Elisha Benjamin Andrews served as the president of Brown University from 1889 to 1898. His tenure in office was marked by innovation and controversy. Poems, portraits, and biographical information are available from the Brown University Archives.
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"The Lengthened Shadow of One Man": E. Benjamin Andrews and Brown University, 1889-1898 3
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Elisha Benjamin Andrews brought notable changes to Brown University before becoming embroiled in controversy over his support of the free coinage of silver. Photograph, circa 1893, Brown University Archives.
In the summer of 1897 the eyes of the country briefly turned toward Providence, where Brown University Corporation and the university's president were at odds. The corporation was seeking the president's resignation on the grounds that his support of the free coinage of silver in the 1896 presidential election was both morally flawed and damaging to the university. But the national debate that followed did not center on bimetallism; it centered, rather, on the changing nature of the university.

Was an institution "the lengthened shadow of one man," as William Howe Tolman, quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson, contended in his 1894 History of Higher Education in Rhode Island? Tolman divided the history of Brown University into the time before and the time after the pivotal presidency of Elisha Benjamin Andrews, and he attributed that divide to the striking changes that Andrews had wrought.¹ During his tenure from 1889 to 1898, Andrews brought to Brown the changes that were sweeping colleges across the country into the age of the university. He molded the growing Brown according to his vision, one that was often at odds with that of the corporation, the faculty, and others who claimed that they, too, had a role in shaping Brown's future.

The late nineteenth century saw Brown University, like many institutions of higher education across the country, increase in size and organizational complexity. When Andrews accepted the presidency in 1889, Brown was a regional Baptist institution with 276 students and 26 faculty, little more than one member for each department. It was run like a household, with a clerk employed by the corporation's treasurer handling the accounts in the sitting room of his own home. By the summer of 1897 student enrollment had increased to 644, and the faculty, arranged into departments with an internal hierarchy, had grown to 88.² The campus itself was then so large (with a "base ball" diamond a little too close to the windows of the new science building) that it could no longer be seen in its entirety from a single vantage point. The mission of the school expanded as the Women's College, graduate study, the elective system, and the University Extension program all became realities. In every way—including debt—that the university could be measured, the numbers increased throughout Andrews's presidency.

While many welcomed these changes; others mourned the passing age. The fellows and trustees of the corporation resisted the new "scientific" management and secularization of the college, particularly because they, the guarantors of the operating budget, covered the deficits to provide salaries for more faculty members. Moreover, was it proper for the president to grant the school's fledgling baseball team permission to miss class for away games? With many corporation members lamenting their declining role in the daily governance of the university, personal and political tensions between Andrews and the corporation marked the earlier years of his administration. His detractors on the
corporation spoke out, however, only when Andrews seemed to damage their good name by publicly supporting bimetallism. The unexpected support of this populist cause by the president of a prominent New England university was widely publicized.

The conflict attracted local and national attention. While all agreed on the importance of the issue, there was little agreement on exactly what the issue was. The cover of Life magazine caricatured Brown trustee and U.S. congressman Joseph Walker and the rest of the corporation advertising for a college president, with the caveat that “no gentlemen encumbered with a backbone need apply.”

To the progressive editors of Life, the dispute was the classic story of the age: individual rights succumbing to business interests. To the Brown faculty, writing a blistering storm of letters from their summer homes, it was about free speech and the nascent conception of academic freedom. To the students on their summer vacation and the alumni recalling their golden days at Brown, the opposition to Andrews was an insult to their beloved prey.

What was, in fact, the issue at stake for the men sitting in the University Hall boardroom at the center of it all? Throughout the Andrews administration the president and the corporation struggled with issues much closer to the management of their school than to the free coinage of silver: they struggled over chapel attendance and baseball games, faculty salaries and fund-raising, and how the curriculum should deal with evolution and political economy. Most important, they struggled over who was to have the power to decide on the future direction of Brown: in the age of the emerging university, who would direct Brown’s mission and its path?

The son and grandson of Baptist ministers, a Civil War veteran, and president of the Brown class of 1870, Elisha “Bennie” Andrews was a Baptist minister who devoted his career to higher education. He began as president of Denison University in Ohio, then returned to Brown as a professor of history and political economy, moved to Cornell to chair its new Department of Political Economy in 1888, and again returned to Brown in 1889 and served as its president for nine years. During his presidency there he twice refused calls from the University of Chicago, including one offering him the “co-presidency.” After leaving Brown in 1898 he spent two years as superintendent of Chicago schools before becoming chancellor of the University of Nebraska.

Andrews was popular with his students. When he declined a position at the University of Chicago, they rejoiced that “he has not reached the limit of his powers. Given the means to do with, he can and will make Brown University the greatest of the great colleges of the country.” But despite the unquestioning adoration of the students, Andrews often faced professional controversy. He had left Denison after disputes with its trustees over his participation in Ohio Republican Party politics, his position on the issue of eternal damnation for the wicked, and his appointment of the irreligious William Rainey Harper (later...
Board of Fellows and a thirty-six member Board of Trustees. Andrews himself was a member of the corporation; the school’s 1764 charter specified that the college president, who was to be a Baptist, was also to be one of the corporation’s fellows. The charter also directed that the Board of Fellows should include eight Baptists and that the Board of Trustees should be apportioned among twenty-two Baptists, five Quakers, four Congregationalists, and five Episcopalians. During Andrews’s tenure approximately half the trustees were ministers; the other half were businessmen. More than two-thirds were from Rhode Island, with nearly all the rest from Massachusetts. William Keen, from Philadelphia, was the sole trustee from outside New England.

The roster of the corporation included some of the most influential men of Rhode Island. The treasurer of the corporation was Arnold Buffum Chace, who would be elected the university’s chancellor in 1901. A notable member of the northern banking establishment, Chace was the president of the Westminster Bank, director of the National Bank of North America, and treasurer of the Valley Falls Company. Thomas Durfee, a former Brown chancellor and then a fellow of the corporation, served in both the Rhode Island House and Senate before becoming chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court in 1875. Eulogized as having “insured the stability of property and personal rights, and upheld the dignity and wisdom of the common law,” Durfee was known as “a graceful poet and a devout pure man”; he was not known for liberal politics. Other corporation members included John Carter Brown Woods, a member of the university’s Advisory and Executive Committee, who served as a Republican in the Rhode Island Senate from 1881 to 1888; Arnold Green, a counsel to the Boston and Providence Railroad; William F. Sayles, a major capital investor and founder of a massive textile-bleaching plant, who had business dealings with another trustee.
Rowland Hazard, the president of the Peace Dale Manufacturing Company; Chancellor William Goddard and his cousin, trustee Thomas P. I. Goddard, the managing partners of the Weybosset Land Company; and Richard Olney, a fellow of the corporation until 1896 and one of its rare Democrats, who served as U.S. attorney general and secretary of state under President Grover Cleveland.

These men governed not only Brown University but also the young Rhode Island Hospital, the Providence Public Library, and Memorial Hospital of Pawtucket. These were men with many competing demands on them who gave freely of their time and money to promote the interests of the university. William Goddard, the chancellor of the university from 1888 until his death in 1907, was committed to serving the university’s best interests as he perceived them, literally into his grave. He chose to be buried in his chancellor’s robes.

When President Ezekiel Robinson resigned in 1889 after seventeen years of service, he enthusiastically noted the “encouraging” prospects of the university: “under wise guidance, and with such changes as in due course of events will necessarily come, it can rapidly advance to a measure of usefulness not hitherto attainable.” But Robinson could not have known that the 1890s would be considered a turning point in the history of American higher education, when conflicting notions of college reform would begin to point towards organizing and expanding along “scientific” principles. Andrew’s presidency was a crucial one that marked the troubled emergence of Brown into the age of the university. Unlike his colleagues at the University of Chicago, Johns Hopkins, and Stanford, which were new universities with no traditions and habits to overcome, Andrews arrived at an institution whose history and character had been in place and evolving for well over a century. He was not creating a new university; he was changing an old college.

