The Life and Works of William Preston Johnston.

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THE LIFE AND WORKS OF WILLIAM PRESTON JOHNSTON

A DISSERTATION
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
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in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Department of English

By
Arthur Marvin Shaw
A. B. Hendrix College, 1920
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1941
To

Mrs. Mason Barret
In preparing this study, I have turned in many directions for assistance. The response has been invariably generous; therefore, my obligations are large -- in fact, so large that I cannot indicate them properly here.

I am indebted to Dean Charles W. Pipkin of the Louisiana State University for helpful counsel and for assistance in securing access to important materials. Dr. Earl L. Bradsher gave me many valuable suggestions and much encouragement.

From Colonel William Preston Johnston's family, I received the fullest cooperation. Mrs. Mason Barret, a granddaughter, of Louisville, Kentucky, gave me free access to Colonel Johnston's private papers, which are in her possession. Mrs. Rosa Tucker Mason, another granddaughter, and Colonel A. S. J. Tucker, a grandson, both of Lexington, Virginia, likewise gave me their assistance.

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A. M. Shaw, Jr.
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ABSTRACT

The career of William Preston Johnston, the oldest son of General Albert Sidney Johnston, was rich in the variety of important events and developments with which he had connection and in the manifold character of the services which his versatile nature enabled him to render. He was born in Louisville, Kentucky, January 5, 1831, and received his education in schools and colleges in Kentucky and at Yale College, where he graduated in 1852. He prepared himself for the practice of law, in which field he manifested some ability for a brief period before the outbreak of the Civil War. When the break came, he immediately gave his services to the Southern side, serving first as an officer in the field and later as an aide-de-camp to President Jefferson Davis. He was among those captured with Davis and suffered imprisonment for several months. Impoverished by the War, and faced with the necessity of securing a stable income for the support of himself and his family, he accepted a place on General Robert E. Lee's faculty at Washington College in 1867. From this time forward, his services were for the most part devoted to education. He became the third president of the Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge and the first president of Tulane University at New Orleans.

Throughout his life, beginning with his early years at college, he manifested a strong interest in literary pursuits and exhibited
considerable ability as a writer. As a student at the Western Military Institute in Kentucky, he composed poems, delivered an anniversary address, and kept a journal of such character as to suggest a literary bent. Later, he was associated for a brief time in the publication of a short-lived magazine in Louisville, Kentucky. As a senior at Yale, he wrote essays which won for him two literary honors, the Townsend Prize and the Clark Prize, and brought him high praise from President Woolsey and others at the college. During the twenty years which followed his graduation, he found little opportunity for writing. In 1872, after having sought without success to find time outside of his regular labors for the writing of his father’s life, he first took a leave of absence from Washington and Lee University, and later resigned his position in order that he might do what he felt was necessary for the vindication of General Johnston. The copious and heavily documented volume which he produced was the fruit of six years of hardship for himself and family; and although the book received the commendation of critics in all parts of the country, it brought him little in the way of financial returns. However, the prestige which it gained for him was apparently of some material value in his career as an educator.

In 1880 he became president of the Louisiana State University, which then suffered under the serious disadvantages of a small enrollment, meager financial support, and interference from political factions. During his two and a half years there he
effected some improvement in the condition of the institution and assisted in laying the ground for more constructive achievements.

When Paul Tulane made his gift to Louisiana education in 1883, he entrusted the details of its administration to General Randall Lee Gibson of New Orleans, a college mate and life-long friend of Johnston. The establishment of a university having been decided upon, Johnston was invited to organize the new institution and become its president. In this capacity he served until his death in the summer of 1899. In spite of the sorrows and afflictions suffered by him during this period, his life was easier than it had been at any time since the beginning of the Civil War. With a substantial income and a loyal and devoted board of administrators, he found time to devote to lecturing and writing. He delivered many addresses throughout the country, chiefly in the South. Most of them were devoted to the problems of the New South, with principal emphasis upon education. These addresses, a number of which were published, elicited wide and favorable comment. During these years he contributed several articles to magazines and published a volume of studies on Shakespeare, three volumes of poetry, and a number of items of miscellaneous character. His productions were praised by W. T. Harris, Professor T. R. Lounsbury of Yale University, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thomas Nelson Page, and others less prominently known. Southern critics invariably referred to his writings as the work of one of the South's best authors.

The purpose of the present study is two-fold: to present in
as full a manner as possible the life of an important Southern
citizen; and to evaluate the impact of his influence upon his
section, special regard being given to his published works as
an instrument of this influence. In pursuing the first part of
the purpose, the present writer has been particularly fortunate
in locating and securing access to Colonel Johnston's letters and
papers, which number thousands of items. Apparently, he preserved
every bit of correspondence which was ever addressed to him and
as many of the letters of his family as he found opportunity to
secure. Among these items are a considerable number of unpublished
personal letters of Albert Sidney Johnston and of Jefferson Davis.
Since Colonel Johnston used none of this material for publication
except some his father's letters, portions of which appear in General
Johnston's biography, and since the collection, which is now in
the possession of Mrs. Mason Barret, one of Colonel Johnston's
granddaughters, has not been hitherto used by others, most of the
biographical matter in the present study appears for the first
time.

By many of his contemporaries, the subject of this study was
considered eminent as a soldier, educator, orator, and author.
Writing of his father, he says in the preface to his life of
General Johnston, "It cannot be well that such a figure should
pass into utter oblivion." The present writer feels that it is
not inappropriate to express the same sentiment with regard to
William Preston Johnston.
CHAPTER I

THE JOHNSTONS AND THE PRESTONS

William Preston Johnston's earliest paternal ancestor who can be definitely identified was Archibald Johnston, a "person of considerable property and influence in the civic and military life of the community in which he lived." As a pioneer citizen of Salisbury, Connecticut, he was a man of importance, owning large property, serving in public office and as an officer in the Revolutionary Army. Dying in 1789, he left his property to his wife and his five sons, James, Daniel, John, Archibald, and Samuel B.

John, the third son of Captain Archibald Johnston, was born at Salisbury in 1708. He was educated as a physician, and practised his profession for some years in his native town. In 1703 he married Mary Stoddard, daughter of Dr. Josiah Stoddard, and a member of an important family in that section. Sometime near 1790, Dr. Johnston and his family emigrated to Kentucky, where in 1793 Mrs. Johnston died, leaving her husband three sons, Josiah Stoddard, Darius, and Orramel. Settling at Washington

I: id., p. 13.
In Mason County, he practised his profession until the end of his life in 1831. In 1794 he married Abigail Harris, who lived for about twelve years, and bore eight children, Albert Sidney Johnston being the sixth child of this union and the eleventh child of his father. Dr. Johnston's life was one of hardship. Although his practice was large in the frontier community, and although he was universally trusted and honored, the income derived from his patients was far from adequate for his large family. When he married the third time, he took as his wife a widow, Mrs. Byers, who brought to his household nine children of her own. To this union were born two children. Although he was not anxious to accumulate money, he seems to have been solicitous for the education of his children. Through the payment of security debts, he became poor late in his life, and his house was sold at public sale; but his eldest son, Honorable Josiah S. Johnston, who had become a distinguished citizen of Louisiana, bought it and restored it to him. However noticeable his faults may have been to his children, those faults were excused, for his grandson, William Preston Johnston, writes, "we have always looked back to him as the worthy progenitor of a noble band of sons and daughters."

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3 Ibid., p. 51.
4 Ibid., p. 154.
5 Ibid., pp. 52-53.
6 Ibid., p. 54.
Josiah Stoddard Johnston, the eldest son of Dr. Johnston was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, in 1704, and at an early age was carried by his father to Kentucky. He attended school for several years in New Haven, and completed his academic education at Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky. In 1805 he emigrated to the territory of Louisiana, located at Alexandria, then a frontier village, and, devoting himself to the practice of law, rapidly gained wealth and distinction. He was elected to the first Territorial Legislature, and from that time forward enjoyed a continuously successful career in politics until his death in 1833, being elected to the Lower House of Congress, and later to the Senate of the United States. In 1814 he married Eliza Sibley, the daughter of John Sibley of Natchitoches; and to this union was born one son, William Stoddard Johnston.

With the exception of Albert Sidney Johnston, all of Josiah Stoddard Johnston's younger brothers who survived to maturity, followed him to Louisiana. The oldest of these, Darius, who had prepared for the law, and Orramel, who had studied medicine, joined their elder brother at Alexandria, but later, "allured by the spirit of adventure and of republicanism," joined the Mexican forces then in revolt

7 Ibid., pp. 64-72.
8 Ibid., pp. 54-55.
against Spain. They suffered long punishment in Spanish prisons, and after their release came home wrecked in health, and died within a brief period.

John Harris Johnston, the eldest son of Dr. John Johnston by his second marriage, was taken while a youth to Louisiana, by his half-brother, Josiah Stoddard Johnston, who gave him the advantages of a thorough education. Following the example of his elder brother, he practised law and engaged in a career of politics, holding in succession the positions of member of the Legislature, Speaker of the House, District Judge, and Parish Judge. He died at the age of forty.

One other brother, Lucius, went to Louisiana to become a planter, but in the second year of his residence there, when he was twenty-four years of age, died of a malignant fever.

Senator Josiah Johnston's only child, William Stoddard, was educated at Yale College, and later entered the practice of law at Alexandria, Louisiana. Although he was but twenty-two when his uncle, Judge John Harris Johnston, died, he was selected to succeed him as Parish Judge. He married Miss Marie Williams, the daughter of a wealthy planter of Rapides Parish, Louisiana, and with a seemingly promising future

9 Ibid., p. 54.
10 Ibid., p. 70.
11 Ibid., p. 55.
before him, he died of a fever two years later. Concerning
the passing of this member of the Johnston family, William
Preston Johnston writes:

"In Rapides Cemetery, Pineville, opposite
Alexandria, a plain marble shaft, eight feet
high, marks the last resting place of this
promising young man. With him the last of the
Johnstons, who had numbered eight or ten in
the parish a few years before, disappeared from
Louisiana for forty years."12

Since the career of General Albert Sidney Johnston, the
father of William Preston Johnston, is so well known, and
since the important facts concerning him are necessarily a
part of this study of his son, nothing need be said of him
here except that it is probable that he would have followed
the example of his brothers and emigrated to Louisiana
about 1833, had it not been for the untimely death of
Senator Johnston in that year.

Because of the distinction which he received, and because
of his intimate connection with the subject of this study,
one other member of the family, Josiah Stoddard Johnston, 2nd,
should be mentioned. He was the second son of Judge John
Harris Johnston, of Alexandria, Louisiana, and his wife, who,
before her marriage, was Miss Eliza Allen Davidson, of New
Orleans. Josiah Stoddard was born in New Orleans, in February,
1833. On the death of his mother in 1837, he was sent with
his two small brothers to live with their mother's

12 Ibid., p. 73.
13 F. Johnston, Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston, New
sister, Mrs. Mary Davidson Hancock, in Jefferson County, Kentucky. His educational career was almost identical with that of his cousin, William Preston Johnston. Both of them studied in the school of Samuel V. Womack, at Shelbyville, Kentucky, attended the Western Military Institute at Georgetown, Kentucky, graduated from Yale College, and finished in law at the University of Louisville, Josiah Stoddard Johnston completing his work at the two latter institutions one year behind his cousin. In July, 1862, he entered the Confederate Army, and served successively on the staffs of Generals Bragg, Buckner, and Breckenridge, being present in twenty-two engagements, and achieving distinction by his creditable conduct. After the war he returned to Kentucky, edited the Frankfort Yeoman from 1867 to 1886, and took an important part in politics until 1889, when he moved from Frankfort to Louisville, devoting himself to private business and to researches in local history. He was associated with the Filson Club, and edited the History of Louisville, a large work in two volumes.

On his mother's side, William Preston Johnston was related to several of the prominent pioneer families of Virginia and Kentucky. Henrietta Preston Johnston, the first wife of General Albert Sidney Johnston, was the eldest daugh-

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15Ibid., pp. 81, 116; Class Book of 1853, Yale College.  
16Ibid., p. 81.  
17Ibid., pp. 81-83.
ter of Major William Preston and his wife Caroline Hancock.

Caroline Hancock's father was Colonel George Hancock of the Hancock family of Fotheringay, Virginia, the early members of which were among the founders of the colony. George Hancock, although a very young man at the time of the American Revolution, was made a colonel in the American Army, a position which he probably attained through the wealth and influence of his father. By the marriage of Colonel Hancock to Margaret Strother in 1781 two old colonial families were united. The earliest member of the Strother family in America emigrated from England to Virginia as early as 1673. His descendants achieved large wealth and distinction, numbering among their members two Presidents of the United States, John Tyler and Zachary Taylor; a distinguished general, Edmund Pendleton Gaines; Governor Madison of Kentucky, and others of note in their day.

Major William Preston was the son of Colonel William Preston of Smithfield, Virginia, whose father, John Preston, emigrated in 1735 from Londonderry to Augusta County, Virginia, when his son was eight years old. When John Preston died in 1740, he left only one son, but he left also four daughters, from whom sprang four very notable families -- the Breckinridges, Browns, Blairs, and Howards. Concerning the Preston connections, William Preston Johnston says:

A talent for oratory and for military and

18 Ibid., p. 99; John M. Brown, Memoranda of the Preston Family, Lexington, Ky., 1870, p. 38. (This work will be cited hereafter as MEM.)
19 Ibid., pp. 176-187.
20 MEM., p. 30.
21 Ibid., p. 31ff.
political life has marked many of the scions of this stout Scotch-Irish breed, and the descendants of Colonel William Preston have evinced the same traits, as, for instance, William Campbell Preston, of South Carolina; General William Preston, of Kentucky; Gov. James McDowell, of Virginia; William Ballard Preston, of Virginia; Gen. Randall L. Gibson, of Louisiana, and many others. 22

Mrs. Caroline Hancock Preston was left a widow at the age of thirty-six. She remained unmarried and devoted herself to the task of extricating her estate from debt and rearing her large family, among the members of which there were, besides 23 Henrietta Preston, several daughters and two sons. With one of these daughters, Josephine, who married Jason Rogers in 1831, William Preston Johnston made his home after the death of his mother. Upon the death of this aunt he then went to live with his uncle, William Preston, his mother's only surviving brother. 24 This William Preston served as an officer in the Mexican War, became an important figure in Kentucky politics, and was 25 appointed Ambassador to Spain by President Buchanan. He served as aide-de-camp to General Albert Sidney Johnston, and when that leader received his fatal wound at Shiloh, Preston held him in his arms during his dying moments. He distinguished himself as a general, and witnessed the closing of the war as ambassador to Mexico.

23 Ibid., p. 100.
24 Ibid., p. 116.
25 Ibid., pp. 197-198.
27 Ibid., p. 199.
William Preston Johnston was the eldest of three children born to Albert Sidney Johnston and Henrietta Preston Johnston. The other two were Henrietta Preston and Maria Pope, the latter of whom died in infancy. Several years after the death of his first wife, Albert Sidney Johnston married Eliza Griffin, a cousin of the first Mrs. Johnston, and from this union were born six children—three boys and three girls.

In 1853, William Preston Johnston married Miss Rosa Elizabeth Duncan, the daughter of Judge John Nicholson Duncan of New Orleans, whose father was Abner L. Duncan, a man of wealth and prominence, and the trusted friend and aide-de-camp of Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans.

Six children were born to William Preston Johnston and his wife, Rosa Duncan Johnston:

Mary Duncan Johnston, was born in Louisville, Kentucky, January 10, 1855, and died unmarried, in 1894.

Henrietta Preston Johnston, born April 19, 1856, was married in October, 1877, to Henry St. George Tucker, a lawyer of Staunton, Virginia, who represented his district in Congress for four terms.

Rosa Duncan Johnston, born December 9, 1858, was married to George Anderson Robinson of Louisville, Kentucky, September, 1880.

Albert Sidney Johnston, the only son, was born near Louisville, Kentucky, June 21, 1861, and died at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, January 9, 1885.

Margaret Wickoliffe Johnston, was born near

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23 Ibid., p. 158.
29 Ibid., p. 122.
Richmond, Virginia, July 20, 1864, and married
Richard Sharpe, of Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, in
April, 1892.

Caroline Hancock Johnston was born August 8,
1866, at Louisville, Kentucky, and married Thomas
Colston Kinney, a lawyer of Staunton, Virginia and
later of New York City. She died in Louisville,
July 28, 1896.

No living children of Colonel Johnston remain, but the
following named grandchildren survive:

Mrs. Mason Barret, George A. Robinson, and Preston Robinson,
all of Louisville, Kentucky; John Randolph Tucker of Richmond, Vir­
ginia; Mrs. Rosa Tucker Mason, Albert Sidney Johnston Tucker (Colo­
nel, United States Army, lately retired), and Mrs. Forest Fletcher,
all of Lexington, Virginia; Mrs. T. Preston White of Charlotte,
North Carolina; Henry St. George Tucker of Lexington, Kentucky;
Mrs. Yale Stevens of Rye, New York; Mrs. Marion S. Saunders of
Wytheville, Virginia; Richard Sharpe of New York; and Dr. Mar­
garet Sharpe of Philadelphia.

On October 19, 1885, Colonel Johnston's first wife died,
and in April, 1888, he married Miss Margaret Henshaw Avery, the
daughter of Judge Dudley Avery of Baton Rouge. Judge Avery's
family and that of his wife, Sarah Craig Marsh, began their resi­
dence in Louisiana during the early years of the nineteenth cen­
tury, Mrs. Avery's grandfather, John Craig Marsh coming from
New York City to what is now known as Avery’s Island.

30Tbid., pp. 160-161.
31This information was furnished the present writer by Mrs. Rosa
CHAPTER IX

EARLY LIFE

In 1828 while Lieutenant Albert Sidney Johnston was stationed at Jefferson Barracks, he became acquainted with Miss Henrietta Preston, whom he first met at a ball in St. Louis. Miss Preston, who lived in Louisville, Kentucky, was visiting at the time in the home of one of her cousins, who had married Thomas H. Benton. The young couple became strongly attached to each other; and Lieutenant Johnston, being sent for the great part of the year 1828 on recruiting service to Louisville, became engaged to Miss Preston, and was married to her January 20, 1829.

Mrs. Johnston was gifted with a poetic temperament, and possessed high literary culture and strong religious impulses. So deep was her love and respect for her husband that she believed the lofty ideal she had formed of the aims and duties of life was realized in him. This high esteem was fully returned by Lieutenant Johnston, who once told his son that "it was impossible to have felt her influence, and afterwards to cherish low views, that to her he owed the wish to be truly great."

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2Ibid., p. 23.
3Ibid., p. 24.
4Ibid.
After their marriage, the Johnstons lived at Jefferson Barracks; and during one of the occasional visits which they made to Mrs. Johnston's mother in Louisville, their eldest son, William Preston Johnston, was born on January 5, 1831. He was named for his mother's brother, William Preston, who became distinguished in public life and a general in the Confederate army.

During a part of their stay at Jefferson Barracks, the Johnstons enjoyed a happy association with Lieutenant Johnston's former college mate at West Point, Jefferson Davis, who was then a lieutenant in the army. Davis became very much attached to Mrs. Johnston and rejoiced with his friends in the birth of their son, who was afterwards to become his aide-de-camp and life-long friend.

In 1832 while Lieutenant Johnston was engaged in the Black Hawk War, his second child, Henrietta was born at Jefferson Barracks. When Johnston returned, he found the health of his wife seriously impaired. The climate, the care of her small children, who were ill much of the time, and her anxiety for her husband, had brought Mrs. Johnston to such a condition that all of the loving care and effort which were afterwards expended for her recovery were unavailing. Now that the war was over, she urged her husband to resign from the army; and Johnston, caught between

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5 Ibid., p. 25.  
7 W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 47.
his desire for a more settled domestic life and his feeling of obligation to the government which had given him his military education, hesitated to comply with her request.  

The birth of a third child in October, 1833, contributed further to Mrs. Johnston's declining health. This child, Maria Preston, died in less than a year.

During this period Lieutenant Johnston considered strongly the possibility of moving to Louisiana, and was invited to do so by his eldest brother, Josiah Stoddard Johnston, who was a United States Senator in that state. However, the death of this brother in a steamboat explosion on Red River in May, 1833, turned Albert Sidney Johnston from any serious purpose which he might have entertained of settling in Louisiana.

In Louisville, the physicians pronounced Mrs. Johnston's lungs affected. In the hope of improving his wife's health with travel and a change of climate, Lieutenant Johnston took her to New Orleans in the spring of 1834. During their stay of several weeks there, he resigned from the army, and, anxious to satisfy his wife's desire for a permanent home, he bought a farm near St. Louis.

Upon their return to Louisville, in obedience to medical advice, they traveled to sea-coast and mountain resorts in Vir-

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8Ibid, pp. 48-49.
10Josiah Stoddard Johnston to Albert S. Johnston, Jan. 12, 1833.
11Alexandria (La.) Gazette and Planter's Intelligence, May 29, 1833.
12W. F. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 52.
ginia, visiting also some of Mrs. Johnston's relatives, especially Colonel James McDowell of Rockbridge County. During their stay in Lexington, the small lad, William Preston Johnston, visited a house which forty years later he occupied for a while as a residence.13

After more travel and consultations with eminent physicians, the family returned to Louisville, where Lieutenant Johnston devoted the autumn and winter to the tender care of his wife. In the spring, they moved to the country home of George Hancock, Mrs. Johnston's uncle, where she died August 12, 1835.14

William was less than five years of age when his mother died. His father, moved by a desire to be near his children, considered for a time the possibility of taking up a vocation in Louisville, but failed to find anything to which he thought himself suited.15 Stirred by the situation in Texas, he emigrated there in the summer of 1836,16 leaving his two children, William and Henrietta, to the care of maternal relatives. Thenceforth his career, up to the period preceding his death, was pitched amid western scenes, and his associations with these children were intermittent and of brief duration.

After the death of his mother, William resided for several years in the home of his aunt, Mrs. Johnston's younger sister,

13 Ibid., pp. 52-53.
14 Ibid., p. 53.
15 Ibid., p. 54.
16 Ibid., p. 55.
Mrs. Josephine Rogers; and after her death in November, 1842, his further rearing was entrusted to his uncle, William Preston. Since both William and his sister were heirs to property which had belonged to their mother, they were not dependent upon the beneficence of relatives for their support and education, though such assistance might have been cheerfully supplied by these loyal kinsmen, if the need for it had existed.

In the early part of 1837, Albert Sidney Johnston was severely wounded in a duel, which he fought with a high ranking officer in the Texas army; and in an effort to recuperate from his wound through rest from military exertions, he spent the summer and fall of that year in Louisville, returning in December to Texas. He visited his children at other times during the years which he served the Republic of Texas, and he longed earnestly to have them with him, as the following paragraph from a letter, written in October 1839, will indicate. Johnston was then Secretary of War for the young republic and was contemplating a withdrawal from public life.

I do not know when I shall be able to get out of office. I hope soon; though I cannot calculate on it with any certainty.

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19 Ibid., p. 86.
I am anxious to see the roof of my cedar cabin peering among the live-oaks.——I am most anxious to see Will and Hennie; but this cannot be yet.  

On October 3, 1843, General Johnston married Miss Eliza Griffin, a cousin of his first wife, and the ward and niece of his close friend, George Hancock. The marriage took place in Hancock's home near Shelbyville, Kentucky, after which Johnston returned with his bride to Texas, and settled on a plantation which he had purchased in Brazoria County.

Neither the new relationship upon which he had entered nor the separation from his eldest children diminished his affection for them; and subsequent pages of this study will reveal the depth of William Preston Johnston's devotion to his father.

William received his earlier education in the schools of Louisville, and later he attended an academy at Shelbyville, an institution which was operated by S. V. Womack, whom Johnston refers to as "a noted teacher of the classics." Josiah Stoddard Johnston, a nephew of the Louisiana Senator of the same name, and a cousin and lifelong friend of William, was a student there at the same time.

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20 A. S. Johnston to George Hancock, October 24, 1839. (Barret Collection. All letters and manuscripts cited in this study, unless otherwise indicated, are from the Barret Collection.)
21 W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 129.
22 Ibid., pp. 129-130.
24 Ibid., p. 80.
During the session of 1846 William was a student in Centre College at Danville, Kentucky,\footnote{17} where according to the testimony of one of his classmates at Yale, who was later a professor at Centre College, "he was the subject of deep religious impressions during one of the revivals which so frequently attended the preaching of the President of the College, the saintly and gifted John Clarks Young. The impressions remained with him through life."\footnote{17} The youth was a zealous student, and his health and strength were somewhat impaired either by too rapid growth, as he himself declared, or, as his father believed, by too much study.\footnote{17}

At the invitation of his father he went to visit him at his China Grove plantation near Galveston, Texas, spending three months there from New Year's, 1847. Albert Sidney Johnston, with meager resources and little assistance, was attempting to cultivate a large tract. Here the son enjoyed the happy companionship of his father, whom he joined in labors about the place and with whom he engaged in such exercises as riding, hunting, and exploring the native scenes. The sixteen-year-old boy entered into these activities with enthusiasm, and from his experiences derived great benefit. He worked at digging and planting, rived out and nailed pickets on a long line of fence, and enjoyed the instruction and companionship of an Irish laborer, who possessed the dignity of a parson, a weakness for an occasional spree, and a rich vein of humor. In company with his father,
who loved nature and took pleasure in observing the habits of animals, he roamed the surrounding country, saw large herds of deer grazing on the prairie, and observed many kinds of game, large and small—panther, wild-oat, bear, turkey, quail, wood-cock, squirrel, and a great variety of water fowl. Here at China Grove plantation he enjoyed also the observations of his father upon the reports from the Mexican War, which was then in progress, and which General Johnston was following with eager interest.

Soon after the boy's return to Louisville in the spring, he received a letter from his father, a brief extract from which will indicate the warmth of affection existing between William and the members of General Johnston's second family:

Sid is a fine boy, grows well, and talks a great deal about brother Willie. Like all healthy children, he is considered a prodigy, physically and mentally. His mother will give you the facts sustaining this opinion, and can do it better than I can.

General Johnston had very definite convictions concerning the education of his children. Believing that his two eldest children possessed superior mental endowments, he desired for them the fullest culture "that the most liberal education can bestow." He insisted also that they should be educated in Amer-

28 Ibid., pp. 148-151.
29 Ibid., pp. 152-153.
30 Ibid., p. 155.
ican institutions and preferred those which were located in the region where the children were being reared. 31 Several years before William was ready for college, General Johnston declined an appointment for him in a French school, an honor which was offered by Admiral Baudin, of the French Navy. At a later date he also dissuaded his son from taking an appointment to West Point, "his own experience pointing to so many evils and discouragements in the career of a professional soldier in America as to render it most undesirable." 32 Although he disapproved of educating American boys in foreign institutions, he wished his son to travel and study in Europe after his principles and habits were established; but circumstances prevented this. 33 That General Johnston considered the possibility of his son's entrance into politics is indicated in a statement contained in a letter to his brother-in-law, William Preston:

You are aware of the value, to one who looks forward to political preferment, of the great advantages to be derived from the friendships and general acquaintance formed in our public schools. 34

To Preston, with whom William was then living, Johnston left the privilege of selecting a college for the boy. 35

In September, 1847, the Western Military Institute began its first session at Georgetown, Kentucky, 36 and William Preston

31A. S. Johnston to Wm. Preston, July 21, 1847.
33Ibid., p. 161.
34A. S. Johnston to William Preston, July 21, 1847.
35Ibid.
36Mabel Altstetter and Gladys Watson, "Western Military Institute, 1847-1861", Filsom Club History Quarterly, April, 1036, p. 100.
Johnston was a member of its student body during that year. This institution, which lived only fifteen years, rendered important service during its brief existence, and more than a thousand of its trained cadets went into the Confederate army as officers or privates. Its president and founder, Colonel Thornton F. Johnson, was a graduate of West Point; and this institution and the Virginia Military Institute served as models for the organization of the new school. Strong emphasis was placed on mathematics, the discipline of students was rigid, and the uniform of the school conformed rather closely to that used by the United States army. The course of study included mathematics, Greek, Latin, French; history, chemistry, elementary philosophy, and Spanish.*

In the middle of the first session, James G. Blaine became a member of the faculty, and remained with the college for three years. Bushrod R. Johnston, who was afterwards one of Albert Sidney Johnston's generals throughout the campaign which culminated in the Battle of Shiloh, was added to the faculty in the second year.*

During the first session, a course in elocution and composition was added to the curriculum, and all of the cadets were required to take it. This course, which proved so distasteful to

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37 Journal of W. P. Johnston, November, 1847. (Manuscript.)
38 Alstetter and Watson, "Western Military Institute", pp. 100-102.
40 Alstetter and Watson, "Western Military Institute," p. 104.
most of the cadets, most have been agreeable to William, for in the middle of this session he was selected by his comrades as the orator in the college celebration of Washington's birthday. From his father he received a warm congratulatory letter, which contained sensible advice in reference to the speech.

That the young man had decided upon law as his profession is indicated in another letter which he received from General Johnston near the close of the term. Advising his son concerning his manner in debate, the father wrote:

Be courteous and calm, and endeavor to convince by the earnest exhibition of your argument, and do not employ personalities. Above all, do not try to show your superiority; if you have it, it will be felt and silently acknowledged; if exacted by words or bearing, it will be withheld.----If you deserve well, the merit of it will usually be accorded to you.

William was by nature an earnest student, and at the Institute he exhibited a strong desire to attain the top position in scholastic achievement, which determination on his part called forth solicitous counsel from his father, who feared that the boy's health might be seriously impaired by a too intense concentration on his studies. The following extract from a letter on the subject is replete with sound sense:

41 Ibid., p. 103.
42 Journal of W. P. Johnston, December, 1847.
43 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, January 4, 1848.
44 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, May 9, 1848.
While I would inculcate all the diligence compatible with good health and a full development of physical power, I would most assuredly depurate and regret any exertion beyond that, if it endangered the loss of the one or checked the other.

You are, I hope, preparing for a long career. In that case, our experience teaches us that the powers, physical and mental, should be husbanded or used moderately and economically; otherwise the goal can never be reached with distinction. If our experience is correct, it would be unwise to waste our strength in a first effort. The untaught pedestrian who is trained for a ten-mile race knows this; he wins his race by at no time in the course attaining the highest speed of which his is capable. What would you think of the judgment of a recrider who would give his horse the highest speed at the start, or who, all other things being equal, would agree to carry ten pounds more than his opponent? Now, this latter view embraces your case; you have one more study than your rival. You may possibly beat him; so may the horse that carries undue weight win, but in most cases he never wins again—all his powers have been sacrificed for a single object.

Other admonitions contained in the letters of the father to his son indicate that General Johnston feared the young man's zeal to excel in his studies might be attended with damage to his constitution. "Study moderately; exercise moderately; eat moderately"; he advised. And again, "Be patient, and be satisfied with moderate progress. Go to bed early; rise early; read three or four hours a day." It is apparent that the father was conscious of the fact that good advice from competent and interested advisers often fails to secure the result intended, for he writes,

46A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, December 11, 1843.
"I have occasionally offered you a little of my experience, of which I have a large stock, purchased at high prices (which men of strong will have always to pay) to save you expense; but I doubt if it is a transferable article."48

William must have stood high in the esteem of his fellow-students at the Institute, for years afterwards Judge Charles E. Fenner of New Orleans said of him:

My acquaintance with Colonel Johnston began, when as a boy of 14, I became a student at the Western Military Institute at Georgetown, Kentucky, where Colonel Johnston was then just completing his course. He was then a splendid, beautiful, and high-spirited youth, who was worshipped by his comrades, and especially by the younger students, as a veritable hero of romance.49

During the early part of his first session at the Institute Johnston began a personal journal. Beginning with November 6, 1847, the diary continues throughout the term and into the summer which followed. In the middle of July, 1848, he abandoned the journal method of recounting his experiences, but continued to narrate some of the occurrences and emotional reactions associated with himself during several following months. The document is an interesting and intimate revelation of the character of the young man, who was less than seventeen years of age when he began the journal; and it is interesting also for the pictures which it presents of college life in the Institute. In it the author records such matters as the following:

48 Ibid.
49 New Orleans Picayune, July 17, 1899.
the departure of his uncle, William Preston, for the Mexican War, and his subsequent return months later; his own accomplishments as a student and his ambition to become a speaker; his reading interests; his long walks through the country-side; his mild student escapades; his anxiety for his father's welfare; his participation in chess and football; his affection for his relatives and his fellow-students; his profound sadness over the loss of his grandmother; and many other circumstances which touched his intelligent and responsive nature. His narrative at times glows with emotional power, and at all times it rings with sincerity. A few of the briefer entries follow:

November 6, 1847.
I have this day commenced a journal of my life, in hopes that by recording good and bad alike, I maybe encouraged to persevere in what I deem correct, and shun what I consider wrong. Nerved by this desire, I hope to merit the notice of the good; and this day I note down a resolution to pursue my studies ardently.

On November 1st, my uncle William Preston, Lt. Col. of the 4th Regt. Kentucky volunteers, started for Mexico. Same day I started for Lexington with his family. Arrived there on the 2nd.

On the 5th I came to Georgetown, and today, I entered the Western Military Institute. This morning there was a sword presentation to returned volunteers, and a Cadet's parade.

November 21.
Sunday. Went to church. Heard Mr. Gano, a Campbellite preach a remarkable fine sermon.
Walked with Aunt Susan, Mark Chinn and Stoddard.
Letter from William Wooley. Read Mr. Clay's speech on the War. Some parts are very beautiful and eloquent.
November 24.
Recited Juvenal. In the afternoon, Martin, Professor of Mathematics, unjustly reproved me. I replied to him and we have some words, in which I conceived the French looking hound treated me badly. He apologized dubiously after school. I will not stay here if these lousy professors take any advantages of me. A letter and "Shelley News" from Mark Chinn, and an article in favor of General Taylor for President. Received a very pretty letter from Sister.

December 7.
Recited. I visited Forrester and chose a subject suggested by Woolfork. "A Crisis in the Cradle of Genius." Professor Martin invited me to play chess with him. Frank Hopkins is on the point of death. Fever and inflammation of the brain. Five days ago he was playing football. His father bears it badly.

December 8.
I awoke to find that Frank Hopkins died last night at 12 o'clock. He died delirious. He had a remarkably fine head, and his father laying his hand on it said, "This noble head has cost you a life, my boy." This was true, the brain was overtaxed. Thus was cut off in the beauty of youth, a lad of promise and talents. Recited. Received and wrote letters. Studied speech. I sat up with the body until two o'clock. Rainy day.

December 22.
I learned terrible piece of intelligence—a sudden affliction, the death of my best and kindest of grandmothers. Traveled on Steamboat Sea Gull, and reached Louisville at 3 o'clock at night and proceeded at once to grandma's. This is a sorrowful day for many.

December 23.
My grandmother, Mrs. Caroline H. Preston, died December 20, at midnight.

50 The subject of Johnston's oration for February 22, 1848.
Her illness was short and apparently painful, but she was unconscious from the first. . . . died with a tranquil smile on her features. None of us realize our loss. She is missed and mourned, but seems merely gone on a journey—not dead. . . .

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December 24.
A sad Christmas Eve. Grandma, as usual, was making preparations for a merry and delightful reception of all her family----Uncle William is well in Mexico. John Drake, an old room mate at Womack's who volunteered in the Shelby Co. 3rd Regt. Kentucky Vol. is dead. The saddest Christmas I ever passed. Spent the day in the house.

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December 31.
Spent the morning with William Wooley and Bob Atwood. Dined on oysters and champagne with them. Collected my poetry (if it deserves the name) into a book. The first four months of this year were spent in Texas, with my father at China Grove in Brazoria County. May on road to Kentucky. June as a vacation. July and August studying with Joe Winlock. September in Lexington. October in Louisville. . . . My grandmother has died, Uncle William gone to Mexico. They are ringing out the old year.

I pray God, the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, that he will grant unto me a pure and honest heart, a mind free from inordinate desires, a true and real reverence, and that through his grace, my soul may be redeemed. I ask the same for my beloved father, my dear sister, and all whom I love.

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January 5, 1848.
Today I am seventeen. How many thoughts and fancies start at the reflection, but I will not here record the day-dreams and castle-building of a boy. Started for
Frankfort on the Blue Wing with Aunt Mag.
Read a book called "O'Sullivan's Love."

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January 12.
Studied in Greek Grammar. Read in
"Amber Witch." Read Calhoun's speech on
the War opposing all extension of terri-
tory. Played checkers. Wrote long letter
to Ma. I fear for my speech. It goes slowly
on, and visitors plague me.

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February 2.
Purchased cloth for uniform. Read
"Drama and Pekerville" by Fields and some
in "Don Juan." Played chess and football.
Got hurt at the latter.

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February 10.
Heard from Pin and Stod, they will be
here tomorrow. The anticipation of my
speech is very painful. Look up, Friend
William, wait until you are certainly dis-
graced before you feel so.

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February 22.
The 22nd has arrived. I dressed to the
very tip. . . . The ceremonies came off in
the Christian church. 1st, prayer. Then
Petterson spoke in an animated manner, a
speech strongly flavored with my ideas.
Mr. James Gray in a speech of 45 minutes
for the Ciceronian Society of Georgetown
College, and lastly myself. I lacked ani-
mation, for I was frightened to death at
first. The allusions in my speech to Genl.
Taylor were enthusiastically applauded.
The long feared and contemplated speech is
spoken. I did as well as the best on the
occasion. Thank God, it is over, and well
done in spite of all disadvantages and nat-
tive diffidence. In spite of the rein we had
a crowded house. My foot is on the first
round of the ladder--my eyes turned upwards
ever. . . .

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March 24.
Read a letter from Me in regard to their condition in Texas. What she says makes me unhappy. Here I am at college spending money, and they deprived of the common comforts of life. Unless some other arrangement is made after this session I leave college.

March 26.
... Received a letter from my best and kindest of fathers. Oh! What a bitter life he is leading for one like him. He writes, "Cherish friendship; it is a pleasant delusion." My heart is full, and my eyes overflowing.

April 5.
... Letter from Mrs. Drake announcing the death of Col. Jason Rogers on April 3rd. He was kind to me in childhood, and I am under many obligations to him. I always will act a brother's part to his orphans.

April 28.
Have missed no recitations. Spent the day with John Pouke. Mary Munday, Sally and Betty Faulkner, and other girls there. Played one game of cards. Would have fallen in love with M.'s pretty face, but found that she was a ninny. Sally Faulkner tried to flirt with me, but I wouldn't.

May 13.
Read several of Scott's Poems. Gist and Thornhill had fight and when I parted them, came near being whipped for my officiousness. Finished all of Scott's Poems.

June 12.
Reported for "swearing and disobedience of orders." Do not recollect whether I did
or not. But it is a bad habit and I forswear swearing. Drilled and recited as usual.

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June 21.

I feel a deep humiliation because I fear I am not the first in my classes as I should be, and all because I have not studied as I should. But from this to the end of the session I will study.

On July 11, of this year, he records his return to Louisville and his reunion with relatives and friends there, and winds out the entry of this date with the statement that "Finding this too long and tedious I will hereafter condense it into a narrative form." In the pages which make up the remainder of this account of himself, he sets down a series of pictures and experiences that throw an interesting light upon the responsive nature of the young man and reveal the character of his environment. Among other things he records the pleasures of boyhood pastimes on the farm of a relative—swimming, hunting, rambling through the hills, and enjoying the improvised entertainments of the negroes; and he relates at some length the deep impression made upon him by the death of a country drunkard. He presents a vivid picture of a camp meeting of the "Old Ironside Calvinistic Baptists in a beautiful grove," recurs with intense sadness to the plight of his father in Texas, and tells how he was converted from anti-slavery leanings to the "Moderate Southern idea on the subject," which change of attitude was effected by a conversation with his uncle, William Preston.
While young Johnston was at the Institute, he wrote many letters to his younger sister, Henrietta, who, like himself, resided with maternal relatives in Kentucky. In these affectionate letters, which are alternately playful and serious, the writer reveals a penchant for giving his sister the same sort of counsel and admonition that he was receiving from his father. In the middle of the summer preceding his departure for college he writes:

I hope you will preserve your health and if possible improve your constitution, to do this you must rise early, and take regular and constant exercise—when the ladies, from want of exercise, become sallow, they adopt rouge, as a substitute for a good complexion; it makes about as good a substitute as whiskey. I hope you will bear this tedious but well intended lecture in mind.51

Later, at the Institute, when he is engrossed with the preparation of his oration for February 22, he replies to her invitation to visit her, with a discourse upon the claims of duty:

You yourself would think less of me, my dear Hennie, if I should spend in enjoying myself, even in the society of a beloved sister, those few hours of vacation, which should be allotted to the preparation of my speech for the 22nd of February. To toil is the fate of men; to toil is the wish of all, who aspire to the high places and seats in the synagogue.52

51 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, July 16, 1847.
52 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, December 4, 1847.
Still later, he advises attention to history and literature in preference to drawing and the study of science:

You should read all the valuable history you can—poetry, if you please. I do not object to a lady's reading poetry. Such works as the Spectator, Shakespeare, the modern British Essayists, Washington Irving's works—they are amusing and instructive, and impart the foundation of a good style. I do not wish you to read history in such a way that you know the date of every skirmish, the name of every nobleman....you should learn to distinguish between the important and the trivial....to dwell upon the former with thought, to read the latter. To attempt to memorize every fact and circumstance of history would be an endless and a useless task—there is a difference between reading attentively and drudging. Don't take these to your sensitive soul as reproofs—they are items I have learned from my own experience and that of others.53

From his letters to his sister, we learn also that Johnston enjoyed at the Institute the pleasant association of three cousins who bore the Johnston name—Harris, Pintard, and Stoddard;54 and in these letters he records many other interesting circumstances connected with his college experiences.

An interesting circumstance in his life during this period was his brief association with his cousin, William Preston Woolley, in the publication of the Bon Ton, a literary journal of pronounced satirical character, the aim of which apparently

53 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, February 29, 1848.
54 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, October 28, 1848.
was the correction of the foibles of Louisville society. William Woolley, who was but a few months older than Johnston, was a youth with strong literary tendencies and considerable talent. He died at the age of twenty; and the testimony of his admiring cousin many years later was that had he lived, "there was scarcely a doubt among his acquaintances that he would have won much distinction." That young Woolley was inclined toward satire finds additional support in an entry which Johnston made in his journal in the summer of 1348:

Will Woolley published "Il Bontona," a burlesque and not a bad one on Louisville society. Being an opera it required some talent in music to adapt it to his various airs. He is a most versatile genius.

General Johnston did not share his son's admiration for Woolley, and he was seriously concerned over young Johnston's connection with the Bon Ton, as the following extract from a letter on the subject indicates:

I wrote to you last winter that I was glad W. Woolley was trying to turn an honest penny, but that he would fail and although I could have no objection to your contributing articles to the paper, divested from all personality, I should, if consulted, have most strenuously opposed a partnership—one in which there was every prospect of having to pay all expenses and do the fighting to boot. I commend to you a re-perusal of Gil Blas. If the paper, conducted in a manner not to give offense to the people, won't pay expenses, give it up. The first loss may be replaced—a much greater involves great doubt; it may lead to ruin.

If you, stimulated by the applause of the few, dreaded by some who love a good name, and hated by the greater portion of the people, should persist in trying to keep up your paper with the certainty of loss, perhaps ruinous, your pertinacity would be paralleled by the obstinacy of the novice who would throw away his thousands betting on the single figure, because the bystanders (who perhaps shared the loss between themselves) pronounced him firm and bold.

The man who travels in a stagecoach and tries to reform the method of entertaining customers, the cookery, normally gets a broken head for his pains; one or two journeys generally correct this folly—There is no power mental or physical equal to the task, perhaps not of reformation, but of making society square their notions, with our own—Horace with his keen, playful wit, Juvenal with his bitter sarcasm, Peter the Great with power over life and in the opinion of his subjects over their souls almost, could achieve nothing. Time is the true and only honest reformer—He works those changes which are necessary and so gently as to prevent their being disagreeable. Your paper is too personal and such is the insatiable appetite of malice, if it were less so, would have but little interest for those who read it, who don't know who Dudley Dumps is and some of the others of that article, why wound unnecessarily? Do you think there is no sympathy for them? There is—all who fear a similar attack will make common cause against you. The author of that article surely has been indulged in his infant days in the amusement of twirling flies on pins—If there is not courage in the party attacked to resent it, it is pusillanimous to attack him. If he should resent, what member of your clique would be shot at or perhaps killed for the pleasure of indulging a little petty malice—It is not manly to hold the female portion of your community up to ridicule. I am sure I should not sleep soundly if I had caused one bitter tear, tho' it should be of remorse, to be witty. That poor girl's
fortune has created bitter envy. If you have some female contributors. The savage Comanche gives victim prisoner up to the women for torture.

Now, why attack Prentiss? Have you asked yourself that question? Are there not among your applauders, who egg you on, those in whom there still clings a festering arrow, who notwithstanding have not thought fit to risk their precious persons to retort it—Would they or any such ignoble minds care how much you might risk your life or waste your fortune to castigate their ancient enemy—Don't you know this as I do—Are you prepared to occupy the unenviable position of a dupe—I hope not—I think not.

You know insults have been quietly pocketed, and if you know anything of human nature, the hope of retribution is as anxiously longed for, as the Millenium among the pious—If the simple hearted boatmen of early times in Kentucky ran into what they called a "pocket," they quietly backed out and took the right channel. Now my son, if you think you are in a pocket, back out and take the right "chute."

Your first feelings on reading my remarks about your paper and your position will be those of exceeding vexation. But if they should have the effect to produce a calm and unprejudiced survey of your present position, I hope they may lead to good for you—You will bear what I have said patiently when you remember that whatever professions are made to you, that I love you more than all together—That I am the only person in the world who would tell you the undisguised truth, and I am certain, the only one who would give his life to save yours. If you prosecute the study of the law until February, as you will perceive by
this paper and then obtain your license, you can graduate at Cambridge in one year—This I hope you will do.

Affectionately yrs.

A. Sidney Johnston. 57

To this long letter of admonition, William's step-mother added the following post script:

If Pa has not said too much for your patience, let me add a little by way of P. S. Your position now as editor of the Bon Ton gives Pa great anxiety and distress, and I know your greatest aim is to do that of which he will approve. In addition to many other things, he thinks that in entering life as a man, you will not have a fair "showing." You will be worn out and hackneyed as an old song. You take my advice, though unsolicited, and let no taunts or persuasion induce you to continue it. If you think that your being its editor is not known, you are mistaken. Everyone knows all about it, you may be assured, if it has reached the ears of any of your friends and acquaintances—but enough of this. I wish you would study well, and save enough to bring you and Henny to see us this fall, ere you go to Cambridge next winter as Pa wishes you to do. 58

General Johnston and his wife did not underestimate the soundness of the young man's judgment, nor his respect for his father's wishes. He immediately gave up his connection with the Bon Ton, much to the relief of his parents. In appreciation of his decision, General Johnston wrote:

. . . Your remarks in connection with your recent enterprise evince great

57 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, May 16, 1849.
58 Ibid.
soundness of judgment. I felt great anxiety on account of your connection with that wretched little paper which has been carrying on a predatory warfare against the society of Louisville. . . . 59

To this letter Mrs. Johnston appended a note expressing her gratification also at his separation from the paper, which "would have hung by you like an unpleasant nightmare." 60

With its main financial prop withdrawn, the offending journal did not survive; and Louisville society was freed of the abominations of the Bon Ton, a publication which years afterwards Josiah Stoddard Johnston, William's loyal and admiring cousin, was to characterize as "a bright society paper." 61

Johnston's connection with the short-lived Bon Ton ended in the spring of 1849. His father's letters during this period indicate that plans were being made for the young man to complete his education at Cambridge. However, when he left Kentucky for New England in the autumn of 1850, he followed the example of several of his kinsmen and the advice of his uncle, William Preston, and went to New Haven to prepare himself for entrance to Yale College.

59 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, June 4, 1849.
60 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

AT YALE COLLEGE

In August 1850, Josiah Stoddard Johnston left Louisville for Yale College;¹ and in October of that year, William wrote his sister that he too was leaving Louisville to attend the same school.² Through the sale of a small piece of property he received money enough to defray the expenses of the current college session; and following the advice of his uncle, William Preston, he departed for Yale. He arrived at New Haven in November and devoted several months to intensive study under the direction of tutors, in preparation for entrance to the college. In April, 1851, he wrote his sister that he was about to take his examinations in the classical languages. That he was reasonably assured as to the outcome is apparent from the following extract from the letter:

I suppose they will look wise, catch me in fifty mistakes, and finally let me in. If I cannot, however, I have the consolation of hearing my tutor (a college officer) say that I read Latin better than any young men he ever saw from the West. So I will know I am not an ignoramus in that at least.³

In the same letter, Johnston wrote also concerning the types of diversions in New Haven:

¹W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, August 11, 1850.
²Ibid., October 27, 1850.
³Ibid., April 4, 1851.
There are any number of concerts here: Ethiopian, Beethoven, Brass Band, Hutchinson, etc., besides Book Auctions, Shakespeare Readings and all the amusements except Theatres, which Blue Laws forbid. Everything is as stupid and delightful as heart could wish. There are revivals here as well as at Danville. 4

In view of the fact that this letter was written a little more than two years before Johnston's marriage, his statement therein concerning his lack of serious interest in girls is amusing. "There is not a girl in the world I would snap my finger to marry," he declares; "I never saw one I would marry, (though I was terribly smitten with Betty Sanders, and one or two others in my verdancy)." 5

On May 10, 1851, William entered Yale College in the third term of the Junior year. 6 One of his cousins, William Stoddard Johnston, the son of Senator Johnston of Louisiana, had graduated there in 1834; 7 and two other cousins, Josiah Stoddard Johnston the second, of Kentucky, and Randall Lee Gibson of Louisiana, were William's college mates. 8 The first of these died in 1839; 9 but with the latter two he enjoyed life-long friendships which were of great importance in his career.

4Ibid.
5Ibid.
7Biographical Notices of Graduates of Yale College, 1816-1884.
8Faculty Records, Yale College, 1852; and Class Book (Yale), 1853.
9Biographical Notices of Graduates of Yale College, 1816-1884.
On December 13, 1651, he again enrolled in Yale for the final year of his college course. Although he was the last man to enter the class which graduated in the following spring, and although the requirements of the college were rigorous, he quickly gave evidence of his fine ability as a student. The system of education at Yale was steady and conservative, and the scholarly atmosphere of the institution was permeated with Puritanic severity of discipline and orthodoxy of religious faith. However, the old college curriculum, with its fixed program of studies, was yielding to the demands of the elective system, which modification and expansion was moving the institution in the direction of the real university.

The class which Johnston joined contained many men of marked intellectual force and executive ability. Two of the number, besides himself, became university presidents: Daniel C. Gilman became president of the University of California and later of Johns Hopkins; and Homer B. Sprague, one of Johnston's rivals for honors in writing, became president of the University of North Dakota. Henry McCormick became a large iron manufacturer in Pennsylvania, and Johnston's only son, while working in the firm of this former classmate of his father, died at the age of twenty-four. William M. Stewart became a United States Senator for Nevada. The class also included men who became members of Congress, judges of state supreme courts, prominent ministers, and college professors.

10Matriculation Book, Yale College, December 13, 1651.
11Record of the Class of 1652, Yale College, 1878, p. 73
12Cooper, p. 8.
13Record of the Class of 1852 of Yale College, 1887, pp. 16-37.
Among the members of the last group was Jacob Cooper, professor at Centre College and at Rutgers. He was a friend and admirer of Johnston, and late in life wrote a brief but glowing biographical sketch of him. At the college also, in the class just below Johnston's, was Andrew D. White, who became the first president of Cornell University. He and Gilman and Johnston, all three of whom were to be presidents and guiding spirits in the founding of three American universities, were brought into close companionship at Yale through their membership in the same senior fraternity.¹⁴

Johnston's scholarship was greatly strengthened by the scholastic requirements of the college, where such thorough-going scholars and teachers as President Woolsey and Professors Thatcher and Hadley placed insistent emphasis upon accuracy and completeness. His range of study, which was already wide, was much extended; and although the intensity of his zeal did not place him in that class of close students who were termed poles, he did his work well, ranked with the top competitors in the class, and won "as high a grade as was permitted by the strict usages of Yale, in the case of those who enter as late as the middle of the Junior year."¹⁵ His average for the one and one-third sessions at Yale was 2.997. The highest mark in the class was 3.59 and the lowest 1.92.¹⁶

The faculty of the college consisted of the President; a Professor of Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology; a Professor of the Latin Language and Literature; a Professor of Mathematics, Natural

¹⁴Cooper, p. 9.
¹⁵Ibid., pp. 10-12.
¹⁶Book of Averages, Yale College, 1851, 1852.
Philosophy, and Astronomy; a Professor of Divinity; a Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory; a Professor of the Greek Language and Literature; and seven tutors. The three younger classes were instructed by the professors and tutors; the Senior Class by the President and the professors. The course of study for the junior and senior years was as follows:

**JUNIOR CLASS**

|---|---|

**SENIOR CLASS**

|---|---|

The catalog also states that a course of lectures on the oration of Demosthenes for the crown, was delivered to the members of the senior class; that the Junior and Senior classes engaged in "forensic
disputations" once or twice a week before their instructors; and that there were frequent exercises in declamation before the faculty and students. 17

That Johnston was strongly interested in political economy and literature is evident from the honors which he won in his senior year. In the distribution of awards at the close of the session, he received the Clark premium for his essay, "political abstractionists." This was the second place award, the first honor, which was known as the DeForest Prize, going to Homer B. Sprague. Johnston and Sprague were also among the five winners of the Townsend premiums for essays in the field of literature. 18

William Preston Johnston's name appears on the list of members of the following fraternities and societies: Kappa Sigma Epsilon; 19 Kappa Delta Epsilon, which had been founded at Yale in 1844; 20 and the Skull and Bones, 21 one of the senior societies, which had been founded at Yale in 1832 by fifteen members of the class of 1833, because of "some injustice in the Phi Beta Kappa Elections." 22 He was also a member of the Calliopean Society, 23 the youngest of the

17 Catalog, Yale College, 1851.
18 Yale Literary Magazine, June, 1852, p. 274.
19 Supplement to the Ninth Record of the Class of 1852, Yale College, 1900, p. 26.
21 Ibid., p. 33.
22 Ibid., p. 24.
23 Yale Literary Magazine, XVII, 1851-52, p. 79.
literary societies, which was "Southern" in its complexion, and which only students from the Southern, Middle, and Western States were expected to join. Occasionally, however, a New England man was admitted.24

This disposition on the part of Southern students to make of their society a sectional unit apparently inspired no disfavor on the part of the other college men.

Although much of his time was occupied with his college courses and with the preparation of exercises for literary societies, Johnston found some time for the enjoyment of such recreational activities as riding, sailing, in the harbor when the sea was calm, and fencing with the small sword. In a playful manner, which was common with him in his letters to his sister, he explained his interest in the latter exercise, "Not that I ever expect to pink my gentleman's doublet, but because it is a graceful, genteel, and developing exercise." He declared also that he would take up the broadsword, upon the recommendation of one of his uncles, and that he would learn boxing, "which is not so genteel but more useful."25

In the same letter, Johnston presents a picture of himself, which, although written in a humorous manner, may be considered as a rather accurate delineation:

Uncle Will wishes me to return this summer to "see how the fellow looks." If that is all, tell him I look superbly. I have taken to dressing better. I find such a line of distinction here, I had to fall in with the old customs. The good scholars never even wear clean shirts, they are always down at the heel, and don't comb their hair. It can be tolerated in them,

24 Supplement to Ninth Record of the Class of 1852, Yale College, p. 23.
25 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, May, 1851.
but not in me, who am only a moderado. So I put on great dignity, dress pretty well, and in fact, set the fashion for my class. I have but one rival, a son of L. Buster King, once of Georgia, now of California. His watch chains of pure California gold, of course, eclipse me, but I put on an air of unconscious magnificence, pay great regard to my cravats, gloves, and the cut of my coat, and so I force him to yield in some respects, but more than all, I am six feet, one, while he is five feet, two. Tell Uncle Will I am splendid, and a great man in college.

In his letters to his sister, Johnston records many other interesting circumstances connected with his life as a student at Yale College. A few of them are as follows: Mrs. Eliza Gilpin of Philadelphia, the widow of his father's oldest brother, Senator Josiah S. Johnston of Louisiana, sent him a cordial and pressing invitation to spend a vacation period in her home; on one occasion at least, when he was asked to speak extemporaneously in a debate, he delivered his speech with such power as to win the acclaim of a large audience assembled in the college chapel; he suffered a harrowing experience when the lake steamer, upon which he and several of his relatives were traveling from Cleveland to Buffalo, was caught in a terrific storm and almost capsized; and he enjoyed the intimate companionship of his cousin, Josiah Stoddard Johnston, who was his college roommate.

In the latter part of March, 1852, he wrote his sister, who was visiting with her father's family in Texas:

26
27 Ibid.
W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, April 18, 1852.
28 Ibid.
W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, December 14, 1851.
29 Ibid.
W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, September 13, 1851.
30 Ibid.
W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, November 15, 1851.
You have heard from Ma of Stoddard's punishment. As it is temporary, and for an offense, involving no moral wrong, I do not feel much distressed by it. I look upon it as a part of the fortune of war.

The circumstance referred was the suspension of Josiah Stoddard Johnston from college, for what the faculty termed the "Bell Scrape," the young man having been apprehended with three of his schoolmates as they were "about to perform on the college bell." On June 2 of that year the faculty failed to grant the petition of William Preston Johnston "for the restoration of his cousin"; but by a vote of the faculty later in the summer, he was re-admitted, and graduated with the class of 1853.

