance had reached its height, while one of the trumpeters was making night hideous with his horrid blasts, Prof. Blake quietly stepped out before him from behind a tree and said, "Good evening Mr. M." That was all and it was enough. The din ceased. There were no trials of the offenders before the Faculty. There was no scolding in class room or chapel. He who was so alert as a detective was wisely forbearing as a ruler. There was in him a rare blending of the "wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove."

With acuteness and strength of intellect and practical common sense, he combined noble impulses and warm affections. During the three years that I spent under him at Davidson College I thoroughly learned to revere him as a teacher, honor him as a man, and love him as a friend.

JOHN. W. DAVIS.

Soochow, China, May 10th, 1898.

Professor Blake's Personal Influence Over the Students.

CHAPTER XII.

While it is true that the presiding officer is held responsible before the public for the management of the institution success cannot attend his most faithful efforts unless he has the support of his colleagues, and this Prof. Blake had to the fullest extent, being sustained in all his efforts to advance the interests of the college by the generous touch of their confidence and sympathy. Hence his success was shared by others with whom he cheerfully divided the honor and credit. He never attempted to carry out his own pet theories or magnify his own importance before the public ; he was always in harmony with his Faculty and spared not himself to acquaint each one with any matter of unusual interest or emergency.

As an illustration of this point, an old student returning to college during the chairmanship administration jokingly remarked to him on leaving, "Professor, let a fellow go to the depot to see his sweetheart without calling the Faculty together to get their consent."

We hear a great deal today about the new idea of self-discipline, college boys controlling themselves, as far better calculated to develop manliness, than when they are under "police surveillance." This was eminently the discipline practised at Davidson College at the period we speak of. As a matter of fact, examples prove that the "government of the students by the students" was a marked feature of Prof. Blake's administration, and that it was far more potent than any government by the Faculty could possibly be. We will give some illustrations of this discipline.

On one occasion several of the best young men in college came to his study to ask permission for a class meeting for the purpose of disciplining an offender. The Professor inquired the character of the offence and the name of the accused. They refused to give the name, but assured him that he had violated his pledge of honor, and they could not tolerate such conduct in their class. The Professor, while approving their course, declined to grant the request on his individual responsibility, but asked them to remain in his study while he went to consult each Professor as to the meeting. First exacting a promise that they would do nothing rash and take no final action without the authority of the Faculty. They were allowed to proceed with the trial. A court was established, a judge appointed, and a jury empaneled. The accused was sum-

moned, the charge preferred and witness questioned, then the solemn question "guilty or not guilty." He boldly replied not guilty, and was allowed to defend himself. "It is true that I did leave the examination room and go to my own room. It is true that I did open my book and look at the question which puzzled me, but it is not true that I wrote the answer on my paper ; if you will send to the Professor you will find that question a blank on my paper. I did not break my pledge." So the paper was sent for and proved to be just as he said, and the case was dismissed with a charge from the judge to avoid even the "*appearance of evil*" in future. This is a practical illustration of the discipline which was being enacted day by day on the campus.

On another occasion permission was given to discipline several students who were living in known violation of the college law. The class of men who had this in charge were candidates for the ministry. These young brethren brought charges and having proved them, asked permission to lay the case before the Presbytery which supported them. A similar report from the Faculty confirmed the charge, and the offenders were withdrawn from college.

One of the most notable schemes of Prof. Blake in his personal influence over students was a "secret society" which he formulated. Selecting a dozen of the most consecrated spirits, he invited them to his room to a conference, and each one pledged him-

self to become a "home missionary" on the campus, their chief work being to watch over the unwary who in unguarded moments might be found "standing in the way of sinners" or "sitting in the seat of the scornful." These earnest Christians with discreet kindness drew them from the "counsels of the ungodly" by personal attention, attracting them to other places of higher interest. Many an one thus had an invisible cord thrown around him, gently leading to the better way. One day a candidate for the ministry was seen walking arm in arm with a student not very saintly. A Professor met them and asked in a surprised tone "Why what does that mean?" The other Professor understood what it meant as he was a member of the "Fraternity."