Benjamin Andrews was not the most obvious choice for the presidency in 1889. Otis Randall, a young professor, recalled that the faculty was “much surprised” that he was chosen over men such as Augustus Strong, a prominent Baptist who thought that Brown was becoming too secular. “The striking contrast” between Andrews and his predecessor had been noted during his professorship. Randall described the contrast in generational terms. As a student he had seen Robinson as in “the old school” and Andrews as “one of us.” Then, when Randall joined the faculty, he perceived Andrews as “a misfit” among its older members and a leader of the younger ones: “I remember well that in his own way he would invariably carry his points, for his broad minded and progressive attitude toward college policies never failed to appeal to us of the younger generation.” The younger generation of students considered Andrews “the prophet and the inspiration of a new intellectual life.”
The choice of Andrews signaled that the corporation wanted an "electric breeze." At a welcoming dinner of 250 alumni, faculty, corporation members, and friends, all professed themselves to be "united in an expression of their hearty sympathy for President Andrews and his work." Colonel R. H. I. Goddard, class of 1858, spoke of his belief that "Brown stands on the threshold of a new era." The new president, a young man of forty-five years to Robinson's seventy-five, was the very man to lead them over that threshold. "Let us join hands with this administration to make it a glorious one," Goddard exhorted his fellows and friends of Brown.20

Named the university's president, president of the corporation, and professor of intellectual and moral philosophy in 1889, Andrews immediately began applying the "scientific" organizing principles of the day towards "measure of usefulness not hitherto attainable." The age of the expert had come to universities, displacing the traditional power of the minister.21 Although many corporation members were Baptist ministers, their declining influence was marked by Andrews's hiring of an increasingly professionalized, secular faculty.22 Brown had been "too conservative," Andrews asserted two months into his presidency, and he now began both modernizing his faculty along the lines of the new German-style research university and reordering the university's finances.23 He set another new standard when he provided a printed agenda for his first corporation meeting in June 1890.24

Reordering the university's finances was a large reform. Fifteen thousand dollars of student fees had gone missing under Robinson's administration, embezzled by the former registrar, and there were also concerns about irregular accounting in the Gymnasium Fund.25 In October 1890 trustee William Keen sent Andrews a confidential letter that raised questions about the informal accounting practices. Keen encouraged Andrews to view these not as isolated incidents but as a larger, systemic problem, "a state of affairs in the finances of the University that ought to be changed. It does not seem to me that a system that will allow at least two of these mistakes can be a good one; and it is not to me a pleasant picture nor a business-like way of doing things to see a man far away from the Treasurer, at his own house, in the evenings, making up the accounts," said Keen.26

The corporation then formed a committee "to arrange for a complete reorganization of the fiscal administration of the College."27 The committee comprised some of the most prominent names on the corporation; but the corporation's treasurer, Arnold B. Chace, was conspicuously absent. Chace's many objections to the reorganization all related to his desire to maintain a less formal system of accounting, rather than one dependent on "such hours only as the Trust Company keeps open its banking establishment."28 When Brown contracted with the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company over his objections, Chace became "very anxious to get the new scheme into working order so as to be able to resign the Treasurership."29 The college's investments were now to be professionally managed.

The Committee of the Reorganization of the Fiscal Department acknowledged that its reforms were not isolated ones. "We cannot longer expect so much from any member of the Corporation, however loyal or zealous," a committee report said.30 Chace and his colleagues had long been involved in the daily administration of the university, but as Andrews professionalized the university's administration, he distanced the corporation from administrative details. Thomas Anderson, the corporation's secretary, could no longer act independently: "I should hesitate to make any change before conferring with the President as my superior officer, to whom I look for instructions," he told the faculty.31 Andrews himself recognized that "the Corporation is not likely to go contrary to the recommendation he made."32

Andrews's reorganization of the faculty proceeded more slowly and gradually than his
fiscal reorganization did, but its effects were arguably more dramatic and more consequential. Whereas Brown had previously functioned with departments including a single teacher with a bachelor's or master's degree, Andrews now hired a professional faculty of Ph.D.s, organizing them into departments structured according to professional qualifications as well as seniority. With faculty members at colleges across the country developing scholarly reputations independent of their particular institutions for the first time, Brown, along with other schools, was competing for faculty, who no longer regularly spent their entire careers at a single institution. The most renowned scholars were aggressively recruited by other universities.

In recruiting research-oriented faculty, Andrews was competing with the likes of Clark and Johns Hopkins Universities, young institutions that were without sectarian influences and were devoted to the ideal of scientific research. Effecting change in an existing institution was a different matter, but Andrews was eager to establish graduate study under a scholarly faculty, and so he offered research assistants, laboratories, and competitive salaries to such new men of science as physicist Carl Barus, who would later become dean of the Graduate School. Andrews had actively recruited Barus with promises of a laboratory, but Barus had barely arrived at Brown when he complained that "owing to the variety of routine duties imposed on us," his department had not produced much original research.

Andrews's embrace of the new scientific model upset traditions that were personal as well as institutional. When Albert Harkness retired as chair of the Department of Greek History and Literature in 1892, it was expected that William Carey Poland, who had served in the department for more than twenty years, would be appointed to that position. Instead, Andrews recruited a new professor, James Manatt, Ph.D., to replace the retiring Harkness, and Poland was appointed (some felt he was demoted) to the professorship of a new department, History and Criticism of the Fine Arts. A younger professor than Poland, Manatt sought to make "the college fetish—up to date," and he was eager to oversee the transition from the classical curriculum to presenting Greek as one of "a hundred supreme subjects" in an elective curriculum. His appointment demonstrated generational fault lines among the faculty.

When Andrews had accepted the presidency in 1889, he worried that the corporation had "too little ambition." Three years into his administration, he challenged that body with his 1892 Report of the President to the Corporation of Brown University. This report was markedly different in scope and character from every previous report; involving every aspect of university life, it dramatically outlined Andrews's vision for Brown University to become, in his words, "a university in fact and not in name only."

Andrews believed that the university faced "a serious crisis," although many members of the corporation, perhaps remembering the departing Robinson's optimism, did not see it that way, and Andrews himself noted some improvements. The faculty and the student body had expanded, he noted, and because of "new enterprise on the part of the teaching force . . . the quality and methods of our instruction, too, I believe, have improved." The new faculty he had hired were Brown's first professional scholars; the academic enterprise had been extended to include the examination of women (who had shown a "proficiency averaging decidedly above that of the young men examined in the same branches"); and a University Extension program had been added, in which professors taught courses to the working classes in venues across Rhode Island.

The university was growing rapidly, said Andrews, and stressing the "scientific" system
of physical exercises now possible, he declared that the erection of Lyman Gymnasium "marks an era in the University's history." Equally historic was the expansion of the physical plant to a point where it was now impossible for the whole of the campus to be seen from a single spot. The college, Andrews reported, had outgrown all of its buildings, the chapel in particular. "We shall therefore be forced this very autumn to begin a new policy touching chapel attendance, making it optional for all or for a part of the classes, or enforcing the attendance of classes by turns."  

Andrews lamented that the school's ability to expand further was "desperately restricted" by a lack of funds. "I cannot avoid the conviction that Brown University has reached a serious crisis in its history. It stands face to face with the question whether it will remain a College and nothing more or will rise and expand into a true University." There were "forces at work," he said, that would divide the nation's institutions of higher learning "clearly on one side or the other of the line." Andrews left no doubt where he thought Brown ought to stand, and he urged the corporation to carry out its duties "more faithfully than ever" by supporting the changes already under way. It was the "proper privilege and destiny" of Brown that the corporation and benefactors "promote her to the estate of a true University," one that would include graduate education.  

Andrews represented his accomplishments—the new scholarly and increasingly secular faculty; the restructured student requirements affecting academics, chapel, and physical culture; the improved scientific administration—matter-of-factly, but in actuality they represented a significant departure from the university's prior mission. He had expanded the university in size and scope, and his challenge to the corporation was that it contribute not to the vision but to its funding: "With Brown University . . . the conditions for such an advance are extraordinarily favorable, and it is my profound conviction that those conditions lay upon its Corporation, Alumni, and friends, a solemn duty forthwith to move it up and out into the larger activity. All of our traditions are honorable and glorious. From the days of Manning down, our standard has been high and our work thorough. The career of the University has been one of slow—sometimes too slow—yet solid progress. External circumstances urge us on." The changes Andrews had wrought prior to 1892 required little in the way of funding, but his larger, grander plans would necessitate a large infusion of funds.

