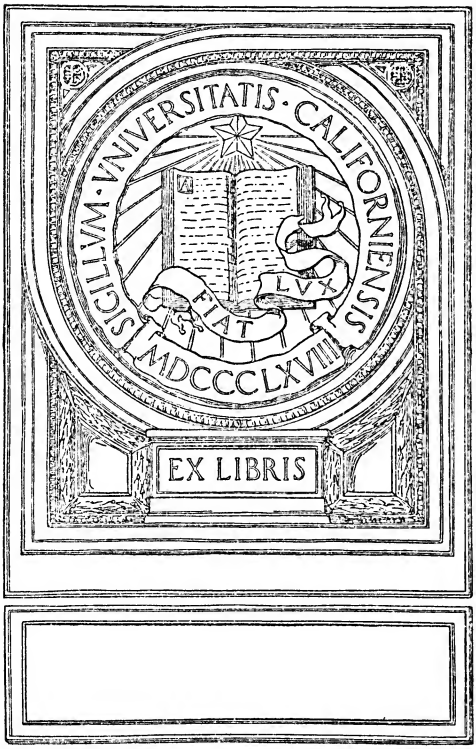
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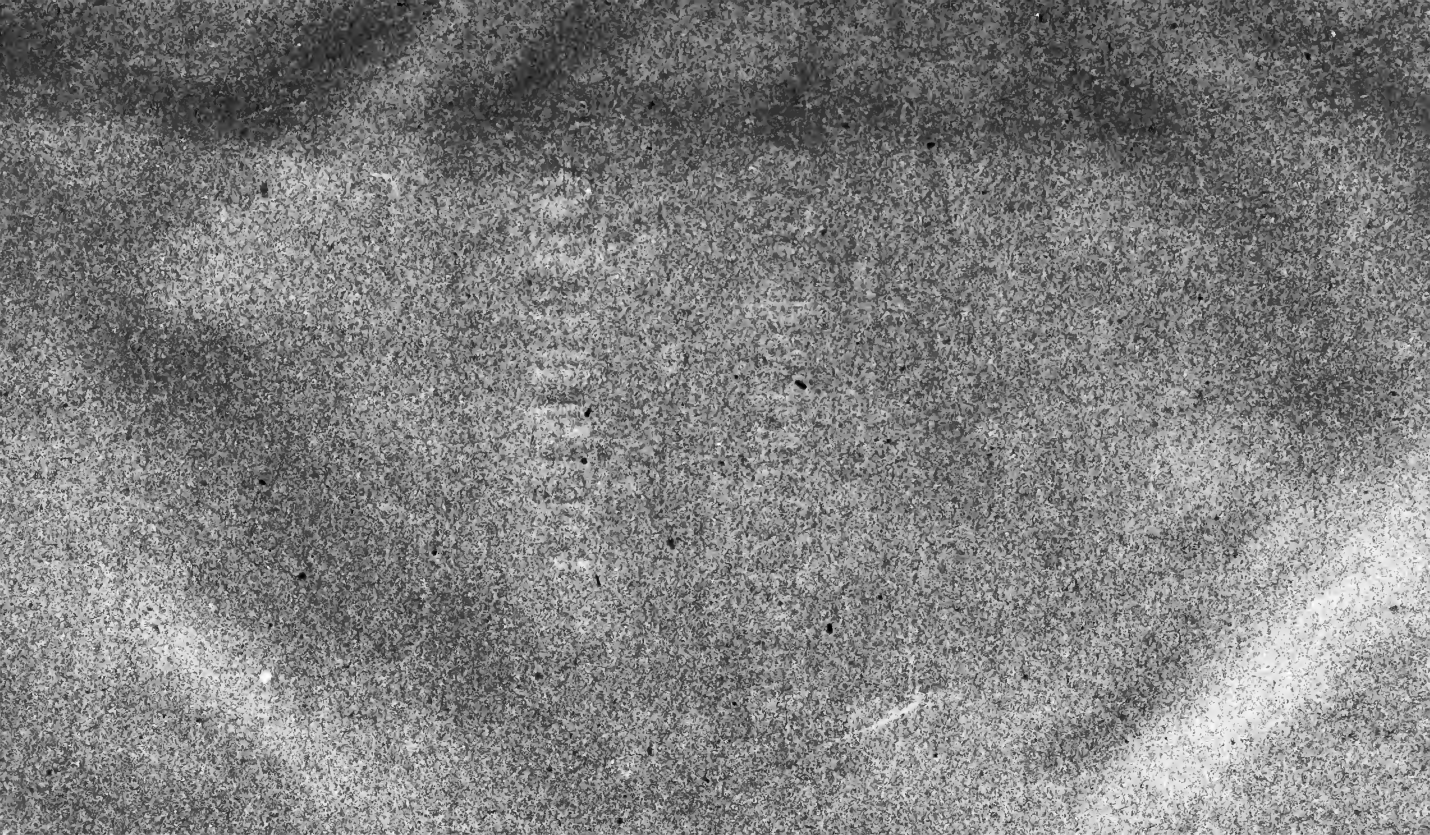
OBERLIN:

Origin, Progress and Results.



OBERLIN:

ITS

Origin, Progress and Results.

AN ADDRESS,

PREPARED FOR THE ALUMNI OF OBERLIN COLLEGE,
ASSEMBLED AUGUST 22, 1860.

BY PROF. J. H. FAIRCHILD.

OBERLIN:
SHANKLAND AND HARMON:
1860.

OBERLIN:

ITS

ORIGIN, PROGRESS AND RESULTS.

A gathering, like the present, of the Alumni and friends of Oberlin College, affords a fit occasion for a hasty review of the origin and past career of the college and the place—how Oberlin came to be, what it has done and what it is. In the past quarter of a century of its life we shall doubtless find many lessons—some of gratitude for the good which God hath wrought, some of humiliation for man's short-comings, of encouragement for success attending honest endeavor, and of wisdom for future guidance. If we shall find occasion for grateful mention of the good hand of God upon us, and of wide-spread results from even feeble efforts, let it not be understood as an attempt at vainglorying, or exaltation of men. It is rare that in any human work there is not enough of imperfection and of error to stain the pride of human glory and to show that "he that planteth and he that watereth" are not to be exalted, but "God that giveth the increase."

ORIGIN.

The plan of Oberlin originated with Rev. John J. Shipherd, in the year 1832, while he was pastor of the Presbyterian church in Elyria. Associated with him in the development of this plan was Mr. P. P. Stewart, formerly a missionary among the Cherokees in Mississippi, and at that time residing in Mr. Shipherd's family. They and their wives prayed and talked together, and prayed alone, until the work lay out before them with such distinctness that Mr. Shipherd in after years was wont with due

modesty to refer to this conception as the pattern shown him in the mount, and it is remarkable that the "plan," brought out in his first published circular, might be taken, in all its leading features, for a description of the college as it stands to-day—not that all his ideas have been realized minutely, but the prominent characteristics are here before us.

The plan involved a school, open to both sexes, with various departments, Preparatory, Teachers', Collegiate and Theological, furnishing a substantial education at the lowest possible rates, and with such facilities for self-support as the "Manual Labor System" was supposed to present. This school was to be surrounded by a Christian community, united in the faith of the gospel and in self-denying efforts to establish and build up and sustain the school. Families were to be gathered from different parts of the land to organize a community devoted to this object. No new principle of organization or of social arrangement was proposed; but those who were ready to volunteer in the enterprise were asked to indicate their consecration to the work by subscribing to the following articles of agreement, called the Oberlin Covenant.