William Preston Johnston's other cousin and college mate, Randall Lee Gibson of Louisiana, took a prominent part in the student activities at Yale. He was president of the Calliopean Society in 1852, and as a student he apparently manifested those qualities of personality, which, in later life were associated with this gifted and distinguished citizen of Louisiana. A reporter for the college magazine records that at a student celebration known as the Spoon Exhibition, "The chair was occupied by Mr. Randall L. Gibson of Louisiana, whose grace and dignity as a presiding officer, certainly added much to the pleasurable effect of the exhibition."

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31 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, March 31, 1852.
32 Faculty Records, Yale College, March 17, 1852.
33 Ibid., June 2, 1852.
34 Ibid., July 14, 1852.
35 Biographical Notices of the Graduates of Yale College; 1816-1884.
Gibson was also a member of the boat crew of his class. Each class had a boat, the crews of which wore distinctive uniforms; and the editor of the college magazine referred to these boats as the "Yale Navy." Between Gibson and Johnston, there was the strongest feeling of friendship; their correspondence covered many years; and the services rendered Johnston by his cousin were of vital importance, as subsequent pages of this study will reveal.

The congenial nature of William's relationships with his fellow-students and the warmth of his friendship for them is indicated in the following sentiments which he inscribed in the autograph books of two of his class-mates. The latter part of his expression concerning J. S. Mygatt reads:

It would be superfluous to allude to your atrocious witicisms, which should have long ago consigned you to the pun-itenity. Permit me to accord you here, my dear fellow, joking aside, the high regard in which I hold you now and the affectionate remembrance in which I shall esteem you hereafter. That all the blessings you so richly deserve may fall to your lot is the sincere wish of your friend and classmate.

Wm. Preston Johnston.

In the autograph book of another classmate, W. B. Ross, he wrote with equal affection:

You are one of the few-the chosen few of college,- to whom my heart has clung, and will

37 Ibid., p. 271.
38 Ibid., p. 317.
39 The papers of W. P. Johnston include scores of letters from R. L. Gibson, dating from the early war period to almost the date of Gibson's death, December 15, 1892.
40 Autograph Album of G. S. Mygatt, Class of 1852, Yale College, (Yale Library).
cling. I do not bring lip-offerings to a friend, so I will barely tell you, I am proud to rank you among the first of my friends,—the nearest. Nerve your iron will, and with stout hearts, we may yet meet as men. It is hard to say "Good Bye."

I am your Friend
Wm. Preston Johnston.

During his residence in New Haven, Johnston was often in the home of Miss Rosa Duncan and her mother. Mrs. Duncan was the widow of Judge John Nicholson Duncan of New Orleans; and after the death of her husband, she moved with her family to New Haven, where some of her relatives lived. Johnston's intimacy with the family culminated a few months after his graduation from Yale in his marriage with Rosa Duncan, a union which was marked by intense devotion on the part of husband and wife through many eventful and often trying years.

Early in his sojourn in New Haven he wrote to his sister that he "dearly loved" Mrs. Duncan and her daughter, and that Rosa would be sorely missed by him when she left New Haven for an indefinite visit with relatives in Providence. In the spring of the following year when the young man suffered a severe attack of bilious fever, Mrs. Duncan had him brought to her home, where he records in a somewhat irregular script during his convalescence that he has grown "passionately fond of gruel" and that he "had the tenderest nursing and most unremitting care, and rather fancy being sick as a luxury and relief from college duty."

41 Autograph Album of W. B. Ross, Class of 1852, Yale College, (Yale Lib.
42 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, November 15, 1851.
43 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, May 27, 1852.
There are many evidences in Johnston's journal while he was a student at the Western Military Institute and in his correspondence throughout his college career that the young man was often depressed by the hard condition of his father and his family in Texas, as General Johnston sought with little assistance and under a heavy burden of debt, to bring a livelihood from the undeveloped tract which was known as the China Grove plantation. How genuine this concern was, is evident from the generous assistance which the son later gave his father at a time when the situation was the most critical.

In the spring of his first year at the Institute Johnston wrote in his journal that if some arrangement were not made for the relief of his father, he would leave college at the end of the session, and seek to assist him.\textsuperscript{44} In a letter to his sister, written shortly after this entry, he expressed the same feeling and determination:

\begin{quote}
My father wasting his precious energies, in a burning cotton-field of Texas,—our affectionate mother, deprived of those comforts, to which she has been accustomed,—you see all of this, and I myself know it, and yet I am easily studying and living off of what should be keeping him from manual labor...if some arrangement is not made, or some property sold, I will go into some business, and at least support myself.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

That his concern for his father's family underwent no diminution through the passing of time or because of his occupation with activities at Yale, is apparent from a letter which he wrote to his sister, during his first term at the New Haven college. Added to this con-

\textsuperscript{44}Journal of W. P. Johnston, March 24, 1848.
\textsuperscript{45}W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, March 26, 1848.
oern were his own yearning for a visit to the Texas home and a
desire that Henrietta should share his affection for their foster-
mother.

I wish that next winter I could go with you
to Texas. You will find its genial, sunny winter
weather quite different from the howling blasts,
sloshing snows, and overcast skies of a Ky. De-
cember. Then the long rides on flowery prairies,
on the easiest and gentlest of Indian ponies, and
the fine fruits and pleasant walks, and an oc-
casional alarm of Indians. (You know you are
safe, as there is a garrison there). You will
find too a kind and affectionate heart in Ma and
one that yearns toward you. Write to Ma as a
daughter, if you wish to please me and make me
exceedingly happy. Poor Ma, what troubles she
and Pa have to bear. She is not only afflicted
by the loss of her little girl, but Sid's foot
continues bad, and Pa suffers under the conscious-
ness of his heavy pecuniary misfortunes. Under
such circumstances what a struggle it must be to
keep up her cheerfulness and courage. 46

From preceding pages in this chapter, it is evident that John-
ston had a deep affection for the members of his family. His love
for his father was remarkably intense; and his feeling for his step-
mother, for his grandmother Preston, for William Preston, his mother's
brother, who was almost a second father to him, and for many of his
other relatives was warm and sincere. For his younger sister, Hen-
rietta, who with himself, comprised the offspring of his father's
first marriage, Johnston had a love and respect, the quality of
which approached the highest possible degree of brotherly affection.
His many letters to her, although often animated with playful humor
and at times laden with over-serious counsel, breathe a sincere
tenderness and earnest solicitude; and this feeling on his part was
fully reciprocated. One matter of concern with the young man was

46 W.P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, June 15, 1851.
that his sister should share his own deep feeling for their stepmother; and the earnest references to the subject contained in some of his letters indicate that her feelings were at first not nearly so warm as his own for General Johnston's second wife—a circumstance which need not be attributed to any hostility on the girl's part, but may be accounted for by the absence of an intimate contact with her father's family, such as her brother had enjoyed. In the early part of 1852, Henrietta journeyed to Austin, Texas, for a visit with General Johnston and his family. Although her surroundings and program of activities there differed widely from what she was accustomed to in her Kentucky home, the visit was apparently a happy one for all concerned; and no one was happier over it than the brother in New Haven.

The following letter written by Johnston to his sister during the latter part of her stay in Austin is interesting not only for its tone of brotherly concern, but because of its revelation of the young man's attitude of mind as he looks toward the conclusion of his college course at Yale:

...You cannot imagine how much of pleasure your letter conveyed to me. My Dearest Sister, you can only know how much I love you when you are aware how deep and abiding interest I take in your lesser cares as well as in your greater pleasures and troubles. The tone of your letter, even more than the written words gratified me. The subdued quietness, the earnestness, and the pre-occupation of your mind in what is useful as well as agreeable, indicated to me an improved

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47 Albert Sidney Johnston re-entered the U. S. Army as a paymaster in the latter part of 1849, and while serving in this capacity made his home in Austin.

48 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, March 8, 1852.
state of the mental powers and an advance to that which I am sure you will one day become, the best and most useful of women. There is no one better than Ma, from whom to learn the true and proper sphere of female effort, the object of women's mission. You cannot imagine, Henry, how delighted I am that you have adapted yourself and your tastes to the condition in which you have been cast. You know my admiration of ladies. I should be an infidel, if I had lived with such a mother, grandmother, and (may I add) sister without learning to love and trust in the sex. Charlotte Corday, whom Lamartine terms the angel of assassination, may fulfill in some minds the idea of female heroism, but to me, the struggles of the delicately reared female, who braves with undaunted front and patient heart the perils of a frontier life, and shares in the vicissitudes which a soldier's wife must undergo, more completely fills my conception of female greatness and goodness.

...I have learned wonderfully here, I think, or at least, I am much improved mentally. I would not, for any consideration, have missed coming to New Haven. I have been attending lectures in Physiology, Anatomy, etc, so I am quite prepared to hang out my shingle as a doctor, if I should fail as a lawyer, and I have already picked up a few notions on Free Will and Predestination, which will serve as a stock of theological knowledge.

Give my love to Ma and the children, and when you write, tell me of them. Your plans suit me very well, so that if you are ready, I will take you to Texas, next winter. I will go to Kentucky in August. A thousand kind wishes to all as much as to yourself.49

Throughout his college career, William received letters regularly from his father in Texas. In all of them there is a note of pride and confidence on the part of General Johnston in the achievements and ability of his son. As the young man approached the conclusion of his course at Yale, the expression of these sentiments

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49 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, March 31, 1852.
assumed a spirit which indicates an almost eager recognition of
the young man's progress toward full maturity. The two letters
which follow were written from Austin, Texas in the late spring
and summer of 1852. 50

My Dear Son

My opportunities for writing to you have
been so few that the correspondence of the fam-
ily was necessarily conducted by your mother,
so that I have regularly heard from you and been
made acquainted with everything concerning you
that you supposed would interest us.

You have formally announced your majority
and your right to independent action. Follow-
ing the course of our own great Government in
like cases, it only remains to me as an act of
comity (being convinced of your ability to main-
tain the attitude you have assumed) to recognize
you as a man "de facto et de jure," and to in-
vest you, in good faith and with all the solemn-
nity the occasion requires, with the "toga
virilis." You have therefore the right in your
sovereign capacity to make treaties of alliance,
coin money, regulate and control your own trade
and do whatever else, it may seem best to you
in the pursuit of happiness, always keeping in
view the prohibition of the law to other sover-
eigns so situated. You are still willing to
acknowledge an allegiance to me, I have no right
to demand it and for your good would not accept
it. Now that you are about to pass from the
sham fights of life to real battles, your secu-
ritv and success will depend upon a high degree
of self reliance. It is the momentum of great
confidence, regulated by a sound judgement that
 crushes every obstacle.

Henrietta left here with Mr. Hancock 51 for
Kentucky some days since and is now probably at

50 These letters are taken from a considerable number of unpublished
letters of General Albert Sidney Johnston to William Preston John-
ston, which the present writer found among the papers of the latter.
The second paragraph of the first letter appears in W. P. Johnston's
life of his father.
51 George Hancock was a brother of Henrietta Johnston's grandmother,
Mrs. Caroline Hancock Preston; and he exhibited a deep friendship
for General Johnston and his family, especially the elder children
who lived in Kentucky.
N. Orleans. She is much improved in health and leaves delighted with the climate and beauty of the country. But I think heartily tired of the dullness of frontier life. Always so I think with those whose tastes have been formed amidst the sentiments of fashionable life and who are not convinced of its falseness and frivolity; they desire no change and are therefore unwilling to adopt a different life and will not adapt themselves to the change. I do not find fault with them, but wish them a ripper experience, without the usual ordeal for its attainment. Henry has no appreciation of the value of money, nor of the duty of economy. (sic). I know I tried her patience in my prosy lectures on these subjects, but I could do no less, unless my love had been less; if the wisdom of experience was to profit anything. I knew she could not draw it from a wider experience than my own.

I do not insculpt parsimony, on the contrary a liberal expenditure, if one's income will justify it. Most surely it should never be exceeded however small. It is a question of liberty or slavery. Everyone may choose, yet the most of us suffer the vanity of display to drag us into the thrall of the latter. With regard to F—r. I have only advised Henry that a proper inquiry as to reputation and character must be made which I wish you to make. If there is no moral objection I will not interfere. If he is honest, industrious, and temperate, I do not care if he be possessed of one cent—if not, if he had millions, I would not consent. He has not written to me. I wish him fairly dealt with. He ought to be accepted or discarded. It is great injustice to a young lady to be bound by engagement the fulfillment of which is indefinitely postponed.52

Our family is all in good health; Sid and McClung and baby grow finely. The boys have good heads and honest hearts, I think they will make bold strapping fellows.

I feel vexed at Stoddard who trifles with his opportunities. His fondness of applause is his besetting demon. If I understand at all rightly, he would be more gratified to be admired

52Henrietta Johnston remained unmarried throughout her life.
by the mob as a genius who could learn if he
would then respect by the few for real at-
tainments. Come out in November, say about
the last, it will then (illegible) to pass
Orleans and Galveston and bring Henry along.
I did not wish her to pass this summer here
as it would be her first and we hope to be
better (illegible).

Yr. Affectionate Father,
A. Sidney Johnston.

The second letter was written after young Johnston had finished
his course at Yale and was preparing to return to Kentucky. It is
similar in tone to the first, and, in fact, to the many others which
General Johnston wrote his son. Written as it was at such an impor-
tant time in the life of the young man, the letter is especially
interesting for the light which it throws upon several matters con-
ected with his affairs.

My dear Son:

Your letter from N. Haven announcing your
academic success & triumphs (not so called by
you) was received some time since and my an-
swer has been delayed till there was a proba-
bility of your receiving it at Louisville.

My heart yields joyfully the tribute of
praise due to you; honors were not expected
for you; the short time you had been there
did not justify such expectation; yet, altho
struggling under the greatest disadvantages
you achieved a great triumph, which has estab-
lished for you, on this very threshold of man-
hood, a reputation for industry & ability &
moral worth, fruits, for a force of character
which will hereafter elevate a reputation now
so well deserved——I am much more gratified by
the prevailing opinion that you most deserved
the medal, than, that you should have received
it, coupled in your mind or in the minds of
others with a doubt of its being well bestowed.
The future promises not other successes to one
so receiving, except by chance or trick, while
the one deserving will boldly enter the con-
flicts of life stimulated by the elements of
success, confidence & power——It is said that

A.S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, May 4, 1852.
college honors are a disadvantage, that the
certainty of early success often shades the bright-
est faculties of the mind; this opinion if true
at all, is I apprehend only applicable as an
exception—The opinion is absurd, there could
be no eminent success in any profession without
minor successes—The mind capable of eminent suc-
cess is in no danger of being overwhelmed by a
minor success.

Your design to marry is approved by me, and
your mother thinks you have selected wisely,
which I am gratified to learn—Being about to
assume a new and very responsible position in
society, your plans for the future must be well
considered & matured before you take so important
a step—a comfortable home must be provided &
all the arrangements made for a support before
hand & so calculated that you can commence your
married life free from debt—As this is the
only opportunity I will have to speak of the
expenses of your household without impertinence,
I have to advise that you regulate your outlay
by the amount of your income—If it is small,
frugality & economy (sic) will make it suffice—
The spirit of rivalry in display is the source
of nearly all the miseries of life, it is a
demon that I do not fear will find a lasting
place in your house. Your views in life are
not to be promoted by a competition of that
sort tho' it should be a successful one.

It is proper that your inheritance should
now be divided between your sister & yourself.
You must therefore, now make application for a
division and I will forward to you a release of
my interest as soon as it is done.

There are now in my possession five letters
to Henrietta from San Francisco which I will in-
close to you to be disposed of as circumstances
may demand. I do not approve of the correspon-
dence whether the parties are engaged or not.
If Henrietta intends to marry him, let him be
so informed. But in no event will I sanction a
correspondence. If she does not intend to marry
him (and my opinion is that she cares very little
for him) it would be dishonorable to delude him
with the hope, and in that case his letters
ought to be returned & he ought to be promptly
informed. I know nothing against the young
gentleman and would in no case oppose the wishes of my daughter, as I have often told her, unless there was some worse objection. His poverty is no objection with me, I would rather have for my son-in-law an industrious, temperate, intelligent man than one of wealth, only practised in expending an estate & au fait in all the follies of fashionable life.

My family accompanied me two hundred miles on my last tour, that was as far as I dared take them in the Indian Country. I had to go about 2 hundred miles farther. They awaited my return. We had a pleasant tour encamping out every night, sometimes far from human habitation. The mother & little ones did not seem to be aware of it, they seemed to feel as merry as if secure at home.

Yr affectionate Father
A. Sidney Johnston

I should think your best time to leave for Texas would be about the 1st of Decr. & come by way of Houston.

When Johnston completed his course at Yale, he was several months beyond his twenty-first birthday. Although he had chosen law as his profession, and was to begin and finish his law course at the University of Louisville during the following session, he had throughout his college years exhibited a strong inclination toward literary pursuits. Besides his Washington's Birthday oration at the Western Military Institute (which according to his journal cost him so much youthful labor and anxiety) and his literary endeavors in connection with the Bon Ton, he wrote verse also. In the early part of his first year at the Institute he refers to collecting his poetry into a book. Later at Yale, he explains to his sister the reason for the temporary cessation of his poetic efforts:

Tell Cousin Eliza Davidson, if I ever do write a piece of poetry again, it shall be for her,

54 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, August 7, 1852.
but I fear my Muse's wings are clipped, and that
I must bind myself down to the dull, cold earth,
at least till summer again gives forms of beauty to
my mind. 56

Although he attended Yale College for only a little more than
a college year, he attracted considerable notice there as a person
of literary taste and talent; 57 and on the day of his graduation
in the summer of 1852, President Woolsey spoke of him publicly as
"a young man of decided attainment and fine literary promise." 58

His two prize-winning essays, both of which were published in
the college literary magazine, indicate an early interest in politi-
cal science. When full allowance is made for the fact that he
probably leaned rather heavily upon the works of mature students
of government, the reader will not fail to be impressed with evidence
that these compositions are to a considerable extent original in
organization and presentation; and in the quality of their logic,
clarity, and literary finish are remarkable productions for a college
student. Since much of the course of the senior year was devoted
to the study of philosophy and government, it is probably that John-
ston's choice of subjects for his essays was influenced by this fact.

The Clark Prize essay, "Abstractionists in Political Science,"
develops the thesis that political science requires the services of
two groups of thinkers: one, the abstractionists, who conceive and
evolve the theories and doctrines of government; the other, the
politicians or statesmen, who apply these principles. The concluding
paragraph is quoted as a sample of the young author's treatment of

56 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, October 27, 1851.
57 E. M. St. John to R. E. Lee, October 2, 1866.
58 Ibid.
the subject:

The whole character of the abstractionist may be thrown into its strongest lights by a brief contrast with that of a fellow-laborer in the political field. The same depth of thought may belong to each, but the statesman must also possess passion and operative energy. The one is a man of meditation, the other a man of action; the one deals with the possible, the other with the existent. The great merit of the former is in the justness and moral sublimity of his thoughts; of the other, in the excellence of his results. The most common fault of the former is in looking at things too little as they are; of the latter in looking at them too little as they ought to be. The abstractionist regards men as pawns on a chess board; the statesman as powers in society. While to the former falls the golden weed of future glory among the enlightened few; the latter wins the rich reward of present power, and survives in the souls and imagination of endless generations.59

The title of Johnston's essay which gained one of the Townsend prizes was "Centralization." Although this piece was presented in competition for one of the prizes for English composition, it is a more practical, and hence a less philosophical, discussion of a problem in the field of political science; and since the problem is as pertinent in America today as it was then, the discourse is strikingly modern in its tone. The question involved, as the title suggests, concerns the distribution of authority between the central government and the smaller governing units, with the discussion pointing naturally to the advantages of the American system and arguing strongly against any diminution in the powers of local governments. The following passage is a good example of the

thought and expression of the essay:

The immediate benefits of centralization arise from the order and uniformity of the State. These very advantages carry the bane in their own bosoms. Ultimately the sources of strength become sources of obedience in all departments, enervate the moral and intellectual tone of the people, rob existence of its energy, destroy the opportunity and ability for individual cooperation, and convert society into a creature of the state. Were physical bravery may not depend upon the government; but that higher courage, which gives a meaning to every action, arises in a measure from the feeling of personal independence, and is blasted by blind obedience. A centralized government, by its munificent bounties, may give to industry a temporary luxuriance; but it ultimately deprives labor of its dignity, diminishes the stimulus to exertion, and banishes the spirit of enterprise.60

At the conclusion of his college course in New Haven, Johnston wrote his sister that he was in excellent health and ready for work in Kentucky,61 to which state he returned soon thereafter; and in the light of events which occurred in subsequent months, it is safe to conjecture that his thoughts were chiefly occupied with preparation for his law career and with marriage.

61 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, August 6, 1852.
Returning from New Haven to his home in Kentucky, Johnston entered the law school of the University of Louisville, and in March, 1853, received his diploma.\(^1\) Four months later he was back in New Haven, where he was married to Miss Rosa Duncan. "I do not feel any ways strange at the idea of being married," he wrote his sister a few hours before the ceremony;\(^2\) "but just as if I had been married as often as my grandfather."\(^3\) Following a quiet wedding in the presence of a few relatives, the young couple lingered in New England for several weeks. They made a "quick and disgusting jaunt" to the White Mountains, and they visited Boston, which the young bridegroom found disappointing. He did however make the following concessions:

Cambridge is a pretty place, and Bunker Hill Monument, though not so high as it might be, will do. I could not shake it with both hands.\(^4\)

After experiencing many woes in connection with board and bed and travel, ills which were doubtless exaggerated by the writer for humorous effect, the Johnstons returned with relief

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\(^1\) Johnston’s diploma is in the Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts.
\(^2\) W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, July 7, 1853.
\(^3\) Dr. John Johnston was married three times.
\(^4\) W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, August 16, 1853.
to New Haven and made preparations for their journey to Kentucky.

Fortunately for the young attorney, who engaged in the practice of law in Louisville, he was not dependent upon the income from his profession for the support of himself and his wife, for he had inherited from his mother's estate a considerable amount of land, which lay near the city; and as Louisville grew, the demand for this property and the increase in its value made it possible for him to sell parcels of it advantageously. We have already noted that it was from this source that he received the money for his education at Yale. From the same source he continued to derive an income which made it possible for him to support his family in comfort during the time that he was attempting to establish a practice.

As a man of affairs, the young lawyer displayed from the beginning a commendable sense of responsibility. He gave his attention not only to his own property but to that of other relatives, especially that of his sister, Henrietta, whom he chided often for her extravagance, but whose demands he seemed generally able to satisfy. In the first year of his practice he wrote her that he had made some arrangements which would increase her income to the extent of $150 a year, but he counselled: "Don't, however, follow the Mississippi rule, and enlarge your expenditures on this basis."

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5Ibid.
6W. F. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, April 17, 1854.
In the same letter he relates that he and his uncles, William Preston and George Hancock will go to Elizabethtown to attend a sensational murder trial; that gas has been introduced into his house, and "we now dwell in the lighted district"; and that a brilliant wedding has recently taken place. Concerning the last event, he writes:

Joe Sheridan and Rhoda Hite of Bardstown are married. She had six bridesmaids with Eugenie trains and little negro pages to hold up each. Bishop Smith had two candles held before him during the ceremony. They entered Louisville in triumphal procession, six hacks and Wilkes and Sheridan's China-wagon. Put up at the Galt House, where John Rainie gave them a Soírée, and started for Cincinnati next day with a full band of music which Joe employed.

He informs his sister also that his Uncle William, who was then in Congress, "holds his district in the hollow of his hand."

Throughout his career as a college student, William Preston Johnston had worried often about the condition of his father's affairs in Texas. The China Grove plantation, with which General Johnston had struggled so desperately in an effort to support his growing family and establish himself as a planter, was a source of unhappiness to all concerned. While young Johnston was at the Western Military Institute, his step-mother had written him (without General Johnston's knowledge) that his father's struggles against overwhelming circumstances were reducing him to a pitiable state, and had implored his assistance in securing from relatives in Kentucky a loan, for which
the plantation would stand as security. Apparently some hope of assistance was given by one of the relatives, but the aid did not materialize; and the property was sold to satisfy the indebtedness against it. The amount bid by the agent of the creditors was $2,000, and "there was no competition for it." At the time of its sale, General Johnston was back in the service of the United States Army and was making his home in Austin, but his sorrow over the loss of his plantation was acute, as the following extract from a letter to his son indicates:

I have thus for the want of aid from my friends, not money, but backing, lost $10,000 I have paid, lost the place and owe on it $10,000 yet. When the web of life is a little tangled, a friendly hand without risk or injury can often make it straight and relieve the tied up energies from their thrall. . . .

Whatever the full circumstances may have been regarding the disposition of General Johnston's property, the plantation did not pass out of the possession of the family, for young Johnston secured the means with which to pay off the indebtedness on the place, and in August, 1854, sent his father $2,700 for this purpose; and the title to the property, at least for a time, came into the possession of the son. This part played by William Preston Johnston in the embarrassed financial situation

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7 Eliza Griffin Johnston to W. P. Johnston, December 28, 1848.
8 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, December 24, 1851.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 W. P. Johnston to A. S. Johnston, August 17, 1854.
of his father, he modestly omits from his biography of General Johnston. He omits, also, any reference to other assistance which he gave to his father and his family; and the correspondence between General Johnston and his son reveals that such aid, in the form of loans and advances for living expenses, was generously and cheerfully supplied during the time that the general was re-establishing himself in military life.\footnote{\textit{W. P. Johnston to A. S. Johnston, October 19, 1854; January 18, 185}.} That General Johnston made the fullest sacrifices in his efforts to free himself from his financial difficulties is evident from a letter which the son wrote to his father during the time that the latter was commanding the United States forces in the Utah Campaign, and his family was residing in Kentucky. "I very much fear that you limit yourself in some way," the son remonstrated, "for you send almost all your pay, which is unnecessary and improper." Also he wrote, "You must not abridge yourself, as to means, for whatever is needed, I shall be able to advance to Me this summer without trouble."\footnote{\textit{W. P. Johnston to A. S. Johnston, June 85, 1856.}} When one remembers the many expressions of anxiety and sorrow which the younger Johnston set down during his college days, in his journal and in his letters—expressions called forth by the unhappiness of his father's situation,—it is gratifying to note the substantial assistance which the young man rendered and the cheerful
and loving spirit in which he gave it, at a time when he himself was seeking to make a beginning in business and professional life.

Whatever success and good fortune William may have had in the management of his property after setting up as a lawyer in Louisville, he was not apparently satisfied with his early beginnings in his profession. Coupled with the dissatisfaction arising from this cause was doubtless the feeling that he could find larger opportunities in a newer field. The territory toward which he was most strongly drawn was Texas. His warm affection for his father, the remembrances of his happy experiences in the Southwest, and the general attractiveness of the Texas country for him, all contributed to his desire to settle in that state. In March, 1854, while General Johnston was serving as a paymaster in the army, William made one of his long tours with him, taking the place of a clerk. On the journey, which he describes as "one of lively enjoyment," their two daily meals consisted of cold bread, cold ham, and black coffee, with an occasional bird or wild duck shot by the roadside.  

In March of the following year, the young man again traveled with his father on a tour of duty, during which journey he was largely instrumental in bringing about the apprehension of a Negro servant belonging to General Johnston, the Negro having

contrived in a cunning manner to steal large sums of money from the paymaster's strong-box when it was apparently under careful guard.\(^\text{14}\)

The latter journey of the younger Johnston to Texas was motivated by two purposes: to be of assistance to his father, who had written him concerning the embarrassments facing him because of the deficit in his accounts;\(^\text{15}\) and to make arrangements for moving his family to Texas. On January 10, 1855, a few weeks before his departure from Louisville, the Johnston's first child, a daughter, was born.\(^\text{16}\) She was named Mary Duncan, after Mrs. Johnston's mother, and she was much in the care of this lady, who had moved with her family from New Haven to Louisville, following the marriage of Johnston and Rosa Duncan.

In a letter which Mrs. Duncan wrote during this period to a relative in New Haven, she permits her expressions of enthusiasm for the new baby to be overshadowed by those of anxiety at the prospect of the Johnston's emigration to Texas:

\begin{quote}
Will left us a week since for Texas--I suppose he is in New Orleans now--he expects to be gone two months and will make all arrangements preparatory to a move. Oh! how I hate to have them go. I can see no good reason for it--they have a comfortable home here and plenty to live on as long as they live--but ever since Will
\end{quote}

\(^{14}\)Ibid., pp. 178-179.

\(^{15}\)S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, January 18, 1855.

went out there last, he has had a yearning for Texas—his father lives there which is one great inducement. I never saw so devoted a son and he of course wishes him to come... Everything is packed and ready for Emigration. Rosa received a valentine—a picture of a great baggage wagon loaded with people and baggage—and underneath, Off for Texas.17

The Johnstons, however, did not move to Texas; but in the early part of the summer made preparations for a visit to New Haven;18 and within a short time this plan was altered to include the removal of the family to New York, where they expected to make their home. In the making of this decision, Johnston was governed to a large degree by the serious illness of his wife, who had been in delicate health since the birth of her child; and the husband had strong hopes that the sea air and salt b'thing would restore her.19 Mrs. Duncan, whose own health was poor and continued so until her death a few years later, was delighted at the prospect of a return to the East, and to her aunt in New Haven imparted the information that all of her son-in-law's "Kentucky friends would much prefer his living in New York to Texas."20

Another circumstance which probably influenced Johnston's change of plans was the alteration which occurred in his father's situation. In March, 1855, General Johnston received from the

17 Mary F. Duncan to Sarah M. Edwards, February 25, 1855. (Mason Mss.)  
18 Mary F. Duncan to Maria G. Edwards, June 22, 1855. (Mason Mss.)  
19 Mary F. Duncan to Maria G. Edwards, July 22, 1855. (Mason Mss.)  
20 Ibid.
hands of the Pierce Administration, in which Jefferson Davis was serving as Secretary of War, the appointment as Colonel of the newly created Second Regiment of Cavalry. The return of this officer to the active and arduous duties of frontier military service removed the possibility of a fixed place of residence. Therefore, the principal advantage and happiness which his son had hoped to gain by moving to Texas were no longer in prospect. One can easily imagine the sad regret with which he turned his face from the great land which had beckoned so often and so pleasantly, and which his step-mother believed would benefit him "financially as well as physically."

In the latter part of 1855 Johnston and his family, accompanied by Mrs. Duncan and her two sons, Alick and Lawson, moved to New York, where they were cordially received by friends, who apparently put forth every effort to make the new-comers feel at home. Johnston had contemplated a connection with an established law firm in the city, but for some reason changed his plan and entered business on his own account. Either because of the difficulties which attend the efforts of a young lawyer to secure business in unfamiliar surroundings, or because of general conditions, his affairs did not prosper. At the end of a year's

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21 W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 185.
22 Eliza G. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, January 21, 1855.
23 Mary E. Duncan to Sarah M. Edwards, December 15, 1855. (Mason Mss.)
24 A. S. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston June 8, 1856.
25 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, December 30, 1856.
effort to establish himself in New York he wrote his sister that
"There is no law business," and hinted of plans to return to
Kentucky.\textsuperscript{26} About the middle of the following April the family
returned to Louisville; and an announcement published by the young
attorney contained the statement that he would "resume the prac­
tice of Law in the State and Federal Courts in Louisville on the
1\textsuperscript{st} day of May, 1857, and will attend with prompt attention to
the prosecution of all legal claims and collections entrusted to
me." Appended to the announcement was an impressive list of per­
sons given as references, among whom were included the names of
President T. D. Woolsey of Yale College and the Honorable William
Preston.\textsuperscript{27}

while the Johnstons were in New York, a second daughter was
born to them; and she was named Henriette Preston Johnston, re­
ceiving the name of her father's mother and sister.\textsuperscript{28} Johnston
was now in his middle twenties, and his family responsibilities
were considerable. Besides the care of his own family and that
of his mother-in-law, he looked after financial matters for his
sister, who apparently gave them but little thought herself. Also,
we have already indicated, he rendered substantial assistance to
his father's family. Except for an occasional remonstrance

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26}W. P. Johnston to Henriette Johnston, April 15, 1857.
\item \textsuperscript{27}Professional announcement of W. P. Johnston, 1857.
\item \textsuperscript{28}W. P. Johnston, The Johnstons of Salisbury, p. 160.
\end{itemize}
directed at the extravagance of his sister, Henrietta, for whom he had the deepest affection, there is little in his correspondence to indicate any feeling other than a cheerful and confident spirit. Also, his professional labors apparently met with some success, for during the year which followed his return to Louisville, he wrote his father, who was then in command of an army in the Utah Territory, that he had been very successful in his business, that he had handled some difficult and troublesome suits, for which he had been well paid, and that his business was growing. General Johnston was at that time the target of some criticism because of his vigorous policy in dealing with the Mormons; and his son, writing in the same letter, gave him the following assurance:

Public sentiment accords you a vigorous common sense in seeing through the manner in which Govr. Cummings is being overreached. The opinions of the Johnston family are of course—unanimous. There is but one opinion as to your high deserts among the press and the people.

Although young Johnston's responsibilities were large and his spirit willing to assume them, he was not without compensating advantages, which must have done much to keep his courage strong. In Louisville he had a rather substantial property and a clan of loyal and affectionate kinsmen, who were interested

29W. P. Johnston to A. S. Johnston, June 25, 1858.
30Ibid.
in him. The most important and the most devoted of these relatives
was the uncle for whom the young man was named, William Preston.
In the summer of 1843, when William was in the early part of his
college career at the Institute, Preston had written in the fol-
lowing manner to Albert Sidney Johnston:

He is all your heart could wish; all
that a father could desire. Brave, gentle,
docile, intelligent, industrious, with deep
and true passions, he is a son of whom a
father may well be proud. He is already to
me a companion and a friend and seems a
younger brother. In regard to his future
career I feel the utmost anxiety.31

This interest and devotion continued throughout General
Preston's life. That his support and encouragement was strong
and sincere is apparent from an extract taken from a letter which
he wrote to his nephew in the latter part of 1858 when the young
man was wrestling with the difficulties already referred to,
and when he himself was departing from his home in Lexington for
Washington:

... For yourself, my dear Will, I see
a noble and honorable future. Do not despond,
under any circumstances. You are in the
right path, and have laid a good and strong
foundation of worth and honor. Your intel-
ligence will do the rest. God bless you and
believe me

Faithfully your friend

W. Preston.32

31 William Preston to A. S. Johnston, August 23, 1848.
32 William Preston to W. P. Johnston, November 25, 1858.
Johnston had during this period formed a partnership with E. S. Worthington of Louisville, and in the brief years which preceded the outbreak of the war the two attorneys practised their profession with fluctuating success. However, indications point to an upward trend in their business and standing.

William continued to give some attention to the affairs of his relatives. A letter to Henrietta in the summer of 1859 gives an account of his efforts to settle some matters for one of his aunts, and relates that he has paid at the Bank of Kentucky a note for $250, which was owed by his sister. "How I did it I don't know," he added, "for I have not seen any money." However, a letter from General Johnston to Henrietta in the following year indicates a rising prosperity in his son's affairs. This letter, written from Camp Floyd, Utah, contains the usual compound of sound advice and affectionate yearning which characterized the General's letters to his children. Concerning William's business and future prospects, he wrote:

It is a great gratification to me to hear of Will's continued prosperity; he, I do not doubt, is very happy with his little family around him. I hope he will ultimately take to farming; it has many charms for me and although you slyly hint that I rather failed as a farmer I had the highest testimonials from my neighbors of

33 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, August 31, 1859.
a great success for my small means— I refer you also to Will who was also a witness and a participator in my efforts. If he decides against me, I shall give up my pretensions in that line and look to something else for fame.

The little family referred to in General Johnston's letter now included a third daughter, Rose, who was born in December, 1858, and who was named for her mother.

In the Presidential Campaign of 1860 William Preston Johnston was active in his support of John C. Breckenridge, and during the weeks immediately preceding the election made campaign speeches in support of this candidate, who had been nominated in Baltimore by the bolting Southern Democrats after the regular convention had nominated Stephen A. Douglas. Johnston's partner, Worthington, and many of his other close friends supported Douglas. After the election of Lincoln, he felt "no asperity or partisan harshness" toward these fellow Democrats, who had differed with him, but his feelings concerning the situation produced by the elevation of the Republican Party to power were intense. To one of his prominent Northern friends, Judge J. R. Flanders, who was strongly and openly opposing the encroachments on the rights of the Southern

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54A. S. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, January 4, 1860.
56Louisville Democrat, September 26, 28, and 30, 1860; October 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 17, 1860.
States, Johnston wrote that he did not desire secession; but his following remarks indicate his conviction of its inevitability:

"I regard a dissolution of the Union as inevitable. I know the propelling ideas of Republicanism too well to have any hope. The leaders may recede; the excited people will not. I have every feeling of kindness for those at the North who have resisted our subjugation, but I assure you that I speak the sentiment of 99 in 100 when I tell you unless promptly and fully Republicanism recedes and guarantees are given for our security Kentucky, the most conservative Southern State, will certainly secede. Moreover, any attempt to coerce a Southern State will rally an army to its support. Kentucky will not permit any troops to cross her border for that purpose. Still we are striving to hope against hope through our love for the Union."

In the autumn of the following year Judge Flanders and his editor brother, F. P. Flanders, were arrested by order of the State Department of the United States Government, charged with disloyal and seditious conduct, and confined in prison for several months. Among the evidence presented against the Flanders brothers was the Johnston letter, from which we have just quoted; and in the record of the case, the following statement with reference to Judge Flanders occurs:

"A well-known leader of the secessionists in that State, (Kentucky) William Preston Johnston, wrote him on the 31st of December, 1860, thanking him for his kind feelings, assuring him that Kentucky, the most conservative Southern State, would certainly secede and inviting him to go there to reside."

39 ibid.
40 Col. E., Series II pp. 938-956, Vol. II.
41 ibid., p. 940.
Johnston's name appears in the record of another case of a person charged with disloyalty to the Union, in which instance the "well-known leader of the secessionists" is referred to as "a known rebel at Louisville, Kentucky." The circumstances of the case grew out of the resignation from the United States Army of General Albert Sidney Johnston, who, at the time of his withdrawal from service, was in command of the Department of California. Thinking that General Johnston might seek to return home by way of New York, and hearing that he would be arrested if he did, his son determined to warn him of his danger. Since the younger Johnston knew that all letters were subject to official scrutiny, he engaged a midshipman, Edward S. Ruggles, to deliver a message to the General before he could reach the Northern port. Ruggles went to Panama in the hope of intercepting General Johnston there, but succeeded only in arousing the suspicions of the United States consul. He afterwards left Johnston's letter with the consul at Havana and returned to New York, where he was arrested upon suspicion of treason. The letter, which was first opened by the consul at Havana and later transmitted to the State Department, contained a warning to General Johnston not to trust himself in the hands of a "perfidious enemy," and the information that he was to be offered a place in the military service of the Confederacy second only

to President Davis. How greatly the son under-estimated his father's knowledge of the situation; General Johnston traveled the long journey eastward on horseback over burning deserts and across weary stretches.

In the light of what we have indicated concerning the attitude and activities of William Preston Johnston in regard to the sectional conflict, it is hardly necessary to state that he devoted the full power of his energies to the Southern side. The principles which motivated him are fully enunciated in his biography of his father and will be properly noted in a later chapter dealing with that work. When secession occurred, as he and other ardent Southerners knew it would, he became active in the efforts which were being made to throw the strength of his native Kentucky to the support of the seceding states. With Captain Phil Lee, James W. Hewill, who with the rank of colonel fell at Chickamauga, and Colonel R. A. Johnson, he recruited a number of companies for the Confederate Service, and afterwards served as a field officer in command of Kentucky troops.

Almost immediately after the opening of hostilities, Johnston made a journey to Montgomery, Alabama, where he conferred with President Davis and with L. P. Walker, Secretary of War for the

46 United States War Department records.
newly-formed Confederate government. Returning to Louisville, he wrote a letter to the Secretary in which he gave him the following information concerning the state of affairs in Kentucky:

I saw Governor Magoffin today (I arrived last night) and he told me of his reply communicated to you by messenger. He is satisfied that any precipitate action on the part of our friends will react and damage us. The State is unarmed with a border of 700 miles exposed to a furious foe. That such is the case is the fault neither of the governor or of our party but of those false leaders and embezzles who preferred party advantage to the safety of our Commonwealth. Our military organizations are being perfected but we are badly armed, and I regret to say that other companies are being enrolled hostile to the South and I fear equipped with Federal gold. The governor is trying however to intrust our State arms only with the loyal men. The Journal and Democrat are Lincoln papers. The sentiment of the Southern State's rights men is opposed to taking action until Kentucky is armed and organized. I cannot say that my judgment disapproves of this however my heart may point. An unarmed people is a mob. Trust a little to time and be not distrustful of men who have so much at stake as the Kentucky patriots. Four hundred men left here yesterday for Virginia. I learn from Col. John S. Williams (known as Cerro Gordo Williams) lately a citizen from Southern Illinois, that he has been compelled to abandon his large estate there and that Kentuckians are no longer safe there. He has come to excite our people to war.

In the remaining paragraph of the letter, the writer tells of the threatening attitude of Federal forces in St. Louis and Cairo, and states that he and his associates in Louisville are preparing to organize units of artillery and ordnance there.

The prospect which faced the Johnston family was indeed a sad one. Johnston was preparing to enter the army, which meant that the comfortable home and substantial property in Louisville must be abandoned not only by him but by his family as well. Mrs. Johnston had the responsibility of three baby girls and of her mother, who suffered from a painful malady. On June 21, 1861, Rose Johnston gave birth to a son, to whom the name of his grandfather, Albert Sidney Johnston, was given. Two months after his birth, the mother left her home and took her family South, where they resided in a number of places during the four years of war which followed.

On July 16, 1861, Johnston was given a commission as major in the Second Kentucky Regiment of Artillery in the Confederate service. On September 14, of that year, General Albert Sidney Johnston arrived in Nashville, Tennessee, where he was joyfully welcomed. His son was present upon this occasion and

50 W. P. and Rose Johnston, Obituary Letter concerning their son, January 16, 1885. (Published and mailed from Richmond, Virginia.)
51 Johnston's Certificate of Commission is in the Library of Congress, Division of Manuscripts.
shared in the general happiness; but subsequent events caused him to review the circumstances of the day in mournful retrospect, as the following statement will indicate:

This was the last day that I ever saw my father—the only day after his return from California. I was on my way to the Army of Northern Virginia, in which I held a commission, and saw him for a few hours... He was advised by friends to put me on his staff, as I had met some disappointment at the hands of the War Department. But he thought, and I agreed with him at the time, that, for my sake, and to avoid even the semblance of partiality, it was better for me to forego the pleasure of this association, and serve in the position I had made for myself. This decision, proper as it was in its general aspects, I have often since regretted, for obvious reasons; most of all, that I was not with him in the painful season of his reverses, for such use as I might have been to him, and for the lessons I might have learned in his example.32

The next few months were to bring two serious misfortunes to the younger Johnston. Serving as a field officer in Virginia, he contracted a serious illness, which rendered him unfit for such service, and which left its effects with him throughout his life. Even more grievous to him was the loss of his father, who fell in the Battle of Shiloh on April 6, 1862.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR YEARS

On July 16, 1861, William Preston Johnston was made a major in the Second Kentucky Regiment, and on August 7 was transferred to the Third Kentucky Volunteers. On October 14, he was promoted to lieutenant-colonel and was assigned to the First Kentucky, an infantry regiment. This regiment, which was attached to the Army of Northern Virginia, took part in the first battle of Manassas, but Johnston was not assigned to it until later. In the fall and winter of that year his command was encamped near Fairfax and Centerville in the vicinity of Manassas. The young officer did not enjoy army life: many of the soldiers were of a rough sort, "sometimes seized with a mania to get whisky"; and frequent rains made the tents damp and cold. These discomforts were of course aggravated by his loneliness for his family, who were then in Nashville.

Mrs. Johnston, in spite of the demands which were made upon her time by the care of her four small children and her mother, who

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was often ill, cheered her husband's spirits with a "full and
faithful correspondence."\(^6\) Johnston's performance in this regard
was equally good, his letters containing a full account of many
things which occurred in his regiment and other matters of interest.\(^7\)
In one of them he describes a lively skirmish in which Mrs. John-
ston's wayward brother, Alick, had experienced several narrow
escapes.\(^8\)

About the middle of January, 1862, Johnston was taken with
a severe illness. He developed pneumonia and later typhoid fever,
which combination brought him intense suffering and impaired his
health for the remainder of his life. He was removed from camp to
Manassas and later to Richmond. There he was nursed for a time
"with unremitting attention and brotherly care by Mr. Lucius C.
Duncan, an old college classmate and friend," after which Mrs.
Johnston arrived with her two smallest children and took over the
task.\(^9\) By the middle of February, although far from recovered, he
was able to write letters to his father and to his uncle, William
Preston. To the former he related the kindness of President
Davis, who visited him on the day that his fever broke, treated
him with almost fatherly care, and brought him an orange which
Mrs. Davis had sent. He stated also that his illness had been

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\(^6\)\(^\text{This}\) many letters which passed between Johnston and his wife during
the War are among his papers.

\(^7\)\(^\text{This}\) many letters which passed between Johnston and his wife during
the War are among his papers.

\(^8\) W. P. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, Dec. 24, 1861.

brought on by the intensity of his "zeal and exertions, which are always necessary with volunteers." Concerning his future in the army, he was in doubt:

I fear my constitution is not strong enough for the field....I believe I have the soul of a soldier, but my strength is not equal to my will.  

Almost immediately after he began to recover, he was beset by anxieties from two sources. His father's forces in Tennessee received a staggering blow in the loss of Fort Donelson and the capture of its 15,000 defenders; and Colonel Johnston received the news also that his own regiment was to be disbanded within a few weeks, which action would probably leave him with no place in the army. Some of his friends, realizing as he did that he would never be able to undergo the hardships of field service, advised him to apply for the command of the arsenal at Little Rock or for the postmastership at New Orleans, both of which were soon to be vacant. In his dilemma he turned for counsel to his father, who was facing the greatest crisis of his long military career:

If you have time, I know you will help me settle these perplexing questions. If so, write me immediately or as soon as you can. If you do not, I will know it is from the pressure of more important affairs.

10Ibid.
12W. P. Johnston to A. S. Johnston, Feb. 18, 1862.
Colonel Johnston's recovery was slow. An extension of his sick leave was requested by his physician on April 17, and two days later the War Department issued for him a commission as aide-de-camp, with the rank of colonel of cavalry. In this capacity he served on the staff of President Davis. Johnston's new appointment came a little less than two weeks after his father was killed on the field of Shiloh; and one of his first assignments was to inspect the forces of General Beauregard, who had succeeded to the chief command of the Army of the West after General Johnston's death. Acting upon orders from the President, Johnston went to Corinth, Mississippi, inspected the troops, and investigated several matters relating to the condition and the direction of the army which were unsatisfactory to Mr. Davis. They were hardly more satisfactory to the inspecting officer's uncle, General Preston, who had written some weeks earlier from Corinth, "We miss your father. The double Bees do not rise to the exigency." At Corinth Colonel Johnston met General Leonidas Polk, who had roomed with General Johnston at West Point, and who, upon the assignment of that officer to the chief command in the West, had given up his duties as Bishop of Louisiana to lead a division of

15 D. H. Yardell to War Dept., C. S. A., Apr. 17, 1862. (Library of Congress)
16 Johnston's Commission. (Library of Congress)
18 Preston to W. P. Johnston, May 30, 1862. (The officers referred to were Generals Beauregard and Bragg.)
soldiers. In his report to the President, Johnston commended in particular the troops of Polk, which were a part of Beauregard's command. His report with respect to the army as a whole was for the most part not adversely critical, although he indicated some matters which stood badly in need of correction.\footnote{Johnston's report of inspection in Department No. 2, July 15, 1862, in G. & H., Series I, Vol. X, Part I, pp. 760-793.} When Johnston presented his instructions to General Beauregard from Mr. Davis requesting information which related to his command, that officer did not conceal his displeasure,\footnote{Johnston to Hosa Johnston, June 21, 1862.} which circumstance doubtless contributed to the intensity of the Johnston-Beauregard controversy regarding the Battle of Shiloh in the years after the War.

As the President's aide, Johnston rendered such service as only a capable, trusted, and loyal officer could render, though it was hardly as great as one of his enthusiastic friends declared:

He had often to be the mediator between his strong and imperious chief and the many subordinates who were both able and jealous—It is not extravagant to say that no other man in the Confederacy was as well fitted for the delicate post he held, and that his services contributed more than any other single factor to delay as long as possible the inevitable crash.\footnote{Cooper, p. 17.}

Although this appraisal of Johnston's value to the Confederacy is exaggerated, there is abundant evidence to prove that he occupied a place of importance in the official family of Mr. Davis. He was entrusted with many difficult and delicate missions, which
carried him to many battle areas throughout the South; he often accompanied the President in his trips to scenes of action and to conferences with his generals; and he handled many matters of detail that required executive attention. Soon after his appointment he wrote his wife that people constantly solicited his aid in securing favors, which requests were embarrassing:

Everybody presumes that because I am near the Prest. I can exert influence with him, but in reality my position ties my hands, and even where my heart dictates friendly interposition, both my delicacy and common sense tell me that I should remain silent.

A few days later he described to her the condition of the city as it cared for the many soldiers who had lately been wounded. He wrote also of having ridden with President Davis on two trips of inspection in the vicinity of Richmond, adding with regard to his chief:

He is not well. He sits up late and smokes too much... He never complains, so that one cannot tell how he is except by his appearance.

In another letter written the day before, he gave an account of the Battle of Seven Pines, in which he and Davis took active part; and he relates that he saw General J. E. Johnston carried

\[20\text{For items of an official nature involving Johnston see the index volume of O. R.; and for other information concerning his services see Rowland, Jefferson Davis, Vols. VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X. Also, of value on the subject are the many letters written by Johnston to his wife during the War. These are among the large collection of his private papers in possession of one of his granddaughters, Mrs. Mason Harret of Louisville.}
\[22\text{W. P. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, May 13, 1862.}
\[22\text{W. P. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, June 2, 1862.}
from the field on a stretcher, having been wounded for the tenth
time in career. 23 At still another time he wrote of the encourage-
ment which he had received from General Lee as they stood on a
field where a battle had been fought a few days before. As they
talked, an enemy balloon watched them from perhaps a distance of
two miles. "I wish," wrote Johnston, "we could throw a shell
through the ugly spider's bag." 24 And he referred again to the
efforts of ambitious persons to secure promotions.

Some of Colonel Johnston's assignments and experiences during
the War included the following: In the spring of 1865 he again
visited the Army of Tennessee in the West and discussed with Gen-
eral Polk the desirability of placing General Joseph E. Johnston
in command of the army, of which General Bragg was then the chief
officer. 25 As the President's representative, he reviewed Polk's
troops and expressed himself as highly pleased with them. 26 In
October, 1863, he was with Davis at Missionary Ridge, 27 and in
May of the following year he and the President were present at the
Battle of Drewry's Bluff. 28 Upon one occasion he exerted his
influence with President Davis and General Cooper, the chief of

W. F. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, June 1, 1862.
W. F. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, June 3, (year not indicated).
Wm. M. Polk, Leonidas Polk: Bishop and General, (2 Vols) New
L. Polk to Mrs. Polk, Mar. 30, 1863, in W. M. Polk, Leonidas
Polk, Vol II, pp. 203-204.
W. M. Owen, In Camp and Battle with the Washington Artillery
Ibid., p. 318.
staff, to allow the reorganization of Morgan's famous cavalry unit instead of permitting it to be absorbed in the infantry. At another time he probably exerted similar influence to bring about the searching of "blockade runners, caught in the lines, bearing sealed letters to the North." His duties and responsibilities were numerous and varied; and as the War progressed he became embittered by the cruelties of the struggle. The following is taken from a letter to his wife:

I think I will always be cheerful and content if I can have you but I fear I shall never be the same again that I was before the Flood. The War has entered my soul. The track of blood is across every memory and I hate. This hate I trust to curb that I may feel and do no more than duty requires. I am willing to leave the cruel and perfidious Yankees in the hands of a Kuler juster as well as more merciful than I am, but I want to see them no more and hear of them no more. In Tennessee we learn that they have arrested the guard of a flag of truce and are going to execute them as spies. We will execute two commissioned officers for one. Every day we approach nearer to the black flag, and they must quit or make it war to the knife.

Such a spirit was not in keeping with Johnston's nature.

No evidence on this point is necessary here, and the following incident, which was related by one of his Yale classmates the

31 W. P. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, (undated).
year after Johnston's death, is not presented as such, but as an
interesting testimonial from a Northern friend:

In 1861, a friend of mine, Richard C.
Eggleston, enlisted as sergeant in Co. K.,
14th N. Y., and was tent-mate with my cousin,
also a sergeant. He (Eggleston) gradually
rose to a captaincy in another regiment
(25th N. Y.) and on May 27, 1862, at the bat-
tle of Hanover Courthouse, was seriously
wounded in the shoulder, and taken to a
Richmond hospital. The brother of Boies
('52) had married Eggleston's sister; so
Boies wrote an open letter to Johnston to
look after Eggleston, and sent it to me ask-
ing me to join him in this request, as I
was in the U. S. service, running a hospital
transport, first on the York and after on
the James River, and could get it through
the lines. Johnston was at Richmond on
President Davis' staff. He wrote me at
Aiken's Landing, under flag of truce that
Eggleston's arm had been amputated, and he
had died in hospital. He had him buried in
Hollywood Cemetery, one of two Federal
officers buried there, and had had his grave
marked.

In 1865, as soon as one could enter
Richmond, Capt. Whitlock, a relative, and
myself went to Hollywood and found the grave
marked by Johnston. One does not forget
such things! In Johnston's letter was one
sentence which always dwelt in my memory:
"I will gladly do anything I can to spare
a pang to any mother's heart," separating
in thought the men in battle-line against
his cause from "the enemy," and evincing a
chivalrous devotion to women, which is pecu-
liarily American.32

It was near the time of the occurrence just related that
Johnston, while living in the home of the President, was present

32Supplement to Vol. IX, Record of the Class of 1852, Yale
University, 1900, (related by Dubois) pp. 13-14.
at an interesting conference between Mr. Davis and Walker Taylor, the latter of whom presented a daring and plausible plan for the abduction of President Lincoln from Washington. At the conclusion of the discussion, Davis refused to grant authority for the attempt and stated his reasons:

In the first place, I suppose Lincoln to be a man of courage. He has been in Indian wars, and is a Western man. He would undoubtedly resist being captured. In that case you would kill him. I could not stand the imputation of having consented to let Mr. Lincoln be assassinated. Our cause could not stand it. Besides, what value would He be to us as a prisoner? Lincoln is not the Government or the Federal power. He is merely the political instrument there. If he were brought to Richmond, what could I do with him? He would have to be treated like the magistrate of the North, and we have neither the time nor the provision... 33

Johnston relates also that he was present at a conference which occurred at the headquarters of General Magruder on the day after the Battle of Seven Pines. On this occasion one officer asserted that the Confederate forces could not be maintained north of the James River, to which General Lee replied that "those arguments would carry us to the Gulf of Mexico." 34

During the first three years of his service with the Confederacy Johnston's wife and children lived at several places: 35 first, at

35 Letters of Johnston and his wife to each other, 1861, 1862, 1863.
Nashville, then at Marietta, Georgia, and finally at Jetersville, Virginia, which was close enough to Richmond for Johnston to make occasional visits with them. During the last year of the War, the Johnstons were together in Richmond. In July of 1864, Mrs. Johnston gave birth to a daughter, Margaret Wickliffe. At the time of her confinement Mrs. Johnston's mother was seriously ill; and so great was her anxiety on this account that she kept her bed for only eight days, and from that time until two weeks before Mrs. Duncan's death on September 13 she had the entire care of her baby and her mother. It is not surprising that when writing to her cousins that fall, she said, "I have had a most trying summer...." Mrs. Duncan died "after a long and distressful illness," and Mrs. Johnston's account of her passing is an interesting revelation of the family's situation at that time:

...She was more than reconciled to die and prayed earnestly to be released if it was God's will. Indeed ever since Alick's death, life had been a burden to her. That blow seemed to break her heart....I wish you would write to poor John. I fear my letter will not reach him. She spoke of him at the last and said he was her only care. Tell him when this terrible struggle is over I will see him if God spares us. I do not blame the poor boy but wish so earnestly that he was with us. It was a great grief to Ma (but you must not tell him so). If she had dreamed of the extent of this war she would have brought him South. When we left Ky, we thought we would return in a few months and we desired to keep him safe and out of the War....Lawson is with me and not very well. His health has not been strong since he was wounded....
You will be comforted to know that she had every comfort—Mr. Johnston was fortunate in procuring all that was needful and grateful.36

After Mrs. Duncan's death, Johnston, upon the advice of his family doctor, took his wife to the mountains for a visit with his relatives, from which she returned some weeks later much improved in health.37 Her improvement was especially fortunate at that time, for during the succeeding months which brought the collapse of the Confederacy and the imprisonment of her husband, she was to endure other severe trials and anxieties.

During his service as a member of the President's staff Johnston enjoyed an intimate association with the Davis family. The warm affection which they had for him was fully returned, and the climax of the civil tragedy cemented their loyalty to each other.

