



Oberlin

DB

(15)

Oberlin

Rev A. A. Phelps
Boston
Ms.

of course not certainly known. Some fugitives do stay here
for months; yet we do not deem it quite safe to do so.

The Am. Board may take a step soon (if not
taken already) which will suddenly give development to
an Anti-Slavery missionary organization on a most
efficient scale. If they cast off some valuable Anti-Slavery
missionaries in the Sand. Islands, it will be the signal
for a wide effort to sustain these noble men. I should
think the Board would have foresight enough to see this.

The Board is losing the confidence of the Slavery men in this
region, altho^{ugh} yet many are not quite prepared to withhold
patronage & declare off. It needs but a spark to fall
on the train & the work is done. How soon in the
course of divine Providence, the Board will give the
signal, remains to be seen.

With much respect

Yours truly
Henry Charles

need a multitude of common schools, say at 50 different points in the province. Very few - perhaps none, are advanced enough to need any higher facilities at present, of course you readily see that in this stage of education, there is benefit derivable from taking them away from their own families, where they live sufficiently compact to sustain a district school, as is very generally the case. I learn that since Mr. Wilson has been engrossed in the great scheme at "Gawn" the little schools have languished, & many are defunct; that an unhappy jealousy has arisen between the common school interest & his ^{great} object; suspicious of funds given for the former having been converted to the use of the latter & so - things which show at least the necessity of distinct organization for the two objects.

As to Mr. Wilson himself, he is indefatigable, self-denying, devoted to the colored people & while engaged for the common schools he accomplished great good. I am not sure that he has sufficient comprehension & power of mind, experience, tact, education, &c. to render him precisely the man to create such an institution as may one day be needed at "Gawn". Perhaps he may prove adequate to the work; but since he was just the man to head the common school effort then, I rather regretted to see him leave it. "Let well enough alone".

Obertine will do for the colored people what she can. We have 3 in College, 9 in the regular preparatory Department, & some 30 to 40 in the common school Department. We find it necessary to have a common school for colored adults in their A. B. C. course; because though children in book learning they are really adults & need constant instruction as such, appropriate to their age & circumstances. Colored children we receive naturally into the "Gawn" school with white.

The more advanced colored pupils of Canada might be educated here unless their residence in the state should expose them to arrest & re-enslavement. What our situation in this ^{respect} is to be in future years, is

Wm. H. Bowles,
Oberlin, Apr. 6. 1843.

21

Oberlin April 6. 1843

Dear Brother Phelps

I regret the long delay which attends this answer to your kind letter. It has been occasioned chiefly by a fall of some light perpendicular with my horse & wagon in which I struck upon my head & have been obliged to suspend mental efforts, or much diminish them for some time past. -

Our classical course of study is a real course, including the actual & thorough study of very nearly all which it comprises. I believe the only exceptions are Buchanan's Oration which we have not yet been able to obtain & have not been able yet to publish. The Tusculan Questions have been carried only through the first & longest book, *de humanitate de* otherwise, all that the course contains has been studied by the classes for the past 3 or 4 years, & with small exceptions even since I came here. As to thoroughness of acquisition, I know that the body of the classes need not for comparison with those of Yale as they were when I knew them. The information which you received was probably from some renegade from Oberlin who was no student himself & covered as he best could his own dishonor by slandering the Institution. Of such men we always have some about us; very incompetent witnesses of what is done, for they know little about the recitation room or their books. For one I feel very little solicitude about the reputation of Oberlin on this point; if our chief deficiencies & dangers lay here I should feel relieved. Moral obligations & degeneracies I chiefly dread.

Of Hiram Wilson's school at "Bacon" I have from the first had some knowledge & have since the receipt of your letter taken some pains to make enquiries. I am not quite clear that the condition of the fugitive population in Canada demands such an establishment yet; though I trust it will at some future day. At this stage of their education they