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Letter to Dr. Robert Frazer, Pres., June 15, 1894

John Marshall Stone

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June 15th. 1894.

Dr. Robert Frazer, Pres.

Columbus, Miss.

My dear Sir:-

Your letter in regard to the Chair of Modern Languages has been received, and in reply I have to say that I do not know whether I will be consulted at all in the selection of the lady to fill the vacancy. There is a little history connected with this matter which I may mention, but not to be repeated, for your information. Looking to such matters as this, I suggested that the president of the college be made a member of the executive committee, to which suggestion every member of the committee violently protested; every other member of the board, I think, favoring it. This rule prevails at the University, and at many other institutions of similar character; and I think works well. It was apparent to me that the other members of the board desired to adopt the proposition, notwithstanding the opposition of the committee, but their opposition was so pronounced that I thought it would be unwise to do so at this time, and the matter was dropped at my request. When the matter of filling this vacancy was referred to the executive committee, it was at my suggestion that no appointment should be made without first consulting all the members of the board. I do not wish to have to call the board together again, but it may yet be necessary to do so.

The testimonials of Miss Fowlkes are very high, and if she is qualified for the place I would prefer her to any other mentioned. You will find, I think that many of her endorsements are from persons who can know but little of her, but were procured by influential friends.

† 2.

It seems to me that at one time Miss Fowlkes stated that she was not willing to undertake the chair of modern languages. In this I may be mistaken, and it may have been some other person. I have heard nothing from the committee or any member of the board, since the adjournment, and the understanding that the members should be consulted before making a selection does not necessarily embrace me, and I may hear nothing about it until the selection shall have been made, so an unwise or undesirable selection, if probable, can be averted only by a special meeting of the board. If an amicable adjustment can be reached without a meeting, it will certainly be better than to call the board together; but I confess that the action of the committee towards the board of trustees filled me with amazement and regret. The members did not seem to realize the delicacy of the position in which their action placed them, but if they can stand it, I suppose the board can.

Dr. Williamson is the member who has been active in the matter of modern languages, and has a teacher selected provided she is eligible from a religious point of view, but Miss Fowlkes may be satisfactory to him. I think Williamson is loyal to you, and so I think of all the trustees present at the last meeting unless it be the members of the executive committee, and I do not know that they are not, but "sub rosa" I do not think Col. Smith has ever been satisfied, yet he says he has.

Please keep me advised of what is going on as well as you can. I have no candidate, no interest to serve but that of the college.

Yours very truly,

W. M. Stone