Following the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox, Colonel Johnston sought to bolster the spirits of Mrs. Davis with a letter in which he assured her that although "the disaster of Lee's army is extreme," there was still strong hope of successful resistance. "The loss of an army is not the loss of our cause," he wrote. "There is still a great deal of fight in us yet."38

36 Rosa Johnston to her cousins (names and place of residence not indicated), Oct. 14, 1864. (Mason Mss.)
37 Ibid.
Slightly less than a month later, President Davis and his family, together with a small group of close associates who made up the party, were captured by Federal soldiers near Irwinville, Georgia. Among those captured with Davis were Colonel William Preston Johnston and Colonel F. R. Lubbock, aides-de-camp on the President's staff; Colonel Burton Harrison, his private secretary; John H. Reagan, Postmaster-General of the Confederacy; and young Jefferson Davis Howell, Mrs. Davis' brother. The courage and loyalty with which Johnston followed and shared the misfortunes of his leader reflect the highest credit upon him as a friend and as an officer.

Colonel Lubbock relates the following incident which occurred a few days before the capture and before the President's party had joined the little group consisting of Mrs. Davis and her children, who were accompanied by Burton Harrison and a small escort.

Preston Johnston remained in Sandersville to transact some business. Judge Reagan and myself also stopped subsequently to reclaim one of our horses which had been stolen. When we met Colonel Johnston again he said that he had some very important intelligence for the President, and that he must hasten to him. The news was that he had reason to believe that Mrs. Davis and party were on a parallel road with us a few miles across the country, and that a band of deserters and discharged soldiers were following her train with the view of robbing it of the mules and horses, and probably of their subsistence.

"Colonel," said I, "these rumors may be incorrect; your report may change the plans of Mr. Davis. Burton Harrison is with Mrs. Davis; he will take care of her, and we had better not stop to look after the train."

"Colonel," he promptly replied, "I have been with Mr. Davis and his family a long time; I know him better than you do. He would never forgive me if I should withhold this information from him. He would say, 'It was your duty to give me the facts, and let me decide the course I should take.' So saying he pushed on.40

When the information was conveyed to Mr. Davis, he promptly changed direction and rode rapidly across the country to overtake his family. Three days after the juncture of the two parties, the capture occurred.41 According to a statement of Colonel Johnston, he himself was the first person captured.42 In a letter which he wrote to Major W. T. Walthall, more than a dozen years later, he gave the following account, which is interesting not only because of the details relating to the incident but also because of the writer's testimony regarding allegations which were made throughout the North that Davis attempted to escape capture by disguising himself as a woman:

On the night of the 9th, I was very much worn out with travel and watching, and lay down at the foot of a pine tree to sleep.

Just at gray dawn, Mr. Davis's servant, Jim, awakened me. He said: "Colonel, do you

40 R. Lubbock, Six Decades in Texas, pp. 569-570.
hear that firing?" I sprang up and said, "Run and wake the President." Hearing nothing as I pulled on my boots, I walked to the campfire, some fifty or less steps off, and asked the cook if Jim was not mistaken. At this moment I saw eight or ten men charging down the road toward me. I thought they were guerrillas, trying to stampede the stock. I ran to my saddle, where I had slept, and began unfastening the holster to get out my revolver, but they were too quick for me. Three men rode up and demanded my pistol, which, as soon as I got out, I gave to the leader, a bright slim, soldierly fellow, dressed in Confederate-grey clothes. The same man I believe captured Colonels Wood and Lubbock just after.

...After about ten minutes, maybe more, my guard left me, and I walked over to Mr. Davis's tent about fifty yards off. Mrs. Davis was in great distress.

Mr. Davis was dressed as usual. He had on a knit woolen visor, which he always wore at night for neuralgia. He wore cavalry boots. He complained of chilliness, and said they had taken away his "raglan," (I believe they were so called) a light aquascutum or spring overcoat, sometimes called a "water-proof." I had one exactly similar, except in color. I went to look for it, and either I, or someone at my instance, found it, and he wore it afterwards. His own was not restored.

As I was looking for this coat, the firing still continuing, I met a mounted officer, who, if I am not mistaken, was Captain Hudson. Feeling that the cause was lost and not wishing useless bloodshed, I said to him: "Captain, your men are fighting each other over yonder." He answered very positively: "You have an armed escort." I replied: "You have our whole camp; I know your men are fighting each other. We have nobody on that side of the slough." He then rode off. Colonel
Lubbock had a conversation nearly identical with Colonel Pritchard, who was not polite, I believe.

After describing an altercation between Mr. Davis and Colonel Pritchard, in which the President was denunciatory in his remarks, Johnston continues:

I had not seen Mr. Davis's capture. I was with him until we parted at Fortress Monroe. Personally, I was treated with as much respect as I cared for. The officers were rather gushing than otherwise, and talked freely. Some were coarse men, and talked of everything; but I never heard of Mr. Davis's alleged disguise until I saw it in a New York Herald, the day I got to Fort Delaware. I was astonished, and denounced it as a falsehood. The next day I was placed in solitary confinement, and remained there. I do not believe it possible that these ten days could have been passed with our captors without an allusion to it, if it had not been an afterthought or something to be kept from us.

In the plundering of the party, which took place after the capture, the Federal soldiers took from Colonel Johnston about fifteen hundred dollars in gold. Finding the money an uncomfortable burden to carry about his person, he had placed it in his holsters; and there his captors found it. Some of his associates were more fortunate in this regard, notably Colonel Lubbock, who managed to keep the fifteen hundred dollars which he carried.

43Southern Historical Society Papers, Mar. 1878, pp. 120-121.
The Federal troops took also Johnston's horse and saddle, with the trappings and pistols, which his father had used at the Battle of Shiloh.  

The captured party under guard of Colonel Critchard and a detail of officers and men proceeded to Macon, where they arrived on May 13. At daylight the next morning they reached Atlanta by train, and traveled to Augusta on the same day. After a series of transfers from one steamer to another, the party was finally put aboard the steamer Clyde, which, under convoy of the sloop-of-war Tuscarora, arrived off Fortress Monroe, Virginia, at noon on the 19th.  

In addition to the persons who were captured with Davis, the party now included Vice-President Stephens, the Honorable C. C. Clay, and General Joseph Wheeler, all of whom had joined the group at Augusta. Davis and Clay were imprisoned at Fortress Monroe; and in the distribution of other members of the party among various prisons, Colonel Johnston, Colonel Lubbock, and General Wheeler were conveyed to Fort Delaware, near Philadelphia, where each was placed in solitary confinement. Strict orders from the War Department prohibited all communication with or between Colonels Lubbock and Johnston. The prisoners were confined in iron-bound rooms

and were closely guarded. For exercise they were permitted to walk for a half hour each morning on the parapet of the fort, attended by a guard.47 Colonel Lubbock records the following newspaper description of Johnston during his imprisonment:

A Philadelphia paper in speaking of Colonel Preston Johnston, described him as being a tall, commanding-looking man, with large gray eyes, and military mien. "While enjoying his morning walk on the rampart," said the paper, "he moves very rapidly to and fro, evidently determined that his health shall not suffer for all the exercise he can get."48

Although Johnston was forbidden to write or receive letters, he did manage to write at least one communication to his wife, which was delivered to her. There is an element of irony in the fact that it was written on July 4. However, the celebration of this holiday by those in charge of the prison may have rendered it possible for Johnston to do on that day what he could not do on ordinary days. The full text of the letter is as follows:

My Dearest Wife,

I know not if you have heard from me, my only chances of writing being clandestine. I am forbidden the use of writing materials. I have been in solitary confinement since May 23rd, 6 weeks today. We are not allowed to speak to each other, Col. Lubbock and myself and a Capt. Hardin (?) who is confined here. I am not allowed to read newspapers or letters and am not even allowed plenty of exercise—a walk of 60 steps & back on the parapet, one hour or two a day. I am not suffering in health, but the monotony

48 Ibid., p. 585.
& mental weariness for want of any society
whatever is now my chief trouble together
with my ignorance of the fate of those I
love. I trust in God to protect & succor
you & trust that my adversity may bring me
nearer to him than my prosperity did. I am
most anxious to see you again & my dear children
or at least to hear of you. I wrote to [illegible]
Speed about a month ago, appealing to his for-
mer friendship. I do not know whether Genl.
Schoepf let my letter go, but I got no answer.
We are told we are kept as witnesses. If so,
the date of the court's trial being uncertain,
try to get me released by giving my evidence
in examination under parole as a prisoner &
also under heavy bonds to appear as a witness
when wanted. This would avoid my taking the
oath of allegiance which I do not wish to take
until I know the court's wishes & views, but
I feel I will never be released till I do.
Do all you can to get me out; no one can con-
ceive how miserable is our fate who has not
tried it. I read my Bible & Prayer book,
study Ollendorf's (?) French most of the
time. I have now access to other books. We
are not treated so rigorously as at first.
There are only 16 prisoners and four of them
in my fix. I had $70 in gold when I came
here & have $30 left. I will therefore need
some. We have to pay for everything except
bread & cold beef often tainted. The prices
are very high. Put $30 or $40 for me with the
Commandant of Post if you are allowed & also
send me two pr. of drawers, 2 cotton under-
shirts & a pair of pants and a pair of shoes.
If permitted write to me. Perhaps the Gov't.
at Washington may relax that much. I think
of you & the children all the time, my dearest
wife. Your daguerreotype comforts me much
but it weakens my heart. I have no plans for
the future for I have no data to go on. You
may make a plan, assign me a part & I will
try to perform it. Your happiness (too much
neglected by me) is my only wish. All is
lost even national honor. I am a broken man.
I bear no malice to our conquerors. Our own
vices subdued us. God knows best. I tried
to do my whole duty. I still want to do what
is right.
My faith in God's providence (sorely tried) is unshaken. We cannot see the end, but he will sustain those who do not fall away. One chief concern with me is for the Prest. I pray for him often, often. You are in my petitions every hour.

Kiss my dear, dear children & do not let me forget them. [sig]. If I am spared, I look for much happiness in them. They are my treasures. My faith in you is certain, my love greater than ever. I live in the past, I can see no future. If I have one, I will devote it to you. I am willing to do anything to support you. Ambition is dead. All ties are sundered & I am thine only as I have been--

faithfully

Yr. Husband.

Johnston received no letters from his wife, but the commanding officer in charge of Fort Delaware was not lacking in sympathy and consideration, as the following letter, which he wrote to Mrs. Johnston, indicates:

Dear Madam

I received yours of the 9th inst. and in reply I am happy to inform you that your husband is well and would be satisfied with his lot, but for your and children's sake. I informed him where you are and also that you are well. Your writing to him is beyond my power to grant.

Any means you may send to him please send to my address by Express.

49 W. P. Johnston to Rosa Johnston, July 4, 1865.
You may be assured that all consistent with my status will be done in his case.

Yours Respectfully,

A. Schoepf. 50

On July 19, 1865, Johnston took the oath of allegiance to the United States and was released from Fort Delaware.51 Evidently the formalities incidental to his release were not completed until later, for an item in a Louisville paper on August 6, carried the information that on the preceding day Colonel Johnston had been released at New York "on the ground of being a rebel officer and entitled to be placed on the same footing with other officers."52

Having been set free, Colonel Johnston followed the course which many other prominent Confederate officers pursued during those troublous times, and left the country. Accompanied by his family he went to Montreal, Canada, where he resided for several months. Among the other exiles living there was Mrs. Jefferson Davis' mother, who, since the middle of the summer, had been caring for the Davis children.53 After being separated from her husband at Fortress Monroe, Mrs. Davis and her children had been conveyed by the Federal authorities to Savannah, Georgia. Here the wife of the prisoner was closely guarded and suffered acutely both because of her own unhappy surroundings and because of her

50 A. Schoepf to Rosa Johnston, July 13, 1865.
51 Record of W. T. Johnston, U. S. War Department.
52 Louisville Daily Democrat, Aug. 6, 1865.
anxiety for her husband. Fearing that the indignities which the family were forced to endure might seriously injure the natures of her children, Mrs. Davis sent the three older ones to her mother, keeping only her baby, Winnie, with her. Although she herself was not permitted to leave Georgia, she received permission to move from Savannah to Mill View, a country place near Augusta. During the months that she was under military restraint and was excluded from association with her former friends, she exerted her energies in behalf of her husband. To influential persons in the North, who sympathized with Mr. Davis' situation, she wrote letters of an intensely appealing nature. Although strongly emotional in character, and at times indignant in tone, these communications were of necessity marked by some restraint of feeling. No such control, however, is manifest in the letter which she wrote in the early autumn to Colonel Johnston. This letter, directed to Johnston at Montreal, was intended for him only, and because of this fact is notably revealing not only as regards the frank statements of circumstances related but also as regards the emotional state of the writer. Mrs. Davis, then at Mill View, wrote as follows:

My dearest Friend

Mr. O'Conor sent me your message about my children and though in the absence of a note from you, during all these weary months of

54 Ibid., pp. 456-464.
oppressive exhausting uncertainties, and
terrific inevitable woe, I have sometimes
wept you as forgetful, still, I could not
forget that friendship as I understand it,
means that patience that forbears, that mercy
that extenuates, that tenderness that forgives,
and wanting these, there is no sacredness in
friendship and no meaning in the word. There­
fore I questioned you, even arraigned you to
my aching heart, then it arose and plead for
you, so here I am writing to beg you to write
to me—I am so overwhelmed with the sense of
newness, all the memories of yesterday seem
swept away, and all the familiar faces too.
I am a prisoner, and a stranger in a strange
country—and though like the Brobdingnagians
they are kind, and hospitable, it is not the
manner of my own people, and though pervaded
with gratitude, I ever plead at the bar of
my cruel oppressors for a permit to go to my
own. I crave a line from those I love, the
uncertainties of the dreadful position seem
to have swept away all my land marks, and I
do not know how high the tide may swell—I
know that "the tender grace of a day that is
dead, can never come back to me," but I may
steal a beam from other suns occasionally if
I know my friends joys and cares. Your message
was the first tiding of my children since the
week after they left. I had wept myself ill,
written another imploring letter to Mr. Johnson
to let me go, and was quite exhausted when
your letter came. I am not as strong to bear
as I was for I am quite out of health from a
residence in a Southern climate. Do not ask
me to tell you the chapter of petty tyrannies—
it would avail you nothing, it would grieve
me—know that I have been torn like Prometheus
bound, without his divine power to endure.
I have been "purified, yet as by fire." Ma
has told you I presume somewhat of it. How
are people who thus torture women to stand
in future history? Second Washingtons I
presume. No man of my kin or even of my friends
came to me until the last three weeks, when
Joe Davis came announcing that I could not be
found before—it cut me to the quick. Billy
aldered and belied me—and strictly between
us I am afraid took public money, and went
to Canada, giving Sample the slip who had
given him $25,000 of it to keep. Sample keeps the rest, feels bound to do so. The liars (?) would not let Clarke do anything with the trunks, and shared out the money between them, Wat(?), taking twelve thousand more than the rest, saying that he would come to me, and give it to me—and then never even wrote. Clarke did come, and affectionately urged upon me his services, he is the only man that has that I ever saw before. So much my dear Friend for the sympathy of friends—but new ones are being raised up to me.

[A page of the letter is missing here.]

The poor old lady abuses Dr. Stuart roundly. Do sit down and tell me all you know—explain everything. I have had no letters. How is your wife—your children, my child, little Maggie P.—is she pretty as ever? Do not bury me out of sympathy's range—how is Henry, last not least, how is my very dear Mr. Preston—I am sure of him. Did you receive any letters from me in prison? I know you thought of me—tell me of John Wood, Lola,—Mrs. Wood, and tell me of my Maggie. Take her on your knee and talk with her, and tell me what she says—tell her how her poor Mother longs for her—tell her how her poor Father sends even from out of his prison bars, sighs deep and long for his darling. Johnston dear, “my sun has gone out while yet it is day.”

I have two letters from Jeff—but he has as yet received none of mine—he is intensely anxious, and the wretches have told him nothing—pretend at the very time that I am a prisoner in their hands that they cannot find me. Both letters breathe the utmost resignation, a holy peace, and grand fortitude, which command my reverence, and admiration more than any moral spectacle I have ever witnessed. He is evidently a little hurt that no one has defended his good name. He says, “I cannot know, as only an occasional newspaper is given to me, whether any replies are made to the fictitious published in regard
to myself; as their effect is not merely to prejudge public opinion against myself, but extends likewise to those associated with me, it would not seem probable that even the timidity of the present day would keep silent all, whose justification is the truth." He has been very ill but is well again. I have offered again and again to live in prison with him, to take a parole not to tell him anything about the public. I cannot get leave to go out of Georgia, and Hog Bruce---I write the name with gusto---the Hog, told me if I escaped, I should never be allowed to come back---that he had been officially so informed---think of being advised by the Hog---talking over with him in the presence of a Yankee who he brought to listen without telling me his name or nature the manacling of my Husband. He went away and wrote me a fierce note, the wretched pork. Where is Robert? He does not speak of him, where can he be? Can he have left her---I am very kindly treated here, and very much loved by my new friends. I love them, but they aren't "my ain lassies, though dear those lassies be." When you write, direct your letters to Mr. George Schley---Augusta, Ga., and the inner envelope for me---then I will receive it. Write me a part of the long talk I long for and keep my letter to yourself. I am too unstrung for anyone but you to see my letter---possess yourself of its contents and tear it up. Tell me in your return letter of your outer, and inner life---of all your interests, your future.

My baby is very sweet, and "cunning" as women say. She learns to talk in sentences. She listens attentively to sound, and then imitates it so that the words seem articulated. She walks pretty well---and comforts me for occupation, and it is her vocation. I had nearly forgotten to ask you how Ma is off for funds---and to tell you that I have no certain future.
Love to yours—separately, and for you “Ask me no more.”

I am ever devotedly your friend,

Varina Davis.

P. S. Have you thought of our quarrel on the road. I have, and it has made a painful impression, a longing to be forgiven. I was unjust, but so goaded I could not tell the difference—a touch seemed a stab. When I am ill at heart, I am wild, and vagaries possess me.

"Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise."

This apology comes hard, value it. My precious Husband would send you love if he could know I am writing. How about Jordan’s abuse in Harpers? Will nobody strip off the lion’s skin? What a brute—what a jackal—The lion is not dead, the apes had better wait, neither are his teeth or claws gone.

Johnston’s situation as an exile was naturally not a happy one. He was anxious to return to his home city of Louisville and re-establish himself. His former partner, Worthington, who like him, had cast his lot with the Confederacy, was back in Louisville; and from him Johnston sought counsel and assistance concerning the possibility of a pardon. In the latter part of November, 1865, Worthington wrote that he had little fear of Johnston’s being arrested if he returned, but that he hesitated to advise him. By early spring of 1866 Johnston felt that it was safe to return, and after stopping in New Haven for a little

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55 Varina Davis to W. P. Johnston, Oct. 3, 1865.
56 A letter from Worthington to Johnston, Dec. 15, 1862, contains the information that the writer had been paroled at Yazoo City, Miss.
57 S. S. Worthington to W. P. Johnston, Nov. 4, 1865.
58 E. S. Worthington to W. P. Johnston, Nov. 27, 1865.
visit with a friend, he came back to Louisville with his family and resumed the practice of law. According to one of his classmates, "he returned to find that his Northern friends who had known him before the War loved him as well as ever," and with the combined support his friends in the North and the South his prospects were good for securing lucrative law practice, "but his health could not endure the strain which comes upon a successful lawyer."

If Johnston's former friends in the North were willing to forget and forgive everything relating to the bitter struggle, he himself was not—at least, not in every instance. In September following his return to Louisville, he received from Charles K. Bliss of Philadelphia, one of his Yale classmates, a cordial, but rather tactless letter, in which the writer expressed a desire to re-establish contact with all of his Southern friends of college days. The part of the letter which gave particular offense to Johnston was that containing an unfavorable reference to one of his best friends, Vincent Marmaduke of Missouri, who had entered Yale in the same term that he had. According to Bliss' letter, Marmaduke, who had served with the Confederate forces, was reported to have conducted himself in a dishonorable manner, and was...

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59 Handwritten notation in D. C. Gilman's personal copy of Second Biographical Record, Class of 1852 in Yale College, 1862. (Library of Yale U.)
60 On June 20, 1866, Geo. K. Speed, deputy collector of the U. S. Revenue Department presented Johnston with a bill for his license to practice law to May 1, 1866. (Johnston's papers).
61 Cooper, p. 18.
punished by imprisonment in the Dry Tortugas. "Perhaps we do not understand his case," stated the writer, "but as I learned it, he violated his parole and was also engaged in a dishonorable attempt to release the Chicago prisoners of war."62

It seems likely that Johnston did not answer this communication, for upon the outside of the envelope containing it, he wrote a bitter comment, which, besides discrediting the report of Marmaduke's offense and punishment, reveals the rancor which his own sufferings had induced in his spirit. The notation reads:

Why does this man write to me? Our ways are far apart. He pretends great affection, but brags that he has been in the War, that he has been to the Pittsburg Convention (admittedly breathing slaughter) and while he hears Marmaduke is in that horrible hole of Hell sanhimoniously regrets his wickedness. Thank God, Marmaduke is not there, but at home. Why can't these Yankee thieves be satisfied with robbing & killing us, without also being intimate with us? They seem to think that the wish to degrade us is no ban to friendly intercourse. But this letter unworthy of an answer or even of this comment I keep as a specimen of the genuine Puritan.63

It should be noted here that the temper exhibited by Johnston in the comment given above does not indicate his later attitude toward his Northern college mates. He enjoyed the deepest friendships with a number of them, some of whom rendered him valuable service; and the messages which he generally sent to his classmates

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62Chas. N. Bliss to W. F. Johnston, Sept. 30, 1866.
63Envelope of Bliss' letter to Johnston.
when a group of them held their reunion at New Haven each fifth year reflect a warm regard.

On August 8, 1866, the Johnstons' sixth and last child, Caroline Hancock, was born. Johnston's financial needs were acute, and he felt it necessary to take up some occupation other than the law in order to support himself and his family. In the midst of his perplexities, he received a letter from Mrs. Jefferson Davis, who was then at Fortress Monroe. This letter is interesting for the information which it contains regarding Johnston's situation and his hopes for the future, as well as for the generous offer of assistance which the writer made. Mrs. Davis' characteristic impulsiveness and her penchant for free expression are likewise manifest in this communication, the full text of which follows:

My dear Friend:

Your sad letter gives me the first inkling of your cumulative troubles. Why not have told me before the removal of the money which you held in trust for us. All or any part of my means, or any that we might ever have is at your service. I can lend you as it is a thousand dollars which is not invested except upon call, and you need pay no interest. I can very well understand Mrs. Johnston's spirits being low with her little helpless children, and that miserable Kentucky people to confront who will not help the son of the greatest man who ever lived in their state, and the purest too—-I broke with Kentucky when you were defeated for

clerk of the court. You may have successfully defended Kentucky to Otton [?] Williams, but don't you dare to do it to me—it is a Beast. I will say it is a miserable half horse, half alligator slough of despond for honest men. I pray God that you may get the Professorship of the college—Mrs. Johnston would be happier I think with a nice home in Virginia. The wee's must help you in the matter. If you do not succeed there in being elected perhaps some Georgia college will offer such a place— my offer of a thousand dollars is not an idle one. Mr. Burn has it in New Orleans, and I can have it in twenty days in Louisville, and oh how more than welcome you, and yours will be to it. However I am getting quite worked up— you believe me, so I need say no more— My heart is with Mrs. Johnston, and you in your weary anxieties, give my love to her, and say that I grieve that mine was not the only dark day to which the fall of the country did not put a termination. We are about as usual here—Nothing new, nothing certain—All as misty and as anxious as ever—Shuffling, and Truckling; seen the order of the day—I have been reading a little, but do not remember what after it is read. Sewing a little, but rip it out, knitting a little, but ravel it out, talking a little, but unsaying everything— We have a great deal of company, some of those are pleasant who take such trouble to see us— I have learned to swim very well, so as to save this eminently hopeful, and cheerful life of mine in case of accident or perhaps the deluge may be after me—Now is not that stupid— I wrote to your Uncle William weeks ago—Did he get the letter—Please ask him. Mr. Davis is not so strong as he was during the last few weeks—I am afraid his health is permanently injured. He is always calm and quiet. Since Genl. Burton came into position here, he has been very civil, and kind to me and to him— his wife, is a sympathetic warm hearted talented Mexican woman who is very angry with the Yankees about Mexican affairs, and we get together quietly and abuse them—though to say truth since Miles' departure all here are kind to us, and considerate. I hear from Canada
quite often, had a letter today—They have a small house, and I hope will get on very well—Mrs. Buck Allen is in Montreal now. Mrs. Scotch Allen, and her sister Mrs. Randolph came down to see me a few days ago—I expect Mary (?) Brodieer (?) and Joe L. tomorrow—They are in Washington now. Belle Harrison is to marry Rooney Lee it is said. Tell Mrs. Johnston to send a piece of one of her colored silk dresses the size of the scrap I send, a piece of Mrs. Preston's, and each of her girls—a piece of Henny's as well—I do not care for more than one square—I am making a quilt, and each square is to be a memory of better days—the oldest fashioned silk she has will do. This is my first symptom of the sore and yellow leaf which has been content with my body, and until now left my mind untarnished—Love to Henny and the children, and believe me devotedly

Your friend

V. Davis

She is the sweetest brightest child I ever saw. She is as much company for us as a grown person.

Before the end of the year Johnston was elected to the faculty of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia, where General Robert E. Lee was beginning his brief but important administration as president. In the early part of the following year he moved with his family to his new home and took up his duties as professor of English and History. Had he remained a lawyer,

65 Varina Davis to W. F. Johnston, September 27, 1866.
66 Minutes, Board of Trustees, Washington College, February 13, 1867.
67 Lexington Gazette and Banner, February 13, 1867.
his success might soon have been considerable, for shortly before he left Louisville for the Virginia College, he received a letter from his cousin and former schoolmate, Randall L. Gibson of New Orleans, inviting him to come to that city and take up the practice of law as his partner. The prospects which the writer held forth were attractive:

...After the first year, your income would enable you to live comfortably with your family and to spend your summers say from the first of July when the Courts close to the first of November when they open—in the upper country. I say this after considering all the pros and cons—all the ifs and buts—from a near view of the field of operations, of the influences that control it and a just estimate of your own resources and taste.

However, Johnston was not destined to share the distinguished legal career which his generous friend and kinsman achieved. His connection with Washington College was the beginning of a period of educational service, which, except for a comparatively brief interruption, lasted continuously until his death more than thirty years later.

68 R. L. Gibson to W. P. Johnston, January 17, 1867.
CHAPTER VI

AT WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

When the name of William Preston Johnston was placed before the Board of Trustees of Washington College, the circumstances were propitious for his election. His position on the staff of President Davis during the war had given him frequent associations with General Lee, who was therefore well acquainted with him. Also, some years before the war, Lee had served as Lieutenant-Colonel in the cavalry regiment which Johnston's father commanded; and during the critical time immediately preceding General Johnston's death, his former officer had manifested the fullest sympathy with his situation and a strong confidence in his ability to properly acquit himself. More important perhaps than this was the support which Colonel Johnston had from influential friends in Louisville who admired him as a man and a scholar, and who were interested in securing some financial assistance in Kentucky for Washington College. Some of these friends were former officers in the Confederate army and had been associated with both Johnston and his father. It would be difficult to find stronger testimonials than the ones which they forwarded.

1 W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 185.
2 Ibid., pp. 551-552.
in Johnston's behalf to Judge John W. Brockenbrough, the
president of the Board, and to General Lee. The following
letter was signed jointly by two Louisville citizens, each of
whom had formerly occupied the position of Chief Justice of
the Supreme Court of Kentucky:

During the recent visit of Colonels Christian and Allen to Kentucky in
reference to the affairs of Washington College, a visit which created much in-
terest with our people, it was made
known to us, by personal friends, that,
in all probability the name of our
fellow citizen and friend, Colonel
William Preston Johnston, of this city,
but late of Richmond, Va., would be
presented to the Board of Trustees for
that institution as a suitable incum-
bent for the now vacant Chair of History, etc.

As an act of justice, and a testimony
of the regard in which we hold Colonel
Johnston, we deem it proper, respectfully,
to express, for ourselves and the people
of the State, the satisfaction which his
appointment would give throughout Kentucky.

Before the war we knew him as a member
of the Louisville Bar of honorable stand-
ing and as a gentleman of refined and
cultivated mind---of liberal endowments and
of pure and incorruptible life---we feel
assured that he would make a useful and
highly acceptable member of your faculty.

Another view in regard to the appoint-
ment of Colonel Johnston we venture to
present for your consideration. No man
has a stronger hold upon the affections of
the people of this State than our friend,
and the knowledge of the fact of his
promotion to the position, referred to,
would at once arrest the attention of our
people and commend, in the most effectual
way, the claims of the Institution to
their notice. The influence of such an
appointment in this and other Southwestern
States would, in our judgment, be highly
beneficial to Washington College.

It is hoped that our commendation
of Col. Johnston will be received as
coming from those who are friendly to
your great and praiseworthy scheme, and
in sympathy with the Southern people in
their efforts to build up institutions of
learning and all other institutions of
usefulness.

Very Respectfully yours,

Henry J. Stites
Alvin Duvall

A few days after this letter was sent to the president
of the Board, General E. Kirby Smith directed one to General
Lee. Like Lee, General Smith had served under Albert Sidney
Johnston in the years before the War. Concerning Colonel
Johnston he wrote:

a desire that the claims of my
friend Coln. Preston Johnston to the
vacant chair of History should be well
understood by the Faculty will I trust
excuse me for intruding in the affairs
of your college.

Of the character, qualifications,
and social position of Coln. Johnston
I shall say nothing—they are well known
to you—but I wish you to appreciate
the influence this appointment will
have on the schools in the State.

4W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 185.
The population, wealth and affinities of her people make Kentucky a field which should naturally be drawn upon in support of Washington College. Its popularity already great in the State, from your connection with it as President, will be increased by Coln. Johnston's appointment, and patronage of the Ky. schools more largely secured. The friends and connections of Coln. Johnston are numerous throughout the State, and I am satisfied they will liberally contribute to the endowment of the chair to which he might be elected. In Louisville alone, I am assured $10,000 will at once be given, and $20,000 may be expected. The impoverished and exhausted condition of our country and her institutions will I trust excuse me for referring to pecuniary advantages in an appointment recommended by so many other considerations.

I remain sincerely

Your Friend and Obt. Sevt.

E. Kirby Smith

Other persons of importance in Louisville, who wrote in Johnston's behalf were Thomas W. Bullitt, General I. M. St. John, former commissary-general of the Confederacy, and John N. Galleher, a former soldier in the Confederate Army and later associated with Judge Brockenbrough in the practice of law. Still later he was to enter the Episcopal Ministry and be elevated to the office of bishop, serving in this capacity in Louisiana where he was again thrown into contact with Johnston and was able to give him valuable assistance. Bullitt

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wrote that "the very pure and exalted character of the man, with a liberal and cultivated mind, we have thought would render him eminently useful and acceptable as a professor." St. John was strong in his endorsement, and referred in a complimentary manner to Johnston's character and attainments, touching also upon the sacrifices which he had made for the Confederate cause. Galleher's letter was equally as strong, as the following brief except will indicate:

He is widely known as a gentleman of lofty character, and irreproachable life, and there is no man in Kentucky who stands higher than Wm. Preston Johnston in the estimation of his fellows as to his scholarly qualifications, I say much when I add that his life has been spent among books and that he is a man of too much pride and honesty to seek or accept a position whose duties he could not faithfully perform.

The interest expressed by these writers in Colonel Johnston and in Washington College had the desired result, for on October 12, the Board of Trustees met in special session "to consider the propriety of calling a general meeting for the purpose of proceeding without further delay to fill the chair of History and English Literature." The Board requested that the general meeting should be held on November 15, "to give earnest consideration to this matter, owing to the fact

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6 T. W. Bullitt to J. W. Brockenbrough, Sept. 28, 1866.
that from various and eminent sources, our attention has been
turned to a distinguished gentleman from Kentucky, as one
peculiarly accomplished in this very department." The Board
also expressed itself as quite prepared to tender the appointment
to Colonel Johnston, except for the difficulty presented by the
lack of an endowment for the chair; but they added that "the
interest in our college manifested in the State of Kentucky is
gratifying to us and it would be peculiarly pleasant to have a
new chair in this Institution, called by her name and its first
incumbent one of her favorite sons." 9

At the meeting in November, which lasted for two days,
Johnston was unanimously elected; and his salary was set at
$800.00 a year, with "$200 commutation for house rent and a
ratable share of the tuition fees with the other professors." 10
The newly elected professor was to report on February 1.

When Johnston departed from his home in Kentucky for his
new post, the Louisville Courier rejoiced in his connection with
Washington College and sang his praise in the fullest tones. A
portion of the item referring to Colonel Johnston reads:

There is no man in the Southern States
more generally and favorably known or more
warmly beloved. Possessing all the traits
which go to make up the generous, gallant,
and high-souled gentleman, and the culture,
accomplishments, and intellect, which constitute the ripe scholar and the man of genius, combined with a manly port and a suavity of manner with which few are endowed, and which none can imitate, he wins for himself the earnest friendship and devoted attachment of all with whom he is brought in contact. His qualifications for the honorable position to which he has attained are of the highest order and will not be questioned by any who know him. 11

The article also expressed the belief that Johnston's connection with the college would result in an enlarged patronage from Kentucky.

In the middle of February, General Lee wrote to one of his daughters that "Colonel Johnston has arrived and entered upon his duties. He is living at the hotel with his wife and six sweet little children, being unable to procure a house and the college being too poor to build one for him." 12 In July of that year Johnston purchased a beautiful home with some acres of land, located about a mile from Lexington and overlooking the North River. 13 Here he and his family were to reside during the next dozen years—years filled with experiences and accomplishments which, as Johnston later viewed them in retrospect, must have compensated for the labors, anxieties, and disappointments that often weighed heavily upon him. During

11 Louisville Courier, quoted in the Lexington Gazette and Banner, Jan. 30, 1867.
13 Deed Book, W, 393, Rockbridge County (Va.) Court house.
these years he enjoyed an intimate association with General Lee and his family, wrote his best work, the life of General Johnston, and watched all of his "six sweet little children" grow to full or near adulthood.

With the employment of the new professor, the School of History and English Literature exhibited considerable vigor, as a comparison of catalog announcements will indicate. The catalog of 1866 contains the following statement with reference to the work offered in history and literature:

In this school will be taught Modern History, English Literature and Criticism; Rhetoric, Elocution, Philosophical Grammar, and Comparative Philology. The subjects embraced in this school, will for the present, be taught so far as practicable by the professors in the other literary schools.14

The announcement, with reference to the work of this school, published soon after Johnston took charge of it, is as follows:

The School of History and English Literature, as at present constituted, embraces the subjects of ancient and modern History, Political Economy, Belles-Lettres and Criticism, and the History and Study of English Literature. Systematic instruction is also given in the art of English Composition, and in Declamation and Elocution.

It is desirable that students taking this School should have previously nearly completed the prescribed English Course and should at least have read elementary histories of Greece, Rome, England, and America.

14Catalog, Washington College, June, 1866.
The mode of instruction is by rigid examination of the student on the text, which is illustrated in a running commentary; and by lectures on the topics most important to the young men of America. In Composition and Elocution, the instruction is practical and continuous. From the Senior Class original orations are required on prescribed topics. In the Senior year the study of History is philosophical, and that of Literature, critical.

A course, more extensive and critical, is open to resident graduates.15

The evidences of Johnston's influence and popularity as a man and as a teacher are abundant; and perhaps some significance should be attached to the fact that at the conclusion of Johnston's second complete session at Washington College, the publishers of the student magazine thought the final examination questions which he gave the Senior Class in history of sufficient general interest to warrant publication. As a very young student at the Kentucky Military Institute, Johnston had given his sister some sound counsel regarding the study of history. "I do not wish you to read history in such a way that you know the date of every skirmish, the name of every nobleman," he wrote.16 That Johnston applied this intelligent principle in his teaching is apparent from the examination:

15 Catalog, Washington College, June, 1867.
16 W. P. Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, Feb. 29, 1848.
I. The two principal facts of Civilization? Two methods of writing the History of Civilization? Characteristics of Ancient Civilization in contrast with Modern?

2. Elements of society at the fall of the Roman Empire? What ideas did the Empire bequeath to civilization? What the Church? What the Barbarians?


4. What was the influence of the Church on the Middle Ages?

5. Rise of Free Cities? How liberties obtained? Character of interior government and how it differed from Modern municipal government?

6. What two periods divide Modern History? Their characteristics? Give an account of Philip de Comines?

7. How can Modern History be studied to the best advantage?

8. Give rapid sketch of changes in the map of Modern Europe.

9. What sort of military and political questions can be profitably discussed by the general historian? Illustrate.

10. Character and achievement of Frederick the Great.

11. Voltaire's influence on thought of 18th century? His life and character?

12. Describe progress of religious and political parties from Elizabeth to William III.


III. Oral.
In the catalog of 1869 Johnston's position is designated as "Kentucky Professor of History;" and this, it seems, would indicate that some success had attended the efforts to secure an endowment for the chair in the incumbent's native state. Johnston continued to hold this professorship until he resigned in June, 1874, in order to devote full attention to the biography of his father. His name is absent from the faculty list of the following year; but thereafter it appears on the roster of the law school faculty through the session of 1880.

The college records and the columns of the student publication and the town press afford abundant evidences of Johnston's prestige and influence upon the school and the community during his residence in Lexington. He was a dear and trusted friend of General Lee, and to him the admirers of this incomparable Southerner are indebted for an excellent discussion of the General's manner and attitude, when presiding over the faculty meetings at Washington College. A portion of this

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18 *Catalog*, Washington College, 1869.
19 A letter on the subject written March 21, 1869, by General John C. Breckenridge of Lexington, Kentucky, and directed to General R. D. Lilly, a financial representative of the College, appeared in *The Collegian*, April 17, 1869.
20 W. F. Johnston to A. Leyburn, June 24, 1874.
21 *Catalog*, Washington College, 1875.
22 *Catalogs*, Washington College, 1876-1880.
portrait, which appears in several important biographies of Lee, is quoted below:

In his intercourse with his faculty he was courteous, kind, and often rather playful in manner. We all thought he deferred entirely too much to the expression of opinion on the part of the faculty, when we would have preferred that he should simply indicate his own views or desires. One characteristic of General Lee I noted then and have often recalled I never saw him take an ungraceful posture. No matter how long or fatiguing a faculty meeting might be, he always preserved an attitude in which dignity, decorum, and grace were united...4

When General Lee's plan for the expansion of the institution's program was promulgated in 1869, Johnston was a member of the committee that drew up the plan for the extension of the scientific course.25 Among the other items, the program included "a system of press scholarships, designed primarily to acquaint young printers with editorial methods and to enlarge their education"26 and it is likely that Johnston suggested this portion of the plan.27 When a representative of the New York Sun visited the campus for the purpose of securing information about the proposed scholarships, he discussed the matter with Colonel Johnston. The following portion of the article which he wrote for his paper

24Ibid.
is interesting not only as an account of the interview but also for the writer's characterization of Johnston:

I met him as he was leaving the college grounds and saw at once that he was another of the old school of Southern Gentlemen. He is tall, thin, with bloodless lips. Very polite and speaks in a slow, emphatic manner. He sat down on the stone steps beside me, and I questioned him. He is an honest man and told me more than most men of his class would have done. I began about the free scholarships that the college intended giving to candidates nominated by the typographical unions of the country. He asked me if I was a correspondent for a Northern paper. I told him I was: I came from the New York Sun. He then spoke to this effect: "The number of these scholarships will be limited for the present to twenty-five. We think it enough when we compare the resources of the institution with those of Northern colleges, such as Harvard, Yale and Columbia. The reason we propose giving these scholarships is this that printing is one of the arts which diffuse education, and we should, therefore seek to qualify printers for the task of education, as far as possible. These scholarships will probably be given only to Southern Unions, because we need them more here than you in the North. We had proposed to issue half of these scholarships to men arming for the journalistic professor, but have become rather abashed at the torrent of ridicule poured upon us by some of the papers of the country. Now, what we intend is not to make journalists, to make men fit at once for the editorial chair. No, but we wish to give young men as good an education as possible, in order that afterward, having acquired their journalistic training in a newspaper office, they may make far better and more cultivated editors. It is like what we do for young men wishing to enter the ministry. We give them that education, first, which every cultivated man must have, then let them study as best they may for the
pulpit, and don't you think they will make better ministers than if they did not have that education which we give them?"

I admitted that this put the matter in a different light from what I had seen it before, but was somewhat impressed by the admission he had made, in answer to a question I had put, that the scholarships were to be given only to the newspapers and typographical unions of the South. It is true he assigned as a reason that the North had sufficient means of education without aid from the South. But whether that was the true reason or not, the result would be the same. I said nothing of this that occurred to me, however, but began asking him about the politics of the students and his own.

He replied readily, and we passed an hour in conversation while we walked along the college grounds, out among the hills where he had sent his carriage with its negro coachman to await him.28

In the autumn of the following year, General Robert E. Lee, who had served the college as president for five years, died after a brief and severe illness which was the culmination of an extended period of failing health. General Lee died on the morning of October 12, 1870, and during the preceding night Colonel Johnston was among those who watched by his bedside.29 To this friend and loyal subordinate, we are indebted for an eloquent account of the death of the General, an account which was intended for a memorial volume which the university contem-

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28 *Lexington Gazette*, quoted from the New York *Sun*, Nov. 17, 1869.
plated publishing shortly after Lee's death. When the volume failed to materialize, the manuscript was turned over to Dr. J. William Jones, who used it in his *Personal Reminiscences of General R. E. Lee.* Johnston's contribution has been republished wholly, or in part, in a number of later biographies of Lee. The following passage is perhaps the most striking portion of the article:

As the old hero lay in the darkened room, or with the lamp and hearth fire casting shadows upon his calm, noble front, all the massive grandeur of his form, and face, and brow, remained; and death seemed to lose its terrors, and to borrow a grace and dignity in sublime keeping with the life that was ebbing away. The great mind sank to its last repose, almost with the equal poise of health. The few broken utterances that evinced at times a wandering intellect were spoken under the influence of the remedies administered, but as long as consciousness lasted, there was evidence that all the high, controlling influences of his whole life still ruled; and even when stupor was laying its cold hand on the intellectual perceptions, the moral nature, with its complete orb of duties and affections, still asserted itself. A Southern poet has celebrated in song those last significant words, "Strike the tent;" and a thousand voices were raised to give meaning to the uncertain sound, when the dying man said, with emphasis, "Tell Hill he must come up!" These sentences serve to show most touchingly

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through what fields the imagination was passing; but generally his words, though few were coherent; but, for the most part indeed his silence was unbroken.32

At the extraordinary session of the Faculty, which was called on the day of General Lee's death, Johnston was appointed a member of the committee which was to make all necessary funeral arrangements and to extend an invitation to the authorities of the Virginia Military Institute and to the general public to attend the services.33 At the meeting on the following day he was also appointed a member of the committee "to confer with a like committee of the Board of Trustees, and report measures and plans for the erection of a suitable monument to General Lee in the room in which his remains are to be interred, and further to consider and recommend such other monuments or memorials as may be deemed appropriate in the college."34 The joint committee, consisting of J. W. Brockenbrough and Francis T. Anderson from the Board, and Professors Johnston and C. I. Harris from the Faculty, drew up resolutions which contained the following items: A memorial room should be designated in the chapel; the anniversary of Lee's birth should be placed on the college calendar; the following commencement day should be designated as the date for the delivery of the eulogy on General Lee's life.

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33Minutes, Faculty of Washington College, Oct. 12, 1870.
34Ibid., Oct. 13, 1870.
and character, and Jefferson Davis should be invited to make this eulogy;\(^{35}\) and the name of General Lee should be incorporated in the name of the college.\(^ {36}\) The faculty members selected as pall-bearers were Colonel Johnston and Professor John Randolph Tucker.\(^ {37}\) Shortly after the funeral of General Lee, the Lee Memorial Association, an organization composed of former officers and soldiers in the Confederate army, was created; and Johnston was a member of its executive committee.\(^ {38}\)

The passing of General Lee was a staggering blow to the college. A large proportion of the students had been attracted to the institution because of their admiration of its president; and with this great personality removed, Washington College now lacked its greatest claim upon general interest in the South. The faculty realized this as quickly as anyone; and within two weeks after General Lee had been buried a meeting of the faculty and students was held for the purpose of considering the future of the college. At the request of his colleagues, Colonel Johnston was the speaker. In his address, which was forceful and, at times, eloquent, the speaker commended the qualities of spirit possessed by the student body,

\(^{35}\) In a letter which Davis wrote to Johnston, November 25, 1870, he expressed regret that a meeting of the board of directors of his insurance company would prevent his delivering the eulogy.

\(^{36}\) Minutes, Board of Trustees, Washington College, Oct. 15, 1870.


\(^{38}\) Ibid., Oct. 21, 1870.
extolled the character and services of General Lee, and expressed a strong confidence in the future greatness of the college.

Concerning its possibilities as an enduring monument to its lately deceased president, he declared:

We rest in an abiding faith that our country will not suffer to sink into dust and forgetfulness this last enduring monument to his name; and we may return to our appointed tasks and daily duties with cheerfulness and energy, knowing that therein we best carry out his wishes and perpetuate his fame.39

No exhortations, however, could strongly affect the situation. The enrollment dropped from 344 in 1870 to 162 in the following year. In 1872 it rose to 263; in 1873 it dropped to 130; and in 1874 it totaled 226.40 Such a diminution of the student numbers was naturally attended by a diminished college income; and faculty salaries must have suffered considerably. These reductions doubtless had strong weight with Johnston, when in 1872 he took a year's leave of absence from the college, in order to give more attention to the biography of his father,41 and when in 1874 he formally resigned his position.42 During this period he was far from well; and this fact, taken with his eagerness to complete the biography, made it difficult for him to continue his duties at the college on reduced income. Such was

39 Southern Collegian, Oct. 29, 1870.
40 Enrollment Statistics, Washington College.
41 Minutes, Faculty of Washington College, Feb. 20, Apr. 23, and June 25, 1872.
42 Minutes, Board of Trustees, Washington College, June 23, 1874.
the information that Mrs. Johnston wrote to her sister-in-law, with the further statement that her husband would be able to make "as much at almost anything" as he was then receiving. His friend, Jefferson Davis, however, advised caution with regard to resigning his position, and in expressing his deep affection for Johnston, refers to him as one "whom I have loved from infancy." When later Davis was apparently convinced that Johnston would sever his connection with Washington College, he expressed the hope that he and his former aid might get together in a more congenial climate than Lexington afforded and work on a volume of memoirs.

That Johnston was anxious to see such a work projected by Davis is apparent from a letter which he wrote three years before this time. "I feel that you owe it to yourself not to die without vindicating the truth of history," he wrote; and again, "I do not believe any man ever lived who would care to tell in the light more fully what was done in the dark, than you can." While it is evident that Johnston was interested in the proposed undertaking, it is equally apparent that he was not in a position to give much assistance to it.

43. Rosa Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, Mar. 19, 1873. (Mason Mss.)
44. Davis to W. P. Johnston, Sept. 4, 1873.
Mrs. Davis, it appears, was not acquainted with any correspondence on the subject between her husband and Johnston, for in the following year she wrote to the latter, informing him with enthusiasm that she believed that Mr. Davis would welcome him as a collaborator. The letter reads:

My dear Friend,

I have for a long period been anxious, failing to have a conversation with you, to write you on a subject of great importance to both you and me—I think that now is the accepted time for Mr. Davis to write out his recollections of the War, yet know that he has not the strength to perform the labor, mental or physical. He has a mass of newspaper matter here which if it were arranged, would I think make an almost complete record. Dora Shute of New Orleans left our Jeff five volumes of matter, and a basket of papers— I have the loan of files of the Memphis Appeal for many years back—Now I think that unless some one begins it for him that he will never begin—and it seems to me that it would be a good income for you both if the work were prosecuted to a successful termination—I believe that he thinks of you as the most pleasant person with whom he could cooperate in writing a history—

How would it do for you to write to him offering to arrange the material—Then come to an agreement as to your special portions of the proceeds, and begin at once—I cannot say to anyone all I think & feel on the subject—and pray do not answer my letter or allude to it—but be assured that you run no risk of being intrusive in asking for his material—

Believe me very sincerely yours,

Varina Davis

Varina Davis to W. P. Johnston, Aug. 7, 1874.
When Johnston resigned from his place in the school, which after the death of General Lee received the name of Washington and Lee University, he was again called upon to express his views concerning the prospects of the institution. This time the request came from the editors of the college magazine, and he responded by addressing a letter to them for publication. Supposing that the request of the editors was prompted in part by his resignation, he assured them that his action was "due to reasons purely personal, and in no manner whatever to want of accord with the Board of Trustees and Faculty, or to lack of interest in the success of this great and noble University." The discouraging facts in connection with the institution he declared to be due to the impoverished condition of the South, and to competition from numerous colleges and universities which were developing throughout the country. This latter consideration, which he asserted was not altogether undesirable from even a selfish point of view, would necessarily result for a time in somewhat diminished patronage of the leading universities, and the remedy for the situation was to be found in offering superior educational advantages. The contents of the letter are sensible and the language inspiring. The following extract which appears near the end is typically Johnstonian:

Judged from any human standpoint, in material wealth the South is a ruined country. What war spared, tyranny has
gleaned. Its moral energies is the
only hope of its people. Chief among
the agencies of redemption is education;
and if each alumna will consider himself
as an agent of the university—may, as
consecrated to the rescue of our land
from impending ignorance and barbarism,
no human standard can measure the possible
result of the next few years.48

The earliest years which Johnston spent in Lexington were
doubtless the happiest ones for him and his family, for under
the presidency of General Robert E. Lee, the institution had
enjoyed a period of comparative prosperity. Immediately
following his death, his son, General O. W. G. Lee, was chosen
to succeed him. The decline in the fortunes of the college,
which occurred thereafter, can be probably be attributed only
to the fact that no one—not even a Confederate general bearing
the Lee name—could replace the great personality whose guiding
hand and revered presence had meant so much.

In his first year at Washington College, Johnston purchased
his attractive country place overlooking the river. The estate,
situated upon a beautiful elevation, faced a wall of rock upon
the opposite side of the stream; and because of this fact had
been called "Clifton."49 Here the Johnstons resided until they
moved from Lexington in 1860. "There are many," Johnston wrote
years afterwards, "who will recall with a friendly sigh:

_____________________________________________
49Johnston's former home is still standing; and the explanation
of the naming of the estate was furnished the writer by
this picturesque home." It was one of the scenes of gay social festivity concerning which General Lee wrote his daughter, Mildred, when she was visiting in Richmond. "Gaiety continues," he informed her. "Last night there was a cadet hop. Night before, a party at Colonel Johnston's." Here the Johnstons enjoyed visits from General Lee, upon the occasion of one of which, the touching, and often related, incident occurred, involving Lucy, General Lee's beloved harness mare, who was choked into unconsciousness by a tight collar as she struggled up the steep ascent leading to the Johnston home.

The years which followed the death of General Lee were not prosperous ones for the Johnstons, as we have already indicated; and especially was this true after Colonel Johnston turned his attention from his college duties to his writing. In the summer of 1873, he mortgaged his home to the University; and from that time until a much more prosperous period years later, he was not free of debt. Some of the later years at Lexington must have been hard ones for William and Rosa Johnston; and doubtless the pinch of straitened circumstances worked a hardship upon the growing family, especially the older

53. Minutes, Board of Trustees, Washington and Lee U., July 5, 1873.
daughters who were reaching maturity. In this trying period Mrs. Johnston supported her husband's endeavors with the fullest measure of courageous devotion; and the trials of the family served to strengthen the ties of affection. The girls were enthusiastic participants in local social events; and young Albert, the only son, spent much time in the mountains with his gun.

In the autumn of 1877, when the fortunes of the family had reached one of its lowest points, the second daughter, Henrietta, was married to Henry St. George Tucker, a member of a prominent Virginia family and a rising young lawyer, who afterwards served in Congress for several terms. So difficult was the financial situation of the Johnstons that only the insistence of the prospective bridegroom and the heroic management of Mrs. Johnston prevented a postponement of the wedding date. Some days after the event, Rosa Johnston penned an account of it to her sister-in-law, Henrietta Johnston, who still resided in Louisville. The new bride was Miss Johnston's namesake, and the generosity of the latter had played an effective part in the wedding arrangements. Because this letter not only presents an intimate view of the family circumstances at that time but also reveals the admirable qualities of spirit with which Mrs. Johnston sus-

54 Recollections of Mrs. Laura Randolph Tucker Pendleton, related to the present writer in August, 1939. Mrs. Pendleton was a cousin of the Johnston daughters, with whom she grew up in Lexington.
tained her family, a portion of it is set down here:

I have wanted so much to write to you ever since Henny's marriage was decided upon; but it was all gotten up in such haste that I had time for nothing but to get the child ready. The plan decided upon in the early summer was, that she was to be married about the 10th Oct. We found as the time drew near that it would be impossible and told Mr. T. that they must wait awhile. So we settled down and gave up all idea of any preparation. About this time Harry Tucker came from Staunton, and he with his family to back him urged us to make an effort to have the wedding before the family left for Washington. That very day Will received a letter from Ky. which he thought authorized him to proceed in the matter. I started with H. on a day's notice to Richmond; we left Monday and returned Sat. accomplishing everything in that time. Her trousseau was really very pretty and sweet, and we have to thank you dear Henry for the greater part of it as I will show you. She had the black silk you gave her in Ky. made over with saoue for a suit and it really looked as good as new. I managed to match the silk exactly and you would be surprised to see how well it looks. The brown brocade you sent in the summer made a very handsome suit. Then May gave her the light-blue and navy blue silk skirt that you gave her which made a lovely dress for evenings. The only dress I bought her out and out was a dark green cashmere traveling dress. May also divided her linens with her. She was very generous and wanted H. to take all but as Aunt Sue had sent some she only needed half. Her wedding dress was lovely. It could not have been prettier if she had had the money to buy what she pleased. It was my wedding dress for overdress and a plain cream colored silk underneath. The dress was beautifully made and trimmed with my print lace mantills...

The groom's father, John Randolph Tucker, who, for a time served as a professor of law at Washington and Lee University, was then a member of Congress.
Henny had been tired out by the hurried preparations and we feared would not look well, but after she was dressed she was the sweetest looking bride I ever saw and she behaved sweeter than she looked...We got her ready in two weeks and a few days over, and strange to say her things all came in time. Aunt Sue sent her a beautiful brocade which I sent to Richmond and she will have it on her return to Staunton. ...During the preparations Will looked worried that he could do so little for her but I told him if he only knew how satisfied she was with everything he would not be so troubled. She told us over and over again that she did not desire anything better than was provided. We sent to Hatty for underclothing as there was so little time and what she got for $60 was something wonderful. She got a great many very pretty presents but I will leave them to Mary to write you about. The girls took charge of the house and decorated beautifully with flowers. We did all we could to make "Clifton" look pretty for the occasion and Aunt Emily and I did our best for the supper and everyone says it was a great success. After the ceremony we had the bride's cake cut and claret poured in the beautiful bowl Uncle Will sent her. Did the girls write you that the "Betas" a college society sent a beautiful silver (plated) tureen?...

Although Mrs. Johnston displayed superb skill in economical management of her daughter's wedding, the financial outlay which the occasion required was felt by the family, for near the conclusion of the letter from which the portion above was taken, the writer states that "After getting Henny ready the rest of us will have to be very quiet for awhile."
Although separated by considerable distance from the family of Jefferson Davis, the Johnstones throughout their years at Lexington sustained a warm friendship with them. The former President of the Confederacy made occasional visits to Virginia, at which times he spent many hours in company with his former aid. Margaret, the oldest of the Davis children, visited in the Johnston home; and her affection for Mrs. Johnston and her daughters was such as to elicit pleased comment from her father.\footnote{Davis to W. P. Johnston, Oct. 23, 1873.}

Jefferson Davis, Jr., the second child, attended the Virginia Military Institute in 1873-1874; and from Colonel Johnston, the father sought some assistance in the directing of this unsteady youth. Johnston's own son, Albert, a short two or three years later, exhibited little taste for the formal learning of the University, and dropped out in his second year;\footnote{W. P. Johnston to Davis, Sept. 9, 1878, in Howland, \textit{Jefferson Davis}, Vol. VIII, p. 277.} but except for his aversion to books and the uncertainty which existed concerning his future vocation he gave his father little cause for anxiety. Such, however, seems not to have been the case with young Davis. In midsummer 1874 Mr. Davis wrote the boy a letter in which he expressed disappointment not only because of his son's deficiency as a student but because of his conduct as well. In the course of the letter, the father wrote:

\begin{quote}
\textit{\ldots}
\end{quote}
I hope you go often to see my true and much esteemed friend, Col. Johnston. In any trouble you could not find a better counsellor.

Three weeks after the date of this letter, Mrs Davis wrote to Colonel Johnston concerning young Jeff's affairs. The latter part of her letter indicates that Johnston was to some extent interested in securing a place in some other university. The communication, which was marked Confidential, reads as follows:

My dear Friend,

I am in receipt today of a telegram from Jeff saying, "I am not fully well, can I have a furlough".