The corporation needed to procure one million dollars within the next year and an
additional million within the next ten years, said Andrews.43 Responding to the report, the corporation formed a committee, the first of its kind, to inquire "into the ways and means by which the results aimed at can be reached," and it invited Andrews to serve on it.44 In forming the committee, the corporation conceded that "the financial question is a most important question, and may be absolutely decisive."45

The 1892 report was both a blueprint for the future of Brown and a review of the changes that Andrews had already made, not least of which was a broader definition of what it meant for a university to be religiously affiliated. Andrews had denounced nondenominational higher education early in his career; and when he took the helm at Brown, he proclaimed his "burning desire to build up this noble seat of learning, and give Baptists near and far, right here on our own soil as good opportunities for all higher learning as they can have at Yale, Harvard, or Cornell." He was distressed by the number of Baptist undergraduates elsewhere when there were only 276 students at Brown.46 The Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Brown University of 1888-89 declared "Religious Culture" to be of first importance and mandated both daily and Sunday chapel attendance.47

In the fall of 1892 Andrews made chapel attendance optional because of a lack of seating.48 Although Andrews reassured the corporation that students were attending as usual, student Israel Strauss wryly congratulated his class in an 1894 "Address to the Undergraduates": "Ninety-four has also shown the true spirit of self-sacrifice and love for humanity, for when, because of lack of room, you were given the option of attending chapel or not, you magnanimously stayed away and thus warranted the trust reposed in you."49 Mandatory attendance was reinstated the following year.

The college at Brown and later a president of Amherst College, recalled the first sermon he heard during his sophomore year at Brown in a letter to Andrews years later: "You stepped out of the pulpit to the platform in front of it and talked about Demosthenes. There have always staid together in my mind the shock of the unexpectedness of the topic and the feeling of its fundamental appropriateness. It made every one of us criticise himself, bringing face to face the two facts—first, that it was the sort of thing we ought to be thinking about, and second, that we ourselves never would have thought about it. I have always been grateful to you for the enforced self criticism which followed from it." Helen Meiklejohn later said that her husband considered this sermon "one of the turning points in his education. . . . Andrews curtailed the conventional amenities common to the first chapel of the year and chose instead to share with the students a topic of substance and significance."50

More in tune with liberal Protestants and William Rainey Harper's University of Chicago than with the traditional Baptists of Rhode Island, Andrews believed that "all knowledge, religious or secular, is sacred." Neither Andrews nor Harper was at all entirely secular: Harper's devotion to the Bible since his conversion at Andrews's Denison University was famous, and Andrews believed the two "mightiest influences that higher education in America has ever felt" were Calvinistic theology and associational psychology.51 Where Andrews and Harper differed from their predecessors was not in Calvinistic theology but in making room as well for associational psychology.

In 1894 Andrews told an audience that he would discuss education "in no narrow and pietistic way, but, as I hope, in a spirit so large and true that all will approve the tone, even if some should dissent from the particulars, of what I shall say." Observers of Brown noticed the university's movement towards this larger, truer spirit: "Dr. Andrews is not a narrow-minded or bigoted denominationalist, but a man of broad catholic sympathies,
comprehensive learning, and commanding force," wrote William Howe Tolman in 1894. "He is singularly well adapted for the work of completely emancipating that college from sectarian influences and establishing it on the broad foundation of higher scholarship and good letters." Andrews would have denied that he "emancipated" the college from its Baptist roots, but as he extended Brown's mission, he also extended it more explicitly to non-Baptists.

The religious character of Brown changed in both form and content during Andrews's presidency. The school's 1896-97 catalog was the first in which admission requirements did not include "good character." A greater change came the following year, when the heading "Religious Culture" was replaced by "Religious Services," and the sentence that had begun the section for at least twenty years, proclaiming the topic to be "of utmost importance," disappeared. By 1898 Andrews had come to believe "that sacred cause which brings us together" was education itself, and he wanted education "in the interest of no sect, section or party." Andrews was not alone in his promotion of a broader, humanistic religious culture in the university. His contemporary at Harvard, Charles Eliot, was famously quoted as announcing that "a university cannot be built upon a sect" but must include an entire educated nation. Eliot and his colleagues were expanding the mission of the religious New England colleges beyond their denominations to include the whole of humanity.

With Brown expanding its student body, as behooved a university whose sphere of influence included the entire nation, Andrews felt compelled to reassure the corporation that any apprehension it might have about the increase in the student population would be unwarranted; one does not see how it can well be avoided if the University wishes to do its part in providing American youth with the facilities for securing higher education," he said in 1892. It was no less than Brown's patriotic duty to do its part in providing for the common education to an ever-expanding group of people. The impetus for the creation of the Women's College (which would be renamed Pembroke College in 1928) came from the same sense of duty; in fact, Andrews's sense of duty was so clear that the admission of women, first to examinations and then to their own classes taught at night and to laboratories shared with the men, was not presented to the corporation as a subject for debate. The admission of women was decided upon in the manner that the Graduate School was created: entirely in faculty committees (all headed by Andrews), a major change in university governance.

Professor A. Clinton Crowell later recalled that Andrews originally paid the faculty for their services at the Women's College out of his own pocket: "The Doctor sent the early checks himself: Paymaster, President, prime-mover, soul of the whole plan." The creation of the Women's College, a major achievement, was but a part of Andrews's vision of what a university should be and what it should do. Under Andrews, Brown expanded its curriculum to attract a broader range of traditional students, and it added extension courses in Providence, Woonsocket, and Cranston for the cultural enrichment of working people throughout the state.

As the number of people on the expanding campus grew rapidly, the nature of what the university provided them changed as well. Encouraging teaching in "scientific" fields, Andrews established the bachelor of science degree and civil and mechanical engineering programs in 1891 and 1892, and he overturned Ezekiel Robinson's prohibition on the teaching of evolutionary theory. Andrews also brought to Brown the elective system of study that was sweeping colleges across the country. Under Charles Eliot, Harvard had the most extreme curriculum, one that left course selection almost entirely
open to student choice, but requirements were similarly falling away at nearly all universities. Reformers across the country believed that any subject had the potential for moral bracing, and that there should be "no aristocracy as between scientific truths."59 Most radically at Brown, Andrews made the senior capstone course in Practical Ethics an elective. Practical Ethics had been long considered the central academic experience of the college, taught by the president himself.60

Many of the older members of the faculty and the corporation probably agreed with Andrews's contemporary, Irving Babbitt, a professor of French at Harvard, who rued the day when "the wisdom of the ages is to be as naught compared with the inclination of a sophomore."61 Nevertheless, the ratio of required courses to elective courses steadily decreased, until the college's 1893-94 catalog stated that "the work of the senior year, with the exception of Gymnasium practice, consists entirely of elective studies, fifteen hours per week." Only three years earlier the gymnasium had not even been built; now it housed the last remaining requirement for seniors.

Physical culture was now a part of the required curriculum, but intercollegiate athletics, although not required, presented a larger disruption to campus life. Much of Andrews's 1895 address to the corporation consisted of a defense of intercollegiate athletics, and the topic was often debated among the faculty as well. At the urging of the Board of Managers of the Brown University Base Ball Association, by the spring of 1891 the faculty had changed afternoon lecture hours to accommodate practice schedules, and within a year nearly all of Wednesday afternoons were freed up for sports competitions. Overwhelmed by special requests in 1893, the faculty created a Standing Committee on Athletics to handle all matters but the most controversial, such as the propriety of the game [football] itself and a Saturday holiday from classes for the entire school to watch a "Base Ball meet" in Worcester, Massachusetts.62

Brown men (and women) turned their attention to an ever-increasing number of activities during the first five years of Andrews's administration. The new Brown Daily Herald, itself a product of this trend, reported the "organizational-multiplying tendency" that the larger student body now supported. By the 1890s even the social world of Brown men had expanded outside the college to the extent that in February 1892 the Providence society newspaper About Town launched a column devoted to "Social News" at the university.63 To the graduates of the Brown classes of the 1850s, 1860s, and even the 1870s who sat on the corporation, this was a very different university indeed.
The funds Andrews requested in 1892 were not forthcoming. The depression of 1893, the most severe the United States had seen, strained the resources of colleges and universities across the country. The infant Stanford University nearly closed its doors, and many established colleges struggled to maintain their financial commitments. The only university unaffected was the University of Chicago, which was supported almost single-handedly by John D. Rockefeller.

