6-5-1916

Letters to Reverend H.W. Stough

Board of Trustees

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Reliable information having come to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of The University of Tennessee, that at a meeting held on Sunday last Reverend Mr Stough had stated that he had been reliably informed that there was a professor in the University who had taught his students in certain classes that the double standard of morals was right and harmless; that he could substantiate the statement, having absolute proof of the fact; and that he would renounce the University from one end of the State to the other until the man was removed; therefore, at a meeting of the Executive Committee called at the office of the President on Monday morning, the following letter was prepared and sent to Mr Stough, the Registrar of the University, Mr Thomas D. Morris, being the bearer:
5 June 1916.

Reverend H.W. Stough,
733 North Fifth avenue,
Knoxville, Tennessee.

Dear Sir:

We have been informed that at one of your meetings, yesterday, you made certain statements in regard to the teaching of a professor in the University, with the additional statement that you were prepared to furnish the name of the professor, with the evidence in the case. With the desire of investigating this charge we beg to request you to furnish us with a written statement of the charges made, the name of the professor, and the evidence on which you based your charge, including the names of your informants.

Very truly yours,

Executive Committee,
Board of Trustees.
To this letter Mr Stough gave no answer, and indicated to Mr Morris over the telephone that he did not intend to answer it at once. Therefore, at a meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday morning, the following letter was prepared and sent to Mr Stough through Mr Morris:
Reverend H.W. Stough,
733 North Fifth avenue,
Knoxville, Tennessee.

Dear Sir:

We addressed to you yesterday a respectful letter requesting that you furnish us in writing with the exact charges made by you against a professor of the University, the name of the professor, and the evidence on which you based your charges, including the names of your informants. Thus far we have received no direct answer to our communication. But our Registrar, Mr. Thomas D. Morris, informs us that in a telephone conversation with you yesterday afternoon you stated that you did not feel called upon to furnish us the information desired at present. This position is very surprising to us. As a Christian minister you certainly would not decline, after making a public attack on the University, to furnish us the grounds on which your charges are based, to the end that we might investigate the charges, and if substantiated, take such steps as may seem necessary to correct the evil which you claim exists. As trustees of the University, responsible for its good name, we must, therefore, insist that you furnish us im-
H.W.S.-2-

Immediately in writing, the information requested. As the College session is closing this week, and our professors and students are leaving the city, we must have this information at once. Otherwise we would not be in a position to prosecute our investigations. Mr. Morris, our Registrar, will await your reply.

Very truly,
Brown Ayres
Hu L. McClung
James Maynard

Executive Committee,
Board of Trustees.
To this second letter Mr Stough refused to give any answer. On report of this fact by Mr Morris, the following letter was sent to Mr Stough:
6 June 1916.

Reverend H.W. Stough,
733 North Fifth avenue,
Knoxville, Tennessee.

Dear Sir:

We are greatly surprised and disappointed that you still decline to furnish us with the information requested, to enable us to investigate the public charges which you have made against one of our professors. Such refusal places you in the very unenviable light of an irresponsible scandalmonger, whose statements are unworthy of belief, and so you will be regarded by all right thinking people when your refusal to substantiate your charges is made public. We do not wish to place you in this light if it can be avoided. We will, therefore, give you until one o'clock today to furnish the desired information in writing, in default of which the whole matter must go to the newspapers in its present form.

Very truly,

Brown Ayres
Hu L. McClung
James Maynard

Executive Committee,
Board of Trustees.
As he has declined to substantiate his charges by furnishing us information on which they were based, we are powerless to proceed in the matter, and he stands self indicted. The intelligent public will draw their own conclusions.

Brown Ayres
Hu L. McClung
James Maynard
Executive Committee,
Board of Trustees.

Dear Mr. Morgan:

The above is a correct copy of the correspondence with Mr. Strong.

Brown Ayres
President.