Will you have the goodness and learn what is necessary in his case and take such action as your judgment may indicate. It would not I think be safe for him to come here at this season, and I do not know when, if at all it would be convenient for me to go to him. If his condition requires it he might go to see Mr. Braud in Maryland but we are very anxious that he should lose nothing of the studies which he proposed to pursue during the encampment. He could however take the necessary books with him, and get Mr. Braud to aid in directing him in his studies. As we know nothing of his indisposition it is difficult here to form an opinion, and we are happy in having one on whom we can rely as we do on you who is in a position to get all the requisite information as we are intensely anxious about him.

Please send telegram as soon as you have reached a conclusion to advise us of your action in the case.

Davis to Jefferson Davis, Jr., July 21, 1874.
I did not answer your letter about the Professorship at Athens, but sat down at once & wrote to all the men I knew. Ben Hill & Gov. Jenkins answered with kindest wishes & promises, the others did not answer at all. I am however glad that someone else got it for the reason that I do not think anyone but a dissenter in religion, and a Georgia politician could maintain himself there, and not even with these requisites unless he were a little of a Damagoge.

Mr. Davis is not well, and I am urging him to go away, but unfortunately money is scarce & he does not wish to leave me - am more anxious about Jeff. You know how I feel about him - Do be inquisitive with him & write the result to me - with love to Mrs. Johnston & the girls believe me very sincerely.

Yours,

Varina Davis

Sometime afterwards Johnston received from Davis a letter, the contents of which indicate that the writer was sorely distressed by his son's failure to measure up to his responsibilities.

The text of the letter, except for the beginning portion, which is missing from the manuscript, appears below:

Will you endeavor to learn from him what is to be expected, and if no good is to result from remaining at the Institute please withdraw him at once, and send him here.

It may be that in some business house where there is enough of hard work for the employment of an uneducated boy, he may be forced to learn something which will be useful to him hereafter. This is, my dear friend,

62 Varina Davis to W. F. Johnston, Aug. 13, 1874. (This letter and two succeeding ones by Jefferson Davis are quoted in full because they have not hitherto been available to the public.)
a sad conclusion to my hopes for the only Son left to me, and I would, he had permitted me to drink of a less bitter cup.

I inclose a note to Genl. Smith and two drafts, the one for balance due must of course be transmitted to him, the other if Jeff. is not to remain had better be withheld and whatever has become due since July last be otherwise provided for.

I do not know any civil engineer to whom I could send Jeff. for such work as you suggest, and the dissipation of a surveying camp usually exceeds that which under the worst circumstances should be possible in the camp at Lexington. For several days it has been my intention to write to you of other matters, and especially to ask about your plans for the immediate future.

I did not make such arrangements abroad as enabled me to offer any thing to you, but put in train a matter which promises to give us employment and ample remuneration if the success approaches the promise.

By the middle of next month I should know the result.

You have probably seen what J. E. Johnston would have others to believe, his refutation of B. H. Hill's assertion that I regarded him, as a great Genl. Hill did not say so and you have the evidence that I did not think so, in that letter to James Melan. It might give you the occasion to publish it if you think it well to do so. Joe. R. Davis wrote to me to advise its publication and I informed him of my correspondence with you. With love to Mrs. Johnston and your children I am as ever truly yours

Jefferson Davis 64

63 His other son, when a small child, was killed by a fall from the second story of the Confederate white House in Richmond, in 1864.
64 Davis to W. P. Johnston. (The first page of this letter is missing; therefore, the date is not indicated. It was doubtless written in the early part of 1875.)
In March, 1875, the disappointed father wrote another letter to Colonel Johnston, which brief communication must have followed soon after the one quoted above. That the deficiency of his son as a student was a heavy addition to the load of tribulations which the ex-President had carried for some years is apparent from its contents:

Do me the kindness to withdraw Jeff. from the Institute and send him to Memphis. Perhaps he may as you suggest be aroused to some effort in a new walk and at least in a position where comparison is less exact, spare me the pain which seems ever to rest where he is.

Please advance whatever may be necessary for his expenses and draw on me at Memphis.

With love to each and all of your family I am ever

Cordially yours

Jefferson Davis 65.

Although a great part of Johnston's thought and energy, during his residence in Lexington, was devoted to his college duties and to the writing of his father's biography, he found time to respond liberally to requests made of him by the community and to do a little writing besides the major work with which he was engaged. The columns of the local press indicate that as a public speaker he was called upon more frequently than

65 Davis to W. P. Johnston, March 22, 1875.
any other citizen of Lexington and that the demands made upon him in this capacity had a remarkable range of variety. A catalog of his speaking engagements includes occasions as widely apart in character as a railroad meeting at the local fair and a Commencement Day at the Augusta Female Seminary in Staunton.

The range doubtless exceeded the farthest limit within which he expected to demonstrate his versatility as a speaker when he accepted under protest an invitation to address the Lynchburg Agricultural Society. Upon this occasion he excused, in highly humorous fashion, his inadequacy as an authority on scientific or practical farming, and gave his hearers an inspiring discourse which had no relationship to specific problems of agriculture.

The high point in his address was his tribute to the three great figures of the Confederacy whom he had known most intimately. The passage which follows indicates that as a representative of the old school of oratory he had considerable gifts for lofty expression:

There is a grander sight than the cunning hand of art can devise, or the material universe reflect into our souls; it is a good man standing secure in his integrity and the wreck and ruin of his worldly hopes, calmly superior to the accidents of fate. It has been my singular good fortune, fellow citizens, to dwell in the sunlight of three such lives; and in the reverential love and study of them, I found some of the strongest safeguards in

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66 Virginia Gazette, Oct. 20, 1869.
67 The Collegian, Washington College, May 29, 1869.
adversity. One, it may not become me to mention, but it is a name full of sacred and tender regrets with all who loved the Lost Cause. The second in point of time was the President of the Confederacy, a man who in splendor of talents, perfect singleness of purpose, and the entire devotion of his patriotism has never been excelled. I saw him from a standpoint where the reserve of official intercourse was withdrawn, and can truly say, that the nearer the approach, the grander seemed the stature of that lofty soul.

And lastly, my countrymen, my labors have been for the past few years under the direction of the great leader we all so honored, we all so deeply mourn. With reverential affection I have beheld the serenity with which he bore the lesser and greater trials of life, opposing to each a magnanimity unsurpassed among men. When first I saw General Lee some fifteen years ago he was in full pride of mature manhood. Honors were clustering around a brow, wreathed with the laurels of Chapultepec, and a. I looked upon a form in which dignity and grace seemed to blend, I said, "It is thus that Washington appeared to man." In the perfect poise of his figure, the sweet yet measured accent of his voice, the commanding light of his eye, you could not fail to see the man who ruled his own spirit. When I saw him again, he stood against the gloomy background of war. Disaster lowered and the red light of battle played about him. If sadder, he seemed yet grander. The mighty calm of a soul superior to the strife it waged, breathed on all around.

I remember on that day at Cold Harbor when Grant came with repeated assaults only to recoil in terrible carnage and utter dismay, that I was with him some hours and bore from him messages to the President. The steadiness of his soul was unshaken by the great events going on; and as he confided to me his intentions and plans, the perfect simplicity and
truth of his character as a man made me forget for the time the mighty interests he wielded as a general.

And now again for the past four years I have labored under the direction of General Lee. Called to Washington College by a request, which from General Lee any Confederate would consider a command I have had an opportunity to study the workings of that great soul under pressure of irretrievable calamity. I have learned from him the lesson that common actions can acquire a grace and dignity in the doing. When beaten by overwhelming force, he laid down his arms, and sought refuge behind a wall of mountains, he gathered around him a circle of loving hearts which served him faithfully in life and cherish his memory in death. The maimed hands of the soldiers of his renowned army consigned his dust to a tomb beneath that chapel he had humbly dedicated to God from the first fruits of the offerings of a grateful people, and which will remain as a simple, yet beautiful memorial of his piety, his humility, and his resignation.

And now again for the past four years I have labored under the direction of General Lee. Called to Washington College by a request, which from General Lee any Confederate would consider a command I have had an opportunity to study the workings of that great soul under pressure of irretrievable calamity. I have learned from him the lesson that common actions can acquire a grace and dignity in the doing. When beaten by overwhelming force, he laid down his arms, and sought refuge behind a wall of mountains, he gathered around him a circle of loving hearts which served him faithfully in life and cherish his memory in death. The maimed hands of the soldiers of his renowned army consigned his dust to a tomb beneath that chapel he had humbly dedicated to God from the first fruits of the offerings of a grateful people, and which will remain as a simple, yet beautiful memorial of his piety, his humility, and his resignation.

He laid him in the tomb and Ahi! My Countrymen, what a reflection it is upon the legislation of the land, that General Lee died a disfranchised man. But the shackles of human law can bind him no further, and he stands enfranchised now in the company of the Just.

Colonel Johnston's appearances on the speaker's platform included also an address before the State Educational Association at Staunton; a lecture before a Teachers' Institute group in Lexington on "Teaching History in Public Schools"; occasional speeches on the University Campus; an address at the county convention of the Conservative Party, where, in the absence of

68 Virginia Gazette, Nov. 25, 1876.
70 Gazette and Citizen, Apr. 23, 1873.
Lexington Gazette, June 23, 1873; Southern Collegian, July 3, 1873.
the scheduled speaker, he occupied almost three hours with a dis-
course which "was a powerful and sweeping review of conditions
in the country and causes leading to them," and where he was
elected a delegate to represent Rockbridge County at the Congres-
sional Convention; and a Decoration Day address in the Lee
Memorial chapel, upon which occasion he eulogized Lee, Jackson,
and Davis. Speaking of Jackson, he said, "I remember soon after
he was killed I said to General Lee: 'General Lee, you have suf-
f ered a great loss in the death of General Jackson.' He replied,
'An irreparable loss. I do not see what I am to do without him.'"
In the course of his address Johnston complained that no suitable
memorial had been reared to Jackson and expressed ardent hope that
one might soon arise.

As a member of the executive committee of the Lee Memorial
Association, Johnston had a part in furthering the aims of the
organization, one of which was providing for the recumbent statue
of Lee, a piece sculptured by Edward Valentine for the chapel.
Upon the completion of the work, General Jubal Early was invited
to make the address at the celebration which followed. Colonel
Johnston introduced him, and a comparison of his speech with that

72Gazette and Citizen, Aug. 11, 1876.
73Ibid., June 4, 1875.
74Southern Collegerian, Apr. 5, 1873.
of the main speaker indicates that from the standpoint of the
demands of the occasion, their positions should have been re-
versed. 75

Outside of his addresses, Johnston permitted little else in
the way of composition to occupy time which he needed for the
biography. During the years that he was working on it, he pub-
lished only one item which can be considered as an effort at
literature. This was a brief essay, "The Origin of Myth,"
containing an abundance of lofty phraseology, but notably lacking
in appeal. 76 More interesting, if less literary, were two art-
icles of a controversial nature, which reveal that he had some
ability as a disputant, as well as a disposition which responded
heartily when the occasion seemed to demand it. The first of
these was a reply to an article published in a church periodical
by Professor Williamson, who held a chair in the Virginia Military
Institute. Williamson, who, like Johnston, was a member of the
Episcopal Church in Lexington, attacked the good faith of Wash-
ington and Lee University on the grounds that it was dominated
by Presbyterians. In his reply, Johnston pointed out the fact
that if the same measure were applied to the Institute, a state
college, then that institution was strongly sectarian in character,
since a majority of its board and five-sixths of its professors
were Episcopalians. His most telling blow was perhaps his ob-

75C a s tte and C itizen, Apr. 23, 1875.
servant that although Professor Williamson had insisted upon
the resignation of the Board of Trustees at Washington and Lee,
in order to diminish a preponderance of one sect, the same course
of action had not suggested itself as a remedy in his own case. 77

In the other article written several years later, Johnston
explodes one of the stories of amazing prowess during the Civil
War. Major Zagonyi, a Hungarian, who was commander of Fremont's
body-guard, gained credit for the prodigious prowess of his
command from his report of a charge in which he states he led
150 of his men against 2200 Confederates. He asserts that he
ordered his men to charge with sabres, and that they routed and
slaughtered the superior force in a fearful manner. The alleged
exploit was fantastic, yet was widely believed. According to
Johnston, the facts in the case were much different from those
related by the hero; and Colonel Johnston concludes wittily, with
the following paragraph:

If his story, or similar military reports had
been true, it was the wildest extravagance on the
part of the United States to keep 60,000 or 80,000
men on foot in Missouri, as was the case at this
time. Fremont's body-guard should have been
increased to 2,000 or 3,000 and permitted to
"charge with sabres" wherever the Confederates
could be found in "line of battle." Instead of
this, an ungrateful Republic, while it embalmed
these heroes in its history, somewhat contum-
eliously discharged them from its service. 78

77 Lexington Gazette, Oct. 17, 1873.
78 W. P. Johnston, "Zagonyi's Charge with Fremont's Body-Guard--
a Picturesque Foil-de-rol," in Southern Historical Society Papers,
In the year which followed the one in which this brief article appeared, Johnston's biography of his father was published. Considering the proportions of the work, the immense labor involved, and the difficulties under which it was written, it was a remarkable achievement. The sacrifices entailed by its accomplishment left the author poor and in debt. Before its publication he turned his eyes more than once towards positions in distant universities without favorable results. In the summer of 1874 he apparently had some hope of being selected as Chancellor of the University of Georgia; and in 1877, a former colleague of his at Washington and Lee, Professor E. S. Joynes, who was then at Vanderbilt University, recommended him for a place as professor of literature in the University of Missouri.

The spring of 1880 found Johnston engaged with a number of interests, but longing for employment which would enable him to live with his family in independence. He gave some effort to the practice of law, sought to stimulate the lagging sales of his book, and actively promoted the candidacy of Judge Field for the Democratic nomination for President. By this time, several of his children had arrived at maturity; one daughter was married, another, Rosa, was about to be; his son, Albert, who "would not

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79 Kirby Smith to W. P. Johnston, June 12, 1874.
80 E. S. Joynes to W. P. Johnston, July 1, 1877.
82 Ibid.; Lexington Gazette and Citizen, Apr. 20, 1880.
study," was employed in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as a clerk in the iron business; and Johnston's sister, Henrietta, was conducting a school in Louisville.35

The coming of autumn marked the beginning of a new epoch in Johnston's life. Thenceforth until his death he was to serve continuously in the capacity of university president, heading successively the Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and Tulane University in New Orleans. His departure for Louisiana did not, however, sever him completely from Lexington. He returned often for extended visits; and it was there that he died. Since the biography of his father is his most important book, it is proper at this point to set forth the circumstances connected with the writing and publication of it and to examine the work itself. The two chapters which follow are devoted to The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston.

Early in 1872 Colonel Johnston reached the decision that he would never be able to complete his biography of his father unless he were relieved of his duties at the University for at least a limited period. Therefore, in spite of the fact that his resources were small and his family was large, he applied to the University authorities for a leave of absence, which was to run through one session. His application dated February 19, 1872, is contained in the following letter to General Custis Lee:

Gen. G. W. C. Lee
President—

My Dear General—

After much thought and hesitation I feel compelled to lay before you the following statement and request.

When I accepted a chair in this institution, I was greatly moved thereto by the hope that it would enable me to write a memoir of my father. I regarded this as a duty incumbent on me; and believed that in the intervals of collegiate work, I could prosecute this task. Such, however, has not been the case; and I find that five years after my appointment here, and ten years after my father's death, my work has not been begun.

Without entering upon the causes that have prevented me I am forced after due deliberation to say that they are such as must always hinder my carrying forward the preparation of the memoir, and at the same time properly performing my duties in the University.

The frail tenure of human life,—the gradual disappearance of the witnesses to the facts on which this memoir must rest,—and the attempts that have been made to put on record statements disparaging to my father and at variance with historical truth, impress me with the conviction that my work ought to be done at once. The very obvious and serious embarrassment

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1Minutes of the faculty, Washington and Lee University, Feb. 20, 1872.
and inconveniences that must result from a break in my course of instruction here have delayed me for a long time in the hope of finding some way to reconcile a conflict of duties. This I have been unable to do. The only thing left me is to ask a leave of absence for the next session, in which time I hope to complete my task; of course I do not desire compensation while not on duty.

Please, do me the favor, General, to lay this request before the Faculty for consideration, so that I may learn at their earliest convenience what recommendation, they may find proper to make to the Board of Trustees.

As I am not unaware of the difficulties, I have only to beg the Faculty will not weigh my personal wishes in making this request against the interest of the University; but will frankly inform me if they think the complete surrender of my chair a less evil than the temporary absence proposed. Such a declaration on their part will not in any wise diminish my zeal for the University or my friendship for my colleagues.

With great respect, I have the honor to remain, General,

Your Obedient servant and friend,

Wm. Preston Johnston,
Professor of History and
Political Economy. 2

At the meeting of the faculty which occurred on the day following the one on which this letter was written Johnston's colleagues expressed themselves as being unanimously and fully in sympathy with the writer's request and went on record as recommending the granting of it by the board of trustees.

They also appointed Professors Kirkpatrick and Joynes members of a committee to suggest to the board arrangements for carrying on the work of Professor Johnston's department during the period

2Ibid.
of his absence from duty.3

Later when the faculty met in regular session again, the action of the meeting was significant for its suggestion of how genuine the sympathy of Johnston's colleagues was for him and his designed work. The faculty not only repeated their indorsement of the requested leave of absence, but recommended further that their colleague during the period of this leave should be allowed to retain the personal direction of his classes, and should receive his regular income, from which amount he was to pay an assistant, whom he himself should have the authority to nominate, and whose compensation he should be allowed to fix.4

In the interval between the two faculty meetings the arrangements had evidently been discussed by Johnston and his colleagues, for the faculty notes in its recommendations that "Col. Johnston proposes to nominate Mr. E. B. Kruttschnitt as his assistant."5 The latter was a young graduate of Washington and Lee University,6 and was afterwards to achieve a brilliant career in law and politics in New Orleans, and through his influence was able to render valuable assistance to his former professor at both the Louisiana State University and at Tulane University during the time that Colonel Johnston was president of each. The recommendations of the faculty were approved in

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3Ibid., Feb. 21, 1872.
4Ibid., April 25, 1872.
5Ibid.
6Washington and Lee University Records; Kruttschnitt graduated in 1872.
full by the Board of Trustees at their next meeting.  

With this gracious concession on the part of the University authorities, Colonel Johnston was in a measure free to prosecute his labor of love and duty, the biography of his father, General Albert Sidney Johnston. This freedom was, however, far from a complete one, and his difficulties were manifold. The responsibilities of a large family, straitened financial circumstances resulting in debt, the claims of the University and the community upon his time, the difficulties of securing competent testimony upon bitterly controversial matters, the antagonism of individuals whose military reputations were affected by his point of view with reference to his father's career in the Confederate army, and a dissatisfaction with his publishers' treatment of him, were trials suffered by the author in the task of placing General Johnston's case before the public. This work when complete represented not the labor of a single year, but of six; and the published volume ran to more than seven hundred large pages of closely documented material.

The faculty minutes of the University reveal that Professor Johnston attended the meetings of the faculty with some regularity throughout the spring of 1872 and also during the fall months of the new session until the meeting of December 10, 1872, after

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7Minutes, Board of Trustees, Washington and Lee University, April 25, 1872.  
8W. P. Johnston Albert Sidney Johnston.  
9Faculty Minutes, W. and L. Univ., December 10, 1872.
which he attended no more meetings until April 22, 1873, upon which occasion the clerk records that "Prof. Johnston appeared at the meeting."^{10} He resumed regular attendance at the June faculty meeting.\(^{11}\)

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees on July 5, 1873, the members voted that a loan be authorized to Colonel Johnston of certain money collected by him, the amount to be secured by a mortgage on his "Clifton" property, provided the buildings were insured and kept insured for the sum of at least $2000.\(^{12}\)

Apparently the offer was not accepted at the time, but the county records reveal that the property was mortgaged to the University in 1876,\(^{13}\) that an additional sum was borrowed on it in 1879,\(^{14}\) and that it was sold to satisfy the debts against it on October 1, 1883,\(^{15}\) about three years after Johnston had moved to Louisiana.

On June 22, 1874, Colonel Johnston resigned his position on the faculty, writing letters on this date to both General G. W. C. Lee, the President, and to Dr. Leyburn, the Rector of the University. In his letter to General Lee he wrote:

"In taking this action, which has been here-tofore fully discussed with you, I feel a regret that I hardly care to put in words. I beg leave to return thanks to you for your invariable kind-

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\(^{10}\)Ibid., April 22, 1873.
\(^{11}\)Ibid., June 23, 1873 to June 22, 1874.
\(^{12}\)Minutes, Board of Trustees, W. and L. Univ., July 5, 1873.
\(^{13}\)Rockbridge County, Va., Deed Book W. 395.
\(^{14}\)Ibid., RR 574.
\(^{15}\)Ibid., VV. 393.
ness to me, and through you to my colleagues for a thousand gracious acts, marking an intercourse of nearly eight years, marred by no unpleasant recollections. For you all personally and for our University I shall ever cherish the warmest friendship.16

Johnston's letter to Dr. Leyburn was similar in tone. He stated that his resignation was "due in no manner to want of confidence in the Board of Trustees, of accord and sympathy with my colleagues, or of interest in our noble institution."17

The brief notation which President Lee wrote upon this letter of resignation before giving it to the Board read, "Colonel Johnston has been considering the question of his resignation for some time and has come to the conclusion that he must leave us. I am obliged therefore to approve this paper; but do so with great regret."18 The Board accepted the resignation with expressions of regret and of admiration for Johnston's personal character and eminent abilities; and the body expressed an assured confidence that "he will continue to adorn any position in the Department of Literature or in any other sphere of life which he may be disposed to occupy."19

Two days after his resignation Colonel Johnston addressed a letter to the editors of the student publication, who had requested from him a statement concerning his views on the future of the institution, in which communication he re-iterated the

16Minutes, Board of Trustees, W. and L. Univ., June 27, 1874.
17W. F. Johnston to A. Leyburn, June 22, 1874.
18Ibid.
19Minutes, Board of Trustees, W. and L. Univ., June 23, 1874.
expressions given to President Lee and the Board concerning his resignation, spoke of the difficulties facing the institution because of diminished student enrollment and insufficient revenues, but expressed full confidence in its future.  

His connection with Washington and Lee University did not end, however, with his resignation, for although the catalog of the institution for 1875 indicates the Kentucky Professorship of History and Political Economy as being vacant for that session, the minutes of the executive committee of the Board of Trustees for July, 1874, state that Johnston was invited to deliver lectures on history and literature during the session of 1874-5 at his convenience. At the end of that session the University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws upon him and upon the Honorable Charles O'Conor of New York, who had served as counsel for Jefferson Davis during the procedure which culminated in Davis' release from prison. From 1876 to 1880 Johnston was a member of the University Law School faculty, his name appearing in the catalogs as Professor of History and the Science of Law. However, such income as he received for his services in this department were far from adequate for the needs of himself and family. The anxieties connected with the preparation of his book and the welfare of his family weighed heavily upon him. Soon after the

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20 Southern Collegian Vol. VI; June 27, 1874.  
21 Catalog, W. and L. Univ., 1875.  
22 Minutes of the Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, W. and L. Univ., September 18, 1874.  
23 Minutes, Board of Trustees, W. and L. Univ., June 22, 1875.  
marriage of one of the Johnston daughters in the latter part of 1877, Mrs. Johnston wrote to her husband's sister in Louis-
ville, "During the preparations Will looked worried that he could do so little for her"; and in the same letter, "....Will
is doing final work upon his book and in a few days will com-
plete it. I can't tell you how thankful I am, for it has been
a terrible strain on his nervous system and I am sure he will
be better when it is finished. He will leave for New York as
soon as he has gotten through with it, and I have written to
Hatty to have a place for him at her house while he is there.
....She sends an urgent invitation for me to come too and make
her a little visit. She little understands the Johnston
finances or she would not dream of such a thing"; and again,
"God bless you, I wish you could be with us. We are all in
trouble, but you are alone, and I often wonder how you stand
it. I can do very little to help Will, but he knows twenty times
a day how sorry I am for his perplexities and that is a comfort
to him."25

Colonel Johnston sought to relieve his financial perplexities
by a number of expedients: for a consideration of $10,000 he
sold to the United States Government his official papers, re-
lating to his Confederate service;26 he was appointed an agent of
the University "for patronage and endowment with a compensation

25Rosa Johnston to Henrietta Johnston, Nov. 1, 1877.
26W. T. Walthall to Jefferson Davis, Dec. 3, 1878, in Rowland,
of $75.00 a month, to be credited on the debt due by him to the University—for the former; and a commission of 15% for the latter service and he resumed the practice of law.

That all of these, added to whatever royalties he may have received after 1878 from his book, were insufficient, can be perceived from a paragraph of a letter written in April, 1880, to Jefferson Davis by Johnston, who was then in Washington on legal business:

I long for the time when I can find some (any) honorable employment which will enable me to live with my family in independence. My life has been a long uphill struggle, without fame or ease or reward, and I expect it to continue so until I fall in the harness. I thank God I have no very special grievances, at least from friends, and any hard licks I get from "the enemy" I do not count.

Throughout the period that Johnston was working on the biography he conducted a more or less regular correspondence with Davis; and in his letters to his former chief he kept him informed about the progress of his work, touching upon the difficulties and impediments which hindered his progress and apologizing for the long delayed completion of the book. Such an intimacy was natural, not only because of Colonel Johnston's former service as a member of President Davis' staff, but because of the close and life-long friendship and comradeship which had existed between Davis and Albert

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Sidney Johnston. The difficulties which had beset General Johnston during his campaign in the West, and the criticisms which at times fell thick upon him, were in a large measure shared by the President of the Confederacy, who championed the ability and the reputation of his general before and after his death. Colonel Johnston's viewpoint was, therefore, the ex-President's viewpoint; and a vindication of General Johnston operated favorably in his own direction.30

Near the close of 1874 Colonel Johnston wrote Davis that he was thoroughly engaged on the memoir of his father, but that he did not find authorship easy, because his habits had made him "critical in style, and I am never satisfied with the result".31 Concerning an important difficulty in the matter of securing adequate testimony, he wrote in reference to several former officers of importance in his father's army:

Governor Harris has already replied to me subsequently that he would not write what he said. Others do not. Breckenridge always evaded. Preston does not reply to my letters. General Bragg is the only man that has written without reserve. I shall write to him about Beauregard's claim to "the Plan of Battle".32

Johnston's reference to Beauregard's claim to the plan of battle was prompted by a statement which the General is alleged

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30 This matter is fully indicated in the following chapter.
to have made during a visit to Lexington some months before this time, wherein he asserted that after General Johnston's death at Shiloh, it was not difficult for him to assume command, because he had made the plan for the battle. This assertion Colonel Johnston did not accept then, nor did he do so afterwards; and the account which he gives in his book of the Battle of Shiloh varies at important points from Beauregard's official report of the battle. The resulting controversy ran on for several years after the publication of the biography; and the main point at issue was the soundness of the generalship of Beauregard, who was second in command at Shiloh, in ordering a retreat of the Confederate army, after General Johnston was killed on the field. The supporters of Colonel Johnston's position contended that only a final advance was necessary to complete a great victory, which had been won with terrific bloodshed, and Beauregard and his adherents maintained that the demoralized and exhausted condition of the troops in the late afternoon of the battle necessitated their withdrawal from action.

In October, 1877, when Johnston had almost completed his book, he again wrote to Davis concerning Beauregard's claims:

I have finished my narrative of the Battle of Shiloh. Anxious as I have been to avoid controversy, the claims set up by General Beauregard

are so preposterous that my account must necessarily lead to it. He sent me for my information a letter from Jordan claiming that he had great difficulty in inducing my father to concentrate at Corinth and that Jordan persuaded him by Beauregard's order, to fight the Battle of Shiloh. He says that Beauregard gave all orders after my father's arrival, and had actual command of the army.34

I replied to Genl. Beauregard that I regretted that his views and opinions were so much at variance with the conclusions at which I had arrived after a calm investigation of all the facts accessible, and that I should have to present a state of facts entirely different. Such friends as have examined my Mss. think I have been very just.35

The climax of the author's Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston was naturally the Battle of Shiloh. Upon this portion of the narrative he expended great labor, making use of maps, giving in minute detail descriptions of the country and of the positions occupied by the various divisions of the opposing forces, tabulating the numerical strength of these divisions, narrating progressively the events which occurred throughout the battle, and piling up circumstances and testimonial evidence ---all of which had as its object, of course, the complete vindication of his father. Circumstances being what they were, it was inevitable that such a zealous effort must operate unfavorably for Beauregard's reputation.36

34 Colonel Jordan was Beauregard's chief of staff at Shiloh.
That Beauregard was deeply offended by Johnston's account of the battle is evident from a letter which the author wrote to Davis a few months after the book came from the press:

I received yesterday a copy of a Fredericksburg paper of Dec. 3, with Beauregard's letter egging on Ruggles. He is spiteful, but weak. He says: "Col. Johnston in his book seems to attach as little importance to the reputation acquired in the field by an officer as though it had been obtained in some nominal military position in Richmond or elsewhere. Mere rumors or reports from a 'babbler' are sufficient for him to cast blame or award praise with an assurance which would ill become even a Carnot or a Von Moltke.

"No wonder, therefore, that the Colonel should have written so shallow, confused and wrongful book as the one he has just published, etc."

Speaking of the recall of the troops, he says: "This state story which originated in an intrigue against me, he revamps and enlarges for the purpose of building up a fanciful contrast, etc." 37

Although the author's account of the Battle of Shiloh is the portion of the book which gives deepest offense, there are other parts of it which were not pleasing to some persons who had played a part in the events narrated therein. In his account of the fall of Fort Donelson the author is apparently anxious to be gracious in his recital concerning General Buckner's conduct. Johnston submitted this portion of the manuscript to him for revision, but Buckner returned it without comment through General Preston, greatly to the regret of the author. 38

Even with his friend Jefferson Davis, Johnston was not always in entire agreement concerning details relating to General Johnston's campaign in the West. Such differences of opinion were not serious, however, and did not affect the cordial relationship between the two. Johnston submitted his manuscript to Davis for examination, and exhibited the fullest interest in satisfying his former chief, permitting him to make some alterations in the material; but upon points where his convictions were strong—in matters where a modification of his statements would diminish the strength of his father's case—he did not defer even to the judgment of Davis:

Tonight I revised my Mss. with your letter before me. I have made most of the modifications you suggest. Your objections are sometimes to matters that can be cleared up by a word as we do not disagree on them........

On one point we must disagree---it may be prejudice on my part, but I hope not---the judiciousness, not the motives, of the Govt. in their action on the 12 Md men. I think I have guarded carefully against the danger of being quoted as reflecting upon you personally, and I have pointed out your difficulties. I trust the result may meet your approbation.

The statements quoted above referred to the condition of affairs in the West in October, 1861, when General Johnston was attempting in the face of great difficulties to raise and equip an army for the defense of Kentucky and Tennessee. In the hope of promoting rapid enlistment, he offered volunteers

a twelve months' period of enlistment instead of a longer term of service. The publication of the proclamation containing this call was followed by a letter to General Johnston from Mr. Benjamin, the Secretary of War, stating that enlistments should be accepted for no shorter period than the duration of the war, and directing that all twelve months volunteers be disbanded. In view of the apathy of the people in that section of the South at the time, Colonel Johnston believed it to be an error in judgment on the part of the Secretary.

It is easily apparent from the preceding paragraphs that Colonel Johnston's task of narrating the most important part of his father's life, that portion which was concerned with General Johnston's career in the Confederate service, was a labor in which the elements of difficulty weighed rather strongly against those of advantage. That Jefferson Davis sympathized deeply with the author in these difficulties is evident from a statement which he wrote to a friend some months after the publication of the biography:

Col. W. P. Johnston, when writing the biography of this father, General A. S. Johnston, sought information from many quarters as to Beauregard at Shiloh, the answers were weak compared to the oral statements they had made. And the reason for the difficulty suggested in this statement

42 Davis to L. B. Northrop, Apr. 24, 1879, in Rowland, Jefferson Davis, Vol. VIII, p. 381.
is indicated in a later letter which Davis wrote to the same person:

The difficulty in Preston Johnston's case as in that of any other who writes on that subject is the impossibility of getting men to state in a manner to be used, the truth as known to them orally; they have said to me many things, which in that miserable spirit of harmonizing now endemic—they cannot be induced to put in writing. Governor Harris, now U. S. Senator, was by Johnston's side when he was wounded, helped him from his horse, and when he died went to look for Beauregard, the second in command. He found him far in the rear; I think he said two or three miles.

Harris has been a personal friend of mine, manifesting always much interest in my welfare; I am, therefore, unwilling to press him for a statement which he does not appear to have been willing to make to Preston Johnston. He is a fearless and a truthful man, would not prevaricate or mis-state, but might refuse to answer.43

As already suggested, the controversy between Colonel Johnston and Beauregard continued for some years after the publication of Johnston’s book; and in 1887 when it had reached an acute state, after Jordan and Johnston had each published magazine articles on the Battle of Shiloh,44 Johnston wrote a letter to Davis, in which he again referred to the difficulties which had attended his efforts to secure completely satisfactory assistance from the former associates of his father, but in which, to some extent, he excuses the reluctance of these friends to give written testimony on a matter of bitter controversy:

43. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1880.
44. The Century Magazine for Feb., 1885, contains articles on the Battle of Shiloh by Thomas Jordan, W. P. Johnston, and General U. S. Grant, pp. 593-634.
You put a question to me hard to answer, when you ask me why my father's staff do not aid in seeing justice done. Most of them are old or infirm or broken-hearted men. They cannot, at least, do not, rally, to speak what they know. I appealed to General Preston and to Gov. Harris. Preston never explained his silence, except on general grounds. Harris gave an evasive answer. He saw the proof of my book, I feel sure, giving his statement to me as to where Beauregard was to be found "in his ambulance in bed", but when Beauregard called upon him for the facts, denying that he had said so, he replied that he had certainly said, "he would be found at his ambulance." He has thus left me by implication in the position of adding to his words and has always ignored my request to set me right, by silence. I am perfectly willing to say I misunderstood him, if he will say he did not give me the information as I reported it. I did not cite him as my authority. Indeed, I had no thought at the time that I was saying anything that would be construed as a reflection, for I supposed from Beauregard's telegrams, &c. that he claimed to be a sick man. I do not hope to get any direct testimony from the men my father had gathered around him. They have all first or last, testified in a declaratory way to the facts as I have them. But they will not meet controversy for him.45

From this statement it is apparent that Johnston, twenty-five years after the death of his father at Shiloh, was not embittered by what might have seemed to be the neglect of General Johnston by his friends, but that he realized that there were considerations which prevented these friends from having the same willingness and zeal for the controversy that he, the son of General Johnston, had. As Johnston indicates, most of them were too broken in body or spirit to take much interest in dis-

puted matters involving the reputations of generals who had fought in a war on the side which had suffered a crushing and humiliating defeat, or to risk the strain of an added measure of unhappiness which even a small participation in controversy is sure to bring. Also, they doubtless realized how unprofitable it would be, after losing a bitter four years conflict with an enemy, to assist in keeping alive the contentions between factions on the defeated side. Some of them, also, like Governor Harris, were anxious to resume a place in the progress of affairs, and the success of these efforts depended often upon the good will of as many people as possible.

Over against difficulties of this sort, as well as others, Colonel Johnston had the advantage of what he termed "some peculiar facilities for the successful achievement of his purpose." He had a strong urge for the task from within himself, which was strengthened by the sympathetic encouragement of eminent Confederates and of many other worthy persons. He had the benefit of his father's papers which had been preserved almost entire since 1836, and these included General Johnston's Confederate archives, which were especially helpful. He had also the co-operation of some persons who had supported the Union side during the War, and whose sphere of service had thrown

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
them in contact with General Johnston.\textsuperscript{50} Finally, Colonel Johnston says that there were "certain exceptional features in his relations to General Johnston, not often found between father and son"; that "there was the utmost confidence in their intercourse", which, he states, often enabled him to explain better than anyone else the bearing of obscure transactions.\textsuperscript{51} Such a relationship between the writer and the subject of his book did not, he felt, affect the character of his account except in the manner that he himself noted:

...the close tie between the biographer and his subject has to some extent marred the artistic effect of this book. Not only delicacy but a sense of duty to the intelligent reader has dictated that it was better in all personal matters to speak in the language of others, wherever it was possible; and yet this could only be done at the sacrifice of brevity and of apparent unity. Then, too, in the discussion of controverted points, where a bias might be presumed to exist, he has thought it proper, while frankly stating his own conclusions, to give the evidence on which they rest.\textsuperscript{52}

The author was to discover, however, that the tie which existed between him and the subject of his biography rendered him vulnerable where controverted matters were concerned; and that his opponents did not overlook this fact is evident in the following complaint:

\textsuperscript{50}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., p. vii.
\textsuperscript{52}Ibid.
...it is easy to see the disadvantage at which I stand in any controversy, as a son. Jordan and Beauregard have availed themselves of it to the utmost.53

There was still another cause of annoyance, which vexed Johnston both before and after the publication of his book; his relations with his publishers were not pleasant, and he complained of their treatment of him. In December, 1877, several months before his work came from the press he wrote Davis from New York:

I am here trying to please the Publishers about my book, which is too long. I am very solicitous to have it ended, so that I may be released to the support of my family.54

Four months later he repeated his complaint to Davis, indicating a growing dissatisfaction at the slowness with which the work of publication proceeded:

The Appitons proceed with my work very slowly. I have not been at all satisfied with their treatment. I hope you are in a position to exact your rights from them. They have sent me about two thirds of my proof---some 475 pages. But they proceed with sublime indifference to my interests or convenience.55

In July, 1878, the large volume upon which Colonel Johnston had expended so much labor came from the press. The book did not sell in the numbers which the author apparently expected, nor in anything near the proportion which his sacrificial efforts in

producing it would justify him in hoping. The chief factors in this circumstance may be reasonably accounted for by the fact that the book was not one which probably had an appeal for many Northern readers, and by the fact that the South, where the interest in such books was naturally strongest, was a poor market for books. Whatever the reasons may have been, Johnston placed the chief blame upon his publishers, as indicated in the letter which he wrote to Davis in the spring of 1880, almost two years after the publication of his work:

...Last fall finding that my publishers had abandoned the sale of my book, I tried to take it up and make it effectual; but from lack of co-operation on their part my efforts have been in a great measure paralysed. They have never sold any books in N. C., S. C., Geo., Ala., Mo., or Ark., or offered them for sale. I do not think they have sold 500 copies, except through agents recommended to them by myself. Dudley Hayden alone has sold about 1500 copies out of the 4000 copies reported to me as sold and some 300 or more are charged to me.

Little or nothing has been done in Texas. They have refused to advertise and consider my book dead. In view of these facts I am trying to buy the copyright back, with stereotype plates and engravings. They offer them to me at $600 and I may arrange with them. My arrangements with the Appletons have not proved satisfactory, and I have not found them just men. They have no organization for the sale of subscription books in the South.56

It is evident from the paragraphs given above, as well as from other portions of the same letter, that Johnston devoted

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himself energetically to promoting the sale of his book; however, it is apparent—since no edition of the biography was published except the one which the Appleton Company issued—that the author did not follow up his expressed design of buying the rights on his book and the materials which would enable him to handle the further publication of it himself.

Although there is apparently no available record concerning the details of Johnston's arrangements with his publishers, it is obvious from the limited sale of the biography and from the means used in disposing of a large proportion of the edition that the author received very little from it in a financial way.

However, there is evidence of other compensations to the author from this publication—returns which were more highly prized by him than financial profit, even though he stood sorely in need of the latter. It gained for him considerable reputation as an author, and more important than this, it made available for the reading public of that time and of succeeding years a thorough and detailed account of his father's life and services, narrated in a manner which could not fail to inspire in the mind of the unbiased reader the same feelings and convictions that animated the biographer. Of such response, especially in the South, there is ample evidence.

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A letter to the writer of the present study, October 17, 1939, from the D. Appleton-Century Company, successors to the publishers of the biography, states that several years ago the old records of the company were destroyed by fire; hence, they have no information concerning the transaction.
The book was published in one large octavo volume of 773 pages containing a number of illustrations. The price according to binding was: cloth, five dollars; sheep, six dollars; and half turkey, seven dollars.\footnote{St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Dec. 20, 1978.}

Its reception by the press throughout the country was favorable. The New York Herald, Sun, World, and Post, the Chicago Times, and the Cincinnati Commercial praised its judicial temper, narrative interest, and literary quality.\footnote{Ibid. The review in the Post-Dispatch is my authority for the notice given the book by these papers.} A review in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch cites a statement made by General Joseph Hooker to a representative of the New York Sun in answer to the question as to what he considered the best book on the War. Hooker's reply was: "The best book, by all odds, published by either side is the Life of Albert Sidney Johnston, by his son."\footnote{Ibid.} The St. Louis paper also points to other testimonials of approbation:

One distinguished critic says that Colonel Johnston's descriptions of battles excel Napier's in his Peninsula History. Another, a noted Southern General, says they are superior to Kingslake's in his Crimean War. A Northern lady, not in sympathy with his views, read the account of Shiloh three times for its picturesque and vivid narrative.\footnote{Ibid.}

Another St. Louis paper wrote favorably of the biography and took occasion in the same item to lambast the Globe-Democrat for its failure to do likewise, asserting that the trouble with
its competitor "is that it does not countenance any history
which does not dove-tail with the Grant boom." The Nation
also praised the work warmly:

> It is...a warm and affectionate eulogy in
> which no little literary skill is used to
> heighten the color of whatever can honor
> his memory and apologize for whatever could
detract from his fame...The book abounds
> with interesting incidents, showing traits
> of character in the subject of the memoir
> that are most attractive, often charming....
> Leaving out of view the question of his
duty to the Union, whose officer he was,
it is the story of a very noble life.

One of the first journals to publish a notice of the book
was, of course, the Lexington paper, and the unqualified enthu-
siasm of the editor is revealed in the following extract from
his appraisal:

> We were prepared for an interesting
> book when it was announced that the gifted
> son (Col. Wm. Preston Johnston) was writing
> a history of his distinguished father, Gen.
> Albert Sidney Johnston. The author, a
gentleman of culture and good judgment, the
> subject, one of earth's noblemen, who lived
>a life of stirring incident and died an
> heroic death...What should we not expect?
> And yet with the book before us, our expecta-
tions sink into nothing in the grand reali-
zation of what has been accomplished.

Following a rapid review of the main events covered in
the book, the editor, referring to the time when General Johnston
assumed a high command in the Confederate service, concludes the

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62 St. Louis Republican, Jan. 4, 1879.
63 The Nation, Vol. XXVII, pp. 197, 214.
64 Lexington (Va.) Gazette and Citizen, Aug. 2, 1878.
From this time to the date of his death his devotion to the cause of the South was of the highest order, and the mastering ability he displayed in overcoming the obstacles which lay in his way testifies to the heroic mould of his mind, his purpose, his character, and stamp him as one of the great men of his age.65

Several weeks after the publication of this review there appeared in the same paper a more lengthy, and even more encomiastic notice, written by a resident of the Lexington vicinity, who, by his testimony, was more than satisfied with the book, as the following segment of his appraisal will indicate:

Too much cannot be said in commendation of the labor and research employed in gathering, sifting, and collating the facts presented in the volume, to render them accurate, complete, and satisfying to the reader. I was, but am not now, surprised that the accomplished author with his well known habits of industry and his facility in writing, should have spent so many years in the preparation of the work. The task he assumed, as I now see, was one of multiform difficulties. No part of it has been performed negligently, or perfunctorily.....

Every reader will be struck with the evidences of the rare judiciousness and taste with which the author has handled a theme of the most delicate complications. It is an affectionate and loyal son delineating the character and deeds of a revered father, who through life, was actively engaged in the service of his country in positions of great prominence and responsibility and who, as every man of worth and influence will be, was constantly exposed to the jealousies and assaults of disappointed rivals. Yet from the beginning to the end of the story the reader will look in vain for exaggerated eulogy, on the one hand, and

65Ibid.
for harshness or injustice on the other. Calmness, courtesy, and scrupulous impartiality are everywhere its characteristics.

The style is simple, chaste, and elegant. In this respect, as in others, it is a model biography. When the subject calls for them, there are passages of great rhetorical beauty and force, evincing a high degree of intellectual culture. The book is an honor to our Southern literature and will take a favorable position in the rank of those productions—too few in number—-which have won distinction and credit for American letters.66

In the October number of the *Annals of the Army of Tennessee*, a notice appeared, in which the reviewer wrote in such language as to leave no doubt in his readers' minds concerning his opinion of the greatness of the book and its subject. He praises it not only as history and literature, but as a fine moral document.

...It is a book of solid merit, valuable as a contribution to history, for it gives us many new and important facts; to literature, for its animated narration is embodied in a style pure, vigorous, and classic; to the general public, for it gives us the faithful portraiture of one of the few truly great men of modern times.... For the comparatively few survivors of "Shiloh", the remnant of that band who.....fought by his side with unsurpassed gallantry, it possesses an especial and peculiar charm. It tells them not merely of his grand strategy by which the concentration at Corinth was effected, but how, by his tact and skill on the battle-field, the smaller, less disciplined, and worse equipped Confederates overthrew a much larger and perfectly appointed army on their own chosen ground. And to all the survivors of the "Lost Cause" it brings a message at once melancholy and inspiring. It tells them how one of the ablest and best of men, holding high rank and face to face with the

most glittering prospects, conscientiously laid down his commission, turned his back on all these temptations, and simply because he believed it to be right, left the stronger to give the weaker side his laureled sword and his life...It not only vindicates a portion of history essential to Southern honor, but presents to the gaze of the rising youth of America a magnificent model upon which each for himself may form a character of true manhood...How can our boys be more healthily and happily tutored in the rounded symmetry of true manliness than by their study of august characters like that of Albert Sidney Johnston?...Let every father furnish his sons with a copy, let them ponder well its lessons, and sure as the day follows the night will the next generation present a higher tone of citizenship and the future of our country a more cheering outlook.67

The book continued to be praised until the end of Johnston's life and afterwards; and wherever the name of William Preston Johnston appears in print, it is almost certain to be followed soon by a glowing reference to the biography.

When Johnston moved to Louisiana in 1880, the literary prestige which the book had given him was in evidence there. Although viewing Johnston's election to the presidency of the Louisiana State University with some disfavor, Thomas D. Boyd, then a young instructor in the institution, was impressed by his literary reputation and ability.68

Also, the Baton Rouge press, in its announcement of the new president's election, placed enthusiastic emphasis upon his literary gifts, praising his biography as the best book which

68 T. D. Boyd's Diary, 1880.
had then appeared dealing with the characters and incidents of the Civil War. 69

Some of the later appraisals of the work are given below. Professor Alcee Fortier, a distinguished member of the Tulane University faculty while Johnston was president of that institution, wrote that the biography had made its author famous. 70

Another writer of Louisiana history and biography makes this statement:

Among the biographies of the Confederate generals none deserves higher rank than Colonel W. F. Johnston's "Life of Albert Sidney Johnston". The style of the book has been much praised, and the author is recognized as a master of English prose. 71

In his anthology of Louisiana authors, which appeared in 1894, Thomas McCaleb lags behind no one in the rank he gives the biography:

His Life of Albert Sidney Johnston (1878) deserves as high place in American literature as Parton's Life of Andrew Jackson or Cotton's Life of Henry Clay. It is written in a style remarkable for its transparency, its earnestness, its elegance; and most critics agree that it is the most satisfactory biography of a general of the ex-Confederacy that has yet appeared. 72

A later, and rather general review of Johnston's works, contained in the William and Mary Quarterly, praises the literary finish of the biography and refers to the rank "usually accorded to the honored president of Tulane University as one of the fore-

69 Louisiana Capitolian, Oct. 9, 1880.
most literary men of the South. 73

And in the long account of William Preston Johnston's life and services which was published by the New Orleans press the day after his death, we find in one of the papers this statement concerning the author's most important book:

Colonel Johnston's life of his father ranked him as one of the best writers in the country, and his style is noted for its vigor and elegance. The judicial character of his work has been attested by many of the most distinguished generals and fairest critics on both sides, North and South. 74

As regards these estimates of the biography, it is hardly necessary to state that in some of the appraisals noted, a personal and sectional bias caused the critics to give higher rank to both the author and his book than has been accorded them by literary historians. However, it is equally true that, even when full allowance is made for bias and the lack of superior critical judgment, the testimony of these intelligent persons indicates an impression and an influence of considerable strength made by Johnston and his biography upon the reading public, particularly in the South.

73William and Mary Quarterly, Vol. VI, Jan 1898.
74New Orleans Times-Democrat, July 17, 1999.
CHAPTER VIII
GENERAL JOHNSTON'S BIOGRAPHY

From the letter which William Preston Johnston wrote to President Gustavus Lee in 1872, requesting a leave of absence from the faculty of the University for the purpose of writing the life of his father, Albert Sidney Johnston, two aspects of feeling with regard to the task are apparent. First, there is the unmistakable evidence of a deep filial attachment for the subject of his biography; and second, it is equally apparent that the author feels the biography is necessary for the complete vindication of his father, especially as regards the circumstances attendant upon his resignation from the army of the United States and his subsequent career as commander of the Confederate forces in the West during the months which preceded his death at Shiloh. That his attitude toward his subject is biased, the author freely admits; but that he believes such bias not necessarily an obstacle to a judicial evaluation of the great man's character and services is evident from the copious documentation employed throughout the narrative. However, even in the use of documentary evidence the author must have been conscious of the fact that his invariable practice of giving strongest emphasis to testimony favorable to his father and minimizing that of an adverse character places the stamp of bias upon this evidence. Still, the author's feeling that the account of his father must at some important points be defensive justifies from his standpoint the manner of treatment. Keeping in mind

this attitude of the author, and keeping in mind also his strongly partisan feeling for the Southern cause, we may proceed to an examination of the book.

General Albert Sidney Johnston was not only a great man, as measured by standards of distinctive achievement, but he was a person of high-souled nobility of character. The list of his virtues is large, and if there was anything to blemish the perfection of his nature, his biographer was apparently unacquainted with it. Such nobility is manifest in his relations with his family and with his associates in the army and in civil life, and in his conscientious devotion to high principles where duty to his country was concerned. There was nothing of the complex or equivocal in his nature, a fact which the author notes in the preface to the biography:

---General Johnston was so truthful and simple in all he said and did that the fittest tribute to his memory is absolute accuracy in whatever relates to him. No ideal of what a hero ought to be has been framed herein; but the story of his life has been told, just as it was lived.  

The biography traces the career of General Johnston from his birth in Mason County, Kentucky, in 1803, to his death on the field of Shiloh on April 6, 1862. The author relates in progressively rising detail the circumstances connected with his childhood, his education at Transylvania College and at West Point, his marriage to Miss Henrietta Preston, his services as a lieutenant in the Black Hawk War, his resignation

\[\text{Ibid., preface, p. viii.}\]
from the United States Army, his services to the Texas Republic, his life on a plantation near Galveston, his re-entrance into the United States Army, his further military service in Texas, his transfer to Utah as commander of the regiment which was stationed there after an outbreak of Mormon hostilities, his subsequent transfer to California, his resignation from the United States Army in 1861, and finally the closing part of his career, when as a general in the Confederate service he commanded the forces in the West.

"There has been no effort to make General Johnston the central figure of his times," the author stated after the book was finished; and he speaks the truth. Such a placement would hardly be possible, for when every possible claim to greatness is allowed General Johnston, the fact remains that he was at no time in his career the most important person on the American scene. He was nearest to such place at the Battle of Shiloh. If he had not been cut down on that field, and if all that was expected of him by his admirers had been realized afterwards, he would have been indeed the central figure of his times. If the biographer does not attempt to place his father in a position where he does not belong, he leaves no doubt as to his estimate of General Johnston's greatness. The extended narrative is an elaboration of the author's condensed appraisal.

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4 Ibid., p. vii.
The most casual reader must be struck with the dramatic interest of the career of a man, who, with small share of wealth, patronage, or political arts, filled so large a sphere by mere moral and intellectual force. It is something in this material age to find a man almost wholly above the accidents of fortune. In some respects he was a man representative of his times, his country, his section and his profession; in others he stood apart with an individuality so marked that Marcus Aurelius might have welcomed him as a brother-stoic, or the Chevalier Bayard as a knightly peer. In Albert Sidney Johnston's life he mingled in many and memorable events, and in some of the greatest he acted the chief and most conspicuous part. In all of them, his countrymen accounted him a fine example of civic and military virtues. His death was not only the decorous and becoming end to a grand life, but many of the wisest and ablest leaders believed that in his fall a national tragedy culminated, which ever after declined toward its final catastrophe. Many of the most judicious have declared that on his arm rested the fortunes of the Confederate cause. It cannot be well that such a figure should pass into utter oblivion.6

According to those who knew Albert Sidney Johnston as a boy, he displayed at an early age an energy which made him an acknowledged leader among his comrades. "He was fearless and impetuous, but kind, affectionate, and just; amenable to reason, deferential to age." His conduct and character were such as give promise of the kind of man into which he afterwards developed.6 As a school boy of fifteen, he was quiet and reserved, and was afterwards remembered by his associates as a youth of influence among those of his own age, and as one who habitually interfered for the protection of smaller and weaker boys.7 As a student at Transylvania College, he was

6Ibid., p. viii-ix.
6Ibid., p. 5.
7Ibid., p. 5.
thorough in his work and exhibited special skill in mathematics. Having received an appointment to West Point, through the influence of his oldest brother, Senator Josiah S. Johnston of Louisiana, he pursued his studies there with diligence and success; and according to the testimony of his college mates, enjoyed the deepest affection and esteem of his associates. As a cadet, he was happy in the privilege of selecting friends whose tastes were congenial. Leonidas Polk, of Tennessee, subsequently Bishop of Louisiana, and a lieutenant-general in the Confederate service, was his room-mate and intimate friend. Among his other close friends were Jefferson Davis and Robert Anderson, the latter of whom was afterwards famous for his defense of Fort Sumter.

Soon after his graduation, when he was visiting in Washington, in the home of his brother, Senator Johnston, and his attractive wife, the young lieutenant was offered a place as aide-de-camp of General Winfield Scott, but declined the offer, preferring to enter upon the more rugged duties of his chosen career with the hope of owing his advancement to his own meritorious service. Lieutenant Johnston believed that his decision offended General Scott, and caused him afterwards to be prejudiced against the younger man and opposed to his advancement in military rank. However, this independence of

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8 Ibid., p. 8.
9 Ibid., pp. 11-14.
10 Ibid., p. 17.
spirit and reluctance to owe any advantage to favor continued to characterize Johnston throughout his life. For example, when he went to join the Texans in their struggle for independence about two years after his resignation from the United States Army in 1834, he made no use of the testimonials concerning his personal worth and military ability, which had been written by persons of distinction to the leading men of Texas, but enlisted as a private in the ranks. However, his merit was discovered almost immediately, and he was given the position of adjutant-general.

Closely bound up with this quality of General Johnston was his unwavering practice of putting aside considerations of personal advantage when they were in conflict with his convictions. The best example concerns the most important decision of his career, when he was commander of the Department of California in the early part of 1861. Upon learning that Texas had seceded from the Union, he resigned his commission, although he stood high in the service, depended upon his army income for the support of himself and his family, and had before him the attractive prospect of glorious position, if he continued in the United States Army. He was not the owner of a large estate nor a large slave-holder; therefore, his conduct was free from imputation of personal financial advantage. How important his position would have been in the Union service is indicated in the following account of a brief

11Ibid., pp. 69-70.
12Ibid., p. 72.
portion of the conference which occurred between him and
General L. V. Sumner, who came to relieve him of his command:

General Johnston mentioned the facts of his
resignation to General Sumner, who then said:
"General, I wish you would reconsider and re-
call your resignation. General Scott bade me
say to you that he wished you for active
service and that you should be only second to
himself." General Johnston replied, "I thank
General Scott for his opinion of me, but nothing
can change my determination."13

There were other considerations which might have influenced
a person less firm in his convictions. After he resigned his
commission and was waiting to be relieved of his command, a
rumor sprang up that he was the chief member of a body of promi-
nent conspirators who were plotting to seize the United States
arsenal, distribute the arms to their partisans, and hand over
the State of California to the Southern Confederacy.14 This
report was given wide circulation by some of the administrative
party journals, which elaborated the supposed circumstances in
highly dramatic fashion.15 General Johnston had strong friends
among the important persons connected with the administration,
and these attempted to repair the injury which had been done
him. General Scott sent him the strongest assurance of friend-
ship, and President Lincoln wished to make him a major-general.16
By resuming his place in the United States service, he could
have set at rest the imputations affecting his honor. However,

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13 Ibid., p. 266.
14 Ibid., pp. 261-264.
15 Ibid., p. 262.
16 Ibid., p. 267.
neither this prospect nor the allurements held out to him had any weight. "From the moment Texas seceded," his biographer writes, "his purpose was fixed, no longer to bear arms for a government of which she was not a member."  