Andrews had declined a position as head of philosophy and dean of the graduate school at the University of Chicago in 1892, but the apparently strained relationship between Andrews and the corporation was tested in 1894 when William Rainey Harper made yet another offer. Andrews's decision to remain at Brown galvanized his supporters. A student rally—the largest gathering of its kind that had ever been seen on campus—proved, students claimed, "how closely the President himself is associated with the life of the college." The students had only one criticism of Andrews: that the university, under his administration, continued to lack financial resources, "as is well known to every Brown man." Andrews's decision to "abide by her fortunes at the present crisis" sparked renewed cries among alumni for support of their alma mater, but at the same time it raised questions about the future of the institution and the president's role within it.

The depression of 1893 and its aftermath created both an economic and a cultural crisis, and Andrews found himself diverging from the major financial supporters of the university. In 1893-94 he delivered a series of six economics lectures, including one, "Economic Evils due to Social Conditions," that he opened with "the discussion of the faults, wrongs, and dislocations characteristic of the present economic régime." With the extent of the nationwide depression only beginning to become obvious, Andrews offered a critique of the entire economic system. Although this was done "without particular regard to the question of whether such infelicities have their immediate source in legislation, in the nature of society, or in men's selfishness and perversity," his implication throughout was that there was a moral problem with the way business was conducted in the United States. It was a view shared by other politicians and intellectuals who considered themselves progressive.

By 1894 every constituency at Brown was painfully aware of the university's financial straits: students could not help seeing the rise in their tuition; faculty were well aware of the drop in their salaries; and alumni were beset with repeated requests for donations. Corporation members, meanwhile, were making up the deficit in the daily operating expenses of the university. With the corporation and the faculty both feeling pressured financially, many in each cohort blamed Andrews's priorities for the dire conditions at Brown. Four senior members of the faculty wrote to Andrews to request a salary increase, saying that while they "fully appreciate the present condition of the University and the many pressing needs that are crowding upon it," they were "of the opinion that this request should be considered in advance [sic] of plans for further extension." The distribution of funds involved choices, and Andrews had chosen to give precedence to university expansion.

It became clear to Andrews himself that his cherished plans might not be fully realized for financial reasons. In February 1894 he wrote to a prospective instructor that "in common with other colleges, we shall next year feel the peril of the hard times, and cannot be as liberal with money now as we would desire." A month later Andrews had to write again to say that even the salary he had offered in February was not possible.

The situation only worsened. The treasurer's preliminary report in April 1894 "realizes my worst fears," said Andrews. Salaries were frozen, and both library aides were to be laid off. The tone of the president's June report to the corporation was not a promising one. The nation was still in the grip of a depression,
which made fund-raising nearly impossible while it increased both the number of young men applying for financial assistance and the general operating expenses of the university.

The relationship between the president and the corporation worsened along with the financial situation. A member of the class of 1895 later recalled “that through the college years of ’95-’96, ’96-’97 (which was spent abroad [by Andrews]), and ’97-’98, there was progressively growing tension between him and the Trustees,” and that “the tension at the close of the college year of ’96 made him really ill.” The president’s reports to the corporation took on an increasingly defensive tone as Andrews tried to justify the growth of student athletics, the expanded role of the faculty in administration, and even the larger student body. Many of his explanations were clearly responses to objections that had been privately voiced. What was not spoken aloud, at least until his 1896-97 sabbatical, was that many of these complaints were directed at Andrews personally. Although he lamented the “cruel fate” of curtailed fiscal resources, “which must evoke protest from every true friend of the University,” some members of the corporation did not see fate as quite so inevitable. They looked instead to Andrews’s well-known and increasingly publicized views on matters of political economy—views in sharp contrast to those held by New England Republicans and conservative Democrats alike—and thought that these views made Brown unattractive to potential donors.

The unrest that was pervading the country was quickly coming to a boil with the 1896 presidential election, one of the most contentious in history. Democrat William Jennings Bryan led the populist crusade for the free coinage of silver at a 16:1 ratio, while the banking and moneyed interests of the East, the traditional sources of financial support for Brown, worked hard to ensure that Republican William McKinley would represent their interests. This was a realigning election in American politics, the Republicans seeking to become the majority party as the Democrats split over the question of the gold standard. There was a general sense that much rested upon the outcome of this election, and its implications were not lost on the Brown community.

The national debates about money and capital, wealth and poverty, had come to Brown University even before the 1896 election, not only as a matter of course but also through the political associations of its president, its fellows and trustees, and its faculty. As the university’s president and a leading Baptist intellectual, Andrews was both a public and a political figure. "An easy writer," he reached a broad audience with his opinions on the economic issues of the day. His textbooks were used by students in colleges, high schools, and academies; his speeches were reported in newspapers and seminary newsletters; his articles appeared in popular magazines and scholarly journals alike. Everything he wrote was prominently attributed to "E. Benjamin Andrews, D.D., President of Brown University." His basic economic message was a commendation of “our advance toward socialism,” with socialism understood as state intervention in affairs from prohibition to public education to “the extension of government surveillance over great industries” and regulation of trusts. Andrews’s views were not aligned with business: “Great corporations and combinations, it was now well understood, could not pursue their ends merely for profit, irrespective of public interest.”

Seeing no separation between morality and practical affairs, Andrews actively supported the Social Gospel, which sought to align the social order with Christian principles. Historian Laurence Veysey has characterized the research of that generation of scholars as carried out “for some ulterior (and serviceable) purpose, not primarily for the intrinsic rewards of discovery.” It is a description that can be applied as well to Andrews’s reasoned support of his beliefs and values; for Andrews, the serviceable purpose
was nothing less than the perfection of society, a practical aim that encompassed both the individual and the body politic.

As Brown students were aware, Andrews was the chairman of a committee of one hundred of Providence's leading citizens who sought to study and suppress vice. "It was not considered safe to approach a roulette table or ... the bar of the Mahogany Palace," one student remembered, "for was it not known that Bennie had suddenly appeared in this or that resort at various times" with "a swift glance of recognition at such students as happened to be present[2]" Politically, although his Republican sympathies had caused trouble for him at Denison, Andrews was considered democratic "in the wide, public sense" and had moved away from the Republican Party by the 1880s. In 1885 he debated Nelson Aldrich at the Young Men's Republican Club of Providence, taking on that prominent Republican senator on the controversial issue of the tariff.

Beyond his duties to Brown, Andrews traveled in influential circles; he was considered a possible Democratic nominee for the Senate, he consulted with Grover Cleveland during the president's summer in Newport in 1892, and his name was used in William Jennings Bryan's 1896 presidential campaign. In 1892 President Benjamin Harrison, a Republican, named him one of the American delegates to the International Monetary Conference in Belgium, where he spoke in favor of bimetallism while "setting forth in an emphatic manner his conviction that the United States will never be willing to give up gold for silver." Advocating bimetallism in a speech in Colorado during the summer of 1893, he was surprised to find himself insufficiently radical for the audience there, whereas he believed that he might be too radical for the political climate in Rhode Island.

Rather than becoming more politically involved, Andrews focused on higher education, "a leading phenomenon of our age," thus leaving himself open to the criticism that he was negatively influencing young minds by teaching his political views in the classroom. Before 1896 he advocated tax reform, unpopular in New England, and the student paper reported his views approvingly. One of Andrews's students recalled his influence forty years later: "I remember how deep was his conviction that a policy of free trade by the nations of the world would be the best and wisest for all concerned, and through his influence I became a lifelong convert to this doctrine fundamental to world peace." The depression of 1893 and the polarizing election of 1896 politicized academic talk of the economy and brought new scrutiny to articles and letters that Andrews had written years earlier. Bryan's thundering against "the encroachments of organized wealth," those "idle holders of idle capital," echoed many of Andrews's earlier writings. In an 1889 textbook Andrews had maintained that "economics, in discussing wealth, has of course also to canvass the conditions of wealth." Andrews believed the misuse of wealth to have severe social consequences in the 1890s: "There was too great rush for wealth. We became nervous. Nervous diseases increased alarmingly. We read, but only market reports. Think, we did not; we only reckoned." Andrews's advocacy of free silver was considered particularly helpful to the Bryan campaign because a New England intellectual was the antithesis of the middle class's image of a free-silver advocate, which most resembled "Sockless Jerry" Simpson or some other undignified type. Andrews himself was in Europe during the campaign, but when Bryan came to Providence on one of his few eastern tours, the Nebraskan invoked the reputation and views of Benjamin Andrews: "When I define an honest dollar as a dollar which does not change in its purchasing power ... I am simply giving you a definition which has been given to the world by that distinguished educator who lives in this city, and who is an honor not only to this city and to this State, but to the nation." Here Bryan quoted from Andrews's An Honest Dollar, then continued: "When Prof. Andrews described the ideal money as a money whose unit is steadfast ...
[in] purchasing power, he planted himself upon the solid rock.”