During the war, the college was filled with boys of all classes and ages, some unruly spirits crept in, no doubt imbibing the war spirit. Prof. Blake was not in charge of the college at that time, but he was ever on the alert to check any disturbance, so it came to his ear that two of the students were practicing for a duel. Strolling behind the college, he found one of them engaged in shooting at a mark; he took him aside expostulating with him on the danger and guilt of duelling; after much persuasion he succeeded in influencing him to desist if his opponent would; so he also was visited, and the two were brought together to "bury the hatchet" by

shaking hands. One of the duellists is now a Judge of the United States Court, so he was spared perhaps from a cruel death to an honorable life, by the wise tact of this skilful disciplinarian.

It frequently occurred that those under censure became his best friends, ready to show kindness of a personal nature, as well as gratitude for discipline which checked them in a downward career.

One of the most remarkable instances of this kind was in the reformation of one who had attacked the Professor on his way from Charlotte on a cold November afternoon. He rode to the side of the carriage asking if Prof. Blake was inside he wished to see him a moment. Without thinking of any evil intent he quietly alighted to be confronted with a pistol and a volley of profanity. He brandished his weapon pointing it at him again and again, then he would suddenly draw back as if restrained by some invisible power, he said "Professor are you armed?" I hate to shoot a man without arms, you ought to have a chance to defend yourself. The friend who was with him, took his place beside him hoping to be able to render some assistance, but he also became the object of the attack and having no means of defence they were both at the mercy of the desperate fellow who thought he had a grievance against the Professor, but he quietly answered all his charges, showing that he had been dealt with justly. So, finally this truth seemed to convince

his companion that he was wrong, and he insisted on allowing Professor Blake to go on and they would see him at home the next day. God certainly preserved him from death, which seemed imminent, as he was at the mercy of one who was reckless, and really not responsible for his violence. Several months afterwards he did come to see the Professor, but he was "clothed and in his right mind," begging for pardon and forgiveness for the wrong he had committed.

Another incident is recalled of one who had left college under censure, and several years later the Professor was on the train going to New York but it was quite difficult to obtain a seat. He had given it up until a stranger kindly offered him his place, also taking his checks to attend to his baggage. He could not understand his attentions, till an old student was recognized; one who had undergone a great change of sentiment.

Again, while in New York in attendance on Dr. Hall's Church he failed in getting a seat till a stranger touched him asking if he was not Prof. Blake, offered to procure a seat in the crowded Church for him. He had been a student under his instruction thirty years before. "Cast thy bread upon the waters and it shall be gathered after many days."

The Afternoon of Life at Peaceful Greenwood.

CHAPTER XIII.

On the removal of Prof. Blake to his old home in Greenwood, South Carolina, he was elected President of the Educational and Library Association, also of the Bible Society and Vice-President of the State Bible Society.

When the Synods of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, appointed a commission to consider the propriety of establishing a great Presbyterian University within their bounds Prof. Blake was selected as one of the commission and he received the highest vote in the Synod of South Carolina as Regent to conduct the enterprise.

In 1880 he was appointed by the General Assembly to the second general council of the Prebyterian Alliance which met in Philadelphia.

In 1874 he was a delegate to the General Assembly at Savannah, Ga., which meeting he attended.

After his retirement from Davidson College he was elected an Alumni Trustee, and on his return to the scene of his life work he was thus welcomed :
“No visitor to Commencement has received a more hearty welcome than Prof. J. R. Blake. It is with

feelings of the most sincere pleasure that the students grasp the hand of the old Professor who has for twenty-five years faithfully discharged the duties of his office. He resigned his position last year and removed to Greenwood, S. C. May happiness and prosperity attend the declining days of the honored Professor."

In 1895 Prof. Blake finding his health impaired, and that he would no longer need to preserve his books, donated his entire library to the Clinton College which is connected with the Thornwell Orphanage. The following paper explains itself:

"Prof. Blake has made a generous donation to the young and growing institution in our sister town of Clinton.

"The number of boxes shipped on the G. C. & N. R. R., was 16, 8 containing books amounting to 550 volumes and 8 were filled with reviews, magazines, and scientific journals, including a whole set of the Southern Presbyterian Review, most of them bound. Silliman's Journal of Chemistry, preserved for many years, even previous to the war. Nature, an English periodical of high merit to scientists. The Scientific American, Popular Science Monthly, with numbers of miscellaneous papers. These represent the life work of a laborious student, and if they shall in a small degree stimulate the scholastic ambition of those students who shall come in contact

with them Prof. Blake will feel that he is richly compensated for his gift."