"Lamenting the degeneracy of the Church and the deplorable condition of our perishing world, and ardently desirous of bringing both under the entire influence of the blessed gospel of peace; and viewing with peculiar interest the influence which the Valley of the Mississippi must exert over our nation and the nations of the earth; and having, as we trust, in answer to devout supplications been guided by the counsel of the Lord: the undersigned covenant together under the name of the Oberlin Colony, subject to the following regulations which may be amended by a concurrence of two-thirds of the colonists.

1. Providence permitting, we engage as soon as practicable to remove to the Oberlin Colony, in Russia, Lorain county, Ohio, and there to fix our residence for the express purpose of glorifying God in doing good to men to the extent of our ability.

2. We will hold and manage our estates personally, but pledge as perfect a community of interest, as though we held a community of property.

3. We will hold in possession no more property than we believe we can profitably manage for God, as his faithful stewards.

4. We will by industry, economy, and Christian self-denial, obtain as much as we can above our necessary personal or family expenses, and faithfully appropriate the same for the spread of the gospel.

5. That we may have time and health for the Lord's service, we will eat only plain and wholesome food, renouncing all bad habits, and especially the smoking and chewing of tobacco, unless it is necessary as a medicine, and deny ourselves all strong and unnecessary drinks, even tea and coffee, as far as practicable, and everything expensive, that is simply calculated to gratify the palate.

6. That we may add to our time and health, money, for the service of the

Lord, we will renounce all the world's expensive and unwholesome fashions of dress, particularly tight dressing and ornamental attire.

7. And yet more to increase our means of serving Him who bought us with his blood, we will observe plainness and durability in the construction of our houses, furniture, carriages, and all that appertains to us.

8. We will strive continually to show that we, as the body of Christ, are members one of another; and will while living provide for the widows, orphans, and families of the sick and needy as for ourselves.

9. We will take special pains to educate all our children thoroughly, and to train them up in body, intellect and heart for the service of the Lord.

10. We will feel that the interests of the Oberlin Institute are identified with ours, and do what we can to extend its influence to our fallen race.

11. We will make special efforts to sustain the institutions of the gospel at home and among our neighbors.

12. We will strive to maintain deep-toned and elevated personal piety, to "provoke each other to love and good works," to live together in all things as brethren, and to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are his.

In testimony of our fixed purpose thus to do, in reliance on divine grace, we hereunto affix our names."

These articles were thought to serve the purpose of bringing together families, devoted not only to a common end, but agreeing in their views of practical duty and in the means of promoting religious education. After a few years, however, the Covenant was mainly laid aside, being found to be too specific to serve as a general pledge of Christian purpose, and too general to be a guide to specific duty. It was often more difficult in a particular case to decide what the "Covenant" required, than what were the requirements of Christian benevolence. It seemed more wholesome and more conducive to Christian unity to shorten rather than lengthen either the creed or the Covenant.

The plan arranged, a *name* was required for the school and the "colony." This was borrowed not from Oberlin the elegant scholar, but from Oberlin the Swiss pastor, representing in his self-denying and efficient life, that love towards God and that sympathy with man which the founders of this school desired to establish and cherish here.

The school, although sufficiently grand in its conception to be called a University according to the modern Western fashion, was named the "Oberlin Collegiate Institute," which remained its legal designation until the name was changed upon application to the legislature in 1850.

A *place* was found within the limits of the county where the plan was formed—a tract in an unbroken forest, entirely unappropriated by the early settlers of the county in consequence of its uninviting surface, lying on the belt of clay which traverses North-

ern Ohio from East to West, destitute of springs and rocks and hills, but with a soil of sufficient strength to sustain a varied forest. The advantages of the location were,the room it afforded entirely unoccupied, its location on the "Western Reserve" in the midst of a growing population just beginning to feel the want of better schools, having an origin and antecedents which indicated that this want would grow with their growth, and the low price of the land, which was still held by Connecticut proprietors. A portion of this land three miles square — nearly six thousand acres — was purchased at the low rate of one dollar and fifty cents an acre, and resold at an advance of one dollar an acre, thus providing a fund with which to lay the foundations of the school. The original proprietors donated to the enterprise about five hundred acres in the centre of the tract, for the uses of the school. On this portion the college buildings now stand, and the entire south-western quarter of the village.