In addition to Bryan’s quotation of Andrews’s writing on the campaign trail, a pair of personal letters that Andrews had written years earlier were published during the campaign without his knowledge. An 1886 letter stated his conviction that “silver comes nearer to being ideal money than gold.” When Andrews returned to Providence on June 30, 1897, Nathaniel Davis, a professor of mathematics at Brown, was not alone in “feeling very blue about the newspaper reports of Dr. Andrews’ sentiments” in regard to bimetallism.

Rhode Island Republicans who had long financially supported Brown University objected strongly to Andrews’s association with the Bryan campaign, and so too did most of New England’s Democrats. Reflecting the overall conservatism of New England politics and its mercantile interests, local Democrats supported the maintenance of a gold standard. Alonzo Williams, a Brown professor of modern languages, requested and received a seven-week leave of absence in the fall of 1896 to go west and campaign for the Republican Party. Historian Laurence Veysey wrote of “the tacit identification of the [American] university with the sober elements of the society” and provided examples of routine campaigning for the Republican Party among professors and presidents at other universities, notably Columbia and Harvard.

President Andrews spent the 1896-97 academic year in Europe, unable even to vote in the election that shone such a controversial light on his presidency. A close friend believed that “the tension at the close of the college year of ’96 made him really ill, and when he went abroad that summer he was completely broken in spirit.” There are hints that his political views were a matter of discussion prior to his departure, as he wrote a friend, Isabel Bliss, of those “infernal reporters who dogged me like imps before I sailed,” and that difficulties at the university contributed to the breakdown of his health. Rumors later circulated—and were emphatically denied—that the corporation had intended to give him a leave of absence from which he would not return to Brown. In fact he required a sabbatical to restore his health, as he was ‘quite badly broken up’ prior to leaving, unable even to preside over commencement in June 1896, although he did attend to distribute diplomas. He originally intended to return in time for the spring term, but when he found himself “steadily but slowly improved,” he extended his sabbatical until June 1897.

While abroad, Andrews maintained a correspondence with Benjamin Franklin Clarke, the university’s acting president, in which he rejoiced in “the good order and general prosperity of Brown University in my absence” and noted that “everyone who has written me has testified to the happy character of your management.” Such “happy character,” which involved little in the way of policy change, apparently extended to financial matters, since no deficit appeared
in the university’s finances for the first time in several years.\textsuperscript{96} Many trustees did not see it as a coincidence that fiscal affairs improved when their increasingly controversial president was absent.

At its June 1897 meeting the corporation passed a resolution introduced by Joseph Walker, a Brown trustee and the chairman of the Congressional Banking and Currency Committee, “after remarks from several members of the Corporation, showing more specifically the reason for it”: “Resolved, that a committee be appointed to confer with the President in regard to the interests of the University.”\textsuperscript{97} Walker had not attended any meetings since June 1892, and it is clear that he attended this one in order to introduce the resolution.\textsuperscript{98} That July an unsigned article, believed to be written by trustee H. L. Wayland, put the following words in Walker’s mouth: “The college is injured by the public utterances of the President. I do not speak of his views on ordinary political questions, such as Protection or the reverse. I refer to the principles which lie at the foundation of Christian civilization. Gifts to the amount of thousands or perhaps, millions of dollars are withheld from the college, because business men protest against the teachings of the President on subjects of economic morality. When the former President retired, Dr. Andrews was my first choice; he has been my guest; it is only from a sense of duty to the university that I have spoken.”\textsuperscript{99}

Judge Francis Wayland, Judge Thomas Durfee, and Chancellor William Goddard were appointed a committee to meet with Andrews to discuss those “interests of the university.” The four met amicably in the president’s home for two hours on 16 July 1897. When Andrews requested a written statement, the committee members responded by expressing the “highest appreciation” for his work and “at the same time professed for him personally the warmest admiration and regard.” They expressed a “wish for a change in only one particular,” in reference to “his views upon a question which constituted a leading issue in the recent presidential election and which is still predominant in national politics.” Andrews’s position on that issue was “so contrary to the views generally held by the friends of the University” that it dissuaded donors and inhibited the school’s ability “to prosecute with success the grand work on which it has entered.” For all these reasons, the corporation sought “not a renunciation of these views, as honestly entertained by him, but a forbearance, out of regard for the interests of the University, to promulgate them.”\textsuperscript{100}

The grand plan that Andrews outlined in his 1892 report suffered because of a lack of financial support, and no one was more aware of that than he. Whether it was his utterances or the national depression that inhibited the university’s fund-raising was unclear. “[W]ho will succeed in getting money for the college from gentlemen who have given nothing since the beginning of Dr. Andrews’ administration—and nothing before it that we remember,” students sarcastically wondered.\textsuperscript{101} But the students may have been too cavalier. Local newspapers reported without challenge that “the university had already lost gifts and legacies which otherwise would have come to it,” reinforcing the perception that Andrews’s political views hindered fund-raising.\textsuperscript{102} During the summer of 1897 several Brown supporters wrote of money and students that would have come to Brown were it not for the views of its president—and not just his political views. James Freeman told the corporation about a woman who had Brown in her will but “revoked it, as she told me, because of Andrews’ recognizing the Catholic Church as Christian.” Others were more general. One member of the class of 1866 wrote expressing his hope that “the prosperity of this University may be attained by the election of a man sound on the questions of the day.”\textsuperscript{103} It was commonly held that support for Andrews and support for the university were closely tied.

Of particular concern was a potential gift from John D. Rockefeller, whose son was a member of the class of 1897. Henry Demarest Lloyd, an ardent Andrews supporter who
summered in Rhode Island, recalled "the Trustees of Brown University soberly discussing the dismissal of Pres. Andrews in order to get a million dollars from Rockefeller." In a 1940 letter, however, John D. Rockefeller Jr. was emphatic in stating that his father—committed to the University of Chicago—had never intended to make a large gift to Brown. Rockefeller in fact later gave a large gift to the University of Nebraska when Andrews was serving as chancellor there. Rockefeller's actual intentions in regard to Brown were likely less important to the corporation than the possibility that he might make a gift.

Throughout its "free and friendly discussion" over "all the aspects of the question" with Andrews, the corporation's committee assured the president that it "could not doubt his willingness to accede to any reasonable wish of the Corporation." Andrews gave the committee the impression that he never intended to promulgate his views, although "he might have been more on his guard to prevent publicity." With the committee's assurance that it sought "no pledge, promise, or engagement," Andrews stated that "so far as practical, he would be more careful in the future." The corporation's three representatives left believing he would comply; Andrews had said "more than once that such a course would be quite in accordance with his feelings."

But the next day Andrews wrote to the university's Advisory and Executive Committee that "however much [he] might desire to do so," he was unable to accede to the corporation's request that he curb the free expression of his views "without surrendering that reasonable liberty of utterance which my predecessors, my faculty colleagues, and myself have hitherto enjoyed." According to one account of his resignation, Andrews "gained a good deal of courage" during his sabbatical year, and thus he submitted his resignation as president of Brown University because he "was not a man who could modify his convictions to please another group. The Chancellor at the time was a man of similar firmness of attitude, and I think he was the leader in the opposition." A friend remembered a conversation in which Andrews attributed his difficulties not to one man but to a small group of corporation members. Immediately after Andrews resigned to protect his "reasonable liberty of utterance," his supporters at Brown and across the country began to clamor for the right of "academical freedom." The American concept of academic freedom was emerging as an adaptation of the kind of free inquiry modeled at the new research universities. Historian George Marsden characterizes this as the moment when German ideals of scientific exploration met American ideals of free speech. "The limits, if any, of that free speech were not always clear, however. In his 1902 "Academic Freedom," John Dewey made a distinction between "teaching bodies, called by whatever name," that had ecclesiastical or political tenets and were free "to maintain and propagate [a] creed," and "the university proper," which had as its mission "to investigate truth." Andrews's 1892 plan to make Brown University "a university in fact and not in name only" was a central, if generally unrecognized, component of his dispute with the corporation.