The President and Professors return thanks for the gift of books, &c :

My Dear Prof. Blake :—The books, cases, minerals and the apparatus all came safely to hand. I enjoyed thoroughly the task of arranging our library. I am sure you could not have bestowed them where they are more needed and will be more appreciated. The book cases, too, fill a long felt want. If our college had a few more friends like yourself, we should soon possess all we require. Thanking you most heartily,

I am with great respect, yours,

REV. E. C. MURRAY.

Prof. Blake, Dear Sir :—May I add my thanks to those already expressed by our President and Faculty? Your gift to the Scientific department is invaluable to me in the conduct of my classes. Without them I should have been much hindered in the proper presentation of Chemistry and Physics. I am,

Yours respectfully,

S. L. CAMPBELL,
Prof. Nat. Science.

Prof. Blake, Dear Sir :—In behalf of the student body of the Presbyterian College at Clinton, we ex-

tend to you sincere thanks for your valuable donation to our Library, Laboratory and Cabinet. Be assured that this act of encouragement on your part will in the future be a stimulus to us in the pursuit of knowledge.

Most respectfully,

R. McCASKILL,

A. V. RUSSELL,

Committee.



THE ADMINISTRATION
OF
PROFESSOR J. R. BLAKE,
CHAIRMAN OF FACULTY.

BY ALEX. R. BANKS, A. M., CLASS OF 1869.

This administration was unique in its character and remarkable in its history. It is distinguished from all the others as the "Chairmanship Administration," in which each member of the Faculty was made to feel his personal responsibility not only for the discipline and progress of the students but for every interest involving the internal welfare and management of the college.

The Chairman, as the presiding officer and the executive head of this system, was of course responsible for the successful management and the carrying out of all its details, and hence, while it may be necessary to assume as we proceed, that Professor Blake, by virtue of his office and the responsibilities it imposed, was the leading factor,

still it must never be forgotten that his able colleagues were all his efficient auxiliaries.

By his side stood the clear headed indefatigable Martin, the original and bold thinker Phillips, the energetic, enthusiastic Latimer, the conscientious and faithful Sampson, the modest and scholarly Hepburn, the polite and cultivated Richardson, the pious and earnest Anderson, with others who were associated with Professor Blake all along the line of advancement, and each of whom did noble service in the cause of education, and for the upbuilding of our Alma Mater.

It is well known that Professor Blake, though having the fullest confidence of his Faculty, was theoretically opposed to this system, as not being so well suited to project the college and its interests upon the outside public and that he declined to accept the responsibilities of the Chairmanship until forced to yield by the unanimous appeals of his colleagues. However, when once committed and elected by the Trustees, he threw himself into the work with all the zeal and energy of his ardent nature, sustained to the last, and at every point by the undivided support and sympathy of his co-laborers.

The history of this administration it is now my privilege and pleasure to narrate. In the outset, I have said that it was remarkable. The statistics show that this era extending from June, 1871, to

June, 1877, was at once progressive and aggressive in the history of the college. A simple enumeration of the changes wrought in the organic life of the institution, during this period would be sufficient to mark it as a period of unsurpassed energy and enterprise.

First. It was held to be a prime necessity to secure and retain an able and efficient Faculty, if the college was ever to attain any high degree of excellence. To this end the tuition fees were greatly increased, as the only means thus available to meet the demands, owing to the embarrassed state of the funds of the college.

Second. To secure a high standard of scholarships rigid entrance examinations were enforced, and students who were not prepared were sent back to the academies; and finally, when many of the schools could not prepare their pupils for our college, rather than lower the standards a sub-fresh class was established to supplement the work of the academies.

Third. To enlarge the usefulness and patronage as well as to remove the provincial character of the college, the government was extended so as to include not only the Presbyteries of North Carolina, but South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Fourth. During this period a financial agent was sent into the field to increase the permanent fund of the college and bring its merits before the public,

which agency has continued to the present, with short intermissions and happy results to the college.

Fifth. During this period, also, the present valuable executive committee system was organized, and substituted for the old and less efficient methods.

Sixth. The curriculum of the college, also, now for the first time, begun to be extended and liberalized by the introduction of elective studies and alternative courses, thus offering a more diversified and practical training, and one better suited to the varying necessities of individual pupils.