There was another factor connected with General Johnston's decision, which must have added greatly to his pain. The widow of his deceased elder brother, Senator Josiah S. Johnston, always regarded her soldier-brother-in-law with a tender and affectionate esteem. After the death of her husband, she had married the Honorable Henry D. Gilpin, attorney-general in President Van Buren's Cabinet, but her sisterly feeling for Albert Sidney Johnston was sustained through the years. She was intensely devoted to the Union; and when she learned that he had been superseded in his command she wrote in warmly sympathetic terms, assured him that influential persons in Washington would see that full justice was done, and reminding him of his brother's exalted patriotism and love for the Union, implored him not resign his commission. General Johnston's reply was of the same tone as his sister-in-law's letter. In language that breathed his affectionate appreciation of her, he revealed how deeply his honor had been touched, how much he appreciated the confidence and loyalty of his friends, and how sad he was because of the state of the country. His attitude with respect to the crisis is stated in a brief paragraph near the end:

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17 Ibid., p. 268.
18 Ibid., pp. 86.
19 Ibid., p. 273.
I do not desire ever again to hold an office. No one could feel more sensibly the calamitous condition of our country than myself; and, whatever part I may take hereafter, it will always be a subject of gratulation with me that no act of mine ever contributed to bring it about. I suppose the difficulties now will only be adjusted by the sword. In my humble judgment that was not the remedy.\(^{20}\)

The disappointment of his sister-in-law did not lessen her esteem for him, as the sentiment contained in a letter written July 12, 1861, to William Preston Johnston, will indicate:

> I truly grieve for the necessity of your father's resignation. Still, I cannot blame him. He has always been the soul of honor; and so he will be, in my estimation, while I live.\(^{21}\)

> "Years afterward," writes the son, "these sentiments were reiterated by the trembling hand of age."\(^{22}\)

General Johnston's high sense of honor led him, at least once in his life, to follow a line of conduct which he doubtless would have avoided, had it been possible to do so without damage to the morale of the army to which he had been assigned as commander. In the early part of 1837, a circumstance arose in connection with his service to the Texas republic, which resulted in a pistol duel between him and another commanding officer. In this encounter General Johnston was seriously wounded, and the injury which he received was a

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\(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 274.
\(^{21}\)Mrs. Henry D. Gilpin to W. P. Johnston, in ibid., p. 274.
source of much suffering for several years and proved a great handicap in the performance of his duties. The cause of the affair was the appointment of Johnston as senior-brigadier general, which placed him above Felix Huston, an ambitious lawyer and politician, who had brought a contingent of volunteers to Texas after the battles of the revolution had been fought, and who, through his popularity with the soldiers, had gained the command of the army.23 On the day that General Johnston arrived at camp, General Huston addressed a letter to him, expressing his respect and esteem for the officer whose appointment had consigned him to second place, but stating that the circumstances connected with his own demotion made it necessary for him to tender a challenge.24 Although General Johnston had had nothing to do with his own appointment, and although he had little respect for the practice of duelling, he accepted the challenge, believing that the safety of the republic depended upon the efficiency of the army, and that the lawless spirit in the army, which General Huston embodied, must be controlled, even if his own life was imperilled.25 Also, in spite of the fact that Johnston knew that Huston was a skilled pistol shot, and he himself was not, he selected pistols for the encounter when the choice of rapiers would have improved his chances with his adversary.

23 Ibid., pp. 75-76.
24 Felix Huston to A. S. Johnston, Feb. 4, 1837, in ibid., p. 76.
In the duel which took place on the morning of February 5, 1837, the day following the challenge, General Johnston received a dangerous wound, and for weeks lay at the point of death. However, the results which he anticipated from the encounter were realized. The sentiment of the army underwent a revolution in his favor; and Huston, greatly chastened by the injury which he had done his brother-officer, acted in good faith as a subordinate officer during the brief time that he remained in the army. 26

General Johnston's attitude toward Huston after the duel reveals a spirit which was characteristic of him. He felt no resentment toward his adversary; and when he lay in pain, with the surgeons believing that his wound would prove mortal, he directed his sorrowing and resentful second to yield obedience to General Huston, and not to promote a spirit of insubordination. 27

His biographer records the following recollection connected with the affair:

I remember, when I was a little boy, asking my father "if he did not hate Felix Huston." He replied, "No," and then I asked him what he would do if he were to meet him then. He laughed, and answered, amusedly, "As he would be a stranger here, I would ask him to dinner." I thought a good deal before I could reconcile it to my sense of right. 28

The spirit exhibited by General Johnston in the trying circumstances just recorded is in keeping with the natural

26 Ibid., pp. 76-79.
27 Ibid., p. 79.
28 Ibid.
kindliness of his nature, which manifested itself throughout his life. His son writes that he recalled many lessons from his father that a man has no right to inflict unnecessary pain upon any creature, and that he would habitually turn aside from treading upon a worm in his path; but he adds that "there was no morbid sentimentality in this, as he enjoyed field sports moderately." 

Reference has already been made to General Johnston's unwillingness to advance himself through the influence of his friends. Not only was it true that he desired to advance solely by his merit, but it was true also that his ambition for a successful public career was confined to the military field, the profession for which his education and experience had fitted him, and for which he believed himself qualified. During the Mexican war he once told his eldest son, "There is one thing I know I can do; I am competent to command troops." Unlike many military men, he shrank from the idea of using his military reputation as a means of attaining high political position. During his career as commander of the Texas army, he was urged by many friends to allow himself to be nominated for the presidency of the young republic, but steadfastly refused. Some twenty years later, while he was in command of the army in Utah, a number of prominent citizens of the West

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29 Ibid., p. 6.
31 Ibid., p. 60.
wished to have his name introduced into the campaign for President of the United States. To one of these he wrote that he had no ambition for the high place; "or, I might better say, I have no taste for political life." Writing to his son on the same subject, he stated his position a little more fully:

My friends, some of them, in the States, say that a glittering prize is within grasp, in their opinion. If I had you to write my answer, declining the preferred honor, if by any chance it should be offered, I could, by displaying the folly of our people in selecting men for public office without any regard to their fitness by education and training for the particular duties they are called on to perform, more entitle myself to their good opinion than by accepting. My education, taste, and my ambition, if I have any, would find nothing congenial in the performance of the duties of a civil office. If success were certain, I still have honor and patriotism enough to say that there are others much more capable and more fit for the station who ought to have precedence.

The only civil office which General Johnston held during his long career was an important and difficult post directly connected with military affairs. When Mirabeau B. Lamar was inaugurated President of the Republic of Texas in December, 1830, he selected Johnston as his Secretary of War. This responsibility he accepted because the affairs of Texas were in a critical condition from the standpoint of military defense, and he hoped to organize an efficient army, at the head of which he knew President Lamar would place him if the troops went into

32 Ibid., p. 244.
33 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, in Ibid., p. 245.
action against Mexico. General Johnston held this post for more than a year, and resigned in the early part of 1840, after it became evident that the objectives which he had in mind would not be realized.34

Among the many virtues with which Albert Sidney Johnston was endowed was that of intense loyalty. The sorrow which afflicted him at the prospect of the breaking up of the Union has already been noted. He was strongly Unionist in feeling, but also strongly Southern; and his decision to resign from the United States Army when the Southern states, particularly Texas, withdrew from the Union was based upon the conviction that the highest claims upon his loyalty were those of his state, whose rights under the Constitution he believed violated by the North. His position, as stated in the biography, was as follows:

But, devoted as General Johnston was to the Union, he could not forget that he was also the citizen of a State. To Texas he had sworn allegiance; his estate and his best years had been spent in shielding her; he had aided to merge her autonomy and to limit her independent sovereignty by annexation, and he knew that when she entered the Union it was by treaty, as an equal, and that the Constitution was the bond to which she had consented. She had performed her covenant faithfully; it was the North by which it had been trampled into the dust. She had, therefore, the right to renounce the broken contract, or to try to enforce it, as she deemed most expedient. If she elected to secure her liberties by withdrawing from a Union in which they were assailed, her action would be justified by either the letter of the bond, or by the "inalienable right," as the Declaration of Inde-

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34 W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 120.
pendence has it, of a people to choose their own form of government. It was an act of sovereignty, for which the State was responsible to whatever other community should choose to dispute it; but not to its own citizens who were bound to adhere to it the more closely it was endangered. 35

The quality of loyalty which he manifested in following the fortunes of his adopted state, and which he exhibited in his relations to the governments he served, was equally apparent in his relationships with persons associated with him. Perhaps the most notable example is one of generous support given by him to Generals John B. Floyd and G. J. Pillow, after the fall of Fort Donelson. These officers were in command of this last defense between the advancing Federal army and the city of Nashville, Tennessee; and finding that their army must surrender to General Grant, they turned over the command to General S. B. Buckner, and escaped capture with a small portion of their command. 36 A blast of accusation and fury from the terrified citizens of Tennessee followed, falling most heavily upon these officers and their superior, General Johnston. 37 Johnston received Floyd and Pillow with utmost kindness after their escape; and to his aide-de-camp, he expressed the intention of sustaining them. However, in spite of his favorable attitude, they were suspended from command by the War Department. 38

36Ibid., p. 475.
37Ibid., pp. 511-512.
38Ibid., pp. 515-516.
The loyalty which General Johnston generously gave to others was given by his associates to him. After the fall of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, he was compelled to retreat southward and abandon Nashville to the Federals. His reputation as a commander was assailed vigorously and vociferously by persons of importance who demanded his removal. During this critical period, those persons who knew him best were unwavering in their support and encouraged him with expressions of fullest confidence. When a delegation of Senators and Representatives from Tennessee demanded of Jefferson Davis that Johnston be removed, charging that he was "no general," the President replied: "Gentlemen, I know Sidney Johnston well. If he is not a general, we had better give up the war, for we have no general." Because of the tremendous force of the attack leveled at Johnston, all of President Davis' power was required to retain the General in his position. However, he steadfastly supported him, giving him not only his moral support, but ordering Bragg's army from the Gulf coast to reinforce him.

Nor did General Johnston at that time lack loyal support from those in his army who came into immediate contact with him. Among this number were the Kentuckians and the Texas Rangers. The commander of the latter force, Colonel John A. Wharton, wrote his chief in the following language,

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39 Ibid., pp. 496, 511-514.  
40 Ibid., p. 496.  
41 Ibid., pp. 512-513.
under present circumstances, I feel it not inappropriate to say that I regard you as the best soldier in America, and that I desire to fight under no other leadership, and that such is the feeling of the Texas Rangers." Likewise, a letter from General Robert E. Lee, who had served under Johnston as lieutenant-colonel of a regiment several years before the Civil War, expressed the warmest sympathy for his friend and the fullest confidence in his ability to win the battle which was soon to be fought.

In the midst of the storm of criticism which broke upon General Johnston, he manifested remarkable self-control and understanding. He indulged in no excuses or recriminations, but gave his attention to a course of action by which he hoped to rectify the damage which had been done. Anticipating the furor that would follow his abandonment of Nashville, he declared to his friend and aide, Colonel Mumford, "The clamor of today is converted into the praises of tomorrow by a simple success. All I require to rectify that is to get in position where I can fight a battle, and I think all will be well." In a long letter to his friend, President Davis, he gave in detail the circumstances leading up to the calamities which had occurred in Tennessee, and concluded with a declaration which reveals the fairness of his attitude with regard to his situation: "The test of merit in my profession with the
people is success. It is a hard rule, but I think it right." 45

The sense of fairness revealed in this expression was
displayed also by General Johnston in a proposal which he made
to General Beauregard just after the forces of the two com-
mmanders had been united in preparation for the great battle
which was fought at Shiloh. A statement of it is contained in
a letter which General Beauregard wrote to Johnston's son and
biographer:

When General Johnston first met me at Corinth,
he proposed, after our staff officers had retired,
to turn over the command of the United forces to me;
but I positively declined, on his account and that
of the "cause", telling him that I had come to
assist, not to supersede him, and offering to give
him all the assistance in my power. He then con-
cluded to remain in command. It was one of the most
affecting scenes of my life. 46

The biographer explains the proposal in the following
statement:

General Johnston felt constrained to make this
offer, because he had brought with him the smaller
fraction of the united forces, and he was on a
field that he had set apart for Beauregard's con-
trol. That officer had been for some time on the
ground, and he was unwilling that a subordinate
should suffer by his arrival. He would make any
sacrifice himself rather than take one laurel from
the brow of a fellow-soldier. 47

The author states, however, that General Johnston in making
this offer had no thought of shifting responsibility. "It was
his wish to give General Beauregard the command of the troops

45 A. S. Johnston to Davis, Mar. 15, 1862, in ibid., p. 521.
46 Beauregard to W. P. Johnston, in ibid., p. 545.
in the field, which would have secured to that officer whatever of glory might be won at Shiloh; but it was in no wise his intention to abdicate the supreme command, or the superintendence of the affairs in the management of the department or the movements of the army. 48

The biographer recalls also a similar act of magnanimity on the part of his father, which occurred earlier in his life:

A somewhat analogous case in his career occurred at the battle of the Nolches, in 1839. While Secretary of War of Texas, he attended his subordinate on the field, gave him the benefit of his military experience, and then received from his hand the report of the combat. 49

The strong determination which characterized General Johnston was at no point in his life more marked than during the time immediately preceding the great battle in which he was killed. Upon two matters relating to the conflict he was fully determined: that the battle should be fought as soon as the opposing armies were in position to engage each other; and that his army should achieve the victory. General Bragg relates that in the conference which General Johnston had with his subordinate generals on the afternoon preceding the battle, General Beauregard urged a change of program, but the commander was resolute in his determination. In a subsequent conference which occurred later in the evening, and in another meeting at

48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
dawn the next day, April 6, Beauregard again expressed his dissent, but Johnston continued firm, and by his coolness, confidence, and determination inspired his subordinates. General William Preston relates that following one of the conferences on April 5, Johnston had said to him, "I would fight them if they were a million. They can present no greater front between these two creeks than we can; and the more men they crowd in there, the worse we can make it for them." Testimony from others appears in the biography, indicating the same resolute attitude on the part of the commander, and revealing also the fullest concurrence on the part of all of his subordinates, except his second in command.

On the morning of the battle General Johnston's spirit took on an exultant character, which animated his being and inspired his followers with an eagerness for the anticipated victory. The nature of his feeling and conduct is indicated in the following passage:

The native buoyancy of General Johnston's self-repressed temper broke its barriers at the prospect of that struggle which should settle for all time by the arbitrament of arms the dispute as to his own military ability and skill and the fate of the Confederate cause in the west. He knew the hazard; but he knew too, that he had done all that foresight, fortitude, energy, and strategy, could accomplish to secure a victory, and he welcomed with exultant joy

50 Ibid., pp. 568-569.
51 Ibid., p. 569.
52 Ibid., pp. 567-571.
the day that was about to decide not only these great questions, but for his all questions, solving the mysteries of life and death. Men who came within his influence on the battle field felt and confessed the inspiration of his presence, his manner, and his words. As he gave his orders in terse sentences, every word seemed to ring with a presage of victory.

Turning to his staff, as he mounted, he exclaimed, "Tonight we will water our horses in the Tennessee River." It was then that he formulated his plan of battle. It must not stop short of entire victory.

As he rode forward he encountered Colonel Randal L. Gibson, who was an intimate friend of his son. When Gibson ordered his brigade to salute, General Johnston took him warmly by the hand and said, "Randal, I never see you but I think of William. I hope you may get through safely today, but we must win a victory." Gibson says he felt greatly stirred by his words.

With similar expressions, General Johnston inspired other officers in his command, saying to one, "My son, we must this day conquer or perish!" and to another, "You have earned your spurs as a major-general. Let this day's work win them." The valor exhibited by the Confederates during the Battle of Shiloh is adequate testimony of the power of Johnston's enthusiasm.

In the bitter and terrible conflict which occurred that day, the influence of the commander's vigorous presence was felt everywhere, especially at places where the situation was most critical. The following account of Johnston's conduct at one of such places, a short time before he was struck down, reveals a heroic leader in the full glory of magnificent

53 Ibid., pp. 582-583.
54 Ibid., p. 584.
soldiership, out of which shone his courageous determination and his genius for leading and inspiring men.

General Johnston rode out in front, and slowly down the line. His hat was off. His sword rested in its scabbard. In his right hand he held a little tin cup, the memorial of an incident that had occurred earlier in the day. As they were passing through a captured camp, an officer had brought from a tent a number of valuable articles, calling General Johnston's attention to them. He answered with some sternness, "None of that, sir; we are not here for plunder!" And then, as if regretting the sharpness of the rebuke, for the anger of the just cuts deep, he added, taking this little tin cup, "Let this be my share of the spoils today." It was this plaything, which, holding it between two fingers, he employed more effectively in his natural and simple gesture than most men could have used a sword. His presence was full of inspiration. Many men of rank have told the writer that they never saw General Johnston's equal in battle in this respect. He sat his beautiful thorough-bred bay, "Fire-eater," with easy command——like a statue of Victory. His voice was persuasive, encouraging, and compelling. It was inviting men to death, but they obeyed it. But, most of all, it was the light in his gray eye, and his splendid presence, full of the joy of combat, that wrought upon them. His words were few. He touched their bayonets with significant gesture. "These must do the work," he said, "Men! they are stubborn; we must use the bayonet." When he reached the center of the line, he turned. "I will lead you!" he cried, and moved toward the enemy. The line was already thrilling and trembling with that tremendous and irresistible ardor which in battle decides the day. Those nearest to him, as if drawn to him by some overpowering magnetic force, rushed forward around him with a mighty shout. The rest of the line took it up and echoed it with a wild yell of defiance and desperate purpose, and moved forward at a charge with rapid and relentless step. A sheet of flame burst from the Federal strong hold, and blazed along the crest of the ridge. There was a roar of cannon and musketry; a storm of leaden and iron hail. The Confederate line withered, and the dead and dying strewed the dark valley. But there was not an instant's pause. Right up the steep they went.
The crest was gained. The enemy were in flight—a few scattered shots replying to the ringing cheers of the victorious Confederates.56

Although General Johnston's life and thought were devoted chiefly to military affairs, his mind was capable of looking at other matters with clearness of insight. Regarding the boasted superiority of Southern hospitality, he gave the following explanation:

The solitary planter, who gives a traveler supper and lodging, receives in return human intercourse, news from the outer world, and, perhaps, intelligent discourse. He is very well repaid. But in a dense population, crowded into a city, or on a poor soil, entertainment implies personal inconvenience and outlay of money, not compensated by companionship, the need of which is amply supplied. In the first case, provisions and house-room are cheap, and society scarce; in the second, provisions and house-room are dear, and society a drug in the market.56

Remarking upon the abundance of everything in America, which enabled the industrious poor to have all of the necessities of life in ample portion, he wrote:

This is the mystery which foreigners cannot unveil. They do not perceive that the well-being of our population flows from a fostering government, which does not meddle much with private pursuits, and taxes with great moderation—always excepting the municipal tyrannies of our land. The patriotism of our people is founded in the advantages derived from their institutions; hence its ardor; hence it is "a constant quantity" never short of the exigency.57

55Ibid., p. 612.
56Ibid., p. 101.
57Ibid., p. 158.
In the matter of educating his children he held strongly to the idea that American institutions were best for American youths, and especially those schools that reflected the spirit and ideals of the regions in which they were reared. Therefore, when he wrote to his brother-in-law, General William Preston, concerning the education of his two eldest children, he expressed the desire that his daughter should not attend an Eastern school and that his son should not be educated abroad. Concerning the disadvantages of European education for an American he wrote:

They are ages behind us in the science of government—the well-being of the many. I know of no great man in any country who was educated away from his people. An important part of education is the study of the temper and tendencies of our own race—of the people, in units, and in mass, among whom we are to act—without a knowledge of which no one need ever hope to wield power in a free country.59

The following extract from a letter to his son reveals not only his conviction concerning the importance of education, but the obligation of the parent to provide it, even at great sacrifice:

Education in the present age is a positive right. It would be criminal in a parent to withhold it, if any sacrifice or privation on his part could procure it. In my opinion, there is not excuse in this country for neglect in this matter. If there be no ready and available means, then the parent is bound to labor for them.60

58 A. S. Johnston to W. Preston, Aug. 3, 1847, in ibid., p. 160.
59 Ibid.
This expression indicates strongly the spirit which characterized General Johnston in all his relationships with his family. As a husband and as a father he was unflaggingly kind and generous. In the early part of his military career, when as a young lieutenant he looked to his profession as the means of advancing himself and supporting his family, he yielded to the affectionate entreaty of his sick wife and resigned his commission, in order that he might devote himself to her care.61

Some years after the death of his first wife, he married her cousin, Miss Eliza Griffin.62 The children by his first wife were entrusted to the care of maternal relatives in Kentucky; and although General Johnston during the remainder of his life lived at places far removed from them, neither this fact nor the claims of his new family, which grew rapidly, diminished his affectionate interest in his eldest children. While he was living on the China Grove plantation near Galveston, Texas, he sent for his son, William Preston Johnston, to visit him. In the biography of his father, this son relates with affectionate recollection the happy associations, which he as a lad of sixteen enjoyed with General Johnston during the three months that followed. The nature of their relationship is indicated as follows:

62 Ibid., p. 129.
It is proper to say that he had always treated me with a confidence and consideration proportional not at all to my merits, nor probably even to his conception of them, but to the ideal which he set before me as worthy of imitation. His rule with children was to give them a character, that they would try to live up to it. He was an indulgent husband, father, and master.—Though his sway was gentle, I, at least felt that its constraint was absolute. He was no believer in the rod, or in any form of terror, which he said made cowards and liars. His appeal was always to the reason and moral nature, and was made with irresistible force and persuasiveness. His children were his companions and friends, and this without sacrifice of his dignity or their filial relation. The sympathy was very deep and tender; but it was accompanied by a sense of grateful obligation and the perception that they had been lifted to his moral plane, from which an unworthy act would hopelessly banish them.53

Further indications of General Johnston's tender affection for his children are to be found in the many letters which he wrote to his eldest son, a considerable number of which appear in the biography. The following passage is the opening paragraph of a letter sent by him from Austin, Texas, December 23, 1854, at which time, his son, who had married Miss Rosa Duncan of New Orleans, was a young attorney in Louisville:

I send to you and Rosa and Hennie the best wishes of my heart for your health and happiness always; but especially do I offer my wishes for a "happy Christmas" and a "happy New Year," which I am reminded to do by the happy little faces around me, impatient for the arrival of those days so delightful to the beneficiaries of the merry little friend of good children, St. Nicholas. Maggie implicitly believes in his advent and good works; but Sid and Hancock are disenchanted, though "the little hypocrites, like taller ones, |

53Ibid., p. 149.
wisely affect a belief they do not entertain, for the accruing benefits. The children are in fine health and improving in their studies; each has earned a reward for extra work. These little cheerful faces, happy in the hopes of the future, reflect their sunshine on us; and if Brother Willie, Sister Hennie, and Sister Rosa, as these prattleers call you, were here to throw their sunlight on us, the evening of our days would be as beautiful and as full of exquisite repose as the close of day in this delicious climate. 64

To the religious life of General Johnston, his biographer makes but one brief and impressive reference:

He spoke little of his inner life; but once in Austin he said to the writer that a minister had been urging upon him the benefits of prayer, and added: "I did not think it necessary to tell him, but it is many years since I have closed my eyes in sleep without prayer. Indeed, I feel that I cannot thank God enough for his goodness to me. Beyond that thanksgiving I almost dread to go; his care is so great, and my views so narrow, that I do not know how to ask God for anything better for me and mine than that his will be done." 65

The writer of the present study has attempted in the preceding pages to indicate the character of General Johnston as he is represented in the biography. The delineation therein given is such as may well induce in the sympathetic reader agreement with the declaration of the reviewer who wrote that the biographer "presents to the gaze of the rising youth of America a magnificent model upon which each for himself may form a character of true manhood." 66

64 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, Dec. 23, 1854, in ibid., p. 130.
65 W. P. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, p. 182.
Reference has already been made to the fact that William Preston Johnston had in his possession all of the military papers of his father, which obviously were of the utmost importance in his work. How these papers were preserved for the author's use is related in an item which the editor of the Lexington paper published soon after the composition of the biography was begun. The important portion of it is as follows:

In a conversation with Col. Johnston some two years ago, he said the trunk containing these records was saved in the retreat, after his father's death, from capture, by a Methodist preacher, the Rev. Dr. W. A. Smith, of Missouri. This clergyman was lame and rode in a buggy. The Yankees were in the house where the trunk lay. Dr. Smith, who was of commanding presence, ordered the Federal soldiers out of the dwelling, buckled the trunk on the vehicle and drove off unmolested. The trunk was forwarded to a friend of Dr. Smith, Dr. D'Arcy Paul of Petersburg, from whom Col. Johnston received it.67

This chapter thus far has been chiefly devoted to a condensed appraisal of Albert Sidney Johnston's character as he appears in the biography. There are other features connected with the work which merit attention, and with which the remainder of this section will be concerned.

As regards the author's style, we have inserted a sufficient number of quotations to reveal that William Preston Johnston was a considerable extent given to that manner of expression which is generally denominated as Southern. His

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67 Lexinton (Va.) Gazette, Aug. 1, 1873.
language is often eloquent, especially when he touches the high points in the lives and deeds of Southern officers and soldiers, reminding one of John Eaton Cooks and other writers who have glorified the Confederacy. However, Johnston's writing is rarely florid, and the exalted expression of the biography is combined with factual material logically presented and consistently developing the purpose of the work.

In revealing his father's nature, the writer likewise reveals his own. In both there were vigor and determined spirit, but little of the bitter in either. The passion exhibited in the biography is one of intense loyalty and affection on the part of the author for his father and for the South. Evidence of strong indignation or sharp feeling appear but seldom, which fact is the more remarkable when the controversial nature of much of the book is taken into account. However, they are at times exhibited with some strength when the writer deals with circumstances where the honor or ability of his father has been touched. Referring to testimony of Northern writers concerning a disputed point connected with the Battle of Shiloh, he declares:

All the controversy on the Federal side about the battle of Shiloh has arisen out of the theory that it is necessary to show that Generals Grant and Sherman are, and always have been, incapable of mistake or failure. A better theory, and more

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easily maintained, would be that they were capable of learning something, and at Shiloh received a lesson which rebuked their insolent contempt of an able adversary, and the perilous carelessness of their false security.69

Then, to show that he is not unmindful of the true greatness of the leaders referred to, he adds:

These distinguished generals have since become famous; and it is not necessary to their reputations to show that they were infallible—especially, so early in their careers. If the testimony proved them somewhat at fault in wariness and sagacity, yet it shows them derelict only so far; and they certainly exhibited on the field a gallantry and persistence worthy of commendation.70

The comparative moderation displayed by the author in the preceding quotations is exhibited throughout his discussions of controversial matters. That he was capable of sharper language is evident from his later expressions on matters relating to the Battle of Shiloh, and reference to these will be made further on in this study.

Some notice should be taken of the author's opinion regarding the causes of the Civil War, which views, as he rightly states, reflect the standpoint of the Southern people. Like many others from his section, he regarded the conflict as springing primarily from the difference in social organization between the Northern and Southern states. "The more immediate causes," he writes, "were certain real or imaginary collisions

70 Ibid.
of material interests, a different mode of interpreting the Constitution, and the agitation for the abolition of negro-slavery." The first of these he did not consider vital, and the second so only when it became bound up with the third. His analysis of the situation arising from this combination of the two important causes is as follows:

The material interests and social and political difficulties involved in the slavery question rendered it impossible for the South to consider it dispassionately. On the other hand, the sentimental and philanthropic origin of the slavery agitation in the North made it impossible to fix any legal or constitutional limits to the abolition crusade. At the South the Constitution was regarded as an historical document. It was a charter conveying to the Federal government, as the agent of the States, certain well-defined powers for certain specific purposes; all powers not thus explicitly granted being reserved to the several States. The instrument was to be strictly construed; a breach of the covenant entitled the aggrieved party to redress, the measure of which the State must fix, as no common tribunal had been established for that purpose. This involved the right of withdrawal from the Union, either by peaceable secession or by revolution. In the extreme South the former was regarded as the legitimate method, when the emergency arose, those States attempted thus to exercise their right.

In the North these primitive views of the Constitution were changed by an immense influx of European immigrants, who, controlled by speculative republicans, regarded the Constitution as a mere Bill of Rights, and the mission of the republic to be the emanipation and illumination of the world. A modern national, or rather an imperial, theory of the nature of our government prevailed there. Legalists gave form and color of authority to attacks on slavery, which were regarded in the South as willful, dangerous, and manifest infractions of the Constitution.  

71 Ibid., p. 340.
72 Ibid., pp. 246-250.
When William Preston Johnston took up the task of writing the biography, he possessed advantages of an exceptional character for an intelligent understanding of the agencies which operated favorably and unfavorably for each of the opposing sections. He was a close student of political science; he had had considerable training and experience in public affairs; and, as a member of President Davis’s staff during the greater part of the war, he was associated with the principal leaders of the Confederacy. The following extracts taken from his discussions of several aspects of the struggle disclose the insight of an intelligent and informed person. He believed that one of the factors contributing to the weakness of the Southern cause in the beginning was the pacific attitude of the Provisional Congress of the Confederacy, many of the leaders of which confidently believed that they would be permitted to separate without war. Of this he writes:

This delusion, and a kindred one indulged in by certain dreamy statisticians and turgid orators, and formulated in the phrase "cotton is king", encouraged a vain-glorious apathy in the masses, and enabled their representatives to paralyze in many essential points the policy of preparation which the President undoubtedly desired to inaugurate. 73

His appraisal of the situation confronting the more moderate of the Southern states, and of the circumstances

73 Ibid., p. 251.
leading to the addition of several of these to the Confederacy is indicated as follows:

While the Unionists condemned all preparation for war, as leading to that result, the State-rights men denounced vacillation and apathy as the prelude to submission to tyranny and political death. To a community in doubt, inaction is the natural policy; and it only needed moderation and a pacific purpose on the part of the Administration to have preserved the Union intact in seven Southern States, and to have inaugurated measures of peaceful reconstruction with the others. But this would not have accorded with the designs of its leaders; and though President Buchanan is reviled for permitting the peaceful withdrawal of half the Southern States, President Lincoln is applauded for driving the other half into armed resistance.74

The following passage contains the author's explanation of the loyalty to the Union of the mountain people in the South:

A sort of clanship, based on association and kinship, prevailed among this primitive people, who followed with blind confidence local leaders, eminent for wealth or popular arts. Hence they usually voted and acted in masses. It is sufficient to say that the United States Government, more clearly than the Confederate, appreciated the character and importance of these mountaineers, and secured adhesion of their leaders to the Federal side.75

Many other statements could be cited from the work, which exemplify the author's knowledge and appreciation of the factors that contributed to the development of situations, incidents, and conditions belonging to that portion of the nation's history with which the career of his father was concerned.

74 Ibid., p. 252.
75 Ibid., p. 313.
In the preceding pages of this chapter, a somewhat detailed examination of the Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston has been made in an effort to analyze and evaluate this biography. Sufficient treatment has been given it to indicate the success with which the author has achieved what he set out to do. Since the name and memory of Albert Sidney Johnston have been continuously admired and venerated from the time of his death until the present time, and since no other book-length study of the General's career has been published, we must give the biography much of the credit for the impressions which posterity has received concerning this leader. When we give considerable credit to traditional accounts and impressions which were set in motion by his admiring followers, we are justified in believing that even in the case of many of his contemporaries, the biography was the source from which they obtained their knowledge of General Johnston's career and their appreciation of his character and ability.

From one of these, a loyal and valued officer of the Confederacy, we have this testimony, which was contained in a letter which he wrote to his close friend, Jefferson Davis:

I have read recently Sidney Johnston's life and mourned over him, with personal grief, though I never saw him, and conceive how much his loss must have pierced your heart—-it was a terrible trial to your fortitude.76

Albert Sidney Johnston, as his son presents him, leaves little for the reader to desire in the man's character and career except that he might have escaped some of the painful experiences which befell him and that his life might have been prolonged. The biographer has strengthened his narrative with ample testimony from those who knew his father during the several periods of his long and eventful career; but when every consideration of the author's competency and his copious documentation is taken into account, the book is the loving tribute of a devoted son, who wrote with no pretense to an unbiased attitude, and who, as one of the reviewers states, "nobly—discharged the sacred and patriotic trust which filial affection and the voice of the country assigned him." Such being the case, the definitive biography of General Johnston is yet to be written; but when such a work is undertaken, the author's chief source for materials and guide-posts must be the story which William Preston Johnston wrote.

77 Lexington (Va.) Gazette and Citizen, Sept. 13, 1878.
CHAPTER IX

PRESIDENT OF THE LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

On September 18, 1880, Edwin H. Fay, who, in his capacity as State Superintendent of Education, was a member of the Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, addressed the following letter to Colonel Johnston:

Without the pleasure of a personal acquaintance, nevertheless, from a perusal of the life of your illustrious father, I feel as if I really know you and the object of this letter is to inquire if you will accept the Presidency of the La. State University and A. & M. College located at Baton Rouge, La., formerly under the management of Col. D. F. Boyd who has been relieved by the Board of Supervisors to take place Oct. 1st, 1880.

The Board meets Oct. 4th in Baton Rouge for the purpose of supplying the vacancy and I should be pleased to put your name in nomination. The salary is $2,500 per annum. If elected it will be necessary for you to reach B. R. as soon as possible as the session opens Oct. 4th.

Respectfully,

Edwin H. Fay
State Supt. of Education

Three days later Jefferson Davis, writing from Beauvoir, also addressed a letter to Johnston:

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1E. H. Fay to W. P. Johnston, Sept. 18, 1880.
I would have answered your letter sooner but for the hope that I would obtain some more definite information than I possessed when it was received. I now however only have learned that Col. Boyd Superintendent of the Louisiana University at Baton Rouge seeks to maintain his right to the office by an appeal to the Courts, and that there is a strong public feeling in his favor. Under these circumstances I suppose nothing can be done in regard to your wish for the Presidency of that institution if indeed, with the financial and other difficulties surrounding it, you should think the place desirable.

In the meantime I would be glad to hear from you and know further your views in that connection. I need not say it would give me pleasure to serve you in any practicable way.

With kindest remembrance and affectionate wishes for your wife, and children.

Faithfully yours,

Jefferson Davis

It is evident from Davis' letter that Johnston had made some efforts to have his name placed before the Board. Since his election followed soon after his receipt of the two letters just quoted, he had but little time to consider any unpleasant conditions that might be connected with the position; and his financial situation was not such as to dictate very great caution in the matter.

At the meeting of the Board on October 4, Johnston was elected president of the University. At the same meeting General D. H.
Maury and Colonel D. F. Boyd were also nominated for the place.\textsuperscript{3} The latter had been connected with the institution from its beginning, and, except for the year of General W. T. Sherman's administration immediately preceding the Civil War, had served as president during the years of its existence.

Colonel Boyd's removal came as the result of dissension among some of his faculty, who succeeded in arousing to vigorous activity a political faction which was already hostile to his administration. Boyd's opponents sought first to achieve their purpose through legislative action; and when this did not bring the desired result, Governor L. A. Wiltz displaced the Board of Supervisors and appointed others, who removed the president from his position.\textsuperscript{4} Colonel Boyd had many strong supporters among the friends of the University, some of whom were still on the Board. He strenuously resisted the action of the new Board by appealing without success to the courts,\textsuperscript{5} and his friends continued their opposition to the new administration after Boyd had apparently relinquished his interest in the presidency.

\textsuperscript{3} Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Oct. 4, 1880.  
\textsuperscript{4} An account of the circumstances connected with Boyd's dismissal is contained in W. L. Fleming's \textit{Louisiana State University,} 1936, pp. 339-345, and M. M. Wilkerson's \textit{Thomas Duckett Boyd,} 1935, pp. 71-73.  
\textsuperscript{5} T. D. Boyd, Diary (The entry is undated, but follows one dated Sept. 29, 1880).
Johnston telegraphed his acceptance on October 5, and in early November he arrived at Baton Rouge on the steamboat Natchez. The vice-president of the Board, General Leon Jastremski, was also the publisher of the *Tri-Weekly Capitolian*. He had played an important part in matters leading to Colonel Boyd's removal; and after Johnston's election his newspaper published successively a number of favorable items with reference to the new president. The issue of October 9, referred to him as "the talented and worthy son of a universally beloved sire," who was "to direct the education of the youth of our state, whose fathers fought under the very Stars and Bars which drew the missile that destroyed an existence dearer to him than it was even to the soldiers and people of the South." Attention was also drawn to the fact that "he married one of our own ladies." A later issue quoted an item from a North Louisiana newspaper, the *Claiborne Guardian*, wherein the editor, referring to Johnston's election declared optimistically: "This, we suppose, settles the difficulty that seems to have been rife about the workings of the University for some time." Also, the *Guardian*, when its editor had caught up with his reading, was not behind the *Capitolian* in paying tribute to the new president's father:

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6 *Minutes*, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Oct. 5, 1880.
7 *Tri-Weekly Capitolian*, Nov. 6, 1880.
Since writing the above we have seen the *Capitolian* and learn from its columns that the above Col. William P. Johnston is the son of the heroic Albert Sidney Johnston, who led the Confederate boys and fell at Shiloh's bloody battle. No name sounds with a sweeter remembrance to Southerners than does that of Albert Sidney Johnston. Then Col. William Preston Johnston comes from a parentage second to none, and if he proves to be so thorough an educator as his father was a military leader our State University is safe. And fathers need not fear that their sons will not be trained with careful hands.9

Upon Johnston's arrival the *Capitolian* expressed itself as fully satisfied with the personality of the new president and declared that the news of his coming had "already brought new accessions of students, soon to be followed by many more".10

Even the ousted president's brother, Professor Thomas D. Boyd, whom the new Board retained as a member of the faculty,11 was favorably impressed by Johnston's appearance and manner, though the two men failed to appreciate each other until the conclusion of Johnston's administration. Concerning the new president Boyd wrote in his diary:

I was favorably impressed by his manner and his conversation. He was evidently a man of fine literary culture, a fluent speaker, a ready and forcible writer, but he was too easily swayed by the counsels of the biased partisans whom he took to his bosom, to make a great success of the University in its then

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9 Ibid., Oct. 23, 1880.
10 Ibid., Nov. 6, 1880.
11 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Oct. 5, 1880.
disorganized condition. I sensed his succeeding my brother as no reason why I should not work under him in perfect harmony, and such was my desire and aim throughout; but he fell into the error of looking upon Col. Boyd as his personal enemy (when nothing was farther from David's thoughts) and soon began to treat as enemies all who were supposed to be warm friends of David.12

The situation which Johnston found at the University was evidently something of a shock to him, for immediately after his arrival he wrote his friend, Jefferson Davis, that he had accepted the place under the impression that his election would harmonize the discordant elements. He informed Davis also of the suit which was pending "to try the legality of the Board which appointed me, which Col. Boyd denies".13 Further light on his view of the situation is given in the following paragraph from the same letter:

The Institution is almost disorganized, and it was urged that my assuming office would be useful to the U. no matter how the suit terminated. If the new Board is invalid, I shall feel no mortification in withdrawing with it. If valid, I will be prepared to go on. The position is a delicate one, but I trust that prudence, sincerity, and kindness may enable me to avoid all personal complications. The position is not one at best, in view of the climate and other considerations, as would exactly suit me. But people usually sit down where they are asked and not where they choose.14

The prospect which Johnston faced must have been, from every standpoint, far different from what he expected to find in a state

12D. Boyd, Diary, (entry undated).  
university. The students enrolled numbered only thirty-eight when he assumed office, a number which was subsequently increased to sixty-nine during the session. The teaching staff for the entire university, including the preparatory department, numbered besides the president, who was designated as Professor of History and English Literature, and Lieutenant M. F. Jamar, Commandant of Cadets, who taught military science and tactics, eight members. They were: Richard S. McCullough, Professor of Chemistry, Natural History, and Physics, including Astronomy; George S. Thomas, Professor of Languages; John Hampden Randolph, Jr., Instructor in Mechanical Engineering; Luke W. Coverly, Instructor in Scientific Agriculture and Experimental Farming; Thomas D. Boyd, Professor of English and Instructor in the Preparatory Department; and Samuel M. Robertson, Instructor in the Preparatory Department. The other members of the staff consisted of a surgeon, a librarian, a secretary to the president, a treasurer, a steward, and a janitor.

Professor McCullough, a former colleague of Johnston's at Washington and Lee, and Lieutenant Jamar had played an important part in the faculty agitation against President Boyd. Professors T. D. Boyd and Robertson, who had been retained by the new Board at a salary figure much below that of the other teachers, were

15 Johnston's report to Governor L. A. Wiltz, Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., July 1, 1881.
16 Catalog, L. S. U., year ending July 1, 1881.
17 Fleming, Louisiana State University, pp. 332-333.
18 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., July 4, 1881.
intensely loyal to the displaced executive. Such a condition could promise little in the way of harmony; and the situation was even worse in the Board, where representatives of contending political factions were at grips with each other. The Governor, the State Superintendent of Education, and the President of the University were ex-officio members of the Board. The other members were General Leon Jaстремский, of Baton Rouge, Vice-President; Major Rene T. Beauregard, New Orleans; Hon. John Clegg, Lafayette; John Dolhonde, Esq., New Orleans; Harry T. Edwards, Esq., New Orleans; General G. Mason Graham, Rapides Parish; A. A. Gunby, Esq., Ouachita Parish; Hon. W. H. Pipes, East Feliciana Parish; F. W. Price, Esq., Jackson; Hon. William A. Strong, Winn Parish; Colonel Spencer R. Thorpe, Avoyelles Parish; Colonel George L. Walton, Concordia Parish; W. H. Goodale, Esq., Baton Rouge, Secretary; and Harney Skofield, Esq., Baton Rouge, Treasurer. The membership of the Board underwent a partial change during the two and a half years that Johnston served as president, but sharp differences of opinion in matters affecting the University characterized the meetings of the body throughout his administration.

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19Catalog, L. S. U., 1881.
20The Minutes of July 3, 4, 5, 1882, reveal the following results of ballots taken on items of business: 7-5, 6-6, 9-4, 5-3, 7-7, etc.
At the Board meeting of December 10, 1880, the president presented a report concerning the various departments of the institution; and the Board took up such items as the condition of the boarding department, the salary of a janitor, the ownership of a painting of Lee and Jackson (which now hangs in the Hill Memorial Library), and a bill for $12.20 for laboratory supplies purchased by Professor McCullough. Also the course of study recommended by the president and the faculty was adopted, and the president and faculty were empowered to "modify the same as the exigencies of the Institution may demand". On the following day the Board devoted its attention to the financial problems of the institution, which had been acute under Boyd's administration and which continued so under Johnston's.

In February Colonel Boyd formally transferred to the Board the books and accounts of the University, which he had kept in his possession until that point in the session, partly because he awaited the results of the litigation directed at the legality of the Board, and partly because he did not wish to relinquish his records until they had been placed in proper order.

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21 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Dec. 10, 1880.
22 Ibid., Dec. 11, 1880.
23 Fleming, Louisiana State University. In the chapters devoted to the administrations of Boyd and Johnston, the financial difficulties are discussed in detail.
24 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Feb. 25, 1881.
25 T. D. Boyd, Diary, (entry undated).
Boyd presented himself to the Board on the second day of the February meeting and was granted the privilege of the floor for the purpose of explaining matters relating to the books and accounts which had been under his charge. Following his report, the Board voted to employ the Treasurer to make an investigation of the "books, accounts, papers, vouchers, communications, and statements of the ex-president and the ex-treasurer and report thereon at the next meeting of the Board."26

Near the end of the school session Colonel Boyd addressed a lengthy statement to the alumni and ex-cadets of the University, in which letter he presented his case and paid his respects in vigorous language to his enemies. He charged that the whole purpose of the "so-called re-organization of the University" had been to get rid of him, and that in sustaining the legality of the new Board of Supervisors, which had been appointed by the governor after the adjournment of the legislature, and therefore lacked confirmation by the Senate, "the judiciary so acted as to forfeit the respect of honorable members of the bar throughout the State". He asserted also that those responsible for his removal included several professors whose salaries, as well as his own, he had recommended to be reduced; a clique of scheming politicians who desired control of the University's money and patronage for political purposes; and Lieutenant Jamar and his friends.

26Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Feb. 26, 1881.
Concerning Jamar he wrote in the most denunciatory terms, almost straining the resources of that character of language designed for personal attack. Colonel Boyd further charged that his enemies had sought to conceal the selfish purposes underlying their opposition to him by a resort to pretenses. They blamed him because the enrollment during the last session had dropped from 179 to 70, which decline had really been caused by an epidemic of typhoid fever resulting in the death of one of the cadets. A large number of students were withdrawn by their parents, and some of the professors had sought to induce others to leave, and thus break up the school. "But if I was a failure with 70 cadets as my roll at the close of the session," Boyd inquires, "what are they, this new Board, who have today but 38 cadets proper (boarding in the University) and 18 day scholars from Baton Rouge?" In reply to the charge that his accounts were not made up and ready for inspection, he asserted that the pressure of many duties during the trying session had made it impossible for him to do the work of clerk, and that since his dismissal, his work had been divided among three or four officers. Answering the final charge that he had failed to collect the boarding and fees from cadets in advance, and had consequently run the University in debt, Boyd declared that a strict adherence to the policy of collecting in advance had been found impracticable, as the new Board had discovered during the current session.27

The situation indicated in Colonel Boyd's letter was such as to render the position of his successor difficult. Whatever the state of Johnston's feelings may have been during the first year of his administration his report to the Board at the close of the term was cheerful, for he stated that the session had been tranquil, that the institution had been thoroughly organized, with resulting improvement in every department, and that the Board had administered the financial affairs of the University in a gratifying manner. He reported also that the four courses of study which, upon the recommendation of the faculty, the Board had adopted as a substitute for the optional system, had been put into operation as far as was possible, and that there was a prospect of the institution's being able to establish a better classification during the following year. The small enrollment he attributed to the litigation regarding the control of the University, and he expressed confidence of an increase at the opening of the next term. He commended the harmonious and faithful work of the faculty, and praised the conduct and attitude of the cadets. "I have had a large experience with young men," he asserted; "but I can safely say I have never seen a more orderly, respectful, and cheerful body of students." This condition he ascribed partly to the character of the students and partly to the discipline of the institution, "which is adapted so far as we have been able to establish it, to our exact condition".
"Discipline," declared President Johnston, "should not weigh upon the student like a yoke, but clothe and adorn him like a garment."

The president also praised various departments of the University, recommended an increase in hospital facilities, commended the Board upon its businesslike policy of demanding payment in advance from the students, and expressed the wish that no student should leave the University without some knowledge of drawing, or at least the opportunity of learning it.

His appraisal of the agricultural department of the University was the least cheerful portion of his report. Pointing out the fact that the facilities for doing satisfactory work in this field were much below what was required for achieving the results expected by the public, he summarized the situation as follows:

We have a small, poor, badly located farm, with a clouded title. No judicious man would lay money out on it under any circumstances. We must do the best we can with what we have. To young men desiring to become planters we must and can give the fundamentals of a liberal education required by law; we can add to these those special scientific branches most useful to the farmer. All animal and vegetable life furnish illustrations to the able instructor. The field, the garden, the roadside, the stable, the dairy are his workshops. Here we have also the great sugar houses of our planters, gin houses, and oil mills open to our students. With a skilled teacher these will, for the present, be sufficient. Nevertheless we must lose no opportunity for development. 28

28 W. P. Johnston, Report to the Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., July 1, 1881, in the Minutes of the same date.
In his report Johnston paid tribute to the services rendered by Lieutenant Jamar, Commandant of Cadets. At an adjourned meeting of the Board, which occurred on the same day, the president read an order from the War Department, signed by General Sherman, relieving Jamar of his position at the University. Johnston then read a resolution from the faculty praising Jamar's work and urging that he be returned to his post; and this was approved by the Board. However, the resolution availed nothing, for the officer who was so pleasing to Johnston and so obnoxious to his predecessor was withdrawn.

The University had conferred no degrees during the seven years preceding the new president's arrival there; and it was because of this fact that the institution "reverted to the older system of curriculums or stated courses, with absolute requirements and a fixed standard for degrees". The four courses of study consisted of two university courses, one classical and the other scientific; an agricultural course; and a mechanical course. The first two required four years each, and led to the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees; the latter two were three-year courses, upon the completion of which a student received a Graduate in Agriculture or a Graduate in Mechanics certificate. The classical course was made up largely of Latin, Greek,

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29 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., July 1, 1881.
mathematics, and French in the first three years, with science and philosophy predominating in the senior year. The Scientific course differed from the Classical course in that German might take the place of Greek in the freshman and sophomore years, and courses in higher mathematics were substituted for Latin and Greek in the junior year. The Agricultural and Mechanical courses omitted Latin and Greek, substituting history, English literature, political science, and practical scientific courses.31

The University library contained 17,000 volumes, besides files of European and American newspapers and periodicals and bound volumes of Baton Rouge newspapers running back for half a century. Because of the state of its finances, the University sought assistance for the library and other departments of the institution by appeals to the public for donations of works of art, historical portraits, books, pamphlets, manuscripts, maps, files of old newspapers, apparatus, models, antiquities, relics, fossils, plants, seeds, and specimens of animal and vegetable life.32

The payment of sixteen dollars a month by each cadet covered the cost of board, room rent and servant's attendance, washing and mending, fuel and lights, and medical attendance and medicines. The cost of the required uniform was estimated at a figure not to exceed fifty dollars, and the average expense for text-books was

31 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
32 Ibid., p. 21.
five dollars for the session. According to a statement in the catalog, "Light yet exact military duties and regular but not severe drill, rather help than hinder progress in studies. The design is to educate, not professional but citizen soldiers".

The attention given to the religious life of the cadets is indicated in the following paragraph:

The Institution is not sectarian, or under denominational influences, but it is hoped that its tendencies are distinctly religious....Religious services, on which attendance is voluntary, are held each morning in the chapel, by clergymen of Baton Rouge, in rotation. Cadets are required to attend such churches in Baton Rouge as may be designated by their parents.

The tone of this section, as well as that of the preceding statement relating to military discipline, affords an interesting contrast to the spirit of a paragraph of the same subject published in the last catalog that appeared before Johnston's election. The latter item ran as follows:

Parents, or guardians, will please specify the churches in Baton Rouge, which they wish their sons, or wards, to attend. Their wish will be our order; and their sons, or wards, will—thanks to military discipline—attend divine worship on Sundays, in churches of their choice, the weather permitting and the preacher officiating, just as surely as, on Mondays, they will be present at the mathematical classes or the military drills.
At a meeting of the Board of Supervisors on the day following the one on which Johnston presented his report, a committee of that body reported favorably upon almost all of the recommendations of the president. The committee also authorized him to assign certain rooms in the University building as living quarters for himself and family; and they recommended that a committee composed of the president of the University and the vice-president of the Board be appointed "to make further efforts to obtain from the U. S. Government, the Barracks property or government reservation, for the uses of this Institution and that they be specially requested to correspond with our Senators and Representatives in Congress, with the view of enlisting their active efforts in securing the proper legislation to accomplish this end".37

The meetings of the Board, which had begun on July 1, were continued through July 4; and on the latter date a letter from Colonel D. F. Boyd was read, stating that he had paid the balance on the Lee and Jackson picture and was transferring his rights and interests in it to the University. Colonel Johnston moved that the donation be accepted and that the thanks of the Board be returned to Colonel Boyd.38

37Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., July 2, 1861.
38Ibid., July 4, 1861.
On July 3, the commencement sermon was preached by Johnston's friend of former years, the Right Reverend John N. Gallagher, Bishop of New Orleans.39

The Board which met in December, 1881, exhibited some new faces among its membership.40 Governor Wiltz, who had been unable to attend the July meetings because of illness,41 had died in October; and Lieutenant-Governor S. D. McEnery had taken his place. Among the other new members present was E. B. Kruttschnitt of New Orleans, a former student and faculty assistant of Johnston's at Washington and Lee University. The records of subsequent meetings of the Board indicate that Kruttschnitt was at all times a loyal and able supporter of the president. The records also reveal the fact that Johnston's need for such support was great, for in the Board he encountered consistent opposition from some members who resented his presence at the University. Chief among these was the aged but vigorous General G. Mason Graham, a veteran of the Mexican War, an important friend of the University from its beginning, an admirer of its first president, William Tecumseh Sherman, and a militant supporter of Colonel Boyd's interests.42 After the old Board had failed through the courts to regain control of the University, Boyd returned for a time to his native

39 Catalog, L. S. U., 1881, p. 2.
40 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Dec. 7, 1881.
41 Ibid., July 4, 1881.
42 Graham's name appears many times in Fleming's Louisiana State University.
state, Virginia, where he conducted an academy; and during his absence from Louisiana, General Graham wrote him from time to time concerning what occurred in the Board meetings. At times he expressed an almost grim satisfaction when recounting his efforts to embarrass the existing administration. For example, at the conclusion of the December meeting referred to above, he immediately wrote Boyd, telling him of the lack of harmony in the Board and of his own activity as a member of the minority faction. That he had little regard for President Johnston is apparent from the following extract from the letter:

When it came to the Resolution for paying Mr. Sewell for doing Mr. Calhoun's work, he having drawn his salary to last Oct., and gone off after the close of the session in July, leaving all the work undone, I thought it a proper moment to remind the Board of its action in regard to your payment to Mr. McCauley and stated it as clearly and concisely as I could, but it seemed to be the feeling that that should more appropriately be brought up as "unfinished business," or "new business," I let it drop. In the course of the discussion that grew out of it, I said interrogatively, to Col. J., who with the rest were along the Royal St. end of the room, "Well then sir, the fact is that Mr. Calhoun drew the entire salary up to last Oct., and then went off on the close of the session in July, leaving all the work undone," to which he replied with his peculiar little laugh, as he turned his person edgeways towards me, "Well! that's the English of it."

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The remainder of the letter dwelt upon the wrangle about the matter, and referred in an uncomplimentary fashion to the handling of the meeting by the Governor, who, the writer asserted, left the body during the reading of two letters from Colonel Boyd relating to his own affairs.44

In the early part of the following April the Board met again, and during this session Graham continued to exhibit a hostile attitude toward the administration. He asked to have spread on the minutes a record of his negative vote and his reasons for so voting on certain resolutions passed by the Board, among them the resolution in regard to the chair of scientific and practical agriculture "on the ground of the want of means to pay the salary and his invincible opposition to running the University into debt."45

The General also threw the meeting into some confusion when he introduced a resolution which stated "that by the omission of the governor to send in to the last meeting of the Senate the names of Messrs. Dolhonde, Jastramski, Pipes, and Walton for confirmation by the Senate, under the 69th article of the Constitution of the State those gentlemen have ceased to be members of the Board". The resolution was referred to a committee consisting of four members, one of whom was Kruttschnitt. After a recess, Jastramski presented the following resolution:

44 Graham to Boyd, Dec. 7, 1881.
45 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Apr. 3, 1882.
Inasmuch as there exists a well-founded doubt as to our legal right to exercise the functions of Supervisors of this institution, we deem it proper at this juncture, to relinquish the same in order that no question may arise to invalidate the proceedings of your Board.

On motion of President Johnston action on this was postponed until after the reading and consideration of the report of the committee appointed on the matter. The committee in its report affirmed that the questions raised by the resolution "were such as could not be passed upon by this body" and that since the gentlemen whose positions were challenged held commissions signed by the governor, "their right to office cannot be questioned except through the courts". The report being adopted, Graham introduced a resolution that the members in question be requested to withdraw their communication to the Board relinquishing their seats. After withdrawing for consultation, the challenged members agreed.46

The financial difficulties of the University were acute; and at the April meeting the finance committee recommended the following measures for improving the situation: that a loan be secured to cover the deficit for salaries and other items; that the General Assembly be requested to reimburse the institution in Baby-Bonds for the amount of £15,681 paid to the creditors of the old University

46Ibid.
in compliance with a special act of the legislature ordering it; and that the same body be requested to transfer its annual appropriation for the support of the University from the general fund to the school fund. The latter provision was vigorously opposed by Mr. Fay, the State Superintendent of Education, who asserted that the institution, in admitting students under age and those not qualified for entrance, had gone contrary to the requirements of the Board of Supervisors; and he took the position that a state has no right to provide for anything out of its Public Free School Fund except the elementary branches of education. A resolution containing the recommended measures was passed, however, with Graham and Strickland requesting that they be recorded as voting against all three parts of it. Superintendant Fay later enjoined the State Auditor and the State Treasurer from taking the University's appropriation of $10,000 out of the public school fund.