The corporation's response to Andrews's political views stemmed from its belief in the gold standard as a bulwark of Christian civilization. Historian Julie Reuben argues that in this period "faculty were accorded intellectual but not moral freedom, freedom of ideas but not of behavior." She cites the examples of two professors at the University of Chicago during the early twentieth century: one, who held unorthodox theological views at that Baptist university, was protected by a commitment to academic freedom, while the other was considered unfit to teach after he divorced. Rockefeller repeatedly endorsed "freedom of inquiry, freedom of opinion, and freedom of utterance" at the University of Chicago, but these freedoms were always to be exercised "within the limits of public morality."
terms, writing that "never since slavery days" had there been such a pressing question, and that he considered "the money question at the present time the greatest question of civilization." In conceding that economic views were, in fact, moral views, Andrews sided with his professional persecutors rather than with his defenders.

Andrews's strongest defenders came from the new academic professional organizations. The American Historical Association and the American Economic Association, founded in 1884 and 1889 respectively and composed almost entirely of men under thirty-five, began defining academic freedom in the new universities as a professor's ability to speak publicly on areas of his knowledge and competence. Academic professional organizations took up the causes of Andrews and other academics not in defense of an established concept of academic freedom but in an attempt to establish the limits of what was protected. The most notorious case was that of Edward A. Ross, an economist at Stanford University. Ross wrote and spoke in support of William Jennings Bryan's campaign, municipal ownership of streetcar lines, and restriction on immigration, views that ran contrary to the politics of Jane Lathrop Stanford, the university's surviving founder. Forced to leave Stanford in 1900, Ross went to the University of Nebraska, where E. Benjamin Andrews had become chancellor.

The Andrews Papers overflow with pre-printed petitions requesting the corporation to ask Andrews to withdraw his resignation, but of the many letters addressed to the corporation at that time, at least half came from those who wanted Andrews to leave. They invoked "the best interests of the college" and believed the corporation to be in the right. A common thread was that "liberty of utterance" should apply equally to all: "That which seems most absurd in said protest is the claim for liberty of thoughts and action in behalf of Faculty while denying the same exact thing to the "Trustees," was the way one letter writer put it, and while he recognized that there was a difference of opinion, he thought it absurd that the president of a Baptist institution should (in the words of another letter writer) "disgrace that situation" by promulgating unsound religious views.

The alumni and friends of Brown who supported the corporation often invoked the issue of influence. A member of the class of 1857 wrote that Andrews's free-silver views "became effective only when uttered by the president of Brown University." As the head of the nation's leading Baptist university, Andrews was in a position of national influence, and he himself acknowledged that bimetallism was "a doctrine, which, I admit, I have, to a certain extent, publicly advocated." But as harmful as Andrews's public influence might have been, many Brown men were more concerned about his direct influence on the impressionable men in his charge. James Freeman recalled "a number of young men who were sent to other colleges because their parents would not allow them to come under the influence" of President Andrews; J. L. Mahoney cabled that Andrews was "not fit to teach the youth of this country Americanism." A. B. Jordan expressed a representative theme: "With admiration for him personally, I do not think he can uphold the usefulness and renown of the University." Voicing their concerns not only about bimetallism but also about the president's liberalism on educational and religious matters, his detractors argued that Andrews's politics interfered with his ability to lead Brown, and they wanted the corporation to take appropriate action. While there was a growing sense that faculty members deserved academic freedom, Andrews was not merely a faculty member but the university's president.

The younger members of the faculty rallied around Andrews during the summer of 1897. Three men led the defense: Henry B. Gardner, of the Department of Political Economy; J. Franklin Jameson, of the Department of History; and Courtney Langdon, of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures. Sharing a set of personal and academic values; these men considered themselves scholars in a broad sense, and they framed the question entirely in terms of free speech and free inquiry. "For my part," wrote
Jameson, "I despise [the trustees'] bigotry and ingratitude, and also their pretense of solemn regard for the well-being of the college, for which the whole pack of them has not done as much as Andrews alone. Goddard and Durfee and Wayland are to show him the muzzle, it seems. I hope the good man will not back down. It will be a bad state of things for us all if a lot of conceited parvenus like Joe Walker, who get put on boards of trustees simply because they are rich, can dictate to us what we shall say both inside and outside the college."  

While concerned about Andrews personally, Jameson also recognized the larger issue at stake as he took the lead in organizing the faculty protest. Even some of Andrews's closest friends considered that the protest of the Brown faculty was more about a guild mentality and a self-conscious role as professors against the dictatorial trustees than it was about Andrews.  

Jameson found ready assistance in Henry Gardner. Four years earlier Gardner had had his own altercation with trustee Joseph Walker, who objected to the texts that Gardner used in political economy classes. When Gardner refused to change, Walker temporarily blocked what was to be a routine salary increase for him. Andrews had supported Gardner's right to teach without interference, and he convinced the Advisory and Executive Committee that "longer delay in determining Prof. Gardner's salary would be detrimental to the University." The committee also "did not feel that it had authority to comply with Mr. Walker's request," and Gardner received his salary increase. Walker let the matter rest, but he raised similar issues in 1895, when he objected to an undergraduate thesis and again entered a "most hearty protest" about Gardner's teaching on economic questions.  

As the younger Brown faculty formulated their official protest, "An Open Letter Addressed to the Corporation of Brown University by Members of the Faculty of That Institution," they fomented similar protests by professors and college presidents, associations of the alumni of both Brown and the Women's College, and any other interested parties they could reach with their pens. The faculty's letter, anonymously authored by Jameson, was signed by twenty-four Brown professors, including "no persons of lesser rank than assistant professors, that is, none but members of the Faculty in the strictest sense." This qualification was important to the signatories, since it gave them legitimacy within the university's structure of governance. The younger professors at Brown and elsewhere were fundamentally different from their older colleagues; they were educated as scholars and appointed to their positions more on the strength of their research and ability to instruct graduate students than on their uplifting moral qualities. The loyalties of the younger Ph.D.s were more closely aligned with the national scholarly community than with the local community of their university.  

Nearly all of the older professors refused to sign the letter. The most senior professor to sign was Benjamin Clarke, Brown's perennial acting president. When Clarke cabled to "Use name Clarke," the faculty committee responsible for the open letter was so surprised that it cabled back that "all senior to Jameson probably refuse." Indeed, after Clarke replied "Let name stand Clarke," he remained the only professor senior to Jameson who did not refuse to sign. Some, like Nathaniel Davis, refused because they were "feeling very blue about the newspaper reports of Dr. Andrews sentiments." While Jameson did not agree with Andrews on the silver question, he signed both from personal friendship and in support of the "honorable and priceless traditions of academical freedom."  