All these, besides other wise and practical changes, marked the progress of the college during the administration of Professor John R. Blake.

Most of them remain to this day incorporated in the life blood of the institution, constituting in great measure the grounds for the high claims the college has for public patronage and favor.

It is not held, of course, that all these measures were due alone to Professor Blake and his Faculty. By no means, for this was an administration peculiarly noted as the era of good will, mutual confidence, and cordial co-operation through all the departments of the college, and uniting all its energies for good. Indeed the crowning virtue and excellence of Prof. Blake's administration was the tact and skill by which he succeeded in making his

Faculty a unit thus deriving a power and efficiency which was felt throughout all the departments of college work.

From those who knew the facts we learn that from 1871 to 1877 every important measure received the unanimous support of the Faculty; that the Chairman never appeared before the Executive Committee, or the Board of Trustees, to advocate any measure that he did not have the moral and intellectual force of his colleagues with him. The result was success.

The Faculty closely studied all questions, the Executive Committee considered carefully all propositions submitted to them which finally, after being matured and reviewed, passed to the Board for final endorsement.

The whole machinery "annointed with the oil of an all pervading confidence," ran on from year to year without a jar. This thoughtful prudence and practical wisdom which controlled the governing powers of the college was felt also in the details of the discipline of the students. "Obsta principiis" which liberally translated, means "an ounce of precaution is better than a pound of cure," was the rule by which all discipline proceeded.

Great freedom and intimacy was cultivated, so the feeling of personal friendship engendered confidence leading to cheerful obedience. The students soon felt that the laws were in the hands of per-

sonal friends. All moral agencies that could be brought to bear upon young minds were applied. The Bible was made a text book of the college, which every student was required to study. The religious life of each one was a subject of consideration, and moral restraints were often set along the pathway of a wayward youth without his knowledge that he might thereby be guided into the paths of truth and virtue.

When we consider the facts set forth by the statistics, that sometimes there were more than thirty candidates for the gospel ministry among the students, that at times four fifths of the entire body members of the church during Professor Blake's administration, you will see how skillful hands, by private conferences, timely hints and public appeals, might successfully mould such young men into models of good order and sobriety. As a matter of fact examples show us that the government of the students by the students was a marked feature of this period and that it was far more potent and efficient than any government by the Faculty could possibly be. Under such circumstances the college necessarily rose rapidly in reputation for good order, morality and scholarship until its praises were in all the churches from Virginia to Texas.

After Prof. Blake had resigned the Chairmanship of the Faculty and Dr. Hepburn had been chosen the President, Dr. McKinnon, President of the

Board of Trustees said, while delivering the keys of the college into the hands of Dr. Hepburn : "Davidson College owes its present prosperous condition to Professor Blake's wise and judicious management."

Dr. Hepburn endorsed these views by a spontaneous expression of Professor Blake's valuable services.

Having spoken thus of Professor Blake's administration, I would feel that my duty was but imperfectly discharged did I not say something in regard to his long and laborious services in behalf of the college. For twenty-five years he stood at the helm, bravely battling for the high standard of moral and intellectual improvement which had been inaugurated.

In 1865 when the college was forced to surrender the services of Dr. Kirkpatrick, with all which that service signified and represented, a few of the Trustees met to consider the important question whether the college was "to be or not to be," whether the doors should be closed for lack of funds, or whether they should go bravely on, Professor Blake stepped to the front, determined to stand by the old ship, though his own entire property had gone down with the Confederacy, and though there were no funds in the college treasury, he had faith enough to trust to the promise of the future, and the same good Providence which had sustained it during the stormy days

of war, and though the Faculty were paid by the private note of the College Treasurer, to be redeemed when a better day dawned.

Well, now, does your speaker recall those times when Professors opened their houses to the students and we were received as members of their families. Money was a rare commodity then. Faithful Amos was the servant of all work. Vividly do we recall how he and Professor Blake worked to keep up the repairs, stopping leaks, mending windows and other necessary work, because there was no money to pay for such work. Under the management and supervision of Prof. Blake the walks on the campus, in their present arrangement were laid out, the lawn sown in grass and over 200 trees planted. These were days of primitive simplicity when these beautiful trees were planted beneath whose shade we today rest and rejoice. For many years this devoted Professor was bursar, which in those days also meant "College Improvement Committee." He was also Clerk of the Faculty and Librarian besides Treasurer of the funds for candidates for the ministry. Dr. McPhail said of him, "here is a man who is ready to do anything and everything required by the good of the college." It often became necessary for him to teach during these times of frequent changes outside of his own department. In fact, in his twenty-five years of college work he taught in every class from the Arithmetic of the Preparatory

to the Astronomy of the Senior. Not once during this whole period did he remit the Bible recitation, even after it was dropped by the rest of the Professors he steadily persisted in the "Fresh Bible."

