

New York Sep^r 8. 1800.

The Trustees of Queen's College,

Gentlemen!

Both the calls with which you have honoured me were presented by Mr. Schureman, and I should injure my own feelings and be deficient in the respect due to the Board, if I failed in expressions of gratitude for the confidence you repose in me.

The Zeal you have hereby evinced to organize the Institution committed to your care is calculated to arouse the public attention and will without doubt facilitate your future progress. If, however, the Ideas I had entertained and recollect to have mentioned upon this subject, had any influence upon your determination to make out the calls in their present form, or were considered as inferring an immediate acceptance to be contemplated as either practicable or necessary, they have not certainly been understood in the latitude intended.

From a firm persuasion that N. Brunswick is above all others the most eligible spot for fixing the Theological Professorate, I am a firm friend to your Institution, and no exertion or reasonable sacrifice upon my part shall ever be wanting to promote in the speediest and most effectual manner, its highest interests. Under these favourable impressions I have considered each case with the seriousness a subject of such magnitude demands.

With respect to the Presidency, if it can be so modified as to render it free from the cares and duties which in most of our American Colleges are attached to it, and which also in your case, I observe are particularly specified, it may possibly become admissible. by long experience it has been found in the universities and Colleges in Europe, and after various experiments in Columbia College in this City, we have found, that the most simple, cheap, and respectable mode in regard to the Presidency is, the appointment of one who is merely official, who gives his name and influence to the Institution, but from whom nothing, either as to Government or Teaching is expected, excepting only presiding at Commencements and authenticating diplomatic Documents. This leaves the mass of the funds for men who are willing to sustain the burthen and capable of bestowing their whole time and labour to the cares and active scenes of a College. for myself, my habits, my age, and present decline in health, absolutely forbid my taking upon me any of the toilsome duties annexed to the presidency. To which I must add, that the work attached to the Professorate is sufficiently arduous and extensive for one person, and I can never consent to be interrupted by any cares foreign to that immediate object. should the Lord however in his holy providence render the way plain for removing my Professorate, and you judge it will be productive of good to the Institution, I would not refuse to hold the Presidency in that official and honorary form, but I decline accepting it in any other way or upon any other condition; and should I ever find this to be any obstacle to the complete accomplishment of the views and wants of the Churches with regard to the

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Professorate, or inconvenient to myself, I shall expect to be at liberty to resign it. — a worthy vice president, who is willing and able to work, may be readily found; and perhaps upon investigating the subject, you will determine that the interests of the College will be most effectually promoted by such an arrangement.

As to the Professorate, the General Synod has already decided the removal of that Institution and placed it under the protection of the Trustees of Queen's College. as I cheerfully acquiesced with that decision at the time, so I have held myself in readiness ever since to fulfill the determination of the Synod; and feel now disposed, without any reluctance, to meet as far as possible, the expectations and wishes of the Churches and the College. your call will therefore of course be accepted. it is agreeable to the decision of the Gen. Synod, it perfectly corresponds with my own judgment respecting the location of the professorial establishment, and I shall without hesitation remove it to you as soon as the Lord in the disposal of divine providence shall render it safe and practicable. the difficulties which are still in the way will not I trust be long insurmountable, and I expect this call will greatly tend to their speedy removal. upon my part nothing shall be wanting to advance in the most prompt and effectual manner an Institution that has so long been near and dear to my heart, and with which I am convinced the prosperity of the Church of Christ is inseparably connected.

I intended to pay you a visit but cannot at present make it convenient. in the mean while it will gratify me to attend to any thing in which I can be serviceable to you; leaving the issue in the hands of the adorable Sovereign of

the Church, who may accomplish our wishes by the ordinary or even by unexpected means, or on the contrary, in various ways and for wise purposes disappoint the desires of Individuals and of public bodies, without any eventual prejudice to the great Object they have in view.

With ardent prayers that the Lord may bless a work so intimately connected with the prosperity of Zion, and with sincere esteem and high respect for yourselves individually, I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen
your affectionate friend
and humble servant

J. N. Livingston

(The Trustees of Queen's College.