The generation gap between those who signed the public letter and those who did not gave rise to speculation that the faculty was intrinsically divided. Jameson believed, however, that "there is little divergence of opinion in the Faculty respecting Andrews, and no such split as the papers have inferred, from the fact that some (in most cases because they disliked the method) did not sign." Andrews himself was troubled by the impropriety of the publicity; later he deplored "the studied effort visible
during the summer to produce estrangement between the Corporation and myself.”\textsuperscript{132} While Alonzo Williams, who had campaigned for the Republicans in 1896, was known "to applaud" the action of the corporation in seeking Andrews's resignation and Alpheus Packard, a politically conservative professor of geology, also supported the trustees, the other senior members of the faculty were silent.\textsuperscript{133} The generation gap was a matter not of principle but of manners, as was evidenced by a second letter urging Andrews to withdraw his resignation. This was a personal letter, not a public one, and it was signed by many faculty members who declined to sign the open letter. At least five professors senior to Jameson were among the signers, including Davis, the man who felt "very blue" about Andrews's silver sentiments.\textsuperscript{134}

Andrews decided to "fight the Corporation not at all," in spite of "the staggering blow" he had felt when it asked him to publicly recant his support for free silver. He wrote his friend (and eventual successor) William H. P. Faunce that he would not fight, because "the world is too wide." In spite of the conflicts that had deepened over his administration, he was surprised to find that "all at once this prop falls, and I find the very men on whom I had depended holding me alone responsible for the poverty of the College, siding with the malcontents."\textsuperscript{135} His decision not to fight was an effort to "retain your esteem so far as I deserve it," he wrote the corporation. He defended "the propriety of [his] personal conduct": "Unfortunate I have been; indiscreet, I believe, I have not been."\textsuperscript{136}

Neither before nor afterwards was Andrews as publicly prominent as he was during the summer of 1897. His cause made the cover of Life magazine, and there were many accounts

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\caption{University Hall, the first building on Brown's Providence campus, was originally called the College Edifice. From 1834 to 1905 its exterior walls were covered with stucco. Photograph, 1892, Brown University Archives.}
\end{figure}
in partisan newspapers and magazines across the country. Secretary of State Richard Olney, a member of the Brown class of 1856 and a former fellow, wrote a public letter in favor of Andrews's right to free speech; and a circulating petition supporting that right was signed by Boston mayor Josiah Quincy and William Lloyd Garrison, the son of the famous abolitionist. Similar petitions in support of Andrews were circulated among academics, Brown alumni, and alumnae of the Women's College. Presidents and professors from many universities, including Princeton professor of jurisprudence Woodrow Wilson and others at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Chicago, wrote publicly or privately to urge the corporation not to accept the proffered resignation.  

The controversy riled all summer until the corporation's meeting on 1 September 1897. On that sunny morning Andrews crossed the street from the president's residence and greeted several corporation members, Joseph Walker among them. Walker and Andrews had not met since the affair began; now the two shook hands and withdrew into a ten-minute conference. No one knows what they said privately, but publicly they were cordial.  

The meeting convened, and all the corporation's summer correspondence was read into the minutes, including Andrews's letter disavowing any part in "the studied effort visible during the summer to produce estrangement between the Corporation and myself" and maintaining that "on my side it has had no effect." Andrews was then invited to "be present to confer with the Corporation on the matter of his resignation," but "while acknowledging the courtesy, [he] deemed it on the whole inexpedient that he should be present." Waiting in his office, he penned a letter to his friend and former student Isabel Bliss: "This is probably the last letter you will ever receive from the humble undersigned on paper marked 'Brown University,' or written from the President's Office in U.H. [University Hall], as this is. I am whiling away the hours in this old office, while the Corporation wrestles with my case in No. 5. Why was a mortal ever born into this world to make so much trouble? There are clergymen, theological professors, bankers, with men of business, and lawyers, spending precious hours over me, which they ought to be putting to some better use."  

Meanwhile, the corporation voted to endorse a letter disavowing any intent to restrict Andrews's freedom of speech and expressing "the confident hope" that the president would withdraw his resignation. Five members did not vote; Joseph Walker voted with the majority to decline the resignation. A committee of three trustees sympathetic to Andrews delivered the letter to the president's office.  

Andrews did not immediately withdraw his resignation. In a letter to Bliss the day after the meeting, he availed himself of "the chance to regret the very gloomy epistle issued yesterday. I had hardly sent it off when a committee of the Corporation came over from No. 5 to my office with a long resolution from the August Curatores requesting me to withdraw my resignation." His response was equivocal: "This creates for me a new situation, perplexing enough, yet certainly pleasanter than the one I was in before." He did not attend the first two faculty meetings that fall, and on 7 September he wrote to the corporation to express his continued uncertainty, wondering if "all the interests involved will be best subserved by my withdrawal." Then, on 11 September, he withdrew his resignation.  

When he announced his intention to stay, there was a "record-breaking celebration.""Sayles Hall never saw anything like the scene that ensued when Benny entered the pulpit to open the first Chapel. The undergraduates had been holding in all summer while the Trustees and the Alumni and the Faculty had had their say. That very morning the papers had announced that President Andrews withdraws his resignation. . . . The match that set off the explosion was Benny's entrance and the student body, led by the Seniors and Faculty, kept him standing as long as he would stand for it."  

Students hoped for "the greatest harmony between the college and its esteemed and beloved president," but such harmony did not
materialize. Andrews's friends were concerned. Faunce thought that the outcome was "a happy result for Brown," but that the crisis was "all because he is a sick man. He is emwie [sic], hasty, nervous, and his vacillation this past summer is indefensible." Optimistic that "the cyclone has passed on, and not all is ruin in its path," Andrews himself hoped that the best interests of Brown might prevail, since "both parties in the debate found themselves forced to exact [sic] the importance of the old University." The ensuing academic year, however, would prove difficult.

Andrews "struggled on for the year '97-'98 with increasing distress of spirit" before he resigned a final time. Many records from that year, including the Advisory and Executive Committee's minutes and all of Andrews's personal papers, are missing from the Brown University Archives, but all participants later recalled an atmosphere of unresolved tension and petty disputes. A younger member of the faculty recalled a conversation in which Andrews indicated that he felt forced to resign: "The same element (I suspect he said 'bunch'), that opposed me before my first resignation blocks everything I try to do for the College, every plan I try to initiate for the good of Brown," he quoted Andrews as saying, "I am of no further use here."

The resignation was not unexpected by those on campus. William Whitman Bailey, a professor of botany, wrote to a former colleague, "Andrews is going. I cannot say I am sorry. I welcomed him when he came; now I can speed the parting guest. Lord send our next is a gentleman." His correspondent, a former Brown professor, replied, "I was not surprised to hear of it after my recent visit to Providence. Though I should have been before that visit." Jameson was perplexed: "Whom in the world can the Corporation persuade to take the job of reigning over us?" he wondered as he surveyed the situation.

After the uproar in the summer of 1897, the job did not, in fact, seem entirely attractive. The corporation's first choice, James Taylor of Vassar College, declined, and its second choice took much convincing. W. H. P. Faunce, Brown class of 1880 and pastor of Rockefeller's New York City church, accepted the corporation's offer only after consulting William Rainey Harper, Acting President Clarke, and even Andrews himself. "I feel the greatness of the opportunity," he confided to Clarke. But Faunce worried about his role: "I feel that Brown University requires at the present time a peculiar order of business ability. . . . Dr. Andrews was a great success as an educator, as an administrator, as a teacher. He left Providence solely because he could not raise money. No one could hope to surpass him as a teacher; the new administration will be judged, I fear, solely by its financial success or failure."

Faunce began his term as Brown's ninth president under "weather conditions . . . not altogether satisfactory nor as promising as a
cautious mariner might desire,” as Otis Randall, a Brown professor and later dean, put it. “There was not absolute unanimity of opinion on the part of the friends of the University as to what the future policy should be.”

The uncontroversial Faunce was chosen for the contrast with his predecessor. He reunited the faculty, transforming it into what one faculty member later said was in “so true and vital a sense an academic family.” He also took steps to “bring our corporation into closer touch with our Faculty and to make them acquainted with our present needs” by appointing a committee of visitation for each department. This committee would “make to the Corporation any suggestions or recommendations regarding the needs and possibilities of the department.” Thus Faunce kept the corporation involved in the daily workings of the university, but in a circumscribed way.

Using the infrastructure that Andrews had created and money that he himself was able to raise with an uncontroversial administration and a robust national economy, Faunce completed the transformation of Brown from an old-time college to a modern university. With the president administrating this university broadly, the position of dean was established to handle most of the student matters. Over the course of his thirty-year tenure, Faunce lost the title of Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy that all of his predecessors had held; he was no longer a member of the faculty. The “scientific” reorganization that Andrews had begun at Brown was complete. When he became chancellor of the University of Nebraska, Andrews applied the same principles at that institution, where he hired several veterans of academic-freedom disputes elsewhere. Under his administration Nebraska became one of the “recognized havens for dissent” in American higher education.