For all these extra duties Prof. Blake received no extra pay. Nor was he ever heard to complain of insufficient salary, even after the war closed and he had to teach a country school to maintain life, at old prices, with provisions for currency.

"In labors more abundant, in duties above measure" he toiled bravely on ; the interests of the college were his interests, her advancement his highest aim, asking no other reward than the confidence and regard of his co-laborers and the Board whom he served. Could we call back those who labored with him, now gone to give an account of their stewardship ; if we could hear the voices of Davis, Pharr, Douglas, Wm. Banks, Harris, McDonell, and Caldwell, those faithful servants of the college, they would with one accord give to John R. Blake the plaudit, "Well done good and faithful servant."

SKETCH
OF
JOHN RENNIE BLAKE.

WRITTEN BY REV. JOHN N. WADDEL. D. D., LL. D.,
IN THE MEMORIALS OF THE WADDEL FAMILY.

JOHN RENNIE BLAKE

The gentleman whose name heads this part of my history is a native of South Carolina, and at the time of his election to the Professorship of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry in LaGrange Synodical College, was in his 32d year. He was a graduate of the University of Georgia of the class of 1846, closing his term of scholastic training with high distinction in a class remarkable even then for intellectual and scholarly ability, many of whom attained eminence in the various departments of professional life. Prof. Blake was a student of the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard University, taking special courses under the celebrated Agassiz and was his private pupil in his laboratory on the seashore at

Nahant, Massachusetts ; and on the nomination of Agassiz he was elected corresponding member of the Boston Natural History Society. He was also a pupil of the great Chemist Horsford at Harvard University.

On the dissolution of the Synodical College at LaGrange he was elected Professor of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy in Davidson College, North Carolina, serving under the administrations of Drs. J. L. Kirkpatrick and G. W. McPhail in the chair, with such eminent success as an instructor and practical manager that on the death of Dr. McPhail Professor Blake was appointed Chairman of the Faculty of Davidson College.

In this capacity he served the college with signal ability and phenomenal success until 1879, when on the change of this provisional form of administration, to which Prof. Blake had always been opposed, he became by election Vice-President of the college. In 1884 he tendered his resignation of the chair he had so long filled, but was induced to withdraw it by the earnest appeals of those interested ; but renewing his resignation in 1885 persistently, the Board accepted it, with complimentary expressions of high esteem and regret on the severance of a laborious term of faithful service of twenty-four years.

The above running sketch of the life and labors of this most excellent and successful college educa-

tor is given as a clear demonstration of the estimate placed by the friends and patrons of education upon his services, talents and learning of all which LaGrange was the recipient for only four years.

I do not consider, however, that full justice will have been accorded him without something additional first, as a statement of his standing and character at LaGrange, and then as to the estimate placed upon him at Davidson College. For the first I am responsible, as it consists of a true statement of my own knowledge of his course during his brief sojourn with us of the four years passing between 1857 and 1861.

From the very outset of his career to its close he manifested the utmost devotedness of all his energies, intellectual and moral, to the work of building up the cause of Christian education. Of his qualifications by personal training and study and experience we have already made mention ; and no man with whom I have ever been associated was more zealous and successful in imparting the benefits of his own learning and acquisitions to those under his instructions.

He was faithful, as all who knew him can testify, as a disciplinarian ; and while sufficiently rigid in exacting of his pupils the requisite diligence and devotion to preparation for all scholastic exercises, and just in awarding to all the credit due to their

performances, he was courteous and approachable on all occasions by the students.

He was much beloved and highly esteemed as a member of the Faculty by his colleagues, never shrinking from the assumption of his full share of all the responsibility devolving upon himself. The characteristics thus displayed in his daily work and association with the college department of his life were as clearly manifest in the community and in the Church of LaGrange.