Other resolutions passed by the Board included a recommendation that the president be directed to enforce strictly the requirements with regard to the admission of students; that the college charges for the next session be raised to twenty dollars a month; and that the Board heartily approve the action of the president of the faculty and the surgeon, Dr. Dupree "in the matter of securing and distributing Bovine-virus," and that the General Assembly

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47 Ibid., Apr. 4, 1882.
49 The importance Dr. Dupree's work in the prevention of smallpox is indicated in Fleming's Louisiana State University, p. 403.
be asked to defray the cost thereof. The Board also approved the recommendation of President Johnston that a petition be presented to the legislature calling for the establishment of a normal school at the University.50

At the close of the session in July when the schedule of salaries was presented, Graham moved to reduce the salary of the president from $2,500 to $2,000, and Jastremski moved that it be set at $2,250, but both motions were lost. Kruttschnitt moved the adoption of the original resolution which would keep the salary at $2,500, and this was voted. The record of the ballots cast at the July meeting indicates that although Johnston still received the support of a majority of the Board, the margin of advantage on his side was narrow and subject to considerable fluctuation; and the opposition was gaining strength. Even the resolution with regard to the adoption of a course of study was carried by only a slight margin.51

Johnston not only encountered opposition in the Board but in the faculty as well. Professor T. D. Boyd, as well as one or two other instructors, disagreed with the president upon several occasions in matters relating to the administration of the University.52 According to Boyd, Johnston attributed this opposition to personal

50 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., Apr. 4, 1882.
51 Ibid., July 4, 1882.
52 T. D. Boyd, Diary, (entry undated).
animosity; and the state of feeling engendered by the lack of understanding between Boyd and the president reached a boiling point in the latter part of the session of 1881-1882. The condition of affairs as viewed by the former is indicated in the following extract from a letter which he wrote to his brother:

We are not getting along as smoothly as we might at the University; and I am afraid there will be trouble in July. The Board you know at its last meeting appointed a committee to revise the charter and prepare a bill to be laid before the Legislature. At the last meeting of the faculty, on Saturday, we discussed the revision, and Col. Johnston showed a great deal of unnecessary feeling—so much in fact that I thought of resigning immediately, but was dissuaded from doing so by Bird and Sam Robertson. I understand that Col. J. has said that I will not be a professor in the University next session; and, I have no doubt that he will do everything in his power to have me thrown out. He attributes Strickland's action in the Board, I understand, to me, and thinks I am making war upon him. I had nothing in the world to do with Strickland's action, as you well know and never have cared whether Col. Johnston or Col. anybody else was president of the University. If I had resigned, I might have fought him, because I know that he is fighting me with all his might and main; but as long as I remain connected with the institution, I don't intend to engage in any Jamar-Haislip conspiracy to overthrow its president. Col. J. seems to think that the Boyd fight is still going on. It certainly is a dead issue so far as I am concerned, for, much as I love you, I would rather see you clerking in old Mr. Pattie's store than filling the presidency of L. S. U. Of course, I sympathize with you in your struggle, and would take sides with you, if you should ever have a row with Col. J. or anybody else, but I don't think any such now imminent, and it galls me to have to work
under a man who impugns my motives and thinks
every time I open my mouth I am laying some
snare to injure him. I don't intend to make
an effort to retain my position. I have done
my duty as well as I knew how, and this Board,
or any other Board, which may be appointed un-
der a new charter, may retain me or not just
as it pleases.

Poor Strickland has to bear all the blame
for the report of the finance committee, and
if Strickland did anything more than signing
it, he was moved by disclosures made in
Skofield's office....53

The writer of this letter underestimated the character and
spirit of the president, for in his report to the Board at the
beginning of the following session Johnston recommended that Boyd
be given a promotion and an increase in salary. His statement
in reference to the matter was as follows:

As the Board has thought fit to select
Professor Boyd as one of the instructors of
the University, I think that it ought to
give him adequate compensation. Underpaid,
he cannot work cheerfully. I hope the Board
will find it possible to raise his salary to
something like a parity with the others.

In view of the fact of Professor Boyd's
long connection with the University, I also
recommend that he be appointed to the chair
of English as a full professor.54

It is evident from this recommendation that in spite of the
animosity which had existed between the two men, Johnston's respect
and regard for Boyd was increasing. By the time that Johnston

left the University a few months later, his attitude toward this professor had been transformed into a feeling of admiration. Shortly before he gave up his position as president in order to begin the work of establishing and organizing Tulane University, he expressed himself in a generous manner to Boyd saying:

I have the utmost respect for you, sir. You refused to "lick my boots" as some of these men have done only to knife me behind my back, and today, I consider you one of the best friends in the University. I want you to shake hands with me as a friend.58

The handclasp which followed marked the beginning of a friendship which lasted until Johnston's death sixteen years later. While Johnston was at Tulane, he assisted Boyd in his unsuccessful efforts to secure the presidency of the University of Arkansas;56 later when Boyd was serving with great success as president of the Louisiana State Normal College at Natchitoches, Johnston joined with others in urging him to accept the presidency of the State University;57 and in 1897, upon Johnston's recommendation, Boyd received from Tulane University the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.58

The report which the Board of Supervisors presented to the General Assembly in 1882 emphasized the president's recommendation that a State Normal School be established under the supervision

55 Wilkerson, Thomas Lockett Boyd, p. 75.
56 Ibid., p. 90.
57 Ibid., p. 141.
58 Minutes, Board of Trustees, Tulane U., Apr. 12, 1897.
of the University, pointing out the fact that such an institution operated in conjunction with the University could be conducted advantageously from the standpoint of economy and the broadness of opportunity offered the teacher. Johnstone's statement with reference to Normal schools is interesting, because it contains the chief criticism to which such institutions have more recently been subject:

Normal schools have been brought into some disrepute among the better class of educators, because too many of them attempt a task at once useless and impossible. They try to teach methods to people who know nothing else. They attempt to fit uneducated people to give instruction to others.

Good methods are of immense value to any teacher; but brains and knowledge are of more importance still. The blind cannot lead the blind, even when a lamp is furnished to guide their feet. Mere methods resemble a system of dry aqueducts and empty conduits, which irrigate nothing. It is only when fulness of knowledge, pulsates through them, that the desert blossoms as a garden, and bud and fruit crown the verdure around.

While President Johnston was preparing his report for the Board of Supervisors, he wrote a letter to his Yale classmates expressing regret that he could not be with them at the reunion of 1882 which was to mark the thirtieth anniversary of their

59 The recommendation with respect to the location of the Normal school was not followed. The Louisiana State Normal was established in 1885 at Natchitoches; and in 1888, Professor T. B. Boyd became its second president.

graduation. This letter, a portion of which is given below, was read at the class meeting:

It would be a great pleasure to me to be with you, but it fails too near our Commencement for this to be possible.... The Commencement day is fixed by law, on the Fourth of July, when we shall be very hot and patriotic.

I am thirty years older than when we graduated. I have a very onerous work here, but one which I trust may prove useful.61

Although burdened with his own troubles at the State University, Johnston was never too much occupied to lend his support and comfort to his former chief, Mr. Davis. The following acknowledgment of such fidelity was written by Davis from Beauvoir, his home on the Mississippi Coast:

Please accept my grateful acknowledgment for your kind letter and characteristic interposition for my defense against the slanderous insinuations of J. B. Johnston. If anything could intensify the mean malignity of his assault it would be his excuse that he intended it to be secret. His confidential friend however in a letter to B. W. Hill, which was sent to me states that the interview was not accidental, but was held in Genl. Johnston's parlor where it was continued a second evening and under circumstances which rendered it impossible that J. should not have known that the purpose was to collect material for publication. I had often had occasion to notice evasion and suppression on the part of J. B. Johnston, but had not expected him to deal in palpable and absurd mendacity. A number of my friends have written to me under the fear that I would reply to him and have told me that however evil was

61Record of the Class of 1852, Yale University, 1883, pp. 28-29.
the intention the attack had been very beneficial to me and certainly I am gratified by the manifestation that others like yourself have made of confidence and regard for me and contempt for my slanderer.

I had the pleasure when I was in Louisville in Dec. last to see your sister Hennie as well as your aunts residing there not forgetting your dear Mary, but I suppose you have later news of all of them.

Mrs. Davis joins me with Winnie in kindest regards to you and your family. As ever truly your friend

Jefferson Davis

In December, 1882, Johnston attended his last meeting of the Board of Supervisors. His report carried the information that 150 cadets had matriculated for the session, 129 of whom boarded at the University. He reported also that the health of the cadets was good, although one had died of dysentery. Regarding the boarding department, the conducting of which presented continual difficulties, Johnston stated that in spite of the anxiety of parents concerning the diet of the cadets, an inspection of the mess-hall revealed that the students should be satisfied with the food. The final item in his brief report was that when the funds of the University should permit it, the Board should appropriate the sum of $500 for the library.

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62 Davis to W. P. Johnston, Feb. 17, 1882.
63 Frequent references to this problem appear in the Board Minutes covering several years.
64 Minutes, Board of Supervisors, L. S. U., December, 1882.
Johnston's difficulties as president of the University increased throughout the period of his administration. The opening of the session of 1882-1883 offered anything but a cheerful prospect. The financial embarrassments of the University were acute; and the factional differences in the Board of Supervisors were becoming more intense. At this crucial point in Johnston's career, a number of circumstances conjoined to make it possible for him to withdraw gracefully from his position at the State University and to enter upon the most successful period of his life.

When Paul Tulane decided to contribute a large part of his fortune to a fund which was designed to advance the education of Louisiana youth, he enlisted the assistance of General Randall Lee Gibson, then United States Senator from Louisiana, as his principal advisor. Upon the recommendation of Gibson, Tulane's gift was used for establishing in New Orleans a university which was named for the donor. At a meeting of the Board of Administrators for the new institution, on January 16, 1883, Johnston was unanimously elected president at a salary of $5,000 a year.

Three days after his election to his new position, Johnston directed to Governor S. D. McIver a letter of resignation as

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65 Fleming, Louisiana State University, pp. 393-394.

66 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane U., Jan. 16, 1883.
president of the Louisiana State University. In this communication, the writer gave a brief report on the state of the institution and its progress during his tenure as president, and followed this with a statement concerning his attitude toward the university and its administrators, which expression was thoroughly cordial in tone:

As I may not have an opportunity of seeing the Board of Supervisors at their next meeting, I shall have to trust to your Excellency to impress upon its members the sense of public duty which has led me, acting under your advice to exchange my sphere of action from this firmly established institution to another as yet inchoate except in the grand benevolence of its founder. It is a satisfaction to me that it is upon the soil of Louisiana and dedicated to her intellectual and educational improvement.

I desire in this, my final report, to thank the Board of Supervisors for many acts of kindness and to assure them of my undiminished interest in the welfare of this University and my sincere hopes for its continued prosperity and success.67

From the account of Johnston's administration at the State University, given in the preceding pages, it is obvious that the president had little opportunity of accomplishing much of a substantial nature. The lack of adequate funds for properly financing the institution and the constant friction between opposing factions in the Board of Supervisors made it impossible for the administration to achieve the progress which the majority

of the Board had hoped would result from the reorganization of the University in 1880. However, during the period there was a gratifying increase in the enrollment; and foundations were laid for later benefits to the institution.68

Since Johnston published practically nothing while he was at Baton Rouge, it is probable that he had little time or inclination for writing. Doubtless, the difficult problems which confronted him there and the arduous labor which he had expended on his father's biography during the preceding years took from him for a time the energy and inspiration necessary for literary efforts. However, in the spring of 1882, he did deliver an eloquent response to a toast given at a banquet of the Army of Tennessee Association in New Orleans. His brief address, which was received with enthusiasm by the assembled veterans who had served under Johnston's father, was afterwards published in the Southern Historical Society Papers.69

In his opening remarks the speaker referred modestly to his own connection with the Army of Tennessee during the early part of the War, and to his later relationships with it when he was on the staff of President Davis. He also spoke feelingly of the esteem in which his father was held by the veterans of this army.

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68 For an evaluation of the accomplishments of Johnston's administration see Fleming, Louisiana State University, pp. 394-406.
and of the affectionate and reverential manner with which the people of New Orleans had treated the tomb of his father during the five years that General Johnston's body was interred in that city. The speaker's tribute to the valor of the army of the West and to its importance in the Confederate scheme of military action appears in the concluding portion of the response:

When the Southern Confederacy took the attitude of a combatant, it was with sword and shield. She chose to employ the Army of Northern Virginia as the sword of her right hand, while in her left the Western Army guarded 1,000 miles of front. If glory gleamed from our flashing falchion in the West at Manassas and Richmond and Chancellorsville and in the Valley, the shield of the West bore all the tests of as high a resolution and of as noble endurance at Shiloh and Perryville and Murfreesboro and Chickamauga, down to those last days when a remnant under Gibson held Canby and his 40,000 veterans in check at Spanish Fort.

If the Army of Northern Virginia was "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon"—sheathed by the mighty hand of Lee at Appomattox—verily, when the weeping eyes of our women were turned to where you guarded so long and well, the heart of the Confederacy, through the noise of lamentation, a voice went up, crying, "This is indeed my shield and my buckler."70

In less than a year after Johnston delivered this address in New Orleans, he became a resident of that city and entered upon the important duties with which he was to be occupied during the remaining years of his life. Better times lay ahead of him: the salary which he received was substantial, and it relieved him

70Ibid., p. 41.
of the financial stringency under which he had labored ever since the time when he cast his lot with the Confederacy; the problems of the new university were less difficult than those of the other institutions with which he had been connected, for the munificence of Paul Tulane gave the school a condition of comparative financial strength, and the presence of loyal and influential friends on its Board of Administrators lightened Johnston's task of directing it; the successful establishment of Tulane University, which, from its beginning, exerted an important influence upon education in the South, crowned the labors of its first president with distinction; and the condition of Johnston's affairs during his years in New Orleans made it possible for him to devote considerable time to literary pursuits.
Colonel T. D. Boyd is credited with having stated that Tulane University was organized in order that William Preston Johnston might be given the position of president. Since Boyd's statement was made some years after Johnston's death, and since, as we have already indicated, the relationship between the two men was very cordial after Johnston resigned from the State University, the assertion must be taken as a tribute to Randall Lee Gibson's friendship for his kinsman and former college mate rather than as a criticism of the circumstances which operated so favorably for Johnston. However, the statement is hardly true. That Johnston owed his position as president of the new university to Gibson's influence, that Gibson shaped the plan by which Paul Tulane's gift to Louisiana education was to be realized, and that Gibson's interest in the creation of the university was to some extent affected by the prospect of benefiting his friend, admit of no argument; but in the light of the state's need for such an institution, the influence of which was, from the beginning, important, such considerations can hardly be accounted the reason for the founding of the university.

Since the circumstances connected with Paul Tulane's gift to Louisiana education are rather fully set forth in a sketch of Tulane University written by its first president, only a brief account of these matters will be given here. The founder

1 Wilkerson, Thomas Duckett Boyd, p. 75.
of the university was influenced in his action by a number of factors. He was born in New Jersey, but in his early youth he became interested in the South. When he was a boy of seventeen, he had traveled with his uncle and name-sake, a French probate judge from Tours, through Kentucky and Tennessee. At Louisville the youth had awaited with eager expectancy the arrival of a steamboat from New Orleans; and when it arrived, he had noted with some wonder that the boat numbered among its passengers certain Creole planters who were bringing their sons to place them in Kentucky colleges. It seemed a strange circumstance to him, and he remembered it. When he was twenty-one years of age he moved to Louisiana; and according to his own testimony, he had not lived there long "before I thought I would like to see a good college built there where the boys could be educated at home." However, it was not until sixty years later that he began his series of donations which brought about that result.

As a young business man in New Orleans Mr. Tulane manifested remarkable business sagacity and rapidly accumulated a fortune. He was honorable in his business dealings, simple in his habits of life, and liberal in his benefactions to worthy causes. A score of years before the Civil War he viewed the approaching end of the slavery system with some apprehension as to its effect upon the financial condition of the South and began to transfer a portion of his rapidly accumulating wealth to New Jersey. He was strongly sympathetic with the Southern cause and identified
himself with the people of his adopted section. At the end of the war, although he had suffered considerable losses, he still had large holdings in both New Jersey and New Orleans. In 1873 he moved to Princeton, New Jersey, taking up residence at a handsome estate which he had purchased in 1860; and here he lived during the remainder of his life. Since he had never married, he lived a somewhat solitary life, although he enjoyed visits from his friends and made liberal contributions for the public good. 3

In March, 1881, Mr. Tulane sent his private secretary, Mr. George O. Vanderbilt, accompanied by Senator Theodore Randolph of New Jersey, to interview General Randall Gibson in Washington. General Gibson was then a member of the House of Representatives, and to him the visitors bore an invitation from Mr. Tulane to visit him in Princeton. Some weeks later when Gibson made the requested visit, Mr. Tulane disclosed his desire to do something for the education of the youth of Louisiana and expressed his intention of donating all of his New Orleans property to that end. General Gibson set about constructing a plan by which the purpose of the donation could be put into effect; and in November of that year the plan, accompanied by a letter, was sent to Dr. T. O. Richardson, Judge Charles E. Fenner, Judge E. D. White, and Mr. James McConnell, who were requested to put the matter into shape according to the laws of Louisiana. 4

3Ibid., pp. 178-181.
4Ibid., pp. 181-182; Gibson's account as given to Johnston.
On May 2, 1882, Mr. Tulane despatched a letter to seventeen prominent New Orleans citizens who had been selected as administrators of his fund. General Gibson's name was the first on the list and the names of Judge Fenner, Mr. McConnell, Dr. Richardson, and Judge White followed. The letter contained the donor's intentions and desires with respect to his gift, the principal item of which was that all of his New Orleans property was to be devoted to the "promotion and encouragement of intellectual, moral, and industrial education among the white young persons in the city of New Orleans...and for the advancement of learning and letters, the arts and sciences therein." As regarded the type of education to be fostered, the writer desired "such a course of intellectual development as shall be useful and of solid worth, and not merely ornamental or superficial," and a course of study which would be "conducive to immediate practical benefit, rather than theoretical possible advantage." Mr. Tulane desired also that the educational development made possible by his gift should be in harmony with the principles of the Christian religion, but should be unfettered by sectarianism. The other important items in the letter were a request that immediate steps be taken to secure the exemption of the donated property from taxation in order that the full benefit of it might be realized, and a statement that the character of the property was to remain unchanged--being neither mortgaged, sold, nor encumbered in any way--for at least fifty years. With respect to the
plans and details of the organization which would be necessary
for carrying out the purposes of the donation, the persons to
whom the letter was addressed were to use their own judgment;
but Mr. Tulane requested that General Gibson should be named
as president of the organization, with Judge Fenner and Mr.
McConnell as vice-presidents or vice-chairmen. 5

Mr. Tulane's first donation of property was valued at
approximately $363,000. His subsequent gifts brought the
total amount to $1,050,000. Although he expressed his intention
of giving other sums to the university which was created with
these funds, he died in March, 1887, without making a will;
and the school received nothing more from his fortune. 6

When Johnston was elected president of the proposed in-
stitution in January, 1883, he was given the responsibility
of formulating a policy for the administration of the trust;
and the establishment of a new university having been fully
settled upon, he began preparations for its organization. 7

Soon after his election Johnston was invited by the Board
to give his views on the policies which should govern that
body. In his response he urged the absorbing of the university
of Louisiana, in order that the resources of that institution
might be utilized, and that a large university might be possi-
bile. With his experiences at Baton Rouge fresh in mind, he
expressed himself as favorable to a limited participation on

8 Paul Tulane to Randall L. Gibson and others, May 2, 1882, in
10 Ibid., p. 185.
the part of the State government in the affairs of the university, but spoke strongly against political control:

No one can dread the evils of political control more than I do. A burnt child dreads the fire. I believe that it will ruin any educational institution subjected to it. Every safe-guard should be established against this; and I do not doubt that the skill of legal advisers is adequate to the task.

The circumstances which brought forth this expression were as follows: the State of Louisiana had established a university in New Orleans in 1845. This institution, at the time of its founding, absorbed a medical college which had been created in 1834, and to this school were added a law department and an academic department. The institution was called the University of Louisiana (it has been sometimes confused with the Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge); and for a period of almost forty years it existed as a struggling state university with meager appropriations. In 1883, when the administrators of the Tulane fund were planning a new university, they were faced with a choice of two lines of procedure. They could set up a rival institution, which, because of superior resources, would probably destroy the older school; or they could absorb the University of Louisiana in the new institution, thus acquiring the plant and buildings of the former for the latter. By such an arrangement the resources of Tulane University would be greatly increased and

Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Feb. 9, 1883.
the state would be relieved of the burden of providing for higher education in New Orleans. The latter course was followed by the Board; and by an act of the general assembly in July 1884, the plan for transferring the property of the state institution to the new university was put into effect. The Tulane Board took possession of the property in the following month, and the school session opened in October. By terms of the agreement between the state and the representatives of University, three ex-officio members were added to the Board: the Governor, the State Superintendent of Education, and the Mayor of New Orleans.\(^9\) With such limited participation of state officials in the affairs of the school, Johnston's fears of political control were doubtless removed.

Tulane University began its work with an organization which was almost identical with that of the institution whose property had been acquired. The schools included were Tulane College, the University Department of Philosophy, the Law Department, and the Medical Department. Subsequently, the H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College for Young Women was added; and, for a time, the University operated a high school department.\(^10\)

Although schooled in frugality by his previous connections with two other Southern universities, the president did not permit the force of former experiences to influence him too

\(^10\) Ibid., 192.
strongly in his plans for the development of the institution which he now directed. In the second year of his administration he presented to the Board a long report containing recommendations for a substantial program of expansion. He recommended that Professor R. S. McCullough, his former colleague at Washington and Lee and at the Louisiana State University, be employed as head of a new department of mathematical physics and applied chemistry, and that John M. Ordway of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology be employed to take charge of and develop the industrial and mechanical department. Each of these men was to receive a salary of $3600 a year. The president's recommendations for other appropriations included $25,000 for the academical department; $10,000 for administrative expense; $10,000 for laboratories; $15,000 for the mechanical department; $5,000 for the library; and $5,000 for public lectures—the total for all purposes amounting to $77,200.11

A few weeks later General Gibson reported to the Board that he had recently visited Mr. Tulane, who had promised to send $50,000 within a few days for the University's technical work. President Johnston reported also that he had visited Mr. Tulane and had found him very friendly. On his journey northward he had also visited schools of manual training in Virginia, Massachusetts, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, where he gained information which he said would be useful in the organization of such departments at the University.12

11Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, July 3, 1884. 12Ibid., July 29, 1884.
Local feeling concerning the possibilities of the new university with Johnston as its head, is indicated in the following statement from one of the New Orleans papers, which asserted with enthusiasm that:

We have but to open the door of opportunity to our aspiring youth and show profitable returns for applied thought or creative genius to induce the bright, quick-minded sons and daughters of this section to ascend with royal tread the proud eminence of success, coping even with the proud savants of France, the philosophers of thoughtful Germany, and measuring mechanical and commercial skill with proud England.13

A statement from Johnston in the same article indicates that the writer of the passage given above had been inspired by the optimism of the president. Regarding the University and its program, Johnston declared:

It will cover the whole wide area of human knowledge, rising through regular gradations, higher and higher, to the utmost attainments of the human mind...

It will have the ability, and therefore will have the right, and should feel the duty of assuming the leadership in public education in the State.14

Johnston was quoted also as making the following proposals with regard to enlarging the services of the institution: the liberal granting of tuition scholarships, both in the city and in other portions of the state; the providing of not only the best in classical and scientific education, but in practical instruction in technical, industrial, and business branches;

13 *Times-Democrat*, July 23, 1884.
14 Ibid.
training in civil, hydraulic, and dynamical engineering; the building of work-shops for instruction in wood and metal working, with complete courses in drawing; the establishing of a program of popular lectures to be given each season by able men; the providing of a good library and a science museum; and the making of efforts in the direction of promoting industrial development in the state.\textsuperscript{15}

From these proposals it is evident that the president wished the benefits of the University to be distributed as widely as possible. Classes in drawing were organized for public school teachers, who received free instruction in this work; and night classes in mechanics and related subjects were filled to capacity.\textsuperscript{16} Johnston recommended to the Board also that certain books be set aside for public circulation, supporting his suggestion with the following statement:

\begin{quote}
It would, I think, undoubtedly be a great public blessing and largely increase the usefulness and popularity of the Library...The wear and tear of the books loaned, would in a few years use up the books set apart for circulation; but books, like clothes were made to be worn out, not merely to be looked at or moth-eaten. If we could get the people of Louisiana to wear out 1,000 volumes by reading, a great good would come of it.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

Free evening classes in decorative art were opened for women, with courses in drawing and composing, hammering brass, modeling for terra cotta ornaments, stenciling, wood carving,

\begin{flushright}
\textit{Ibid.} \textsuperscript{16}
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Apr. 14, 1885.} \textsuperscript{16}
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{Ibid., Feb. 9, 1886.} \textsuperscript{17}
\end{flushright}
The announcement was signed by President Johnston and William Woodward, professor of drawing, and invited "all those who are interested in the advancement of women" to cooperate in the work. The University also established home study and reading courses, with a list which included English, French, German, history, astronomy, physics, physical geography, botany, and political science.

In the early years of Johnston's administration and in the later ones as well, he had the whole-hearted support of his Board. The minutes of that body reveal that an entirely harmonious spirit prevailed among its members, who apparently had the fullest confidence in President Johnston's judgment. They invariably approved his recommendations, which, as we have indicated, sometimes called for the expenditure of large sums.

The congenial character of the body may reasonably be explained by the fact that its members were selected by General Gibson and Mr. Tulane, and by the further fact that their responsibilities were in a large measure confined to spending the funds which were supplied in rather liberal amounts.

If the Board was apparently satisfied with everything, there was one person who was not; and that was the man who was supplying the money for the University. Living in Princeton, New Jersey, far from the seat of the institution he was creating, he

18 Announcement leaflet, Dec. 26, 1885.
19 ibid.
20 Times-Democrat, June 28, 1886.
viewed with some alarm the liberal manner in which appropriations were being allocated to the various departments of the expanding University. He was especially disturbed because the Board made no provision for setting aside a reserve fund, which was to carry the school through lean years; and also he doubtless considered with some dismay the difference in the speed with which his New Orleans fortune had been accumulated and that with which it was now being spent. Near the Christmas season of 1865 he dispatched a letter on the subject to his friend Senator Gibson, who was on the point of leaving Washington for his home in New Orleans. This letter, which Gibson passed on to Johnston, was as follows:

I rec'd your letter with Col. Johnston's enclosed, I have read carefully and notice all what Col. Johnston says about the various actions of the Board of Administrators, which was very interesting to me.

Col. Johnston speaks in his letter about a discussion before the Board of Administrators in reference to Gymnastic Exercises or physical culture——As for myself I am not much in favor at present of introducing Gymnastic Exercises in our College. After a few years when we see how our University gets on, and whether the Schools that are being established in the country (say State) send us many boys——and if then we are in a flourishing condition, and have plenty of boys from the country, I think it will be time enough to think about Gymnastics and consider such a subject.

Now in regard to purchasing Washington Military Hall——the price seems to me very large, I should not think the present condition of our finances would warrant such an enormous

---The letter is a part of the private papers of Colonel Johnston.
outlay of money as $100,000. I have no recollection of that building, I suppose it was built since I left there.

In my opinion we should keep a large surplus of money on hand, on good safe security, and guard against any emergency that may arise, and thus always be prepared to pay our teachers, and keep our College running and not have our money locked up in brick and mortar, more than particularly necessary.

You say you expect to go to New Orleans about 21st or 22nd of Dec. I hope this letter will reach you before you leave, and that you will find our University doing good work and all satisfactory to you. I would like to hear from you when you get there, as to how you find things—I would be pleased to know whether the $20,000 I sent you was in time to be invested in the Bond and Mortgage that Mr. Morris proposed.

At the time I sent you the $20,000 I was so fatigued that I wrote you but a few lines in reference to the matter, intending to write you more particularly in a few days, but owing to the pressure of other matters—and so much unpleasant weather has caused me to be much unwell—I have put it off from time to time until the present—I trust you will excuse me.

I was very sorry to hear that Mrs. Gibson has been sick, but was glad to hear that she was better now. I hope you are well, and all your good family and the boys will have a pleasant time at Christmas. With compliments of the Season I remain as ever

Very truly yours,
Paul Tulane.

This letter was written in the middle of the school year; therefore, there was little opportunity for the administration to alter the expenditures for that session. Near the close of
the following summer General Gibson visited Mr. Tulane at Princeton. Within a half year of his life's end, the philanthropist, old and sick, contemplated with increasing vexation the rising expenditures at the institution which bore his name, and expressed himself strongly to his visitor. An account of this interview is contained in a letter which Gibson wrote to Johnston, a portion of which communication follows:

I stopped to see Mr. Tulane and am sorry to say that I found him sick and almost bitter on the subject of the extravagance of the Board and the President of the Faculty. He even said that if he had known how much money had been wasted on mere trifles—he would not have given the last $50,000. I told him I was responsible, but he insisted I was not. But said he, those are all nice Gentlemen but my friend I count upon you to stop all their extravagance. You must go down there and put your foot down. There was no reserve fund, no guarantee fund against loss. If there had been $10,000 or $15,000 reserve that would have showed me they were safe and understood business—but they have been reckless—So on, so on.

Now of course this is not to go a step beyond you. I doubt if I should mention it to you, but I have adopted the rule of keeping nothing from you and so mention for I know it is disagreeable and disappointing. I was greatly disappointed for I had expected him to inform me of larger donations. I was afraid last spring when he sent over to me to know if I had a budget of expenses—and for other information—that he would find too much money spent in outside matters... and so I wrote him in sending the budget as I felt bound to do explanations and so on, but he had expected a reserve of $10,000.

I know exactly how these old tight-safe business men think and I must insist upon a reserve if it can be done without violating contract or good faith unless I relinquish
the hope of three millions which I am as far as ever from doing.23

Whether the circumstances referred to in the preceding letters affected Paul Tulane's intentions with regard to future donations to the University, or whether death took him before he fulfilled his purpose, the fact is that he died without making a will, and the larger portion of his fortune—which friends of the University had expected to see added to its resources24—was lost to the institution. The death of the old philanthropist, who was so wise in business and so frugal in his personal expenditures, and yet so generous in his gifts for the public good, occurred on March 27, 1867, near the end of his eighty-sixth year.25

It was fortunate for Johnston that he had in General Gibson such a stalwart and influential friend and that the Board of Administrators were in such complete harmony with his administration, for the labors of the president were especially arduous during his first years at Tulane University, and the trials which came to him were severe. Besides the work of organizing and administering the school, he made addresses at various places about the country, speaking in the summer of 1864 at Austin, Texas; Columbia, South Carolina; Sewanee, Tennessee; and Madison, Wisconsin;26 he accepted an invitation from the editor of the Century Magazine to write an article on his father's conduct at the Battle

23 Gibson to Johnston, Aug. 10, 1866.
25 Ibid.
of Shiloh, which undertaking re-opened a controversy between him and General Beauregard and Colonel Jordan, a former staff officer of Beauregard; and he succeeded in persuading Mrs. Josephine Louise Newcomb, a wealthy widow, to establish a college for women as a memorial to her deceased daughter, which institution was to be a part of Tulane University. Added to the weight of these labors were the heavy misfortunes which he experienced in the loss of his only son, Albert Sidney Johnston, and of his wife, Rosa Duncan Johnston, both of whom died in 1885.

In the latter part of 1884, Mrs. Johnston became seriously ill, and her husband took her to Richmond, Virginia, for treatment. Here Johnston watched the condition of his wife with anxiety, and, as he could find time to do so, worked on his article for the *Century Magazine* and corresponded with the editors concerning it. Within a few weeks Mrs. Johnston was enough improved that he could absent himself from her bedside for a time and go to New York for the purpose of discussing his article with the editors. As he prepared to carry out this intention, he was summoned to the bedside of his son, who was desperately ill in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

27A record of Johnston's labors in preparing this article, and of his controversy with Beauregard and Jordan is contained in a series of letters which he wrote to the editor of the *Century Magazine*, R. W. Johnson, and his associate, C. C. Burl, beginning May 2, 1884, and ending September 21, 1887. These letters, which number twenty-five, are in the New York Public Library. Josephine L. Newcomb to the Board of Administrators, Tulane U., in B. W. B. Dixon's *A Brief History of H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College*, and in catalogues of Tulane University.

28W. P. Johnston to R. M. Johnson, Nov. 20 and 24, 1885, and to C. C. Burl, Nov. 25, 27, and 29, 1885.

29W. P. Johnston to C. C. Burl, Dec. 1, 1885.

30Ibid., Dec. 7, 1884.
young man, then twenty-four years of age, had been for some
time in the employ of his father's friend and former classmate
at Yale College, Colonel Henry McCormick, who operated an iron
business. Young Johnston became ill early in November; and
when his condition grew worse, he refrained from acquainting
his family with the severity of his disease for fear of adding
to the distress of his sick mother. Colonel Johnston and one
of his daughters, Mrs. Tucker, were with the youth during the
final days preceding his death, which occurred after typhoid
fever had ravaged his fine constitution for eight weeks.\(^{32}\)

The death of Albert was a sad blow to his father, and of
course, to his mother also. A week after his death, the parents
published and mailed to their friends an obituary letter which
was indeed a sorrowful communication. "He was a beautiful boy,"
the letter read, "and grew to a noble and manly presence, with
a strong resemblance to the grandfather, for whom he was named,
which resemblance extended likewise to his mind and character."\(^{33}\)

In this characterization there is a suggestion of greater pathos
than is found in the more sorrowful utterances of the letter, for
the linking of the young man with his distinguished grandfather
suggests not only the resurrection of a former grief in the mind
of Colonel Johnston, but also the end of his hopes that in his
only son something of General Johnston's distinction might be
continued for the family.

\(^{32}\) W. P. Johnston and Rosa D. Johnston, Obituary letter concern­
ing the death of their son, Albert Sidney Johnston, dated
Jan. 16, 1865.
\(^{33}\) Ibid.
Even in the midst of his grief, the stricken father did not neglect his obligations to the publishers of the Century Magazine. On the fourth day after his son died, he wrote to one of the editors with reference to some matters relating to his article; and at the conclusion of this letter, he explained in a poignant statement a misunderstanding which had arisen between him and the editors. "Just now, I am in great trouble of mind;" he wrote, "Albert was my only son."34

In the February number of 1885, the Century Magazine published Johnston's "Albert Sidney Johnston and the Shiloh Campaign."35 For some years during this period the magazine made it a practice to carry in each issue two or more articles devoted to diverse viewpoints respecting a particular battle or campaign. The number which carried Johnston's article contained also two others on the Battle of Shiloh. One was by General Grant and was written, of course, from the Union army's point of view. However, it was gracious and tactful in character. Upon reading the proof copy of it some weeks before it was published, Johnston wrote the editor that "It strikes me as a candid article from his point of view."36 The other article, "Notes of a Confederate Staff-Officer at Shiloh,"37 was written by Colonel Thomas Jordan and presented an account of the battle which varies widely in some important details from that given by Johnston. Before its pub-

34 W. P. Johnston to R. M. Johnson, Jan. 13, 1885.
37 W. P. Johnston to R. M. Johnson, Nov. 24, 1884.
lication, Johnston read a copy of it and declared, "I see nothing to answer. We do not stand upon common ground at all."39

The chief points of dispute were as follows: Johnston asserted that his father had planned the battle, and, in spite of Beauregard's advice, had ordered the attack, which up to the time of General Johnston's death on the afternoon of the first day, had been highly successful. When the command devolved upon Beauregard, he ordered a withdrawal of the Confederate troops, by which action, the writer declared, he lost the opportunity of crushing Grant's army before Buell's could reinforce it, and thus the great victory, which had been secured at a tremendous cost, was nullified.40

Jordan, on the other hand, declared that General Beauregard had planned the battle and had counselled against ordering it only after a delay of a full day had occurred in the time set for its beginning. Under the circumstances, he believed that it would not be possible to take the Federal army by surprise. The writer contended also that the withdrawal of the troops which was ordered by Beauregard on the afternoon of the first day of the battle was necessary because the Confederate forces were exhausted and disorganized.41

Although Johnston's article is mainly concerned with the Battle of Shiloh, it is really a condensed account of his father's entire career in the Confederate service. The writer's

39W. P. Johnston to R. M. Johnson, Jan. 16, 1885.
41Jordan, "Notes of a Confederate Staff-Officer at Shiloh," p. 620 ff.
purpose and point of view are the same as those revealed in his biography of General Johnston, and in some instances he draws rather freely upon the language of the larger work. As he submitted the final draft to the editor, he expressed himself as dissatisfied with it from an artistic standpoint. However, such deficiency will hardly be apparent to the reader, for the narrative's piquancy is strongly enhanced by its condensation. For example, note the compressed irony of his statement concerning his father's situation as the newly appointed commander of the Confederate forces in the West:

His command was imperial in extent, and his powers and discretion as large as the theory of the Confederate Government permitted. He lacked nothing except men, munitions of war, and the means of obtaining them. He had the right to ask for anything, and the State Executives had the power to withhold everything.

In further explanation of the situation he writes:

General Johnston realized the magnitude of the struggle, but the people of the South only awoke to it when it was too late. Calamity then stirred them to an ineffectual resistance, the heroism of which removed the reproach of their early vainglory and apathy.

Regarding the capture of the Confederate army which was commanded by Johnston's subordinates at Fort Donelson, the author is more direct here than in his former narrative in suggesting the blame:

The answer to any criticism as to the loss

42. W. P. Johnston to the editor of the Century Magazine, Dec. 1, 1864.
44. Ibid., p. 617.
of the army at Donelson is that it ought not to have been lost. That is all there is of it.45

The case of General Johnston as given in the article is, as we have indicated, much the same as that presented in the author's book. To achieve the full vindication of his father, the writer evidently felt the necessity of proving that General Johnston, when he fell in battle, was not only beating the Federal army, but had won a decisive though costly victory, the completeness of which could have been secured by sustaining the vigorous action for a little longer time. Such a presentation of the matter obviously reflects upon the reputation of General Beauregard, who succeeded the fallen commander. The writer concludes his article with a complimentary reference to Beauregard's direction of the army during the second day of the battle, but insists that his error of the preceding day had rendered subsequent efforts futile.46

The publication of the articles by Johnston and by Jordan, of course, aggravated the controversy, which continued sporadically for some years. The later articles, some of which were published in the New Orleans newspapers, were brief items concerning special points of dispute.47 If any purpose was served by them, it was that the evidence and the viewpoints of the disputants were placed on record. It is perhaps worth

46 Ibid., p. 628.
47 W. P. Johnston to K. M. Johnson, May 9 and 30, 1887; Aug. 26, 1887; Sept. 21, 1887.
noting also that during this period the even tenor of Johnston's pleasant relationships with the world at large was apparently marred by little except this controversy.

In October, 1883, President Johnston's wife died while visiting in Lexington, Virginia. A new session of the University was just beginning; and at the first meeting of the Board, which occurred a few days after Mrs. Johnston's death, Reverend Benjamin Palmer offered the following expression of sympathy:

The Board of Administrators of the Tulane University of Louisiana, at their first meeting held this autumn, desire to express to Col. William Preston Johnston, President of the University, their tenderest sympathy in the severe bereavement he has just sustained. Less than a year ago, we mourned with him under the loss of an only son, the virtues of whose early manhood promised to perpetuate the honor of a proud ancestral name. Today our friend bows under a sorrow more deep and sacred still, in the death of her who was "the wife of his youth." We dare not intrude into the sanctuary of such grief with the commonplaces of earthly consolation. In this supreme bereavement, which cleaves through our being and leaves us but the half of ourselves, there is no comfort except that which comes from him of whom it is written "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." He who hath smitten can alone "bind up"; and we commend our brother in his sorrow to him who has promised to stay "His rough wind in the day of the east wind." So far, however, as human sympathy can avail to ease the pressure of this woe, the Board renews to Col. Johnston the assurance of their esteem and affection; and in full measure feel with him the pain of this overwhelming affliction.

48 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Oct. 26, 1883.
In the fall of 1885 President Johnston instituted a plan of student participation in the discipline of the University, the purpose of which was, as he declared to the Board, to embody a system of self-government and to foster a sense of honor among the students. Under the regulations set up in this system, all students were required to sign a pledge that during the time which intervened between their leaving home in the morning and their return thereto they would not enter places where liquor or lottery tickets were sold, or any other improper place, and that they would observe the regulations for discipline, conduct themselves honorably, and commit no act which would bring disrepute to themselves or the institution. The results brought about by the system were evidently gratifying to the president, for in his reports to the Board, he repeatedly praised the conduct of the students, as well as the loyal and effective service of the faculty. "The discipline of the College has been excellent;" he declared at the close of the session of 1887. "As this falls under my personal superintendence, I would naturally be the first to perceive dereliction." Two years later he was still pleased with the plan, as his report to the Board indicates:

I have thought it judicious to take rather prompt and more stringent notice of delinquencies than in former years, but there has been no case involving the honor of any student or any wilful resistance to

49 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Nov., 1885.
50 Leaflet on Organization and Rules for the Discipline of Tulane College, Nov. 16, 1885.
51 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, June 14, 1887.
authority. Indeed the Board of Directors elected by the students has relieved me of nearly all the cases of discipline that have arisen, by the infliction of reasonable penalties.52

In the following year Johnston asserted in a conversation with a French visitor that "My young fellows are very docile and easy to manage." More interesting perhaps than this statement is the Frenchman's characterization of Johnston:

...Tall, spare, energetic, he is remarkable above everything for his extreme politeness and urbanity. If I believed in metempsychosis, I should swear he had lived formerly at Versailles under "le Grand roi."53

When Paul Tulane made his donation for the establishment of a university, he had in view chiefly the education of men; and therefore no immediate provision was made by the institution for the education of women. After the University was organized and its usefulness as an educational force began to be felt, the people of New Orleans evinced a desire that its benefits might be extended to the women of Louisiana.54 This result was achieved more quickly than would have been possible under ordinary circumstances, when Mrs. Josephine Louise Newcomb of New York City decided to establish a college for women in New Orleans. Mrs. Newcomb was the widow of Warren Newcomb, a native of Massachusetts, who had accumulated a large fortune as a sugar merchant in New Orleans. Mr. Newcomb had been liberal in his

52Ibid., May 14, 1889.
donations to individuals and to institutions before his death in 1870, which liberality was continued by his widow. The death of Mrs. Newcomb's only child, Harriet Sophie Newcomb, a girl of fifteen, followed close upon that of her husband; and having lost her closest and dearest relatives, Mrs. Newcomb considered for some years the establishing of an appropriate memorial for her daughter. Her friend, Colonel William Preston Johnston, whom she had known for many years, directed her interest toward the creation of a college for women, which was to bear her daughter's name and which was to be administered by the Tulane Board of Administrators as one of the colleges of the University. The donor's initial gift for the college was $100,000; and after the institution was organized, she made many substantial donations throughout a period of more than twenty years. At her death she bequeathed all of her remaining fortune except a few thousand dollars to the college, which sum added to the amounts given during her lifetime brought her total donations to $3,626,551.

Mrs. Newcomb's aims for the memorial college were similar to those which Paul Tulane had expressed to the Board of Administrators when the University was proposed; and like Mr. Tulane

55Ibid., pp. 220-221.
56Josephine L. Newcomb to the Board of Administrators of Tulane University, Oct. 11, 1896, in Fay's History of Education in Louisiana pp. 221-222; in Dixon's Brief History of Newcomb College, pp. 9-10, and in catalogs of Tulane University. Dixon's Brief History of Newcomb College, p. 105.
she also desired that the Board should have a free hand in disposing of the fund which she provided. She wished that the tendency of the institution should be "in harmony with the fundamental principles of the Christian religion," but that it should not be sectarian or denominational in character. As regarded the nature of the instruction to be given, she requested that it should "look to the practical side of life, as well as to literary excellence."57

On the day that Mrs. Newcomb dispatched her letter to the Board, she wrote one to Colonel Johnston also, stating that her check for $100,000 had been sent to General Gibson and requesting that absolute secrecy be maintained with regard to the gift until all arrangements were complete.58 These two communications from Mrs. Newcomb, as well as a number of other things, indicate that the influence of President Johnston upon the founder of Newcomb College was strong, and that from this influence the school profited to a remarkable degree.59

Professor Brandt V. B. Dixon, who had served for some time as the able principal of one of the St. Louis high schools, was invited by the Board to become the president of the new college.60 After a visit to New Orleans and an investigation of the possibilities in prospect for the institution, Mr. Dixon accepted the

57 Josephine L. Newcomb to the Tulane Board, op. cit.
58 Josephine L. Newcomb to W. P. Johnston, Oct. 11, 1886.
59 Dixon's Brief History of Newcomb College sets forth these matters in some detail.
60 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Apr. 26, 1887.
place, and shortly afterwards began the work of selecting the faculty, housing and equipping the college, and organizing the curricula. The courses of study were three in number and included the Classical, the Scientific, and the Modern Language, each of which led to the degree of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. In addition to these courses of study, the institution offered a number of special studies in art, which students might take without entering the regular course. Art studies were also a part of the general curricula, and prescribed courses in this work were given to students preparing to teach. Physical education was a part of the regular course; and in this department, the Swedish system of training was used, along with "aesthetical gymnastics, adapted from the Delsarte philosophy of expression," and some attention to voice work. Newcomb College also maintained a preparatory department, the course of study in which included the subjects required for admission to college.61

Through the liberality of Mrs. Newcomb and the combined administrative efforts of Presidents Johnston and Dixon, the college for women made steady progress from the beginning. At the close of session of 1890-1891, the first graduating class was presented to President Johnston, from whose hands the members received their diplomas and certificates. Eight young women graduated in the academic department, two in normal art, and seven

received special certificates in French. Dr. Palmer delivered the commencement address, after which Colonel Johnston made a brief speech in his characteristic manner.\footnote{Dixon's Brief History of Newcomb College, p. 54.} He referred to the class as the "firstlings of our flock", and characterized them, in their relationships to the institution, as "the rare primroses in the springtime of its college existence, the first flowers of the morning."\footnote{Ibid., p. 55.} The speaker's fondness for picturesque expression is illustrated in the following passage:

...In the far distant future when the line of silver shall thread the golden curl, or raven tress, or bonny brown hair, and the great artist Time, with the graving tools of care, responsibility, sorrow, patience, faith, hope, and charity, shall have wrought the character-sculpture upon your faces, you will look back with a tender regret and a modest joy to this school where you early found a standard and incentive for aspiration. You will recall it as a sanctuary where was revealed to and confirmed in you that love of knowledge which confers splendor of intellect, that love of wisdom which bestows beauty of character, and love of virtue which brings with it holiness and the grace of God.\footnote{Ibid., p. 56.}

This commencement and the chain of developments which reached a favorable point at this time, marked what President Dixon has termed the end of the preliminary epoch; and Newcomb was moving toward larger achievements.

In June, 1887, the University conferred its first honorary degree, when General C. W. C. Lee received the degree of Doctor of Laws.\footnote{Ibid., p. 56.} A few days before the date of this Commencement, New Orleans Daily Picayune, June 24, 1887.
President Johnston had presented the name of his former associate to the Board of Administrators, stating as he did so that his recommendation was prompted in part by the suggestion of friends. His characterization of the nominee, as given to the Board, was as follows:

General Lee stands close to my heart, as a friend of many years, a comrade in arms, a colleague in academic work, and a man whose life and character have been open to my closest and strictest observation, that I should hesitate to urge his name for fear lest personal considerations might move me, but fortunately he has always stood under the scrutiny of a Public jealous to mark aught amiss.

As student, scholar, soldier, professor, College President, and Christian gentleman, he has modestly, yet consistently, risen to every exigency. He has borne the weight of a great name so well, that no one can think him an unworthy successor in his last great work to Robert E. Lee. He is all that a great Southern University should delight to honor. He is a good man, and of as royal a nature as is alive on earth. We would honor ourselves by honoring him, and I ask that this degree be granted to him, and to him only, at the present Commencement.

Several other persons of distinction were honored in like manner during the remaining years of Johnston's administration, the degree conferred being always the Doctor of Laws. At the Commencement of 1895, the persons receiving this honor were the Honorable Howell Jackson, associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court; the Honorable William L. Wilson, Post-Master
General; and Johnston's friend and former Yale classmate, Professor Jacob Cooper, the Vice-President of Rutgers College. At the Commencement of the following year three other men received the degree: General Stephen D. Lee of Mississippi; the Honorable William Porcher Miles of Louisiana; and the former Post-Master General of the Confederacy, John H. Reagan of Texas, who, like Johnston, was captured with Jefferson Davis. In 1897, Thomas D. Boyd, President of the Louisiana State University, was the only person who received the honor; and at the Commencement of 1899, which occurred a few weeks before Johnston's death, the University conferred the degree upon three others: the Honorable Edward Douglas White, United States Senator from Louisiana, and later Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court; Edwin Anderson Alderman, who became the president of Tulane University at the beginning of the second year following Johnston's death; and James Lane Allen, the novelist.

68 Ibid., May 14, 1895.
69 Ibid., June 8, 1896.
70 Ibid., Apr. 12, 1897.
71 Ibid., May 10, 1899.
CHAPTER XI

TULANE UNIVERSITY: LATTER YEARS

In 1887 an organization in New Orleans, which was called the Art and Letters Association, made an ambitious effort to encourage creative activity in art and literature by publishing a beautifully printed magazine. This bi-monthly publication, Art and Letters, which survived for a single year, contained drawings and literary compositions by local persons. On the first page of the initial number, under the caption of "Proem", the purpose of the magazine was set forth, the editor modestly declaring, "We know full well it is easier to outline our work than to accomplish it." The two-fold character of the publication appears in a further statement: "It is sectional, in the better sense of that outworn term, and it is also national, in the highest acceptation of the word which is so often used and so seldom comprehended, the first part being connected with the thought of furnishing a medium for expressions from the South's intellectual leadership, and the second part, in the breadth of thinking anticipated in these expressions."

The contributors to Art and Letters included such well-known New Orleans names as William and Ellsworth Woodward, Mary Ashley Townsend, John R. Ficklen, Mollie E. M. Davis, Grace King, John Augustin, and William Preston Johnston. To the first number Johnston contributed a poem, "The Return of Youth", to the August number an essay on Macbeth; and to the final number,

1 Art and Letters, Feb., 1887, p. 1.
2 Ibid., pp. 15-16.

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which was published in December, a poem called "The Patriotic South". The MacBeth article was republished in a volume of Johnston's studies on Shakespeare, which appeared in 1890; and the two poems were included in a book of his verse published in 1894.

Besides lending his efforts to the promotion of the short-lived magazine, Johnston was active with other cultural enterprises. His interest in a program of public lectures sponsored by the University for the benefit of the general public seemed never to diminish. In the spring of 1888, his former college mate, Andrew H. White, a distinguished educator and diplomat, who had served as minister to Berlin, and who had organized Cornell University and become its first president, delivered at Tulane University a course of lectures on the French Revolution. Later Johnston himself delivered a series on Shakespeare, which with his essay on MacBeth made up the volume of studies to which reference has already been made. The faculty of the University also made their contributions to the program. Such activities apparently stimulated more than local interest, for in the spring of 1892, T. D. Boyd, who was then president of the Louisiana State Normal, wrote Johnston a warm letter of congratulation and expressed the hope that several of the Tulane professors might appear on the Chautauqua program presented annually.

7 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Mar. 13, 1890.
8 Daily Picayune, Mar. 13, 20, 25, and 27, Apr. 1 and 3, 1890.
at Ruston, Louisiana. 9

Although President Johnston's interests were mainly educational and literary, he could express himself with some cogency upon other matters when the occasion offered an opportunity. An address which he delivered in St. Louis at the Washington University Commencement in 1890 affords a good example. His subject was, "The Function of the City"; and as one reads this speech, he is brought back sharply to the remembrance of the fact that Johnston's chief interest during the early part of his life had been centered upon public affairs and that it was in this field that he had intended to expend the greater part of his energies. The reader is impressed also with the speaker's ability to lay aside the lofty manner, which characterized many of his public utterances, and speak the forthright convictions of an indignant spirit. The following extract from his St. Louis address is given as an illustration:

I can remember when we had a republic.

This is not the time, nor the place, for me to discuss by what necromancy and black arts, it has been transformed into a plutocracy.

But every man knows that this has become a rich man's government and that it is no longer a country where the rich man owes his influence to the indirect advantages that wealth confers; but that rank and office and public franchises are bought and sold with the same brutal cynicism that Didius Julianus purchased the Roman Empire with, though, unfortunately, not with the same righteous retribution. 10

And as he utters further condemnation of the abuses practised by men of wealth, his indignation assumes the austere tone of an Old Testament prophet:

What we call the rich is a class made up of individual rich men. We can only reach that class through the consciences of the individuals that compose it. The capitalist as he counts his gold, may deny that he holds it of society. Let him do so. If he can not read the warnings in the signs of the times as I have shown them, let that pass.\[1\]

From these expressions, it is evident that although Johnston was invariably characterized as an aristocrat, and although he was very successful in securing large benefactions from wealthy persons, he viewed with repugnance the dishonest and unfair methods employed by the ruthless and unscrupulous class of business men who gained rapidly in power after the War. It is interesting to note also that in a period when the acute struggle between capital and labor in this country was comparatively new, his sympathies were with the latter. The intensity of these sympathies is revealed in a poem which is contained in one of his volumes. The title of the piece is "The Strike Ended"\[12\], and the author's reaction to the circumstance which evoked it is indicated in the first two stanzas:

"Order again in Warsaw reigns",
With iron jaws still grinds the mill;
While Justice, sneering in her fanes,
Forges for power the law's strong chains,
To bind the human will.

The succeeding stanzas emphasize the inconsistency which is found in a situation where men are free in every regard except that of chief importance to them: the right to demand and receive a just return for their labor. However, the poet writes no elegy upon lost hopes, for the concluding stanzas convert the poem into a vigorous hymn of revolt:

With gun in hand, ask what you may,
They'll grant you that and offer more;
They fear the people's stout array,
They dread rebellion's bloody fray
And insurrection's roar.

Trust them no more to servile prayer
For justice from your cruel lords;
Come like the wild beasts from your lair,
The belt draw tight, the arm make bare,
And use your whetted swords.

On April 25, 1888, Johnston married Margaret Henshaw Avery, a member of a prominent Louisiana family. Although all of Johnston's daughters were grown, they were at first somewhat disturbed at the prospect of their father's second marriage; but the realization of his loneliness and his need for someone to bolster his frail strength, as he performed the arduous labors of his office, did much to remove their disappointment. The second Mrs. Johnston brought not only companionship to the lonely president of Tulane, but also the competent assistance of an

14Caroline H. Johnston to W. P. Johnston (undated).
intelligent and sympathetic spirit. She was active in civic affairs, and exhibited strong interest in the literary, cultural, moral, and religious development of New Orleans. She was for many years a member of the Louisiana Historical Society and was the author of a book on the Acadians of Louisiana. As president of the Woman’s Anti-Lottery League, she rendered valuable service to the movement which brought about the abolition of the lottery in Louisiana; and she devoted a considerable amount of energy to the work of other organizations.\footnote{15}{\textit{Louisiana Historical Quarterly}, Apr. 1926, pp. 281-283.} Being some years younger than her husband, and blessed with good health, she was able to assist President Johnston in carrying out his plans for the improvement of the University and to give his home the hospitable atmosphere so congenial to his nature. "To see her receiving in her hospitable home, dispensing the choice gifts of her bountiful board," said her gifted friend, Grace King, "was a rare pleasure to the honored guest, a pleasure that memory enhances and never forgets."\footnote{16}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 285.} How necessary such a helpmeet was to Johnston is more fully appreciated when we note the condition of his health as indicated in the testimony of one who knew him and advised him from the time of his entrance to Yale College until his death:

To say that he lived for fifteen years by force of will alone may seem extravagant to those who did not know his actual condition. Yet to such as witnessed the struggles...
through which his weak frame carried the burden of each University term, this will be recognized as a true statement. He was never free from pain for a single hour during that long period. His paroxysms of coughing lasted from three to eight hours a day. They absorbed what to most men is that want which is desirable more than any other for work, i.e. the forenoon, and left him, if they ever did at all, well nigh in a collapse; so weakened that death might come at any time from sheer exhaustion. Yet from such protracted fits of coughing he would rally, to take up the burdens of the day. 17

That one so afflicted with ill health could perform the many and varied duties which were connected with his position and could find additional time and strength for other important matters is remarkable. The arduous and diversified character of these labors is revealed in the minutes of the Tulane Board of Administrators, in the newspaper reports of his activities, and in the large bulk of his correspondence. To these evidences should be added also the rather large number of items which he found time to publish during this period. For an evaluation of Johnston’s capacities and the spirit which sustained his frail bodily strength, we again quote the testimony of his college classmate:

The correspondence which Mr. Johnston carried on was immense. Nor did he avail himself of an amanuensis, secretary, or typewriter, except in rare instances. The great burden of a correspondence, written out in full in a legible script, was carried by him to the last... His powers for diversified action seemed to be unlimited in degree

17 Cooper, p. 24.
and kind...he could go from a meeting of the Smithsonian Regents, from a conference with city government, a committee meeting of the governor and members of the State Legislature, or a protracted sitting of his Faculty; from several of these in one day—to a social function, for which New Orleans is noted, and be the life and soul of an admiring circle. Nay more; from a home very often darkened by bereavement, from the burial of an only son, from the bedside of a daughter dying in a distant city, he would return to take up the burdens of life with the same single-hearted earnestness, as though no heart-strings had been broken.

In the years immediately following his marriage to Miss Avery, Johnston suffered the loss of several of his dearest friends and two of his daughters. On December 6, 1889, Jefferson Davis, his former chief and life-long friend, died in the home of Judge C. E. Fenner in New Orleans; and President Johnston was chairman of the committee in charge of the funeral services in that city—ceremonials which preceded the transferring of the body to Richmond, Virginia. In 1892 two other close friends, both members of the Tulane Board of Administrators, passed away—Bishop John N. Gallagher in February and Senator Randall Lee Gibson in December. The first of these, it will be remembered, had served as an officer under General Albert Sidney Johnston, to whom he was intensely devoted; and in the years which followed the War he had manifested a similar feeling for the General's eldest son. As William Preston

18Ibid., pp. 26-27.
20W. P. Johnston to Mrs. V. C. Clopton, Dec. 10, 1889. (Duke University Library.)
Johnston's friend and fellow-townsmen in Louisville immediately after the war, he was among those who recommended him for a place on the faculty of Washington College; and in later years when the two men became residents of New Orleans, Bishop Galleher gave Johnston the full measure of his loyal support. A note-worthy example his attitude is indicated in a motion he placed before the Board in the spring of 1888, which provided for raising the president's salary from $5000 to $6000 a year and for furnishing him with $2000 to visit seats of learning in foreign countries. Johnston received the increase in salary, but did not go abroad until several years later. At a meeting of the Board which immediately followed Galleher's death, Johnston said, "Bishop Galleher has been my friend for more than thirty years, and it is but justice to his memory to say that I have rarely met his peer in true nobility of soul, and bread of Christian charity."  