In 1901 the Brown corporation elected E. Benjamin Andrews a trustee of the university, and in 1903 he publicly renounced bimetallism. When he returned for a meeting, “the students marched down to the station, unhitched his carriage from the horses, and pulled it up the hill themselves.”

Andrews filled almost every possible role during his fifty-year association with Brown: he began as a student with a family legacy; he returned as a professor; he served as president; and finally he sat on the university's governing board. These were years of change, much of which he himself brought about. He moved the university forward, though unevenly; in the words of one admirer, “He succeeded in the center but failed around the edges.” His vision of “a university in fact and not in name only” seemed progressive when he announced it in 1892, but the national modernizing trends in higher education meant that the secularization, elective system, graduate study, and Women’s College would become as unremarkable as they were necessary.

Brown’s astounding growth notwithstanding, the college in 1898 was still a small community, and academic quarrels were still “family quarrels.” The conflict between Andrews and the corporation was more complicated than most recognized during that summer of 1897. As president, Andrews had challenged nearly every element of the nature of Brown University, not just its corporation’s politics; like other college presidents across the country, he was struggling to move his school into the age of the university. But Brown’s corporation had lost control over the man it had appointed, and although the issues in dispute were substantial, the quarrel between the corporation and the president was ultimately a family quarrel over the right of institutional governance more than it was a quarrel over any one of Andrews’s reforms. Bennie Andrews was the last man who could be both an old-style college president and a modern university administrator at Brown, and the modernization he began there would never again be challenged.


4. There is some controversy as to precisely which positions Andrews was offered at Chicago.


25. Gilman P. Robinson, President Ezekiel Robinson's son, had been the registrar. The discovery of the theft was a source of great embarrassment for the older Robinson and was one of the primary reasons for his resignation in 1889.


28. Arnold B. Chace to Andrews, 3 Aug. 1891, Corporation Papers. See also Chace to Andrews, 14, 26 August 1891, Corporation Papers. Chace did not resign after this incident.


35. In 1893 the name of the department was changed to Greek Literature and History.


37. Andrews to John D. Rockefeller, 15 Jan. 1890, John D. Rockefeller Papers, Rockefeller University, New York,
quoted in Hansen, "Gallant, Stalwart Bennie," 203.

38. Andrews, Report of the President, 1892. 9, 30, 12-14, Brown University Archives.

39. Ibid., 20, 22.

40. Ibid. 23-25.

41. Ibid., 33-34.

42. Ibid., 34.

43. Ibid., 28, 34. This million dollars in 1892 was equivalent to somewhere between twenty and one hundred million dollars in 2006, depending on the method used for calculating relative value.

44. Charles Colby to Thomas D. Anderson, 16 July 1892, Corporation Papers.

45. Committee on President's Report to E. Benjamin Andrews, 1892, Andrews Papers. The committee members were Rowland Hazard, William Goddard, Andrew Jennings, and Andrews.


49. Strauss was the first Jewish student to matriculate at Brown. Quoted in Seebert J. Goldowsky, "First Jewish Students at Brown University," Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes 11 (November 1993): 311.


51. Quoted in Marsden, Soul of the American University, 240.


55. Charles Eliot at the inauguration of Daniel Coit Gilman as president of Johns Hopkins University, quoted in Marsden, Soul of the American University, 192.


60. Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Brown University, 1893-94, 93-94, 47.


62. See Andrews, Report of the President, 1895; Faculty Meeting Records, 4:143-44, 194, 303, 323; 5:16.


65. See, as an example, the Young Alumni Association of New York, as discussed in Brunonian, 20 Jan. 1894, 239-40, 244.


73. See, as an example, E. Benjamin Andrews, "Are There Too Many of Us?" North American Review 155 (1892): 566-607. His identification with the university is prominent on this article about the international food supply.

74. E. Benjamin Andrews, The History of the United States from the Earliest Discovery of America to the Present Time, 6 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), 5:369-70. This was one of Andrews' more successful works; after the first edition in 1894, it was reissued in 1903, 1905, 1912, and posthumously in 1922 and 1926.

75. Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 76.


77. See Alexander Meiklejohn, follow-up interview, Meiklejohn Papers.


82. Brunonian, 2 Jan. 1892, 295.


87. Providence Journal, 29 Sept. 1896, quoted in Hansen, "Gallant, Stalwart Bennie," 293. Andrews had written An Honest Dollar while a professor at Cornell University, and the work was republished when he was the president of Brown.

104. Henry Demarest Lloyd to Mr. Pinner, 30 June 1897, Henry Demarest Lloyd Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; copy in Andrews Papers.


106. J. S. Murdoch to J. D. Rockefeller Jr., 5 Nov. 1941, Andrews Papers.


109. Class of 1895 [Bliss?], "President Andrews' Resignation."

110. Frederick Earle Whittaker to J. S. Murdoch, 1 Nov. 1937, Andrews Papers.


112. Marsden, Soul of the American University, 297-98.

113. Ibid., 298.


116. Vessey, Emergence of the American University, 263.


118. Walter H. Barney to Brown University Board of Trustees, 5 Aug. 1897, Andrews Papers.

119. D. S. Bakey to the President of the Board of Trustees of Brown University, 5 Aug. 1897; James Freeman to the Corporation of Brown University, 28 Aug. 1897; Andrews Papers.

120. A. F. Brittiu to the Corporation of Brown University, [1897]; Andrews to Brown University Corporation, 1 Sept. 1897; James Freeman to the Corporation of Brown University, 28 Aug. 1897; J. L. Mahoney to Brown University Trustees, 1897; A. B. Jordan to William Goddard, 7 Aug. 1897; Andrews Papers.


123. See Alexander Meiklejohn, follow-up interview.

124. This episode is summarized in H. M. Wriston to J. S. Murdoch, 19 Mar. 1941, Andrews Papers. Wriston wrote his summary after examining the corporation's and the Advisory and Executive Committee's minutes, access to both of which was restricted at the time. The corporation minutes are now available, but the Advisory and Executive Committee minutes are missing from the Brown University Archives. See also William A. Slade to J. S. Murdoch, 8 Apr. 1935, Andrews Papers.


126. Jameson claimed to have "secretly instigated...a movement of the women graduates, who of course are especially indebted to A." See J. Franklin Jameson to John Jameson, 8 Aug. 1897, Historian's World, 71.

127. "Open Letter."


129. Clarke to Edward Delbarre, telegram, 30 July 1897; Delbarre to Clarke, telegram, 31 July 1897; Clarke to Delbarre, telegram, 16 Aug. 1897; Andrews Papers.


132. Andrews to the Corporation of Brown University, 1 Sept. 1897, Andrews Papers.

133. J. Franklin Jameson to B. F. Clarke, 1 Aug. 1897, Andrews Papers.


135. Andrews to W. H. P. Faunce, 10 July 1897, Faunce Papers, Brown University Archives.

136. Andrews to the Corporation of Brown University, 1 Sept. 1897, Corporation Records, 5:141, 146.

137. Petition to the Secretary of the Corporation of Brown University, 24 Aug. 1897, Andrews Papers.


139. Andrews to the Corporation of Brown University, 1 Sept. 1897, Corporation Records, 5:141.


141. Andrews to Isabel Bliss, 1 Sept. 1897, Andrews Papers.


143. Andrews to Isabel Bliss, 2 Sept. 1897, Andrews Papers.

144. See Faculty Meeting Records, 5:44-46; Andrews to the Corporation of Brown University, 7 Sept. 1897, Andrews Papers.


148. Class of 1895 [Bliss?], "President Andrews' Resignation."

149. F. E. Whittaker to J. S. Murdock, 1 Nov. 1937.


152. W. H. P. Faunce to B. F. Clarke, [May 1899], 11 May 1899, Faunce Papers.

153. W. H. P. Faunce to Alvah Hovey, 20 May 1899, Faunce Papers.


158. See Catalogue of Brown University, 1926-42.

159. Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 416.

160. Andrews to Thomas D. Anderson, 16 July 1901, 17 Feb. 1902, Andrews Papers. Andrews later resigned his trusteeship, as his duties at the University of Nebraska precluded his attendance at the trustees' meetings.

161. Meiklejohn, follow-up interview.


163. Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 333. Here Veysey is writing generally about American universities in the 1890s.