He was at an early period of his settlement there, made an elder of the small body of believers in the town, and carried out the full details of duty marked out as belonging to that highly honored office. He was in this, as in all others he was called to serve, "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." As a Christian he was esteemed as devoted, and ready for every good word and work, and as upholding the ministry by his prayers, counsel and sympathy. As a citizen he was faithful and conscientious in all the demands of his country, and from the beginning of the terrible civil dissension of 1861 which resulted in the temporary ruin of the material interests of the native South, as well as his own, he was an unhesitating and open believer in the righteousness of our cause. While I write he still lives, retired from all the responsibilities of the teacher's life, at his old homestead in South Carolina in otium cum dignitate, enjoying the entire confidence

of the community and the Church around him. After a long and assuredly, a well spent life, he is surrounded by the friends of his early boyhood, awaiting not in idleness but an active application of all his powers to usefulness in every way, the tranquil old age, or the peaceful summons to the gracious reward provided for all those who hold out faithful unto death.

Much more might be written of Prof. Blake, but these facts will be sufficient to show that the crowning excellence of a teacher is not simply that he be a learned man or a splendid scholar, and successful instructor, important and essential as these qualities are, but that he be a man of earnest Christian character, teaching by example as by precept, living out in his daily intercourse with his pupils, the life of Christ, and thus training them by not only conscious but by unconscious tuition.

THE ADMINISTRATION
OF
REV. J. L. KIRKPATRICK, D. D.,
FOURTH PRESIDENT OF DAVIDSON COLLEGE.

BY PROFESSOR J. R. BLAKE,
LATE CHAIRMAN OF FACULTY AND PROFESSOR OF PHYSICS DAVIDSON
COLLEGE.

The administration of Dr. Kirkpatrick began in 1860. This was a pivotal point in the history of Davidson College.

Old things were passing away and a new era was supposed to be dawning upon the fortunes of the institution.

The princely munificence of Maxwell Chambers who had recently bequeathed \$258,000 to the college was inspiring new hopes and filling the hearts of all friends of the enterprise with glowing anticipations of its future prosperity and usefulness.

Already the corps of instructors had been considerably enlarged ; a massive central building had been erected, with extensive three-story wings at a cost of \$90,000.

This was only one side of a quadrangular structure, which the New York architect had planned and submitted to the authorities, as the basis for future expansion and development.

Already the spirit of innovation which was to have swept away the old dormitories and other buildings out of harmony with the new and splendid program devised for the future had accomplished much of its work, removing many of the old landmarks along the street line of the campus and in front of the "Phi Hall" and other parts of the grounds.

This sweeping policy was to have carried away with it all that still remains of the present "Oak Row," "Elm Row," and "The Cedars," till the "Old Chapel" would be left alone as a solitary monument of that quaint architecture which adorned those academic groves in earlier days.

The "Old Campus" being thus obliterated, and every obstruction removed, the eye of fancy was delighted with the vision of comfortable residences for the Faculty and elegant hall for other purposes rising around the "new campus" in the tasteful proportions of modern architecture.

Such was the outline of a picture which loomed up before the imagination of those hopeful, faithful old guardians of the college. How to meet fully the demands of such a future so full of bright anticipations was the one absorbing, all controlling

question of the hour. To Dr. Kirkpatrick all eyes were turned as the one man available for the emergency. His elegant personal and social culture, his rich and varied literary attainments, his fine taste and discriminating judgment, his high standing in the Church as an able Theologian and pulpit orator—all these qualities combined with an ever ready, vigorous common sense, made him the unanimous choice of the Board.

After his election, so full and complete was the confidence he inspired by his wise and prudent counsels, as well as by his kind conciliatory bearing, that his known wishes became practically supreme in the Board of Trustees. One of the most influential members remarked to me at the close of his administration that "they had given Dr. Kirkpatrick everything he ever asked for," adding the graceful compliment: "He was a wise man; I never heard him say a foolish thing in my life."

With such an environment, and a clear apprehension of the work to be done, a consciousness of the high hopes and expectations of his friends, a full conviction of the unquestioning confidence and moral support of the Board the new President entered upon his task with a brave heart and a determined will. He at once began the important work of completing and organizing his forces.

He had the salaries of the Professors raised from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars. He corresponded

extensively with professional educators, and with all the lights available diligently sought to secure the best results for the welfare of the college.