In the death of Rendall Lee Gibson, Johnston lost a dear and valued friend and kinsman, whose affectionate regard and consistent loyalty through many years meant much to him. A year after the close of the war, this friend had written Johnston: "When deprived of nearly all else in life upon which we had set our hearts, I believe we prize more highly than ever those ties of a personal nature which alone can compensate for the caprices of fortune. And among these is my friendship for you."  

21Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, May 8, 1888.  
22Ibid., June 8, 1896.  
23Ibid., Feb. 8, 1892.  
24Gibson to W. F. Johnston, Apr. 2, 1866.
Even stronger testimony of Gibson's devotion is revealed in the scores of letters which he wrote Johnston over a long period. Following the War, the correspondence between the two was notably regular, and was related to a variety of matters which concerned Johnston. Even with the heavy burdens of his position as United States Senator from Louisiana, Gibson found time to give attention to his responsibilities as president of the Tulane Board of Administrators, often addressing "Dear Will" at length on matters relating to the University, in letters written by his own hand. In the last weeks of his life he devoted much energy to putting into form the plans which he believed necessary for the development of the institution, in order that the trust given into his hands by Mr. Tulane might be fulfilled to the fullest extent. He knew that his end was rapidly approaching; and up to the time of his passing, his thoughts were often upon the rebuilding of the University. A short time before his death he said: "I have spent my life in public service and have done what I could, but it will all soon be forgotten. Will my work at Tulane University be remembered longer?"

25 In Johnston's private papers, there are many letters which he received from Gibson, the dates ranging from October 11, 1863 to Nov. 8, 1892, the latter date being but a few weeks prior to Gibson's death. There were doubtless earlier ones, which because of Johnston's situation during the war, he was unable to preserve.

26 W. P. Johnston, Report to the Board of Administrators, Tulane University; June 15, 1893, pp. 23-24.
On December 15, 1892, Senator Gibson died in Hot Springs, Arkansas, after a painful illness.27 Johnston was by his bedside much of the time during his last days.28 With the passing of this former officer of the Confederate Army, who rose from captain to major-general during his service, Louisiana lost one of her most distinguished citizens. The loss which Johnston sustained has already been sufficiently indicated. The body was taken to Lexington, Kentucky, for burial; and the Tulane Board asked President Johnston to attend the funeral, which request could have been hardly more than an endorsement of his known intention. The Board also telegraphed Gibson's colleague, Senator Edward Douglas White, who was then in Washington, asking that he attend the funeral as the representative of the Tulane Administrators.29 In the founding and organization of the University, three persons played the most important parts. Gibson's death within less than ten years after its establishment, removed the second one from the scene; the death of the third, Tulane's first president, was to follow before seven more years had passed.

On November 25, 1894, Johnston's oldest daughter, Mary Duncan, who had never married, died in Louisville of pneumonia. To his Yale classmates, the sorrowing father wrote, "She was a saintly woman, of vivid personality, and much beloved; a stay to all her family, and friends. My theology teaches me to hope

27 Obituary Record, Yale University, 1891-1900, p. 177.
28 E. D. White to W. P. Johnston, Dec. 2, 1892.
29 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Dec. 16, 1892.
that I shall soon meet her and other loved ones, through the
great mercy of an all Merciful Father." On July 7 of the
following year, Johnston's youngest daughter, Caroline Hancock,
who, two years before, had married T. C. Kinney of Staunton,
Virginia, also died in Louisville. The remaining members of
his family outlived him.

In spite of Johnston's ill health and the bereavements
which so often afflicted him, he carried on the work of his
office with considerable vigor. In 1892, upon the recommendation
of Senator Gibson, who was a member of the Board of Regents of
the Smithsonian Institution, Johnston was added to that body.
Early in the following year he attended a meeting of the Regents
in Washington; and returning to New Orleans, he reported to the
Tulane Board that the Institution had promised him a valuable
archeological collection for the University. On the same
trip he visited New York at the invitation of Mrs. Newcomb, who,
after several conferences with him, expressed her intention of
endowing her college liberally, and immediately thereafter sent
him a number of bonds amounting in value to $100,200.

As the head of a growing university, which he hoped would
render the greatest possible service to Louisiana, Johnston
realized that one of the chief handicaps to such service was the
small number of students in the state who had the necessary

30 Record, class of 1852, Yale University, Supplement to the Re-
port of the Quadrigintennial Meeting, 1895, p. 78.
32 R. L. Gibson to W. P. Johnston, Jan. 30, 1892.
33 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Feb. 20, 1893.
34 Ibid.
preparation for entrance to an institution of college rank. With respect to the situation in 1890, a prominent educator of the state wrote, "The most defective feature of public-school equipment in Louisiana now is the lack of high schools, save in the city of New Orleans... No really good college is able to bear the weight of a preparatory department."  

Speaking before the Louisiana State Teachers' Association in 1893, Johnston made the following statement on the subject:

"Apart from people of genius, you will find as the result of a prevalent intellectual inertia that the great majority of our young people are stopped on, or before, the close of their schooling in the primary grades. That I am not mistaken in this may be seen in the New Orleans Schools, where out of 20,000 children only about 600 are in the High Schools."

Because of the condition indicated in the preceding statements, Tulane University maintained as part of its organization a high school, which Johnston declared to be "the best taught High School in the South and one of the best anywhere." The necessity for such a department in conjunction with the University is explained by the president:

"Education was at a very low level; half of the voters of the State could not read or write; ignorance was paramount. There was not a high school or academy of high grade in the State from which to draw a supply of well-trained students, except the high school of the university, and there were

35 Fay, History of Education in Louisiana, p. 110.
37 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, June 18, 1890."
no students studying in the State with reference to university education. We had to create a demand for higher education, as well as to supply it. It was evidently a necessity for the university to avail itself of its own high school, for the time being, both as a preparatory department to the college and to fix a grade and standard of secondary education to which other schools should conform. 38

In the ten years of its existence, the Tulane high school, according to President Johnston, rendered valuable service to both secondary and higher education in the state; and upon its discontinuance in 1894, left "the legacy of a noble example of scholarship and moral influence to the numerous classical academies that have arisen in emulation of it in the city of New Orleans." 39

With the University's abandonment of its direct efforts in the high school field, Johnston's thoughts were more strongly turned toward encouraging the development of strong public high schools in the state, whose graduates would be capable of measuring up to the requirements which he believed Tulane should maintain; and he was strongly of the opinion that the University had an obligation "to maintain a standard such as to be an incentive to the uplifting of the standard of education throughout the state." When students who were notably deficient in preparation applied for admission, they were either given a trial in the sub-freshman class or returned to the high

38 P. Johnston, "Tulane University", p. 193.
39 Ibid.
schools from which they had come. "This action," stated the president, "has done much to increase the respect of the schools for the University." 40

Johnston sought also to impress the citizens of Louisiana with the idea that Tulane University was a part of the state system of education. Speaking with reference to the University, in his address before the State Teachers' Association, he said, "It is a component part of the State system of education, as much as any primary school, or high school, in the state; and it has always attempted to fulfill its obligations as a State institution." 41 Reporting to his Board on the reception of this address, he asserted that "It was very kindly received by the convention, and will, I hope, do something to establish our direct relations with the public school system of the State." 42

Those who were intimately acquainted with Johnston's work as an administrator agree that he had remarkable ability in the matter of selecting suitable persons for his faculty. Such is the testimony of Dr. Brandt V. B. Dixon, 43 whose combined service as president and later as dean of Newcomb College covered a period of more than thirty years; and such also is the testimony of Dr. Fierce Butler, 44 who succeeded Dixon. If more
substantial proof is required, one has but to examine the
distinguished records of a number of the men who served under
the first president of Tulane University. In his reports to
the Board of Administrators, Johnston frequently commended
the work of his co-workers; and upon one occasion, after some
criticism had been directed at the work of the faculty, he
expressed himself in the following manner:

When the zeal or industry of our Faculty
is challenged, I should feel myself very
derelict in duty if I did not say to you what
I know in the matter. From my knowledge of
the amount of teaching done in other insti-
tutions and of that done in our own, I can
declare to you, on my conscience, that I do
not believe that there is in the length and
breadth of the land in any reputable college
or University a faculty more laborious or
zealous, both in the classroom and out of it,
than our own; and this can be verified by
statistics.45

This devotion to the interests of the University, the president
attributed in large measure to the Board's liberal and con-
sistent policy in dealing with the faculty.46

In view of his ability for securing harmonious and effective
effort from his teaching staff, it is not surprising that his
influence upon students was equally strong. How he lessened
the disciplinary burdens of the administration by instituting
a system of student government, and how he often took occasion
to praise the conduct of the students, have already been indi-
cated. His admiring friend, Jacob Cooper, states that in every

45 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane U., Apr. 9, 1894.
46 Ibid.
period of his life, he had the vivacity of youth and the wisdom of age, which made him a favorite with young people, over whom he exercised, without effort, a perfect witchery. In the records of the University, only one case calling for serious disciplinary action appears during Johnston's administration. In this instance certain members of the sophomore class had to be severely disciplined by the faculty. Regarding the subject, the president expressed himself to the Board as follows:

I think I need only say to the members of this Board that in this whole matter my personal efforts and those of the faculty have been to relieve certain members of the Sophomore Class from the consequences of their own indiscretion, so far as was consistent with the discipline of the University and the manly self-control of its students on which we have relied from the organization of the University to the present time.

In the middle nineties, the game of football became an important student activity on the Tulane campus. Johnston apparently experienced some difficulty in adjusting himself to the entrance of this sport into the life of the institution. A portion of his report to the Board in December, 1894, criticized the present "craze for football games", because of the interference with studies and the danger to the players; and his opinion was, "We should mend it or end it." A year later he was still opposed to the game, but was convinced that the tide of public feeling in its favor would prevent efforts

47 Cooper, p. 29.
48 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Feb. 11, 1895.
49 Ibid., Dec. 10, 1894.
to abolish it. It is interesting to note, however, that his opposition to the game in no wise diminished his loyalty to the Tulane students who played on the team, for when a Baton Rouge hotel keeper submitted to him a bill for eighty-eight dollars, which he claimed represented the amount of damage done by the Tulane players, Johnston returned a letter, disclaiming all liability in the matter; and later, when reporting the affair to his Board, he referred to the hotel keeper's efforts as blackmail.

In the rapidly growing University, other student activities besides football naturally developed. In the fall of 1890, the first indication of a journalistic urge on the campus made its appearance in a small, neatly typed sheet, which was published under the name of the Tulane Rat, and which was displayed upon the bulletin boards. President Johnston unwittingly gave impetus to the journalistic impulse among the students, by tearing a copy of the fifth number of the Rat from one of the boards. The students had ignored the preceding numbers, but now the boys judged that "if it was worthy of even unworthy notice from the President, it was worthy of their patronage." The paper grew and became a power in the school. In competition to the Rat, there appeared another typed sheet, at first called the Gazette and later the Tulane Topics. Its

50 Ibid., Dec. 9, 1895.
51 Ibid.
52 Jambalaya, Tulane University, 1897, p. 122.
53 Ibid., 1896, p. 78.
career was short-lived. In 1891, the Rat was merged with The Collegian, a bi-monthly magazine which survived for three years.\textsuperscript{54} Since the name of this publication was the same as that of the student magazine which was established at Washington and Lee University while Johnston was there, he may have suggested the founding of the newer Collegian. The College Spirit, a four page weekly, was founded in 1894, and the Olive and Blue in 1896. During the following year these two were merged.\textsuperscript{55}

In 1896, the first number of the Jambalaya, the student year-book, was published. It was dedicated to the memory of Paul Tulane, and contained the following features: a list of the faculty, and historical and pictorial material relating to the classes, the nine fraternities, the literary societies, the college newspapers, the Banjo Club, the Mandolin Club, the Tulane Athletic Association, the football team, the Alumni Association, the Graduate Club, the Tennis Club, the Engineering Society, the German Club, the Dramatic Club, the Temperance Club, the Sketch Club, and an organization bearing the tantalizing, unexplained title, $\text{P}\_\text{P}\_\text{C}$. The department devoted to Newcomb College contained similar material devoted to the classes, the Literary Society, the Life Class, Ye Mystic Thirteen, the Tennis Club, the German Club, and the Alumni Association. The medical and law departments were also represented.

\textsuperscript{54}Ibid., 1897, p. 123.

\textsuperscript{55}Ibid.
If this issue of the Jambalaya and the subsequent ones which appeared during the few remaining years of Johnston's administration are taken as an index, the reader will surely believe that the Tulane students were not behindhand in their contribution to the spirit of the "gay nineties". In the department called Miscellany, in the first Jambalaya, student humor found expression in a number of parodies, samples of which were: "My Pearl is a Newcomb girl" (Air: "My Pearl is a Bowery girl"); a poem in the measure of Hiawatha, on the athletic activities of the Newcomb girls; and an imitation of The Rape of the Lock, which was concerned with a fistic battle between two students who fell out with each other over school politics.56

The 1897 Jambalaya was dedicated to the memory of Randall Lee Gibson 57 and the 1898 number to President Johnston.58 The editor's appraisal of the latter is contained in the conclusion of the biographical sketch which followed the statement of dedication:

His geniality, broad-mindedness, and thorough sympathy with the needs of student and professor have admirably suited him for his position... His unfailing courtesy and brilliant qualities of mind enable us to rank him as one of that glorious band, the typical "Southern gentlemen".59

56 Ibid., 1896, pp. 95-96.
57 Ibid., 1897.
58 Ibid., 1898.
59 Ibid.
In spite of ill health, which grew steadily worse during the latter years of his life, Johnston gave evidence of remarkable strength of will in performing the duties of his office until almost the time of his death. The acuteness of his sufferings and the spirit in which he endured them have already been indicated. In the summer of 1896 he requested a four months' leave of absence to visit Europe, which purpose suggests that he had considerable courage for a sick man who had passed his sixty-fifth birthday some months before. Returning from his trip abroad to New Orleans in November, he declared that he had found no place as pleasant as his post of duty.

Writing in the following year to the members of his class who were preparing to meet in New Haven to celebrate the forty-fifth anniversary of their graduation, he referred to his "distressing bronchial cough, which though it has not killed me yet, incapacitates me for social life, and always handicaps me." Johnston was able to attend this reunion and to read one of his poems, "The Absolute", which he had composed for the occasion. Concerning this event, a classmate wrote:

Those who heard him read with tremulous voice will never forget the emotion which thrilled their souls at the grandeur and beauty of his thoughts, while gazing at the frail form which uttered them, and felt that this was the last time they would hear those loved tones on earth!

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60 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, June 8, 1896.
61 Ibid., Dec. 14, 1896.
62 Record of the Ninth Reunion of the Class of 1852, Yale University, June 29, 1897, p. 30.
63 Cooper, p. 31.
Soon after the reunion, Mrs. Johnston became ill with typhoid fever at New London, and later Johnston himself was sick. Added to these misfortunes was an epidemic of yellow fever in New Orleans, which delayed the opening of the University. In November, he wrote his Board from Louisville, expressing his eagerness to exchange the raw climate there for the more genial one at home, but stating that he was unwilling to take the responsibility of opening the University until the fever had disappeared. Realizing the demoralizing effect of the epidemic upon the institution, he concluded his letter with this statement: "We have had a blow, and must accept it with dignity and composure."

During his more than fifteen years as the head of Tulane University, Johnston found his surroundings in New Orleans congenial in many ways. Even though his health was poor during this period, he declared it was better there than elsewhere. His strong will, which observers almost invariably noted, was tempered with a courtesy and dignity which enabled him to secure the fullest cooperation of his Board, one of the most prominent of whom declared after Johnston's death that in the whole course of his administration as president not a single serious disagreement had arisen between him and the administrators.

64 Record of the Ninth Reunion of the Class of 1852, Yale University, p. 86.
65 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Nov. 11, 1897.
66 Record of the Quadragintennial Reunion, Class of 1852, Yale University, 1892, p. 41.
Perhaps no person ever received more kindly treatment from those in authority. His happiness was further increased by the rapid growth in the influence and service of the University, which was made possible through the liberality of its benefactors. In the case of Mrs. Newcomb's donations, his friendship with her was an important factor; and the results were such to bring joy to any university administrator in like situation.

Being a person of fine literary tastes and a marked inclination toward creative achievement, he enjoyed his associations with the talented writers and artists of New Orleans. Several of these were on his faculty: Alice Fortier, John R. Ficklen, and the Woodward brothers. Others in the city, who were warm personal friends of his, included Grace King, Mollie E. M. Davis, and Mary Ashley Townsend, all of whom were literary persons of some distinction. From these, as well as from other noted contemporaries, who represented many sections of the country, he received high praise for his literary accomplishments. The inspiration which came from these sources was doubtless responsible for his increased activity in writing and publishing during the last ten years of his life.

Besides his connection with the educational and cultural life of Louisiana, there were a number of other considerations.

69 Johnston's private papers include many letters from literary people, a number of which are noted elsewhere in this study.
which were calculated to endear the state to him. As a young man, he had sometimes traveled by way of New Orleans to visit his father in Texas; and Rose Duncan, the bride of his youth, was a native of Louisiana. In the early years of its statehood, several of Johnston's close relations had played an important part in its business and political life; and it was from this state that Albert Sidney Johnston received his appointment to West Point. For these and other reasons, Johnston, during the period of his residence in Louisiana, probably never thought of himself as an outsider. Besides making efforts to promote the welfare of his city and state through the activities of the University, he took a strong interest in other endeavors looking toward the same end. Like the second Mrs. Johnston, he was an active member of the Louisiana Historical Association; and also like her he devoted his energies to the anti-lottery movement. At a large meeting which was held in the Grand Opera House for the purpose of inaugurating a campaign against lotteries in Louisiana, Johnston was the presiding officer. After the success of the crusade, he perceived that all of the city's corruption did not perish with the lottery. In a letter on the subject to one of the editors of the Century Magazine, he wrote:

70This.
Much was gained, but "a secondary form" still survives in the legacy it left us of a corrupt Ring government for the city. The war still goes merrily on under other names and flags, and we have convicted five councilmen of penitentiary offenses, though none as yet have put on the striped regalia. An election is coming off soon and the friends of good government are putting up a good fight "to oust the rogues."...The issue is doubtful, but very much depends on it.71

During his last year at Tulane—the session of 1898-1899—Johnston's health failed rapidly. Much of the time he was confined to his bed; but even in this condition, he still gave his attention to the management of the University and to other interests with which he was identified, besides conducting a large correspondence with his friends.72 At the April and May meetings73 of the Board, he presented reports and recommendations which were vigorous in character. Urging upon the Administrators a stronger feeling of faith, in the face of possible reduced income for the institution, he declared that he did not believe, as some did, that New Orleans was on the verge of ruin, and pleaded that a reduction in faculty salaries would result in diminished morale.

After presiding at the Commencement exercises in June, and concluding his work for the year, he went north to Pennsylvania for a visit with one of his daughters. When his strength continued to fail, he was removed to the home of another daughter

71 W. P. Johnston to C. C. Burt, Jan. 20, 1896.
72 Cooper, p. 27.
73 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, Apr. 10 and May 10, 1899.
in Lexington, Virginia, where for a short time he seemed stronger, and displayed remarkable cheerfulness.\(^\text{74}\) However, his frail constitution was making its last brief rally against the enemy which had afflicted it since the first year of his war service in the winter of 1861-1862. On July 16, 1899, he died at "Col Alto," the home of his beloved "Hennie," whose marriage to Henry St. George Tucker had caused so much excitement in the Johnston family during one of the lean and trying years at Lexington. The bed in which he died was the one in which he was born more than sixty-eight years before, at the home of his grandmother, Mrs. Caroline Hencock Preston, in Louisville, Kentucky; and the house in which he died was the one in which his wife had passed away fourteen years earlier.\(^\text{75}\)

Johnston's body was conveyed to Louisville and buried in the Cave Hill Cemetery. His tomb is between the grave of his first wife, Rosa Duncan Johnston, and that of his only son, Albert Sidney, with those of his sister, Henrietta, and two of his daughters, Mary and Caroline, a few feet away. Many members of his mother's family are buried here also. Johnston's resting place is marked by a tall marble shaft, the base of which bears the following inscription: "The heir of a great name, he added to his inheritance as a soldier, patriot, and founder of a great University."\(^\text{76}\)

\(^{74}\) Cooper, p. 28.
\(^{75}\) New Orleans Times-Democrat, July 17, 1899.
\(^{76}\) The present writer visited the Cave Hill Cemetery in April, 1940.
Three days after President Johnston's death, the Tulane Board met and presented resolutions of sorrow and respect.

How fully he was appreciated by this body is apparent from the following portion of its expression:

When, by the combined wisdom and beneficence of Paul Tulane, and of the State of Louisiana, the Board was entrusted with the permanent administration of the old University of Louisiana, and with the task of establishing and maintaining a great University on its foundation, the first condition of success in this momentous work was to find the right man for President of the new University. Their choice fell upon William Preston Johnston, and the whole history of the University from that day to this has demonstrated that in him they had found precisely the right man.

A scholar, a man of letters, with large educational experience, a representative Southerner, with magnetic personality, a consummate tact, a shrewd knowledge of human nature, a high courage, a delicate sense of honor imbibed from the parental fountain of his illustrious sire, and, to crown all, a gentle and earnest Christian, he united all the qualities essential to the successful discharge of the difficult and delicate duties which confronted him...

No university president ever enjoyed, in a higher degree, the loyalty and cooperation of his professors. There have been no jealousies, no bickerings, no clashes of authority, that have ever come to the knowledge of the Board...

The fact that during the entire course of his administration no disorder or breach of discipline sufficiently important to require the intervention of this Board has ever occurred, is the highest tribute to the wisdom of the system (self-government by the students) and to the personal influence of the President and Faculty over the students...

His relations with this Board have been always of the most delightful character. He was constant in his attendance at all its meetings, and his recorded reports will show how faithfully and minutely he kept the Board advised as to the
condition and operation of the University. He was full and frank in his advice and recommendations, firm and independent in the advocacy of his opinions, but prompt in submission to adverse judgments of the Board, and exact and faithful in executing all its orders and directions... He enjoyed the unlimited confidence and the warm personal friendship of every member of this Board.

Paul Tulane, the Founder, Randall Lee Gibson, the first President of this Board, and William Preston Johnston, the first President of Tulane University, have all passed away, but their names will live together in the imperishable annals of the University. 77

A further tribute was paid by the University to its departed president, when in December of that year a public memorial service was held in Tulane Hall. Upon this occasion, Judge Charles F. Fenner, president of the Board, and Johnston's friend from boyhood, spoke briefly but warmly in praise of his friend, by way of introducing Dr. Benjamin M. Palmer, who eulogized Johnston's life and accomplishments in an eloquent address. Tracing his career as scholar, soldier, educator, and literary man, the speaker dwelt in a feeling manner upon the depth and strength of Johnston's religious nature, which had enabled him to bear his heavy sorrows with fortitude. 78

The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution at an annual meeting early in 1900 likewise noted with sorrowful resolutions the death of one of their members, expressing

77 Minutes, Board of Administrators, Tulane University, July 25, 1899.
...their sense of the great loss they have suffered in the decease of their esteemed colleague, their high appreciation of his profound scholarship and literary gifts, of his wise and conspicuous influence in the promotion of sound learning, of his brilliant and useful career as a teacher and as an administrator of universities, of his sincere devotion to the interests of this institution, and of his pure and noble character, which commanded the respect and affection of all who knew him.

The New Orleans papers gave lengthy expression to the city’s appreciation of President Johnston; and in journals and periodicals elsewhere over the country, items of similar mature appeared. On its editorial page, Harper’s Weekly referred to him as “a distinguished scion of very good old Southern stock”; and the editor of the papers of the Southern Historical Society praised his zealous service to that organization. In the Boston Evening Transcript, A. D. Mayo, a friend who was well acquainted with Johnston’s work, extolled his character and accomplishments in language that was plentifully sown with superlatives. During his fifteen years at Tulane, stated the writer, the lately deceased president had “attained a national reputation, beyond question, with the exception of his friend, Dr. J. L. M. Curry, the most notable of the new educational leaders of the South”, and had built up an institution “that in honesty and thorough excellence of all

70Minutes, Board of Regents, Smithsonian Institution, Jan. 24, 1900.
80Daily Item, July 16, 1899; Daily Picayune, July 17, 1899.
its instruction is not the inferior of any school of the higher education in the country.\textsuperscript{83}

The preceding statements, which reveal the esteem in which Johnston was held by those most intimately acquainted with him and his work, make further comment unnecessary. Other testimony of like character is abundant. In all of it the opinion prevails that the first president of Tulane University, more than any other person, shaped the character of the institution, stamping upon it the impress of an honorable life, a discerning mind, and a courageous spirit. The opinion is seemingly unanimous also that through the impact of his influence upon the University and through the appeal of his lectures and writings upon educational and cultural subjects, he made an important contribution to the intellectual and social advancement of the South.

CHAPTER XII

SHAKESPEAREAN STUDIES

In 1890 a volume of Johnston's lectures on Shakespeare was published. The title of this book, which was dedicated to his wife, Margaret Avery Johnston, is The Prototype of Hamlet and Other Shakespearean Problems; and it contains seven lectures: "How to Study Shakespeare"; "Macbeth"; "The Significance of Hamlet"; "The Authorship of Hamlet"; "The Evolution of Hamlet"; "The Plot of Hamlet"; and "The Prototype of Hamlet".¹

These compositions were prepared for the senior classes in Tulane College and in Newcomb College; and later they were included in the courses of free public lectures which were delivered each year in Tulane University to the people of New Orleans. All but the first two, as the titles indicate, were devoted to Hamlet; and although the writer declares that in his interpretation of Shakespeare, truth and not novelty was his aim, the theories which he advanced were such as to prompt him to make the following statement: "The chief problem and main contention in these papers is, however, for a proposition that may strike the reader as probable, plausible, or possibly preposterous, according to his point of view." The main contention referred to was that Shakespeare in his original conception of Hamlet "found the prototype of the Prince in James VI of Scotland, and

that the plot was greatly influenced by political events arising out of the murder of Darnley and the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots." This theory, as the author indicates, was not an altogether novel one, but Johnston arrived at it by independent study and attempts to maintain it, he asserts, with facts which were unknown to the first propounder.2

The first essay in the book, as one will readily suppose, contains little to challenge dispute. It is the sort of offering which the reader would expect from a thoughtful and well-informed lover of Shakespeare who is bent upon leading others to an understanding and appreciation of the dramatist's work. The gist of the central idea in the piece is that the reading of a play as a whole should precede discussions of points or segments of the composition and should precede also the study of its source and the explanations and interpretations of commentators.3 Although many of Johnston's suggestions for the study of Shakespeare may appear commonplace to the mature student today, they doubtless seemed much less so fifty years ago; and full allowance should be made for this fact. Without making such allowance, however, all but the ripe Shakespearean scholar may read this essay with profit. It is sensible, logical, and readable; and its revelation of the author's broad knowledge of the best critical works on Shakespeare and his appreciation of their value merits the respect of even the most competent students of literature. Because of its general character and because of its similarity to other helps to the study of literature, which have

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2Ibid., pp. 17-18.
3Ibid., pp. 31-40.
been published since Johnston offered his suggestions, it may with
profit be dismissed without further comment.

The second essay, "Hamlet", as we noted in the preceding
chapter, was first published in one of the issues of Art and Letters.
The purpose of the author was to interpret the play and not to
establish a particular theory regarding it; and we may say of this
composition, as we said of the introductory piece, that there is
hardly a statement in it which is calculated to arouse opposition.
This and the five succeeding essays in the book reveal that Johnston
believed Hamlet to be the finest product of Shakespeare's genius,
but he declares that Macbeth is his greatest poem. Enlarging upon
this thesis he says:

The greatness of the events, the rapidity
of the action, the compression of the thought,
the fervor of the diction, and the simplicity
and directness of the moral movement, render it
a noble example of the tragic art. Macbeth is
not only, as Hallam called it, the great epic
drama, but also the great heroic drama. The
action is shrouded in mysterious gloom, or lurid
with an unholy supernatural light; the persons
of the drama move in shadow, vast, sombre, and
majestic, like beings of some older and larger
creation....Macbeth is, indeed, a tremendous
epic in dramatic form—an epic in the rush and
swirl of its objective action, but a very paean
of subjective revolution struck from the fervid
lyre of a heart white hot.

The reason for Johnston's apparent partiality for Hamlet and
Macbeth lay in the obvious contrasts exhibited in the two plays:

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4 Ibid., p. 45.
5 Ibid., p. 47.
Together they constitute the obverse and reverse of the heaven-stamped medal we call the will....In Hamlet the renunciation of the human will is balanced by the despotism of will in MacBeth.

The author also thinks that in MacBeth Shakespeare reveals extraordinary genius in the selection of the time and place and plot of the tragedy. "The venue is laid in the borderland of fact and fiction." Even at the time the play was written, Scotland was almost wholly unknown to Englishmen; and the circumstances, some of them tragic, which linked the history of Scotland with that of England, added to the fact that James I had just come to the English throne, plus the further fact that the story of MacBeth was not without parallelisms to events which had recently excited the public mind, all contributed, the critic states, to the popularity of the play with both the king and the people. Here we have a suggestion of Johnston's favorite theory with respect to those dramas of Shakespeare which he liked best. These plays, as his studies indicate, were MacBeth and Hamlet; and the theory supposes that the persons and actions exhibited in them had their counterparts in the life of Shakespeare's day. The main circumstances to which this idea was related were those affecting the career of James I. In the author's five essays on Hamlet, this speculation—which may more properly be termed a conviction--

Ibid., p. 48.
is the keystone of his discussions; and although the discourse on MacBeth is built around no strongly urged thesis, the theory slips in here also. The plots which were aimed at the life of James, before and after he became King of England, the author thinks, might well have affected Shakespeare in his choice of the story.?

This study of MacBeth, as we have already noted, is discursive in character. It has the definite stamp of the classroom lecture upon it and touches so many aspects of the tragedy that one finds it difficult to lay hold upon any idea or ideas which appear to be dominant. In the early part of the essay, the author calls the play Shakespeare's finest poem; and although he does not keep this appraisal before the reader by occasional re-statements of it, it is nevertheless apparent to one who reads attentively that much of the discourse contributes to the development of his thesis. Some of the features which Johnston emphasizes with this idea mainly in mind are: the curious significance of the place and conditions of the opening scene, where amid the tumult of the elements the weird sisters charge the piece with suggestions of calamity;8 the contrast between the atmosphere of tranquil beauty which enveloped MacBeth's castle when Duncan entered it and the horrible crime which was committed that night;9 the progress of

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7 Ibid., pp. 50-53.
8 Ibid., pp. 55-56.
9 Ibid., pp. 63-64.
evil ambition in MacBeth and his wife whereby they urged each other onward and downward;¹⁰ and the pervasive influence of the supernatural which is felt throughout the play.¹¹

Since the story of MacBeth is an excellent moral tale, it is not surprising that Johnston was strongly interested in this aspect of the tragedy. He refers to it as "the old story of temptation, crime, and retributive justice,"¹² and throws upon the hero the full responsibility for his horrible deed:

When the weird sisters struck the chord of unlawful aspiration in the bosom of MacBeth it swelled into a symphony of treason and murder. But no irresistible necessity constrained him. Not fate, but his own free will determined his downward career. And this is shown in that consummate touch of art by which Banquo is placed by the side of MacBeth and subjected to similar temptations, yet preserves his integrity unsullied, and dies a martyr to his loyalty.¹³

The critic does not undervalue the character of MacBeth and believes that an appreciation of the high position which he once enjoyed in the esteem of all who knew him—king, peers, followers, and wife, is necessary in order to grasp the real purpose of the play. The noble thane was of such nature as to deserve the "golden opinions from all sorts of people" until his mind was poisoned by the juggling prophesies, after which, in his conversations with Lady MacBeth and in his soliloquies, the observer "discerns

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 64-65.
¹¹Ibid., pp. 55-56, 58, 61, 64.
¹²Ibid., p. 48.
¹³Ibid., p. 59.
the difference between this man before and after temptation, which, at the last, is the immeasurable distance between innocence and guilt, between a soul under probation and a soul betrayed and lost. When he seems to vacillate "before the threats of vanquished virtue and an awakened conscience," Lady MacBeth, whose ambition he has touched with a fatal spark, holds him to his purpose, knowing that once his decision is fixed, he will commit the dreadful crime. Concerning the manner and spirit with which MacBeth met the disasters that overwhelmed him, Johnston writes:

\[14\]

The poetic justice which assigns awakened sensibility as a necessary part of the penalty of sin is incorrect. MacBeth displays a more usual form of punishment. A gradual hardening of the heart, a constant moral descent with neither ability nor wish to recall the lost innocence, and an increasing catalogue of crimes ensue, until the whip of scorpions and the avenging Furies are needed to shake his obstinate soul. In him we learn there is no disconnected sin, but that offenses are the links in an endless chain, harnessing cause to remotest consequence, and dragging the guilt-burthened soul downward forever.\[15\]

As a part of his discussion of the moral aspects of the play our critic offers also an interesting comparison between Shakespeare and Milton as regards their skill in portraying evil personalities:

\[14\] Ibid., p. 60.
\[15\] Ibid., pp. 64–65.
\[16\] Ibid., pp. 69–70.
Milton, most learned and religious, most metaphysical and most musical of poets, conceives Satan as the archangel ruined, who wins our human sympathy by the dazzling sublimity of his superhuman pride and despair. But Shakespeare's clearer and nobler perception of the essential ugliness and deformity of sin compel him to strike nearer the truth. The weird sisters, who embody the idea of evil, are beastly and loathsome, as well as terrible. 17

How strongly the moral implications of the tragedy appealed to Johnston is apparent from his concluding statements regarding it:

It is the spectacle of a human soul, which, under no despotism of destiny, but in the exercise of a lawless will, accepts the bribe of the tempter, and thus makes a destiny for itself—the destiny of perdition....The lesson of Macbeth is a sad and solemn one. It bids us look into the abysses of our own souls, lest therein may lurk some motive to tempt us to our doom. And it teaches this lesson by exhibiting a human soul—a grand heroic soul—tempted, struggling, betrayed, lost. 18

The first of Johnston's five lectures on Hamlet, "The Significance of Hamlet," contains less original matter than any of the succeeding ones; in fact, the close reader may be justified in feeling that the critic, in his efforts to lay the groundwork for the discussions which follow, has followed a somewhat easy method of criticism and made his discourse largely a patch-work of the opinions of others. Since his studies were first designed for the college classroom, and were later delivered to popular

17 Ibid., p. 58.
18 Ibid., p. 71.
audiences in New Orleans, it is probable that one of his principal objects in this lecture was to acquaint his hearers with important critical literature relating to *Hamlet*. There is, of course, the possibility also that he was not averse to displaying his own acquaintance with such works. Whatever his chief motive may have been, he does exhibit a familiarity with the works of many Shakespearean critics: Goethe, Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, Lowell, Karpf, Furness, Roetscher, Sievers, Kohsbach, Rapp, and a number of others. From some of these he quotes at considerable length; from others, a brief sentence or two. His method consists mainly of quoting contrary opinions with respect to various points involved in the tragedy and offering his own observations, sometimes for the purpose of reconciling opposite views. For example, note the following:

*Mr. W. W. Story, a very pleasant and competent critic, pointing out the weakness of German criticism on Shakespeare, says: “Even Goethe's 'Analysis of Hamlet,' much as it has been praised, seems very poor to me—not to be mentioned for insight and sympathetic sense with, for instance Lamb, Coleridge, or Hazlitt.” While this is true it must be remembered that they had the benefit of Goethe's interpretation before them, and the powerful aid of a common mother tongue and the same national instincts to guide them in comprehending the author.*

And though the Analysis is full of obvious errors and incoherencies, a step in the dark toward truth, it does not deserve Story's censure, that it is "boring and mechanical", for it struck the true keynote for all the rest. 19

From this passage, it is apparent that Johnston believed Goethe to be, in point of time, the first of the great interpreters of Hamlet; and he exhibits the strength of this conviction by recurring to it several times and by a liberal quoting of Goethe's opinions. His other favorites among the critics of this play are Coleridge and Lowell. The reason for this partiality is to be found in the fact that their ideas were in harmony with his own. The following extract from the final paragraph of Johnston's essay summarizes the author's thought with reference to the significance of the tragedy:

If we cast aside his inky robes and consider young Hamlet, not as a prince, but as a man, we discover the secret of his wide and perennial interest for us. The image of the philosophic soul, reflected from the mirror of the poet's mind, stands poised in sweetness and strength, like a demigod. Before it is the heavy burden of life, weighted with cares, with certain peril, and with possible crime. In the shadowy lines of the spirit we behold the intellect perplexed, the conscience appalled, the will paralyzed, and the whole man borne down in a vain struggle with destiny. Equipped from a full armory with every weapon of the intellect, a fatal defect of will mars and ruins all.

In this essay the author makes such abundant use of quotations from other writers that he is moved to refer to the fact in the succeeding study, offering as a bit of pleasantrary rather than as

20 Ibid., pp. 75-76, 79-83, 93, 96.
21 Ibid., pp. 76-77, 85-88.
22 Ibid., pp. 103-104.
a serious excuse the observation that if his interpretation of the significance of Hamlet "seems to anyone more like to a cento of others' opinions than to a cast of my own thought, I might plead a goldsmith's apology, who should think his jewel none the worse that it showed more of gem than of setting."  

With his essay on "The Authorship of Hamlet," Johnston begins a series of discussions, which set forth some definite theories of his own regarding the play. None of these is entirely original with him, but in the presentation of all of them he reveals a capacity for keen analysis, independent thinking, and logical treatment, so that the compositions taken as a whole exhibit a marked degree of originality. His manner is strongly argumentative and suggests the pleading of the court room. In the light of the author's legal training and experience, this fact is not surprising. Johnston's theory concerning the authorship of Hamlet leads to the conclusion that all of the three plays called Hamlet, which appeared in Shakespeare's time, were the work of this dramatist. Naturally his discussions are not concerned with the accepted version, derived from the First Folio of 1623, as verified and modified by reference to the Second Quarto of 1604, but are devoted to a consideration of the imperfect and briefer First Quarto of 1603, and more particularly to that hypothetical first Hamlet, which, contemporary allusions indicate, existed as early as 1589.

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23 Ibid., p. 105.
His theory regarding the First Quarto is that it was a stage copy of the earlier version, and was probably dropped by Shakespeare's company, in or before, 1596, or possibly on account of the Inhibition in 1597. He states that in spite of the corrupt and inferior character of the text of the Second Quarto, it evinces in every part the essential features of a Shakespearean creation, the only doubt concerning which "is based upon intrinsic evidence of very shadowy texture".24 Taking issue with those critics who assert that this version is merely a mutilation of the one published in the following year, he argues that the discrepancies between the two forms of the play are too marked to permit such a supposition. According to his opinion, the Second Quarto exhibits change, process, and development from the First Quarto, in conception as well as form; and in support of this he points out the differences between the two as regards the length, the language, the order of the scenes, and the names of some of the characters. He observes, however, that the two plays are substantially and essentially the same.25 He argues also that because of the brevity and greater rapidity of action of the First Quarto, it probably commended itself to a certain class of minds as the better form of stage play.26

The principal attention of this essay is centered upon the authorship of the first Hamlet, which Johnston believed to be the

24Ibid., p. 112.
25Ibid., pp. 110-111.
26Ibid., p. 111.
work of Shakespeare rather than of Kyd or some other dramatist, as is generally assumed, but of which he declares no absolute demonstration can be made without the discovery of additional evidence. Concerning his ideas on the subject he makes the following humorous observation: "If it should turn out that my contention in the matter is right, and that William Shakespeare was the builder of Hamlet from the bottom up, my hearers may conclude that the upshot is much like 'the Dutch taking Holland'." Then in a serious vein he adds that "it is something if we can prove once in a while that things are what they seem". 27

The arguments which our author presents in support of Shakespeare's authorship of the first Hamlet are as follows: first, contemporary opinion assigned the play to Shakespeare; therefore, the burden of proof rests upon those who would dispute his authorship. 28 Second, it would be difficult to point to anyone in 1587, or 1588,—the dates which Johnston and others consider the most probable ones for its composition,—who was capable of producing it, except Shakespeare, or perhaps Marlowe. Referring to the argument of those who contend that Shakespeare was incapable of producing even a rough draft of Hamlet or any other piece for the stage as early as 1589, Johnston asserts that the genius who gave us the final version of the tragedy in 1600 or 1601 was surely able to produce a cruder draft of the piece a dozen years

27 Ibid., p. 113.
28 Ibid., pp. 114-115.
earlier. Also, it is reasonable to believe, the author suggests, that the man who perfected this tragedy originated it as well.  

Third, to those who point to the omission of Hamlet from the list of Shakespeare's plays made by Francis Meres in 1598, Johnston replies by citing other omissions from the list, and presents evidence to show that the apparent intention of Meres was not to give a full catalog of Shakespeare's plays but merely to cite his favorite plays, or those most in vogue. He notes that at the date of Meres' publication, 1598, Shakespeare's greatest plays had not yet been produced, and adds the following:

Thus, then, though the secondary plays of Shakespeare placed him, at thirty-four years of age, in the estimation of Meres and his contemporaries, with the greatest poets, and above all those who are held out to us as possible authors of Hamlet, we are asked to believe that, at twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, he lacked the invention to adapt an old legend to the stage, and had to depend upon some fore-runner, who never evinced any capacity for great works, for help to lay out for him the ground plan of the play.  

Johnston also cites a suggestion by Dr. Karl Elze, who reasons that since Shakespeare's son Hamnet was born in 1585, it is readily conceivable that at the beginning of his dramatic career the poet "should have chosen a subject for his pen which bore the name of his beloved boy", and that the death of this son in 1596, "may

29 Ibid., pp. 115-116.  
30 Ibid., pp. 119-120.
possibly have led him to take up once more this spiritual child of the same name". Whatever strength Elze’s position may have from the standpoint of logic, its emotional suggestion must have touched Johnston deeply. He, too, had lost a son; and he himself might well have asked the question propounded by the critic: "Who can estimate the effect which grief for his only son may not have had in producing that deep-seated melancholy and distaste for the vanity of the world which have found in this tragedy their immortal expression?”

Summarizing the arguments for Shakespeare’s authorship of the first Hamlet, as well as other plays of his which some critics would take from him, Johnston writes:

All the positive evidence is in favor of Shakespeare’s authorship: popular opinion, competent contemporaneous witnesses, his own unquestioned ownership, a quasi-copyright, the admissions of his enemies, and the claims of his friends, colleagues, and posthumous publishers. The attempt to parcel out the plays of Shakespeare among the dramatists of his day is a failure, because there is no testimony to lead to such a conclusion. The dividers of the spoils cannot agree among themselves as to who is entitled to share in it, and the beggars they would clothe in the purple betray their personality in every phase of their mock royalty.

Finally, our critic asserts, the accepting of Shakespeare as the author of the first Hamlet requires the admission of the

31 Ibid., p. 125.
32 Ibid., pp. 123-126.
33 Ibid., p. 130.
dramatist's superior endowments--a recognition that he possessed a type of genius that is not to be confounded with plodding industry, or with "spasmodic or eccentric vivacity of fancy". His genius, a compact of energy and sanity, was a gift of nature, which conferred upon him a wider horizon, a clearer vision, and a deeper insight. When this fact is accepted, it is easy to believe that he at the beginning of his dramatic career was better able than his less gifted contemporaries to "take a story as he found it, inform it with his own personality, and make of it an immortal play".34

In Johnston's next essay, "The Evolution of Hamlet," he apparently found it difficult to relinquish consideration of the subject to which he had given chief attention in the preceding one, for he announces that he will proceed to fortify his view as to Shakespeare's authorship of the first Hamlet by "showing the utter improbability that it was the production of any of his contemporaries, together with some further proofs that Shakespeare himself wrote it." His principal aim in this study, as the title suggests and as his statement reveals, is to exhibit the manner in which the finished tragedy was developed from the earlier rough sketch, "together with the subtle influences which perhaps called up from the poet's heart its wonderful soliloquies."35

34 Ibid., pp. 131-133.
Resuming his argument concerning the first *Hamlet*, the author points out that all of the greater dramatists of Shakespeare's period, with the exception of the "University Wits," were his successors, and that from the standpoint of both age and productivity, the University group were his contemporaries rather than his predecessors. These dramatists had done little of their work when Shakespeare arrived in London, and most of them exhausted their creative energies between this date and 1594, during the greater portion of which period, it is assumed, Shakespeare was comparatively sterile. Such a theory Johnston believed to be irrational.  

Pointing to the fact that Marlowe was but three months older than Shakespeare, he asks, "Why could not Shakespeare have written the first *Hamlet* at twenty-three, as well as Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*?" This position he again enforces with the argument that uncontradicted contemporary opinion on such matters is of "more value than paradoxical doubts of the same."

All tell us how far thou didst our Lily outshine,  
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.

Quoting this couplet from Ben Jonson, and referring to that poet's estimate as contemporary opinion at its best, he asserts that Shakespeare's debt to his fellow-dramatists lay only in the stimulus to rivalry, which their efforts engendered, and "in the instances they afforded his true artistic instinct and practical mind of what to avoid."  

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Further arguments with reference to the poet’s authorship of the first Hamlet are presented. With his composition of Venus and Adonis in 1568, Shakespeare evinced fine technical and artistic ability. He became connected with the theater almost immediately after he came to London, rose rapidly as a member of a company of players, and won high position as a poet and dramatist. These facts should indicate that he was capable of producing good work early in his career, just as many other literary men with less genius have done since that time, Marlowe, Jonson, Milton, Burns, Byron, Shelley, and Keats standing as well-known examples. "It may be conceded," Johnston writes, "that neither Shakespeare, nor any other man, could have written Hamlet, as we now have it, at such an early age, but we know also that such was not its earliest form, or indeed its form at all, until twelve or fourteen, perhaps sixteen years later, when life had taught him its lessons." Recurring to contemporary references which suggest Shakespeare as the author of the play in its original form, our critic cites the findings of those authorities who would direct attention to the poet’s knowledge of law. From their conclusions, he reasons, as others have done, that the "Noverint," or attorney’s clerk, to whom Nash referred as the author of the early Hamlet was Shakespeare rather than some other dramatist. He points out also that the young playwright, fresh from his attorney’s work at Stratford, would naturally employ more legal terminology in one

39 Ibid., pp. 140-142.
of his first plays than in those of his maturer years. Picturing
the possible conditions which surrounded Shakespeare as a member
of a theatrical group, Johnston suggests that his first work as a
dramatist might well have been produced as follows:

Plays are needed by his company; drunken,
reprobate Greens, who sells his plays twice
over to rival theatres, cannot be trusted to
write them; Burbage, the leading "star" of
the hour, must have a tragedy. What more
likely than that this ambitious tyro should
write a play, in imitation of what he had
seen in his native village,—or that, follow-
ing the lead of Lyly, Kyd, or Marlowe, he
should attempt "a tragedy of blood"—a
"Hamlet, Revenge!"

Regarding the evolution of the tragedy from the crude first
draft to the superb play that we now have, our critic submits the
theory that in 1586 or 1587, Shakespeare made a sketch of the piece
which his company put on the stage. As successive presentations
of the play occurred, alterations and improvements were made in
it, suggested partly by the expertness of the actors and partly by
the dramatic intuitions of the author. By this process it was
brought to the shape in which it appears in the First Quarto, and
in this form it probably held the stage until 1596, when it seems
for a time to have fallen into obscurity. Johnston suggests also
a parallel between the growth of the play and the maturing of its
author:

40 Ibid., pp. 143-145.
41 Ibid., pp. 150-151.
In 1586, Hamlet was to Shakespeare a youth of twenty; only two years his junior, his dear younger brother and confidant—perhaps in some degree, his own image or double; --in 1596, Hamlet had become a man of thirty, who had chewed the bitter-sweet cud of life, and who had seen, too, its illusions shattered. Hamlet developed by just so much as Shakespeare did.42

Johnston believes also that Shakespeare again took up the play in 1596, and, "under social, political, and personal conditions entirely different from those of its original conception, elaborated it to the comprehensive scope of the Second Quarto, or last Hamlet." From the profound melancholy of its soliloquies, our author infers that the play in its final form was written when the dramatist was oppressed by a feeling of defeat induced by some reverse of fortune or threat of disaster, by a spiritual crisis, or by the death of his only son. Johnston in particularly disposed to connect the birth and death of Shakespeare's son Hamnet with the poet's interest in the tragic story of the Prince of Denmark.43

That the strange, crude, barbarous legend finally became a dramatic masterpiece richly embellished with the dramatist's finest philosophical utterances is accounted for by the fact that it developed by an evolutionary process in the hands of one author.

Springing up from some germ dropped into the fecund imagination of the poet, it grows with his growth, and draws its sap and fibre

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43Ibid., pp. 154-157.
from the storm and sunshine of his soul...
So that the perfect Hamlet--at first the
picture of a particular man, as I conceive,
and then the mirror of all mankind--fully
justifies the claim to pre-eminence as the
greatest creation of the greatest poet the
world has ever seen.44

In the next essay, "The Plot of Hamlet," Johnston submits
what he conceives to be the most probable explanation of the origin
of the play. Clinging as always to the assumption that Shakespeare
was the author of the earliest Hamlet, he raises the question as
to why the poet at that particular time should have chosen this
story for dramatic representation rather than some other.45 The
critic's answer is that the choice of theme was influenced by
the political conditions of the time and that the play was an
instrument of patriotic propaganda called forth by a chain of
circumstances which culminated in the execution of Mary, Queen
of Scots. With the atmosphere of the country strongly charged with
an intensely nationalistic feeling, in which persons of every class
shared, and with the patrons of the theatre hostile to the Scotch
queen, it was but natural, our author reasons, that Shakespeare
should employ a plot in which persons might perceive features
that were parallel to the most dramatic occurrences of the time.
By means of such a drama, those responsible for the death of Mary
hoped to touch the public mind and justify their audacious action;

44 Ibid., pp. 156-159.
and all possible arguments tending in this direction were especially necessary after the deed was done and Elizabeth had repudiated all responsibility for it, placing her chief councillors in peril of life and property.46

Another factor that could not be disregarded was King James of Scotland, the son of the beheaded queen. An intense champion of the divine right of kings, he could hardly fail to regard the execution of Mary otherwise than as a double affront: the horrible crime of regicide had been committed, and the victim was his mother. Balanced against this grievous offense to his feelings, however, were other weighty considerations. The young king maintained his position by the support of Queen Elizabeth; and the imprisonment or death of his mother was the only sure guaranty of his privilege to reign at all. Hence, his interests were bound up with those of Elizabeth rather than with those of Mary. Weak as his position was as king of Scotland, the importance of it was enhanced by the fact that after his mother's death he became the heir-apparent to the English throne. Therefore, the crafty politicians of the English court were under some necessity of convincing the future monarch of England by every possible argument that the circumstances of the case justified the bloody deed. To this end, every possible device would be employed. Money, promises, and other resources of diplomacy were used to placate

46 Ibid., pp. 166-171.
the wounded honor of King James; and the stage might well have
served as an agency for the same purpose.

A play that should stir the minds and
hearts of the court, then the center of
intellectual and political activity, against
the unhappy captive queen, was an engine too
powerful to be overlooked. Nor was James, with
his fondness for pageantry and the theatre,
apt to disregard such teaching. The vivid
presentation of a case, odious indeed, yet
closely analogous to Mary's own, might make
that queen appear to him as the victim of a
just retribution.

The author also points to the interpolation of a play within
the tragedy as evidence of Shakespeare's conception of the drama
as a proper political device, and cites plays by other dramatists
to indicate a general recognition of such use.47 A further cir-
cumstance which suggests the employment of the first Hamlet
for purposes of propaganda is to be found in the fact that a
number of ballads and pamphlets justifying the execution of Mary
were licensed for publication soon after the event. One of these
was called "A Ditty of Lord Darnley, Sometime King of Scots."48

The attitude of the English people toward the beheading of the
Scottish queen, Johnston asserts, was such as to inspire a play
which would justify the act:

In the eyes of Shakespeare and the English
people, the plots against Elizabeth in the name
of the deposed queen were acts of treason and
rebellion. To them the captive was but a con-
spirator, while Elizabeth was queen, the queen,

48 Ibid., p. 175.
and poor Mary's taking off seemed but the just penalty of attempted regicide. This and the murder of Darnley are the crimes to which the author points as demanding retribution. 49

And, when after the fatal event Elizabeth repudiated the act and placed the blame for it upon her principal councillors, then "was the time for them and their friends to bestir themselves, and, if Hamlet was not produced before that time, there was a pressing exigency in which it might well do good service." Assuming that such a tragedy was created for the purpose indicated, we must believe, our critic insists, that Shakespeare was, at least, partly responsible for it, because, in spite of the dissenting opinions of some competent scholars, he was without doubt the lawyer's clerk, "yclept by the jealous Nash 'a Moverint,' who had a hand in the tragedy the burden whereof was 'Hamlet; Revenge.'" 50

Referring to the suitability of the old Hamlet legend for the purpose in view, Johnston declares that it seems made to hand to fit the case of James and his mother.

Under feigned names, poor, base, vicious, handsome Darnley, a royal simulacrum, shall come back in this day dream to a more real life as "my father's ghost," and bloody Bothwell, that "adulterate beast," shall live again as the felon king. And the queen?--the queen! There is, alas, but one queen whose unhappy fate has been to marry with her husband's murderer, and she is now in the toils, and

49 Ibid., p. 175.
50 Ibid., pp. 176-177.
Nemesis glides on the stage. *Hamlet? In this Prince of Denmark, "that unsnatched form and feature of blown youth," whom shall all men see but that fair bud of royal promise, the modern Solomon, the young King James, who, with his quiddities and bookish ways, may even himself, perchance, perceive his own princely likeness in this looking glass. Shakespeare's picture of the heir of Denmark is more than a likeness, it is the very counterpart, of the heir of England.51

Our author, as he himself tells us, arrived at his theory by independent study, and supposed that it was original with him. Subsequently, he discovered, however, that James Plumptre had been many years ahead of him in pointing out "some of the more obvious of these parallelisms." A condensed statement of the chief points in Plumptre's article is contained in the Furness Variorum,52 all of which Johnston quotes in his essay.53 Whatever one may think of Plumptre's arguments, he can hardly fail to be interested in the striking parallels which he presents between some of the characters and circumstances of the tragedy and the personalities and events affecting the career of Mary, queen of Scots. The author also makes use of passages in the play to show that Shakespeare had the Scotch queen directly in mind when he wrote them. However, Johnston asserts that Plumptre's zeal in preparing his work caused him to include items which weaken his case, and that he failed to suggest a sufficient motive for Shakespeare's use of the plot.

51 Ibid., pp. 178-180.
Our author indicates, too, that much additional evidence has
been brought to view since Plumptre's day, which throws light
upon questions that could not be answered without it. A portion
of his discussion of this point follows:

The first known copy of Q1 was only
discovered in 1623, nearly a generation
later, by Sir Henry Bunbury, and it is from
the comparative study of this with Q2 that
some of the strongest proofs of this theory
are derived. It has been so constantly
asserted that the play of Hamlet was writ-
ten by Shakespeare after 1597, and from
ten to fifteen years later than its pro-
duction by some other author, that the
points of resemblance in the murders have
been disregarded by commentators. In 1597,
Darnley's murder and Mary's execution were
no longer in the arena of politics. There
would be no political motive for selecting
these incidents, or their analogue, as the
basis of an appeal on the stage to king or
people. But if the view be adopted that
Shakespeare wrote the original acting play
of Hamlet in 1586 or 1587, most of the ob-
jections disappear to the theory that the
plot pointed to the murder of Darnley and
Mary's connivance in it, which were then
on every tongue.54

Propounding the question as to whether it is reasonable to
suppose that the original intention of the play was to recall
Darnley's death to memory, and to spur the timid James to connive
at his mother's death, and perhaps to even take vengeance upon
his father's murderers, Johnston points to three grounds for such
a belief: first, the motives of the English Government and of

54 Ibid., pp. 184-185.
Shakespeare himself in bringing out the play; second, the resemblance in the plot and details of the play to the death of Darnley and the attendant circumstances; and third, the resemblance, or identity, of the character of James I with that of Hamlet. 55

Although recognizing that Shakespeare's geography was of a most elastic sort, our author suggests that there may be some significance in the fact that the platform where Hamlet saw his father's ghost is very like Holyrood, the palace of James, "the dreadful summit of a cliff that beetles o'er his base...and looks so many fathoms down," but is entirely unlike Elsinore, which stands upon a series of sandy ridges. Likewise, he notes that the drunkenness and debauchery, which are assigned to Denmark in the play, were prevalent in Scotland; and that the excesses of the usurping Bothwell in both vices were as gross as those of Hamlet's uncle. 56

The parallels in the characters of the young James and the Prince of Denmark, as well as in the situations that enveloped both, may be regarded as significant also. Both were shrewd, philosophical, and irresolute; and both were cast upon a "sea of troubles," each "with a personal legacy of revenge from a murdered father." Our critic's conviction is that the play was intended as an instrument of influence upon James, and that a plot so

55Ibid., pp. 185-186.
56Ibid., pp. 187-188.
personal to the young monarch, with a moral so pointed and applicable, could not fail to attract his notice. 57

In the final essay, "The Prototype of Hamlet," the author aims at establishing a proposition which he set forth in the preceding lecture, to wit: that Shakespeare in creating the character of Hamlet in the original play took as his model young James of Scotland. We have already observed that Johnston, in presenting his discourses, employs a manner which is highly suggestive of that used by an attorney in arguing a case. Since the final lecture is the keystone of the series, and, as the reader may easily perceive, develops the author's favorite theory regarding the play, it exhibits his court room manner in its best form. As additional evidence and argument are presented, repetitions are frequent, in order that the point under examination may be held constantly in mind. Also, the lawyer's ever eager interest in revealing a "motive" is in evidence; and so is that useful and effective device of court room and political forum--the rhetorical question. The pleader presents his case well; and the reader is impelled toward the belief that whether or not his case is fully acceptable to scholars, it certainly would be to a jury. That the author's views on Shakespearean problems were respected by intelligent students of literature, some of whom were competent critics, we shall indicate later.

