

Howard University

Washington, D.C.

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1873

Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard

Pres. Howard University

Dear Sir: Howard University in its origin was destined to benefit especially the Colored Youths of the United States; but we have seen with regret for some time that it has become a source of revenue and benefit particularly to those who care little or nothing for us. Now we propose to bring to light certain facts which are undeniable and of which you yourself cannot be ignorant. In bringing forth these facts we would not injure you or the University; but our highest interests demand that some changes should be made in the management of the Institution.

In the first place Prof. A. L. Barber is paid twenty-five hundred dollars yearly for doing comparatively nothing. For instance as Professor of Natural Philosophy he as to instruct but one class, towards this he fails to discharge his duty as we can prove; nor does he perform any active duties in the Normal Department, being entirely absorbed in his Real Estate business.

In the second place, the universal testimony of Prof. Whittlesey's students is that they derive neither Rhetorical nor Elecutinary benefit from his instruction, and this can be proven.

In the third place, we find an assistant introduced into the Model School to do a work which many needy students in the Institution are fully able to perform. Through Mr. Johnson's influence as we understand a boss-carpenter has been brought among us who takes bread out of the mouths of Students whom the University professes to aid. - The lady in Miss Crane's Dept. is a niece of our Treasurer; the Carpenter to whom we have referred is his Uncle. Three persons were brought into the Institution when some of your best students in the College and other Departments were compelled to leave, because they could get no aid from the University in consequence as the Authorities said of a lack of funds. Do these things show, General, that there is no money here, are they of such a nature as to impress us with the feeling that the Institution desires



to aid students to the extent of its ability?

Now, General, our intention is not to strike any unfriendly blow at you, for we doubt neither your honesty nor your interest in our race; but we expect to publicly prove - if an occasion arise, such facts as are undeniable. Our instructors with very few exceptions lack interest as we firmly believe in our welfare, and seem to think that any instruction however imperfect is sufficient for us. If this Institution is not good enough for their own children then it is a question whether or not it is good enough for the Colored Youth of the Country.

The money that is paid these persons can secure the best teachers in the land and those who are sincerely devoted to our race; consequently we shall oppose to the extent of our ability any endowment to this University while the present state of affairs exists.

The crisis has come when something must be done, and ledding (sic) with whom we have conversed and who are truly your friends, agree with us, deprecate the present condition of things and say that changes must be made.

We adjure you, sir, to look carefully into the management of the Institution, think deeply upon the University matters, for we are determined to do something, and we have influence at our backs. - If we shall be called upon to publicly expose the University, we shall have but one regret, and that will be on account of yourself whom we believe to be honest and true; but we fear that you will finally injure your reputation in consequence of having self-interested men around you.

Awaiting some indications from you we have the honor to remain

Yours truly

Many students