While thus entering upon the threshold of his usefulness, pressing forward with all the energy which hope could inspire and before the first year of his presidency expired in the very fullness of expectation and confidence the curtain fell, the black cloud of war burst upon the country, and President Lincoln's proclamation for 75,000 troops was issued.

At this point only those who were actors, or personal observers of the times, can appreciate the situation.

Wild enthusiasm, accompanied with a milder confusion and demoralization, spread through all the colleges of the land. Where old men were shouldering their muskets and middle aged men were marshalling for battle, what could be expected from the noble, generous, chivalric young men who filled our schools? Nothing less than what did occur. Their young blood rose to a boiling heat; our colleges became camps for military drill; students and professors often volunteered en-masse and marched to the front.

All law and authority came to naught. "Inter armis silent leges." So was it at Davidson College. How changed the scene! Those quiet academic shades almost deserted, or echoing only the voice of

the drill master and the tread of the youthful soldier who lingered behind, our grave and thoughtful President found his occupation gone ; yet he stood firmly and bravely at his post, directing as best he could, the disorderly elements around him. His wise counsels, matured judgment, and parental influence were now more than ever needed in this hour of youthful delirium.

Time passed on ; the fever heat abated ; the college authorities decided that the institution must not be closed, directing the Faculty to remain ready for duty. The work of our honored President was from this time forward upon an entirely different plane. From the headship of an ideal college, whose possibilities seemed indefinitely great, he descended—or may we not rather say ascended—to the plane of a work more humble it is true, but far more self-sacrificing, demanding infinitely more Christian endurance, patriotic spirit and heroic perseverance—a plane of self-abnegation where patient resignation and all the passive virtues which dignify and ennoble our fallen humanity are brought into ceaseless activity. Imagine a college President and Professor of Moral and Mental Science elected to high honors, and whose scholarly abilities would have adorned any of the leading pulpits of the land, cheerfully, faithfully and laboriously devoting his energies to teaching the rudiments of English and Latin Grammar to the neglected youth of the land,

whose schools were broken up and themselves and their parents refugees from their homes—with the occasional addition, perhaps of some solitary soldier who had been disabled in battle, returned to complete his college course, which had been broken off by the call to arms! Who, think you, was the greater Cincinnatus leading his army as dictator of Rome or Cincinnatus resigning his power and following the plough as an humble tiller of the soil?

Those who observed Dr. Kirkpatrick from day to day as he guarded and guided these exiled young men whose homes were scattered from Virginia to Texas noting his paternal solicitude for them will bear testimony to the great usefulness of his labors and the true nobility of his character.

Never once did he falter or hesitate as to the path of duty, although frequently solicited to accept positions of honor and emolument in other fields.

This was done, too, at an immense personal sacrifice to himself and his family.

How vividly now does the picture of our noble President rise before me as he bravely cheered our hearts, and rallied our spirits to heroic endurance during those direful days of war when the clouds hung so heavily and when the storm burst upon us in all its fury! Amid privation and self-denial at his own fireside cheerfully did he share with the soldiers the meagre supplies with which the depre-

ciated salary in Confederate money barely furnished his family.

As a disciplinarian Dr. Kirkpatrick was mild and paternal—perhaps too indulgent, rarely resorting to severe measures, but when occasion demanded, he could rebuke with withering sarcasm and the keenest satire. I recall a notable occasion when it became his duty to lecture the students in a body for some disorders during the previous night. So searching were his aptly chosen words, so crushing the moral force of his trenchant blows that some of the offenders at once confessed the fault and apologized for their part of the offense.

The students were regarded by him in the light of children, and he by them as a father occupying a position of paternal guardianship and care. Their interests were his, each one was welcomed as a member of his family circle where his hospitable home with all its comforts was ever open to minister to their service or pleasure.

Few of those who were in college at that time will not be able to recall many lovely pictures of quiet home life drawn from this domestic circle.

The ever cordial and winning manner of his devoted wife seemed to be a benediction to each one as she received them not as strangers, but as children to her motherly heart. In times of trial or sickness they were visited in their rooms and tenderly nursed by the ladies of the Faculty, or carried

to the homes and watched over with gentle, loving attentions.