57 Ibid., pp. 190-191.
Johnston points out first of all that the playwright, whoever he was, that conceived the first sketch of *Hamlet*, obtained from the original legend little but the merest outline of the story. As regards language, characterization, motive, and causes leading to the catastrophe, the dramatist secured nothing. By implication our author suggests that the circumstances presented in the play bore a stronger resemblance to those surrounding the murder of Darnley and the marriage of Mary to Bothwell than to the details contained in the original story. The following close parallels are noted. In the case of Darnley's murder, Queen Mary has always been suspected of being an accessory before or after the fact; the same suspicion is attached to Hamlet's mother, Gertrude. Each of the queens married her husband's murderer within a short time after the crime was committed: Mary within about three months, Gertrude in less than two. Darnley, although he had little else to commend him, was one of the most handsome men of his time; the beauty and grace of Hamlet's father is fully delineated by the melancholy prince. And the resemblance of Bothwell to Claudius in appearance and character has already been noted.\(^{58}\)

In comparing the appearance of James with that of Hamlet the author is handicapped by the fact that the descriptions of the former as set down by historians are pictures of the monarch in middle life, after he became King of England. However, Johnston

is able to see some resemblance in character between the mature James and the Prince of Denmark. Using Scott's characterization of James as given in *The Fortunes of Nigel*, he selects certain phrases which he thinks might be applied to Hamlet; and to these he adjoins the following:

Is not this the student from Wittenberg, scintillating, versatile, eloquent, infirm of purpose, jesting with fops and grave-diggers, who would not, or could not, put to the test his uncertain title to the throne, yet in a moment of supreme agony executed dire vengeance on his murderous enemy, as did James, justly or unjustly on Cowrie? In their primy youth, all the Stuarts, as mean as they were, had a certain beauty and glamor full of promise which was as surely blasted by the secret canker of perfidy. James I was not without it....He was a student, well-informed, one might say learned, fit to have been at Wittenberg, or elsewhere, with Hamlet, or as Hamlet.

To those who would object to comparing the noble Dane to a crooked and perverse king, our author replies that he is speaking of the James and the Hamlet of 1587, who were not the same as a decade later. The grand soliloquies, he reminds us, belong to the later Hamlet. That Shakespeare portrayed men and not merely types is accounted for by the fact that he painted with his mind's eye focused upon individuals--actual archetypes in real life, some features of whom might be modified.

So, as I conceive Hamlet to have been written, Shakespeare made him, at first, perhaps altogether James, but, as his own soul and reason entered more and more into

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59 Ibid., pp. 202-204.
60 Ibid., pp. 204-205.
61 Ibid., p. 207.
the contemplation and evolution of this favorite character, Hamlet grew in speculation, if not in character, with each touch, more like the player and less like the Prince, and hence nobler and grander than ever.\(^{62}\)

Our author points also to some evidences in the play itself which he believes confirm his view that James was the prototype of Hamlet. In the accepted version of the drama, based upon the Second Quarto, Hamlet as we discover from his conversation with the grave-digger, is stated to be thirty years old; and he recollects well "Poor Yorick," whose "Skull now hath lain you, i' the earth three and twenty years." For what reason, Johnston inquires, did the playwright set the age of Hamlet at thirty years in the fifth act, when everything in the earlier parts of the play indicate that he was about ten years younger?\(^{63}\) He resolves this discrepancy by pointing out that in the First Quarto, the author was writing with his eye upon a youth of twenty; therefore, in that version, everything is consistent with that view of him. "But," he continues, "when the last Hamlet was written, the prototype had become a man of thirty, and this fact is so impressed upon the author's mind that he says so." Shakespeare's revision was chiefly by additions and interpolations in language and thought, and he failed to alter the passages in the earlier play which pointed to and illustrated Hamlet's youth.\(^{64}\) Johnston notes also an interesting circumstance with respect to the names of two

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\(^{62}\)Ibid., pp. 207-209.

\(^{63}\)Ibid., pp. 211-214.

\(^{64}\)Ibid., pp. 214-215.
characters who appear in *Hamlet*. Rosencrantz was the name of the governor of Bergen, before whom Bothwell was taken after his capture in 1587; and one, M. Gullanstarn, was cited by Mary as one of the witnesses to Bothwell's alleged death-bed confession in 1586, when, as she claims, he exonerated her from all connection with her husband's murder. He suggests too, that Ophelia's eulogy of "the beauteous Majesty of Denmark" was a proper tribute to Queen Mary in 1586, at forty-four, and even more so at the time of Darnley's death, "but a strained compliment to the mother of a man of thirty, whose over-ripe charms would scarcely have stirred to fratricide 'that adulterate beast,' who seemed to have sought, through guilt, the woman as much as the queen."

In almost the final paragraph, our author summarizes his entire theory with respect to *Hamlet*, the main features of which are as follows. In 1586 or 1587 there existed a strong motive on the part of the English Government to foment hatred against Mary, Queen of Scots. It was also important that young James be turned against her, to which end every instrument of corrupt diplomacy was used. Since it was the practice of the time to employ the stage to accentuate political action and to promote personal ends, it is not surprising that a play should appear, the plot of which was strikingly similar to the murder of Darnley. The scenery of the country, the customs of the people, and the

65Ibid., p. 219.
characterizations of important persons in the play, suggest Scotland rather than Denmark; and numerous allusions indicate the essential identity of the plots of Hamlet with Darnley's murder. Finally, says our critic:

...James and Hamlet possess, with all their superficial differences, remarkable and radical points of resemblance in character. I have endeavored to show that Hamlet must be the likeness of a real man. When "Hamlet" was first written in 1586, he was twenty years old, and so was James; when James reached thirty, the play was re-written, and lo! Hamlet has become thirty also. The curious circumstance that he keeps step in years with James corroborates the probability that it was James who sat for the portrait of Hamlet.66

An appraisal of Johnston's Shakespearean studies is not an easy task. His work was warmly praised by enthusiastic admirers, especially in the South; and competent scholars and critics in the East also expressed themselves in a highly favorable manner concerning the studies. Thomas McCaleb, a Louisiana anthologist, declares that his work "places him among the first Shakespearean scholars of these times";67 and the editor of a prominent Southern quarterly magazine, referring to this volume and other works of the author, asserted that they "justify beyond question, the praise usually accorded to the honored president of Tulane University as one of the foremost literary men of the South."68 Other

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67Ibid., pp. 221-222.
68, 1894, p. 247.
expressions of similar character are on record in Southern publications which have devoted their chief efforts toward an attempt to evaluate the works of Southern authors. If a sectional loyalty has sometimes caused the authors of these estimates to push its sons and daughters too far upward—as obviously it has—a useful purpose is served nevertheless. After making all necessary allowances, we are justified in believing that these appraisals of Southern literary men indicate the impact of these figures upon the culture of the South.

However, Johnston was never without admiring critics in other sections besides his own; and the following statements reveal the attitude of some important scholars and literary men toward his

**Prototype of Hamlet and Other Shakespearean Problems:**

W. T. Harris, an eminent author of philosophical works and the intellectual leader of the educational profession in the United States for nearly four decades, asserted that it was a valuable addition to Shakespearean literature and to literary criticism. Professor Lounsbury of Yale wrote the author as follows:

> I was glad to find you holding the same feeling about MacBeth that I do....I was much struck by your argument with regard to the first Hamlet. To me it seems the strongest presentation of evidence in favor of the Shakespearean authorship of that production with which I am familiar.

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W. T. Harris to Belford and Co., publishers, Jan. 16, 1891.

T. R. Lounsbury to W. P. Johnston, Dec. 8, 1890.
Professor Moses Coit Tyler of Cornell was equally complimentary:

Your handling of the subject is full of wisdom, and in form you happily preserve the great traditions of true literature, so many of which are now crowded into the background or even under ground by the Utilitarians. Nothing could be finer, as a penetrating and just disposition of a fashionable nostrum, than your neat and effective handling of the Baconian theory.72

Since the last critic paid tribute to the author's treatment of the Baconian theory, it is perhaps proper to state that consideration of Johnston's discussion of the subject was omitted from the present study because it bears only an incidental relationship to the main ideas in his discourse and was doubtless introduced because the theory was then a popular item of controversy.73 However, the reader is likely to be impressed with the truth of Tyler's estimate on this point.

The preceding statements indicate that Johnston's ability as a student and interpreter of Shakespeare was appreciated and that his studies were read and admired by intelligent persons. Beyond a recognition of these facts we can hardly proceed with safety. The company which published his volume of essays suffered bankruptcy about the time his work appeared; consequently, the book was deprived of the proper agency for giving it a satisfactory circulation.74 Other handicaps also are obvious: the discussions

72 M. C. Tyler to W. P. Johnston, Feb. 1, 1891.
are, for the most part, limited in scope and ingenious in char-
acter; and the author, although he was a competent writer and
scholar, was not an authority on Shakespeare.
CHAPTER XIII

BOOKS OF VERSE

In the years from 1894 to 1898 Johnston published three volumes of verse. Most of the poems included therein had not been printed before they were brought out privately by the author in these books, which were designed for distribution among his friends. The first and largest of these, My Garden Walk, contains almost two hundred pages, and, as one may note in reading, includes compositions which date from the author's early college days. Some of these youthful efforts probably appeared in the Bon Ton, that "bright society paper," to the promotion of which Johnston and his enterprising cousin, William Woolley, had once devoted their immature genius, much to the anxiety of Johnston's father. However, this is but speculation, for the most diligent search by the present writer has failed to uncover a single issue of the magazine.

The volume is inscribed to his daughters with the following dedicatory sonnet:

I would my hand had skill, my voice had tune,
To tell in numbers how my full heart beats
With tender love, and still the theme repeats,
When thinking on kind Nature's kindest born,

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1 A. S. Johnston to W. P. Johnston, May 16, 1849.
Sent to me e'er my manhood's royal noon,
The gift of children, in whose being meets
All that paternal pride forecasts with sweets
Born of a mother's love, withdrawn too soon.

Fair buds that from the Queen-Rose stem have sprung
—0 flower of Eden beyond all earthly price,
You leave us naught save memory's fragrance faint—
Their gentle heads in sorrow long have hung,
Catching love's perfume sweet from paradise,
Immortal message of a vanished saint. 2

Carrying the symbol suggested in the title into the framework of the book, the author makes eight divisions, giving to each the name of one or more flowers with the obvious intention of indicating the character and tone of each group. They are as follows: "Buds"; "Blossoms"; "Wildwood Flowers"; "The Rose"; "Marguerites"; "Laurel and Myrtle"; "Bramble and Berry"; "Violets, Pansies, and Asphodels." 3 The "Buds," as one might guess, are some of his most youthful compositions; the "Blossoms" are graceful compliments to individual ladies; "Wildwood Flowers," as a sub-caption indicates, are made up of ballads; the assortment included in the "Rose," as another and more useful sub-caption explains, consists of melodies and threnodies; and the succeeding floral symbols indicate groups in which the dominant tones are varying shades of the serious, mournful, and reflective.

The poems in the first two divisions, as a notation reveals, were written in the years 1848-1852, a period which almost exactly covers his time at college. In the earlier group of nine compositions

3 Ibid., pp. 5-8.
we find such variety as one might expect from the mind and pen of an earnest and thoughtful college youth. "Elysium," "Faerie Land," and "Anacreon to His Lyre," a translation, reflect the influence of his studies. "The Broken Bough," an easily detected compound derived from Longfellow and Poe, reveals some success in experimentation, as the beginning stanzas will show:

To a lily in a dream,
Stooping by a sullen stream
Vestal holy, bending lowly
By a slow and sullen stream,
Spake an oak-branch sere and riven,
By the slothful currents driven
Midst the sedges on the edges
Of the slow and sullen stream,
Where 'twas drifted by the surges
Sighing melancholy dirges.

Another poem idealizes the Texas home of his father, the thoughts of which so often occupied him throughout his young manhood. The first few lines leave no doubt that "The Plantation Home" is the China Grove plantation, where in the middle years of the century, he spent pleasant vacations with General Johnston:

I know a fair plantation home, set in the far southwest,
In a land of rarer beauty than Araby the Blest.
A rude and logbuilt cottage, half hid amid the trees,
Which sigh and kiss with perfumed lips the seaborn evening breeze,
Peeps from the tangled forest, where it meets the prairie wide
And the live oak and the mesquite grow kindly side by side.

4 Ibid., pp. 17-19, 22.
5 Ibid., p. 20.
6 Ibid., p. 15.
And there is one other poem which springs from the author's interest in Texas. In "The Texas Mother's Lament," written on New Year's Day, 1854, he relates a tragic story of a young boy who was murdered by Indians after he had manfully defended his mother and her smaller children. A note by the poet states that about fifteen years after the poem was composed, an incident similar to its story was reported as having happened in northern Texas.

In the second group of poems, the influence of the romantic poets of the early nineteenth century is evident. The little piece, "Mildred," for instance, strongly suggests an inspiration from Byron's "She Walks in Beauty." Note the first stanza of Johnston's poem:

When Mildred moves, come cloudless skies
And airs will perfume filled,
Or, if a cloud perchance should rise,
Her glance its gloom will gild.

One line in the piece we may be reasonably sure the young author borrowed in part from his beloved Hamlet:

The cliffs look beetling down.

Its similarity to an expression from his favorite play is too marked to be accidental:

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7 Ibid., pp. 25-28.
8 Ibid., p. 183.
9 Ibid., p. 37.
10 Ibid.
... the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetle o'er his base into the sea.

The other poems in this section are similar in tone and subject to "Mildred."

In composing the ballads which make up the "Wildwood Flowers", Johnston drew his subjects and inspiration from a variety of sources. "The Death of Daniel Boone" and "The Bloodwet Glove" are imitations of early English ballads. "The Witch" exhibits strong touches of Poe and Coleridge in rhythm, tone, and imagery.

Stanzas Two and Three are good examples:

She vexed me with dreams at the midnight,
And bore me away to the stars,
The wandering, malefic stars;
She seethed me in steam of the lava
That boiled from Heol's red soars.

She built me a bower of moonbeams,
With a dome like Kubla Khan's
A pleasure-dome weird as the Khan's
But doubt it the doorway stood sentry;
His pass-word was, "Trust is not man's."

"The Cavalier's Sword" is, as its title suggests, a poem in the cavalier manner of Lovelace and Suckling, opening with:

My mistress is the bonny blade
I wedded with my hand.

"Mary, Queen of Scots', Farewell" is derived from a French piece with the same theme. "The Song of Olaf" is a vigorous viking
balled, one line of which,

Nursling of storm and maelstrom,

perambles an expression in Shelley's "The Cloud." "To Pyrrha" is a Roman ballad, which the author found in Horace; and "The Argo," which is by far the poet's longest achievement in ballad making, re-tells the ancient story of Jason and the Golden Fleece.

The poems contained in the fourth division of the volume are deeply personal in character. The author's first wife was evidently the inspiration of most of them—possibly of all except an elegy devoted to his son Albert. "The Rose," a brief threnody, probably refers to Mrs. Johnston, though one of the poet's daughters may have been the subject. "Love's Morning Star," "Christmas Courting," "Transmutation," "Steadfast," "Queens of the Past," and "Divinest of Women" are obviously tributes to the wife of his youth; "The Consoler" may refer to her, but is probably directed to the second Mrs. Johnston. Whether the sorrows indicated in the poem are those of his later life when he lost several members of his immediate family as well as other persons dear to him, or are the griefs of an earlier time, the reader can not determine. He may perceive only that the sorrows are heavy and the comfort strong.

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16 Ibid., pp. 54-55.  
17 Ibid., p. 56.  
18 Ibid., pp. 57-70.  
19 Ibid., p. 72.  
20 Ibid., p. 73ff.  
21 Ibid., p. 81.
When anguish wrings, when sorrows thrill,
My burden thou dost share,
Thy voice hath art, thy hand hath skill,
To banish every care.

The other poems referred to are more definite in their suggestion; for example, the final stanza of "Love's Morning Star":

My clouded youth, forlorn and dim,
Felt its first quickening in thy ray,
Then burst into its morning hymn,
Prescient of joy and glorious day. 23

or the opening stanza of "Steadfast":

All the homage my whole heart could render
Was laid at thy feet in our youth,
With a passion pure, constant and tender,
And a trust in thy crystalline youth. 23

In "The Young Huntsman," the author pictures his deceased son as he loved best to think of him—Albert, the stalwart young hunter, who shot deer in the mountains near Lexington. 24

Ah yes! You would know him, thin flanked
And broad shouldered,
Tail, straight as a sapling, strong, sure-footed, eager;

Here, as elsewhere, the father emphasizes those qualities of body and spirit in which the lad resembled his distinguished grandfather and namesake. That the youth did not take to the formal education as given by the colleges was a disappointment to his father. 25

In other respects the son apparently measured up to his hopes.

22
23Ibid., p. 73.
24Ibid., p. 82.
26W. P. Johnston to J. Davis, September 9, 1878, in Rowland, Jefferson Davis, Vol. VIII, p. 27.
His ability as a hunter Johnston praised to his friend, Jefferson Davis; and even in the obituary letter which the bereaved father and mother directed to their friends concerning the death of Albert, a tribute is paid to his prowess in the chase.

Six of the eight poems in the next section which bears the name of "Marguerites," are addressed to women. "My Lady," "My Lady's Name," "The Queen," "Little Lady," and "Sweet Marguerite" are cheerful in tone. "The Little Lady," a playful ditty of two stanzas, resembles similar poems of some of the Elizabethans and their imitators.

Little lady, why deny me?  
Why so coy and I so eager?  
Friendship's diet is too meagre;  
If you trust me, why not try me?  
I'll be true, as thou art dearest;  
Tell me, faint heart, what thou fearest?  
Do not fly me; why not try me?

"Life's Puzzle," from which we quote the last stanza, is an elegiac:

But O how long the hours seem,  
How dark the little space,  
And life how like an ugly dream,  
Unlighted by her face.

"Hymettus Hill" is a brief expression of low-spirited mood.

The title may have been suggested to the author through his acquaintance with ancient literature, or the suggestion may have been:

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26 Ibid.  
27 Ibid., p. 96.  
28 Ibid., p. 96.  
29 Ibid., p. 96.  
30 Ibid., p. 92.  
31 Ibid., p. 93.
come from Milton's reference to the mountain. What the experience was that induced his feeling is not clear.

In "Vetiver" the poet praises the fragrant plant root that is still so generally displayed in the perfume shops of New Orleans.

The spirit of the sixth group, "Laural and Myrtle," is generally that of vigorous heroism. In "Fletcher of Saltoun," "John Mitchell," "The Farmer's Orang," and "The Strike Ended," indignant protest is directed toward social injustice and political tyranny. "Summer Musings," "Defeat," "The Golden Age," and "The Patriot South," reveal the perplexed and sorrowing spirit of a mind and heart deeply stirred by the condition of the conquered South. Of one of these, Thomas Nelson Page wrote the author: "'The Golden Age' has long been a favorite of mine among the few best American lyrics." Still another poem relating to the sorrows of the South, "The Gettysburg Dead," is, as the author asserts in a note, "an answer to the threat to plough up the Graves of Confederates buried at Gettysburg." This division contains also a sonnet in praise of Patrick Henry, and "The Torch of Liberty," a hymn glorifying America's unquenchable zeal for

33W. P. Johnston, My Garden Walk, p. 98.
34Ibid., p. 100ff.
35Ibid., p. 113ff.
38Ibid., p. 122.
freedom— to which the author, apparently wishing not to appear inconsistent, appended the date of its composition, 1854.

The poems of the seventh group, "Bramble and Berry," are varied in subject and character, so that it is impossible to re-group them for purposes of discussion. The single quality of seriousness relates them to each other. First in the number is "The Master," which the author characterizes as an imitation, the imitative feature being probably the question and answer method employed. Some years before the publication of My Garden Walk, it appeared in the Century Magazine. 40

Q. Tell me O Sage! What is the true ideal?
A. A man I knew—a living soul and real.
Q. Tell me, my friend! Who was this mighty master?
A. The child of wrong, the pupil of disaster.
Q. Under what training grew his lofty mind?
A. To cold neglect and penury resigned.
Q. What honors crowned his works with wealth and praise?
A. Patience and faith and love filled all his days.
Q. And when he died what victories had he won?
A. Hope and humility—his work well done.
Q. What mourning nations grieved above his bier?
A. A sorrowing eye dropped there a loving tear.
Q. But History, then, will consecrate his sleep?
A. His name is lost; angels his record keep. 41

Other poems in this division include the following: "The Return of Youth," an optimistic meditation upon the passing of man's life; 42 "The French Market," a local color narrative in easy cadence, concerning a swaggering young bully of mixed Latin

39 Ibid., pp. 102-103.
41 W. P. Johnston, My Garden Walk, p. 130.
42 Ibid., pp. 131-133.
blood, whose bellicose impulses brought him to a tragic end;43
"The Skylark," a glorification of the bird—similar to other
lyrics with the same subject—as a symbol of the soaring human
spirit;44 "Evolution and Creation," an effort at contrasting the
positions of the evolutionists and the religionists regarding the
creation of the earth,—with the author's bias favoring the lat-
ter;45 "The Epitaph," a stimulating, half-playful tribute to a
departed friend of his youth;46 and two very brief but pleasing
lyrics, "The Sealed Book,"47 and "To Gertrude."48 Included also
is a tender poem of benediction49 evidently addressed to an in-
fant child of Senator Randall Gibson, as the following lines suggest:

Child of my choicest friend, who next my heart
Since youth's bright prime I've worn, nor
found him less
In loyalty and love than honor's core!

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And may thy noon blaze like thy noble sire's
Who, consecrated in the cause of truth,
Did strenuous services on the tented field
And later brought his laurels to the board
Where wisdom counsels for the good of state.
Thine be his eloquence, his sense, his truth,
His fine intelligence, his prudent thought;

43Ibid., pp. 134-139.
44Ibid., p. 140.
45Ibid., pp. 141-144.
46Ibid., p. 145.
47Ibid., p. 146.
48Ibid., p. 147.
49Ibid., pp. 148-149.
One other poem, "The Live Oak," also belongs to this division. Inspired, no doubt, by the many fine specimens of this tree which he saw on every hand in southern Louisiana, the poet takes it as a symbol of the South and glorifies its strength and durability.

The final division of the volume contains seventeen reflective poems, all of which are concerned with the thoughts and moods of the poet as he meditates upon those questions with which philosophers have been ever occupied. In a few instances, he develops ideas belonging to pagan philosophy. "The Butterfly," "Carpe Diem," "Lethe," and "Lotus Land" are of this nature. To these may be added "The Thane's Saying," a paraphrasing of a poetical passage in Bede's account of the conversion of Edwin. The remaining poems reflect the true tone of Johnston's spirit, which was strongly anchored in Christian faith. All of them are sober, thoughtful, and hopeful; and their deep religious tone is marred neither by somberness nor light optimism.

The poem, "Rest," is not an expression of the author's spirit in its best mood, but from the standpoint of poetic suggestion it is one of the best in this group. The first and third stanzas are given here:

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50 Ibid., pp. 150-152.
51 Ibid., p. 159ff.
52 Ibid., p. 168.
53 Ibid., p. 168.
55 W. P. Johnston, My Garden Walk, p. 163.
Here let me rest among these grand old mountains,
Whence flowed the parent stream that filled
these veins;
The rivulet returns unto the fountains,
Weary of wandering in the wide spread plains.

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Here let us rest with the blue vault above us,
Where yon grey mountain rears its cloud-capped head;
Here may we fancy that the angels love us,
And Hope, long buried, may rise from the dead.

The last two poems, "The Fear of Death" and "Euthanasia,"
are expressions inspired by a contemplation of death;55 and as
regards the nobility of spirit manifested, they bear favorable
comparison with similar compositions by more distinguished poets.
"The Fear of Death," although softer in tone than Browning's
"Prospect," may well have been inspired by it, and the language
reveals in places the obvious influence of other English poems.

What is this fear of death?
Is it the dying,
The gasp of the last struggling breath,
When life is flying?
The fading memory of this world of sorrow,
The dark foreboding of a fearful morrow?

Is it the beaded brow,
The eye that glazes,
The once strong arm, so feeble now;
The unknown mazes
Of those dread chambers, from whose lowering portals
Return no more retreating feet of mortals?

Is it that—all forgot,
No loved one keeping
Sad, tender watch above the spot
Where we lie sleeping—
We shrink to think upon the earthy pillow,
The votive urn, the sod, the pendant willow?

55Ibid., pp. 175-181.
Strive to forget the grief
O'er death that lingers
The choking sobs, the farewells brief,
The picking fingers
That seem to weave, in some sad vacant manner,
A blazon for death's overhanging banner.

Forget them, feeble Man!
But oh, remember!
That, leaping from our narrow span,
The fading ember
Flashes from ashes toward a bliss supernal,
In spaces infinite and realms eternal.

"Euthanasia" may have been suggested to the author by an expression in the forty-fourth number of the Tatler, "Give me but a gentle death: Euthanasia, Euthanasia is all that I implore." Johnston's poem is in dialogue form with Miles and Clericus debating the desirability of sudden and glorious death in battle on the one side, and a more quiet manner of departure on the other; and with Sapiens passing upon the arguments with the judgment that the time and manner of death are of little importance, for,

The soul prepared stands like a rock
'Gainst battle's stroke or tempest shock;
The scaffold and the hemlock bough
Shake not its lofty self-control,
Nor superstition's gloomy fears,
Dining death's terrors in its ears.
It knows that He who gave us breath
Gives a like blessing in our death.

The deeply religious quality of Johnston's spirit, manifested in My Garden Walk, dominates the two small volumes of verse which he brought out later. In the year following the appearance of his

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first book of poems, he published *Pictures of the Patriarchs* and *Other Poems*, which he dedicated to Mrs. Josephine Louise Newcomb "as the memorial of an ancient friendship and of her beneficence and wisdom shown in gifts for the higher education of the women of New Orleans."  

A further tribute is paid to Mrs. Newcomb in the first poem, a sonnet addressed to her:

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Them that the Lord reserves for goodly deeds,
He tempers in affliction's furnace fires,
And treats as dross their sorest human needs,
Burning to ashes all their vain desires.
Quenching in tears the hot soul that aspires,
He on the anvil lays the throbbing heart
And smites it; this its stubborn grain requires
To fashion it for use; the thrill, the smart,
The shaping blow reveal the Maker's art.
From flame, from force, from flood, His hand
withdraws
Th' elastic steel to do a worthy part,
And in a seraph's hand to serve the Master's cause,
Supple and strong as the Damascus blade,
For God's best uses and his warfare made.
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The first group of poems, which gives the volume its title, consists of five dramatic stories of early Jewish leaders, each being centered upon a single incident. The first four are in stately blank verse, and the influence of Milton is evident in the language and style. Something of the great poet's dignity is present in all of them. For example, note the following passage from "The Call of Abraham":

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His eyes were toward the Orient, whose bright gates,
On golden hinges turning, showed the dawn,
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58 Ibid., p. 5.
Angelic sentinel, whose mailed hand
Unbarred the portals of the shining East.
Hope like a diadem, set on his brow,
And in his gaze beamed forth full-hearted joy,
Love, expectation, reverence, and faith.

The second poem, "Abraham's Guest," is a didactic story
without biblical foundation. "The Marriage of Isaac and Rebekah is an extended dramatic re-telling of the story as given in Genesis. "The Burial of Jacob," which follows the Old Testament account, differs from the preceding poems in that a series of rhymed choruses are interspersed among portions of the narrative.

One other poem, "Samson," "As sung by the daughters of Dan," belongs to this section. Cast in stately but vigorous rhymed quatrains, the song recounts the events of the Philistine holiday which reached their climax in Samson's destruction of himself and the assembled host.

The second part of the book is devoted to "New Versions of the Psalms." The division opens with a sonnet, "The Harp of David," following which the poet's renderings of several of the Psalms into rhymed stanzas are given. There are nine of these: Psalms 4, 23, 25, 36, 67, 103 (parts 1 and 2), 111, and 116. Although only one of the poems, "Psalm 116," is designated as a paraphrase, most of them follow rather closely the

59 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
60 Ibid., pp. 15-17.
61 Ibid., pp. 18-29.
62 Ibid., pp. 30-39.
63 Ibid., pp. 40-42.
64 Ibid., p. 45.
65 Ibid., p. 46ff.
66 Ibid., pp. 61-63.
pieces from which they are derived, for example, "Psalm 25," the two opening stanzas of which are quoted here:

To Thee, O Lord, I lift my soul;
My God, I trust in Thee;
Let me not feel my foe's control,
His triumph over me.

Yes, let not them that fear Thy name
Obedient to Thy laws,
For love of Thee be put to shame,
Or suffer without cause.

In some instances, however, the poet's rendering is truly a new version rather than a close paraphrase, as in the case of the most familiar "Twenty-third Psalm," the first stanza of which follows:

What mighty shepherd leads these flocks?
It is the Lord;
No robber from the lonely rocks,
With spear and sword,
Shall burst the barrier, break the fold
His arm protects;
Safe is the covert, strong the hold
Where he directs;
And, therefore, nothing can I lack,
His eye and hand shall guard my track.

The third and final division of the book is called "Devotional Verse," and contains nine poems which commend the efficacy of Christian faith. "The Beloved Physician" praises the spirit and service of the apostle Luke. "The Ladder" extols the comfort and strength derived from work, patience, love and faith. Later,

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67 Ibid., pp. 51-52.
68 Ibid., pp. 48-49.
69 Ibid., pp. 66-67.
70 Ibid., p. 68.
it was published with other pieces in that section of the *Library of Southern Literature* devoted to Johnston and his work. "The Prisoner of War" was doubtless inspired by his own prison experience after the War. Four stanzas including the last are given here:

And war smote hard with sevenfold scourge,  
Which mangles where its sharp lash falls;  
Defeat drove to destruction's verge  
The captive of these prison walls.

Alone within this silent cell,  
Caged in by lock and iron bar,  
Where stands despair as sentinel  
Faith cannot see Hope's twinkling star—

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Ah! What avails now retribution,  
Or what this sturdy heart of oak,  
When, in this lonely dungeon mewed,  
I lay it bare of shield and cloak.

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If, then, my Lord stands by my side,  
And this torn breast His love shall bind,  
My ills I bless, and shall abide  
With patient heart and soul resigned.

"Forgiveness" depicts briefly the poet's struggle to attain the freely forgiving attitude commended by Christian doctrine. Four of the remaining poems, "Christ is All," "Our Hope," "The All-Sufficient," and "The Perfect Rest," are devoted to the same theme: the power of Christ in the human spirit. In "Heaven's

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72 Ibid., p. 71.
73 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
74 Ibid., p. 72ff.
Hostage," which was inspired by the death of the author's only son, we have the expression of an unrebelling soul, who contemplates his loss as an agency of divine benevolence. The third stanza is quoted:

He hath an hostage taken
To lure us to his feet;
We are not all-forsaken,
Since there we soon shall meet
Him in his youth and beauty,
O noble, white, young soul,
That trod the path of duty
And righteous self-control.

In 1898 Johnston published his third and last volume of verse, Seekers After God. All of the fifty-two poems except the last one are sonnets, thirty-two being in the English form and nineteen in the Italian. In the opening poem, the author pays a tender and affectionate tribute to his sister, Henrietta Preston Johnston, to whom the volume is dedicated.76

Seekers After God, like its predecessors, is divided into sections. The first of these is the "Prologue" containing three sonnets which express the writer's love of poetry and glorify the theme to which the volume is devoted.77 In the five poems of the second division, "The Windows of Heaven," the poet magnifies those attributes of man and those agencies affecting his life—reason, obedience, faith, law, and inspiration—which lift him

75 Ibid., pp. 76-77.
77 Ibid., pp. 11-13.
toward an understanding of divine truth. The poems of the third section, "At the Barriers," are devoted to a number of pagan philosophers whose sensitive and thoughtful spirits come near to the realization of Christian ideals. Three sonnets are given to Socrates and one each to Pythagoras, Scipio, Julius Caesar, Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. "Epictetus," which is one of the best, is quoted here:

Slave of the slave of that still baser slave,
Who, having all things, worshipped self alone,
Nero, in whose foul breast, as in a grave,
Festered all infamies born of a throne
One Epictetus, a poor cripple shone
Upon a darkened world as shines a star
Through a dim, clouded dawn, and, to the moan
Of human pain that welled up near and far,
Pointed in silence to his scourge and scour,
Or spoke to fainting hearts, "Who would be strong,—
Balm for the sores of peace, the wounds of war—
Must learn to suffer and to do no wrong."
His words, his life, to men a lesson gave
That made Aurelius pattern on the slave.

In the fourth section, "The Eyes Unsealed," the author presents pictures of four apostles, two to four sonnets being devoted to each. John the Baptist is the subject of two, Simon Peter of four, Paul of three, and St. John the Divine of two. The purpose of each group is to reveal the subject in different spiritual attitudes induced by varied experiences. For example, Peter is presented in the following situations: leaving his nets to become a disciple; confessing the Master when the other disciples hesitated; denying his Lord after the Crucifixion; and standing in the

70 Ibid., pp. 17-21.
71 Ibid., pp. 25-34.
80 Ibid., p. 23.
81 Ibid., pp. 37-47.
radiance of his transforming experience at Pentecost.82

The fifth division, "Pilgrims of the Cross," contains an assortment of pictures of religious characters belonging to various eras.83 Some are devoted to general representatives of orders and classes, as "The Saint of the Desert," "The Knight Errant," "The Benedictine," "The Franciscan," "Forgotten Saints," and "Saints of Today."84 The remainder are portraits of individuals: the martyred Monk, Telemachus; the beggar, Lazarus; Columbus; Ignatius Loyola; Hugh Latimer; John Wesley; James Martineau; and Bishop Pattison.85 Four are devoted to contemporary persons: one to the beloved Dr. B. Y. Palmer of New Orleans; another—written on the dedication of the Newcomb College Chapel—to Sophie Newcomb; and two others, "To a Saint on Earth," and "To a Saint in Heaven," which probably refer to the second Mrs. Johnston and to the poet's first wife.86

All of the testimony regarding Johnston's church affiliation indicates that he was a loyal and devout member of the Episcopal Church. Therefore, his vigorous tribute to John Wesley is somewhat remarkable:

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82 Ibid., pp. 39-42.
83 Ibid., pp. 51-71.
84 Ibid., p. 52ff.
85 Ibid., p. 51ff.
86 Ibid., p. 64ff.
Centuries of form and dogma had o'erpast
Since Christ had shown men how to live and die,
And saints had come and gone, and now at last
Religion cloaked conventionality.
The world was sunk in sense—a living lie—
And England's easy ethics, futile thought,
Cast in a mould of smug gentility,
Deemed poor humanity a thing of naught.
But underneath that rotten thin veneer
Surg'd fires volcanic, born of human hate,
That wrecked the order and the idea old;
So all seemed lost, but that Ithuriel's spear,
In Wesley's hand, unmasked the potentate
Of Hell, and warmed to life men's hearts grown cold.37

The volume's valedictory piece, "The Absolute," is a fitting capstone for the other contents of Seekers After God, for in this sober, quiet poem of eighty-six lines the writer, who is himself a seeker, reveals the spiritual fruits of his own experience. This composition, which, as we have noted elsewhere, was written for the reunion of his class at Yale in 1897, voices the poet's unflinching trust in the Divine Spirit, who has manifested himself in the wonders of the Universe, and in whose love, man with all his frailties, shall rise triumphant.88

An evaluation of Johnston's poetry is not an easy task. Although the author manifested in his youth a strong interest in the writing of verse and gave expression to his poetic impulses during his college days and afterwards, he apparently had little time for concentrated effort in this field until the latter years of his life. The dramatic events which interrupted the normal course of his career and the subsequent difficulties and

87Ibid., p. 60.
88Ibid., pp. 76-81.
perplexities which beset him for a score of years after the war were obvious discouragements to poetic endeavors. To these circumstances must be added the fact that the biography of his father engaged his thought and energy for a half dozen years of this period. His election to the presidency of Tulane University marked the beginning of a new day for him. Fortified with a substantial income and with the support of loyal friends, he was freed of many of his harassments. However, the work of organizing and directing the new institution and the efforts which he devoted to shaping educational thought in his region claimed a large part of his time and attention. In the last five years of his life he brought out three volumes of verse, publishing them privately for distribution among his friends. The testimony of these friends, some of which was given in letters to the author and some in published statements, afford the principal basis for appraising a body of verse which, had it appeared under more auspicious circumstances, might have pleased a larger number.

Thomas Nelson Page expressed his delight with My Garden Walk and the memories which it inspired of associations with Johnston—"of the old college campus and your home above the river at Lexington and also of a later home with the sweet fragrance of the far South." The aged Oliver Wendell Holmes, a few months before his death, acknowledged receipt of the same volume as

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follows: "It is a great pleasure to find our Southern writers becoming more national and more and more widely accepted as members of the literary guild." 90 Professor Moses Coit Tyler, referring to *Pictures of the Patriarchs*, wrote, "This choice little book has been a refreshment to me to read it through, and parts of it several times, as the beautiful poem, 'Heaven's Hostage'." 91 Tyler praised also *Seekers After God*, saying that he read it "with the special delight and uplifting which I never feel in reading verse unless it springs from faith that Matter serves Spirit." 92 Professor Lounsbury was impressed with the deep "spirituality and broad catholicity" of the same work. 93

In the book review section of one of the numbers of the *William and Mary Quarterly*, the reviewer appraises Johnston as one of the foremost literary men of the South and commends the quality "of many of the lines that ring in musical cadence in his *Pictures of the Patriarchs* and his *Garden Walk*." 94 His literary friends in Louisiana were kind in their comments also. Mary Ashley Townsend, a New Orleans poet of some reputation in her day, praised his poems highly; 95 Thomas McCaleb, a Louisiana anthologist, called him a "littérateur and poet of considerable ability"; 96 Professor Fortier in his comprehensive history of

90 W. Holmes to W. P. Johnston, June 11, 1894.
91 M. C. Tyler to W. P. Johnston, Apr. 5, 1897.
94 *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. VI, Jan., 1898.
95 Mary A. Townsend to W. P. Johnston, Aug. 5, 1894.
Louisiana mentioned him as being among the best known Louisiana poets; 97 Dr. Brandt Dixon, who wrote the sketch on Johnston for the Library of Southern Literature, 98 asserted that many of his poems were received with great favor; and other testimony of similar character is available.

In noting the preceding estimates of Johnston's verse, we should no doubt make allowance for the favorable bias of gracious friends, but we are equally obliged to recognize the sincerity of these witnesses, some of whom were highly competent critics. However, regardless of any intrinsic merit which this poetry may have, its chief value lies perhaps in the contribution which it made to the encouragement of literary activity and cultural interests in the South. The poet modestly declares in the "Proem" of his first volume that such a service is his principal aim in publishing his verse; 99 and the sincerity of this declaration is supported by the whole record of his character and service, as well as by the testimony of others concerning him.

99 W. P. Johnston, My Garden Walk, p. 10
CHAPTER XIV

PUBLISHED LECTURES

Throughout his life Johnston exhibited considerable ability as a public speaker and lecturer. After he became President of Tulane he received many invitations to render service of this nature, especially at the commencement exercises of Southern academic universities and upon other occasions of an educational character. Most of his addresses, therefore, were devoted to discussions of the educational problems which confronted the impoverished and perplexed South. A number of these addresses were published in journals and in pamphlet form; and an examination of them reveals on the part of the author a clear perception of the difficulties at hand and a disposition to deal with them in a direct manner. To a section which had almost no well-established and well-supported colleges or universities and few reputable public high schools, he addressed his tactful but forthright exhortations, striking at deep-seated prejudices and arguing the necessity for education and the obligation of the public to support it. Only through the development of a competent educational system, Johnston repeatedly avers, could the South hope to realize cultural and economic benefits equal to those of other sections.

In June, 1884, Johnston had the honor of making the first Commencement address at the newly-established University of Texas.
speaking on the subject, "The University: Its Dangers and the Remedies." His opening remarks were gracious, but the main substance of his speech was challenging. Referring to the rather liberal endowment with which the University was beginning its work, he asserted that it would not be adequate and pointed to the older and more wealthy institutions in the East. The youthfulness of the University was no excuse for its lagging behind longer than was necessary. Speaking of Harvard in this connection, he said:

As for its antiquity, though you may start more than two centuries after it, I trust you do not mean to remain that far behind. Remember that you represent a Commonwealth as populous as Massachusetts, and, if not so rich, yet with the elements of wealth far greater.2

And again on the same subject:

Your present income, and I do not speak it disparingly or despondently, is but a drop in the bucket. It is the honorable beginning to a mighty toil, to which the labors of Hercules were but child's play.3

With these and other vigorous utterances, he urged the fullest possible support for the University and pictured the physical plant which the institution would need, his description bearing a striking resemblance to the school's present array of buildings.

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2 Ibid., p. 7.  
3 Ibid., p. 10.
Johnston made the same frank and earnest appeal for the support of Southern education upon other occasions. In addresses which he delivered to the parish superintendents of Louisiana and to the Louisiana State Teachers' Association he placed strong emphasis upon the financial requirements of a good public school system. Nor was he behindhand in urging the claims of his own University. Immediately after his death one of the New Orleans papers asserted that "Colonel Johnston never lost an opportunity to urge upon people of wealth identified with New Orleans to give of their means to the cause of education," and cited the gifts of Mrs. Newcomb as evidence of the results. However, Johnston was far from satisfied with the response and doubtless felt that if Mrs. Newcomb and Paul Tulane, whose interest in the State was inspired by former residence there, could give so generously to its institutions, the people of New Orleans certainly should be liberal also. In the Commencement address which he delivered at Tulane the year before his death, he took the people of the city severely to task on this score and cited the liberal benefactions which were being given by wealthy persons elsewhere in the country.


6. Times-Democrat, July 17, 1899.

7. W. P. Johnston, Commencement Address, Tulane University, June 30, 1898.
In his efforts to promote the support of education he had to contend not only with poverty and apathy but, from some quarters, with a strong, hostile prejudice as well. One idea he assailed frequently and vigorously was that higher education was designed for rich men's sons at the expense of the many. "The halls of the true university," he told his Texas audience, "hold the purest democracy on earth. There the sole aristocracy is the aristocracy of the intellect." He pointed out also that the rich man could take care of himself and that to him it mattered little whether a good university existed close at hand or not. He had the means with which to send his sons to distant schools. In the case of the poor man's son, however, the school near to his home afforded the only hope of an education. In the last commencement address which he made, Johnston made a final thrust at the idea of the University's being a rich man's school, though by then, he asserted, such insinuations were "whispered in out of the way corners".

The same prejudicial idea existed with respect to the public high schools. Johnston was interested in the development of these schools not only because of their general value to the state but because they were capable of becoming the principal institutions

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8 W. F. Johnston, "The University: Its Perils and the Remedies."
11 W. F. Johnston, Commencement Address, Tulane U., 1898.
in which persons might prepare for entrance to the universities. In an address to the State Teachers' Association he refuted the idea that the high school was a rich man's school and the reverse view, which some persons held, that it was for the education of the poor man's children:

Two classes of objections are raised against public high school education. One is that it is a rich man's school, to which the poor man's children cannot afford to go, and for whose instruction they have no use. The other is that it is the poor man's school, to which the rich man's children do not go, and for which he should not be obliged to pay taxes. These objections are suicidal; both cannot be true, and in fact neither is true. It is neither the rich man's school nor the poor man's. It is the citizens' school, in which the State gives its children, rich or poor, a chance to find out whether they are able to eat of the tree of knowledge, whether they have the appetite and teeth and digestion to strip the rind and feed upon the heart of it.  

Johnston's defensive utterances were but incidental, of course, to the main purpose of his educational addresses, which was to acquaint his audiences with the character and objectives of higher education and to impress them with the service which the high schools, colleges, and universities were capable of rendering. It is worthy of note that in shaping his ideas concerning educational programs and policies, he did not rely too strongly upon his own knowledge and experience, which had been considerable before he came to Tulane. On the contrary, he sought the advice

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of such men as his former schoolmates at Yale, Andrew D. White, President of Cornell, and Daniel G. Gilman, President of Johns Hopkins; and he made a number of trips to schools and universities in the North and East that he might study their organizations and objectives.

President Johnston strongly advocated the broadening of college and university curricula, in order that the institutions might meet the demands of a changing order. To disregard the needs or wishes, or even the prejudices of people, and to offer them what educators might choose to think was good for them was not the part of wisdom, he asserted in one of his addresses:

It is not good for them, if they in nowise will accept it. The ideal university, then, according to my view, is the one most exactly adapted to the condition of the people whom it is designated to educate.

He believed that the university should hold something for the youth who was preparing for a business career or for the mechanical arts and that it was useless to try to convince him that the line of study which persons pursued to become lawyers or ministers was suited to his needs also.

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12 Letters to Johnston from White, June 12, 1892, and from Gilman May 21, 1892, contain the opinions of the writers concerning university policies, which opinions were given at the request of Johnston.
14 Ibid., p. 16.
All that is left us is to decide whether we will continue to restrict our work of education to those persons preparing for the professions, by courtesy called learned, or extend it to others, requiring fully as much mental acumen, cultured imagination, and accuracy of intellectual method. For my own part, I say throw open the doors of the university, and provide the exact courses of study required for those who seek to carry culture into other branches of intellectual activity.15

This philosophy with respect to the aims and obligations of university education governed his policies in shaping the program at Tulane. Sound education, he believed, could be accomplished only through recognition of the divine or psychic unity which binds together all of the functions and faculties of mind, soul, and body. The aim in view should not be the mechanical creation of a mere cog for the great wheel of society, but the rounding out of a human being to the possibilities of his nature, whether they be great or small; therefore, the university, in its training of him, must "regard every faculty and function, coordinating them justly though not equally for the work before him in life."16

In his efforts to impress others with the necessity of a strong educational program for the South and the magnitude of the problems involved in the realization of it, Johnston manifested a deep appreciation of the importance of the teacher. His loyalty to his own faculties at the State University and at Tulane has

15Ibid., pp. 19-20.
been noted in preceding chapters. In his public addresses he lost no opportunity, when speaking to laymen or to teachers, to emphasize the high value of the good instructor and the dignity of the teaching profession. In his Texas University address he told his audience that the most important duty of a Board of Trustees, after an honest administration of the finances, is the appointment of an able faculty, which is the soul of a university. Speaking further on this point, he said:

You may have every external condition of success, endowments, buildings, apparatus, patronage, but if you have a lazy, dull, or incapable faculty, you must fail in great results. You might as well try to illuminate this ball with "fox-fire." The phosphorescent gleams of learned mediocrity bear the same relation to the kindling blaze of genius, as that false fire does to true flame. If you wish great results you must have great men to achieve them. Turveydrops, professors of deportment, will not do. You must have intellectual athletes, moral heroes. They are hard to get. You cannot measure them by the ordinary standards of wealth, rank, notoriety, and social polish. You ought to thank God when you capture one and try to keep him. 17

In his last public address of importance he sounded a similar note:

The people who devote their lives to the theory and practice of education have a right to claim that they are the best fitted to know what it is and what it ought to be. And these are the teachers. 18

His addresses concerning public school education likewise pointed to the teacher as the factor of first importance. Speaking

17 W. P. Johnston, "The University: Its Dangers and the Remedies,"
18 W. P. Johnston, Commencement Address, Tulane University, 1898.
to the parish superintendents of Louisiana, he stressed the qualities which should characterize the true teacher: uprightness of life, fulness of knowledge, ideals of scholarship, and zeal for the aims of the profession. The competent teacher, he asserted, is not to be found among those who use the profession as a bread and butter expedient while preparing themselves for other fields of labor.\(^1\) In the closing part of his address to the Louisiana Teachers' Association, he voiced his warmest appreciation of the public school teachers:

The measure of a people's wisdom can be taken by the respect and honor paid to the profession of the teacher; and, if I am not mistaken in this assertion, then assuredly the people of the South have gained wonderfully in good sense in the last generation. They (the teachers) are the missionaries of knowledge, the doorkeepers of the dawn of general intelligence in the coming time.... When I think of how many fine qualities are called forth in the conscientious teaching of a primary school: the industry, the patience, the tact, the benevolence, that are required to lead on the timid, trembling footsteps of a child in the pathway of knowledge, my soul bows in admiration before those truly good and noble natures that do this work in the spirit of humility and love for the little ones.\(^2\)

It is interesting to note that in spite his unpleasant experience with politicians during his administration of the Louisiana State University, Johnston did not share the average person's

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unfavorable opinion of men in politics. However, it was but natural that he should feel that one of the most serious threats to state educational institutions of higher learning lay in the possibility of political control. In this connection, his tactful warning to his Texas University audience is worthy of notice:

I am not one of those who sympathize with the loose talk against politicians. In my experience they are quite up to the average in intelligence, though I know it is popular to say quite the reverse. But to my mind, it is almost too patent for argument, that the less a legislature or an executive has to do with a university, the better for both. What stability can be had in the management, if it can be reopened every year by any demagogue or educational crank who may get to the Legislature, and who may compel the board to heed and dally with his schemes?21

He believed that the best safeguard against such a danger was to be found in the appointment of a Board with a membership too large "to degenerate into a clique, or to be readily manageable, or to be guilty of systematic nepotism or personal patronage," and in giving the members a long tenure of office, perhaps for life.22

Not all of Johnston's educational addresses were so strictly confined to the problems of education as those we have noted thus far. In June, 1891, he delivered at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute an address which is a notable exception. Speaking on

22. Ibid., p. 18.
the subject, "Problems of Southern Civilization," he presented a discourse of such able and acceptable character as to bring a request from the president and a committee of the faculty of the Institute for permission to publish it. This address also brought the speaker to favorable notice in many places.

Although the main discussion is devoted to the "New South" and its problems, Johnston is by no means willing to dismiss the "Old South" without full recognition of its worth. He reviews with pride the contribution which the Southern States made to the development of the nation: the spirit of the people in the struggle to secure their independence from England; the genius of Southern leadership which manifested itself in the directing of military campaigns, the shaping of the National Government, and the expansion of the country's boundaries; and the readiness of the South to measure up properly whenever a broad National policy was at stake. In his contemplation of the civil conflict and its results, there is no suggestion of apology or abasement:

Rightly or wrongly, we believed that a campaign of aggression upon our people and

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our institutions had been begun by our sister states; and by the measure of our resistance we testified to the sincerity of our convictions. We were overwhelmed by superior force. We yielded the point at issue, the right of secession, and the further condition of Negro emancipation; for neither honor nor common sense, demanded that we should invite and endure further disaster. But to those who say that our people are deficient in political wisdom, I have merely to point to the fact that today we are in possession of our civil and political rights, and that these have not been graciously accorded to us, but in nearly every southern state have been won back by actual force, or by the threat of revolution. And having them, by the Grace of God we mean to keep them—by humble petition or the strong arm, as need may be; for that is the Anglo-Saxon way. "There is life in the old land yet." 26

Speaking of the institution of slavery, he pointed to the fact that the South, through circumstances not altogether of its own making, had acquired a peculiar burden by the induction of a subject people into its order of living. That the system was not without some benefits to the Negro race is attested by the transformation of the Southern slave from a condition of rankest barbarian to one of comparative advancement. Such progress, the speaker asserts, will enable the race to have a place and mission in the new order; but "the governing of this country is not part of that mission." His concern for the future of the Negro and of all other underprivileged people is earnest:

26 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
But may we not hope that humanity and Christian charity will enter into our legis-
lation far enough at least to protect him
(and his poor white brother too, whom nobody
seems to regard or care for) from the grinding
slavery, which with cruel irony, we hear termed
"free society" - a condition of affairs in
which the weak has no protection against the
strong, the poor against the rich, the people
against the plutocracy.27

The problems of social and political adjustment in the South
were particularly difficult, Johnston points out:

A conservative rural population, accus-
tomed to the strictest personal government
over a part of its members and the laxest
over the rest, is suddenly confronted with
all the problems of Modern Civilization.28

In his warnings concerning some of the principal dangers accom-
panying modern development in America as a whole, especially with
regard to the growth of large cities, he exhibits the vision of
the true prophet:

If gain is the only purpose of its
people, gold their only God, that city is
already under the seal of condemnation.
If the refuse and garbage of all nation-
alities, sodden in ignorance and leprous in
crime, are to be dumped by the shipload
into our cities, they will simply become
the sewers of a fetid pseudo-civilization.29

In this address and elsewhere, he strongly denounces the rising
power of wealth in America and the corruption which it induces,
and points to the need for effective legislation to hold in check

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27Ibid., pp. 7-8.
28Ibid., p. 11.
29Ibid., p. 12.
"the rapacity of our new breed and brand of millionaires". The country has survived, and can continue to survive, many disasters, "but it cannot survive the loss of liberty, or the supremacy of a few bloated capitalists—the apotheosis of incarnate greed!" People should not permit themselves to be deluded by those who commend the beneficence of capitalistic despotism; nor should they allow themselves to be confused or intimidated by those who denounce as socialistic every effort to limit the wealth and power of a class. The soundness of his views on corrective legislation is evidenced by the progress which the nation has made in that direction:

Official salaries in public corporations should be limited by law; watered stocks should eschew to the public treasury; the hours of labor should be made reasonable; child labor should be prohibited; and a mode of public arbitration should be adopted that will prevent the costly expedient of strikes. A graded income tax, a legacy tax, and the distribution by law of the decedents, in part at least, as the civil law in Louisiana now prescribes, are among the measures that would tend to prevent the aggregation of colossal fortunes.

Recognizing the fact that the day of small things is past and that an era of vast enterprises has arrived—requiring enormous

30 In this connection, reference has been made in a preceding chapter to his Washington University address in 1890, on the "Function of the City," and to his poem, "The Strike Ended''.
concentration of force, power, and wealth at given centers—the speaker suggests the competent university as an agency capable of exerting a beneficent influence upon the new order. Its service in this regard should be of a twofold nature: persons are to be trained to meet the complex requirements of modern commerce and industry; and moral life and purpose are to be communicated to the corporations, which control material developments.33

In the changed order, the new South with its great agricultural population must protect itself and aid the advancement of civilization by enlightening, arousing, and organizing its citizens, to the end that the fullest benefits may be reaped from its resources and the well-being and happiness of all persons in the nation secured.34 According to contemporary testimony, Johnston's acute observations of conditions arising in the new South, his estimates of the needs of Southern civilization, and his shrewd and wise suggestions on the subject were highly appreciated by statesmen of this country and of Europe.35

Besides the compositions already mentioned in this study Johnston published a few other items of miscellaneous character. For the American Historical Association he prepared a brief

33Ibid., pp. 16-19.
34Ibid., p. 19.
discourse entitled, "A Definition of History". This article, which was published in the annual report of the association for 1893, was similar to an address which the author delivered before the Educational Association of Virginia more than twenty years before, the subject of his discussion on that occasion being "History: Its Place in a Liberal Education". Both are well written articles, the aim of which is to present the true nature and purpose of history; but neither contains anything likely to appear striking or original to students of history today.

Johnston published also two genealogical works relating to his own family. The Johnstons of Salisbury, to which frequent reference has been made in the present study, is a rather thorough record of the Johnston family with a partial tracing of other families which were united with it. The book was dedicated to his cousin, Josiah Stoddard Johnston, his companion through most of his school and college years, and was designed to afford information and pleasure to the members of the families represented in it. Although the author had reason to be proud of his

distinguished connections, there is no evidence that he displayed his pride improperly. His own statement with reference to the value of his genealogical investigations is modest and sensible:

If any less can be learned from a study of these data, it is that respectable families preserve their standing by not lowering themselves in their marriages. Heredity is a Nemesis that avenges unto the third and fourth generations and beyond.

It is a source of pride, too, that our family have always been found standing up for their rights as citizens and defending the cause of republican liberty against lawless power. 39

In the last year of his life Johnston published his other genealogical study, Edward Harris and His Ancestors, 40 which is an enlargement of some data given in The Johnstons of Salisbury, relating to the family of Albert Sidney Johnston's mother.

39 Ibid., pp. 20-21.
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BIOGRAPHY

Arthur Marvin Shaw was born in Arkansas Post, Arkansas, December 8, 1896, and he received his early education in the public schools of Arkansas and California. In 1920 he was graduated with the Bachelor of Arts degree from Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas; and in 1928 he received the Master of Arts degree from George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee. During the sessions of 1936-1937 and 1938-1939 he was a student in the graduate school at the Louisiana State University, holding a teaching fellowship during the session of 1936-1937. He has written a brochure, Centenary College Goes to War in 1861, which was published by Centenary College in 1940. He has taught in public schools and colleges since 1920. In 1927 he was appointed associate professor of English at Centenary College, Shreveport, Louisiana; and in 1933 he was made executive secretary of the same institution, which position he now holds.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Arthur Marvin Shaw
Major Field: English
Title of Thesis: The Life and Works of William Preston Johnston

Approved:

Earl J. Bradsher
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