I can recall many cases now where students were nursed for weeks by these devoted women. Blessed be their memories! By such influences over the dear ones separated from homes and mothers many a wanderer has been reclaimed, many a lonely heart solaced and many a discouraged one stimulated to fresh exertion in the battle of life.

As a teacher Dr. Kirkpatrick's method was Socratic, dissecting his subject with consummate skill, and leading his pupil from point to point by questions which probed to the core every separate principle involved in the subject.

His primary aim was to exercise and draw out each pupil's intellectual powers, thus training him to think for himself rather than to store his memory with facts or useful information knowing that the power and habit of accurate thinking, in the very process of acquiring it, would lead to the accumulation of knowledge as a necessary consequence.

His pulpit ministrations also were a source of great profit to the college. His sermons were of the highest order. Elegant diction, sharp analysis, and resistless logic were blended with a freshness and power riveting the attention and combined with an unction of spiritual fervor which imparted

to the dullest truth an impression not easily effaced.

As a writer of classic English he could not be surpassed; for clearness, for perspicuity, for elegance, for the selection of the choicest word to convey the idea, he was a model for imitation by the students in their rhetorical studies. His series of sermons on the young men of the Bible, besides many others of rare excellence, will be recalled by those who were privileged listeners.

The year following the collapse of the Southern Cause Dr. Kirkpatrick was induced by the authorities of Washington and Lee University to accept a chair in that rising institution. Here, as at Davidson, his characteristic traits gave him influence and power. He became the friend of General Lee and his wise and judicious advisor in all matters relating to educational interests with which he was so familiar. Here he closed his useful life, honored and beloved by all the Church for his work's sake. On his dying bed a few days before the end came, he finished his work correcting the examination papers of his class that his college work might be completed as was his life work. Faithful to the end, he died in the harness.

My task is done. Would it were more worthily done! With a true and loving loyalty have I woven this chaplet to the memory of my cherished friend. I knew him well, and I esteem it a high

privilege to call such a man my friend. For five eventful years we took sweet counsel together, and during the darkest hours of those dark days I ever found in his wise and prudent counsels a tower of strength, and in his brave and hopeful spirit a haven of rest.

“ But what avails the gift of empty fame ?
He lived to God
He loved the sweetness of another Name
And gladly trod
The rugged ways of earth, that he might be
Helper or friend
And in the joy of this his ministry
Be spent and spend.”

JOHN R. BLAKE,
Greenwood, South Carolina.

Sem-Centennial Address, Davidson College, North
Carolina, 1887.

Three Holy Women.

The beautiful and truthful notice of Professor and Mrs. Kerr, sketched by the loving and skillful pen of C. P. S., recalls to my memory a remarkable group of women, with whom in the Providence of God, I was thrown, early in the war : Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Mrs. Kerr, Mrs. Rockwell. Three more godly Christian characters seldom ever graced any community. Keenly alive to the terrible struggle through which our country was passing, quick to respond to any and every call for the aid of the noble soldiers who were fighting and dying for us, "with the sympathy that handles grief delicately, with the touch that helps to heal," they heroically endured toil and privation at home in order to send clothing and provisions to the army. The influence of these women of "rare blessedness" over the students in college at that time of great demoralization cannot be overestimated. Most of them were boys of immature development, gathered from all parts of our Southland ; they were received not as strangers, but welcomed as children to each home, called by their familiar names, and made to feel like members of each family circle. Some of those now living will recall many such touching scenes

which memory has garnered up of those college days. Who can number the prayers offered for these dear boys away from home influence exposed to the temptations of college life. "Golden bowls they were full of incense, as treasures laid up in heaven."

How much of the wonderful influence of Davidson College in the Church in those days when her candidates for the ministry were numbered by the thirties, and when three-fourths of her students were church members was due to the labors of these godly women?

In this year of the semi-sentennial celebration of the college, these precious names will be recalled, their memory will be revived as fragrant ointment is exhaled long years after the vase is broken.

In that day when God maketh up His jewels none shall appear brighter than these three. One by one they have been called to wear the crown; side by side they are "set as stones in His Temple," forming a beautiful Mosaic to adorn his pavement and to reflect his blessed image.

May their mantle fall on those who are left to carry on the good work at Davidson College.

May the time never come when there shall be no holy wives and mothers there trustfully and tenderly to bear the precious boys on the arms of their faith to a Throne of Grace.

B.

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