The site selected for the place has been matter of frequent criticism, and many are still unreconciled to the choice. There is no question that Northern Ohio presented many more desirable localities; but there was probably no other where Oberlin could have been built. Places could have been found in 1620—excuse the comparison—presenting a more genial climate and soil than Plymouth on the bleak New England coast, but who would now dare to remodel history and direct the Mayflower to the mouth of the Hudson or of the Savannah? "The foolishness of God is wiser than men."

The first "colonist," Peter P. Pease, already a resident of the county, pitched his tent on what is now the south-east corner of the college square, April 19th, 1833. Here the first log cabin was built, and here the forest began to withdraw. The nearest habitation at that time was three miles distant. The Indian's hunting path still traversed the forest, and the howl of the wolf was heard at night. To this wilderness the original colonists gathered, embracing families from several of the New England states, and from New York and Ohio—all of New England origin. The first season, "Oberlin Hall," the first college building, was erected, and in December of that year the school was opened under the temporary care of a student of Western Reserve College, J. F. Scovill. Those who were present at the religious exercises which preceded

the opening of the school still speak of the occasion as one of solemn interest, and the young teacher coming into the place while the meeting was in progress and entering the little chapel, when invited to speak, expressed in his first words the thought of all present: "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground." The school during this introductory term, not yet permanently organized, numbered forty-four pupils from the States of New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan — not children of the colonists, but young people who on their own account had made their way to the school in the wilderness.

In May of the next year, 1834, the school was regularly organized under permanent teachers —Rev. S. H. Waldo from Amherst and Andover, James Dascomb M. D. from New Hampshire and the Dartmouth Medical school, and Daniel Branch from some eastern college, with their wives, all just entering upon active life. The number of pupils the first year reached 100. In October the first college class was organized, and the first Commencement held, or rather a "Senior Preparatory Exhibition;" as the performers were commencing Freshmen instead of Bachelors. The exercises of that first Commencement afforded Greek and Latin orations, a colloquy in which the vexed question of the study of the "dead languages" was settled upon an orthodox basis, and sundry disquisitions treating of various matters of literature, taste and practical duty—not one allusion to slavery or politics. Coming events do not always cast their shadows before.

In the winter of 1834–5 the Trustees first took their position upon the admission of colored students, and in the spring the Theological Department was organized and the Board of Instruction enlarged by the accession of President Mahan and Professors Finney, Morgan and Henry Cowles. Theological students came in considerable numbers from Lane Seminary, and the college department received large additions from Western Reserve and other colleges. Thus suddenly did the Institution spring into complete and vigorous action, outgrowing even the sanguine hopes of its founder; although his expectations were too broad to command the confidence of careful and considerate men until he had imparted to them his own enthusiasm.

The place kept pace in its growth with the school. All the difficulties encountered in the settlement of a new country covered with a heavy forest were experienced here, with the exception perhaps of sickness. In the matter of health the people were favored from the beginning. Prevailing fevers were never added to the heavy burdens which the early colonists were called to bear. But forests were to be cleared, houses built, roads constructed and an unkindly soil waited upon with patience till its stubbornness should yield. To many, these were days of poverty and sometimes of misgiving; but in general faith in God and zeal in a new enterprise and satisfaction with results, saved even the weary from despondency. The aim of the founder in planting the colony was that it should always remain a quiet and retired Christian community, embracing the school, sustaining it in all its arrangements, and admitting nothing inconsistent with its interests. Such a community he believed was necessary not only for the prosperity of the school, but to illustrate gospel principles in practical life. To some extent these ideas have doubtless been realized. The school has been established and has attained prosperity because the colony has sustained and upheld it. Such a school under the circumstances, or under any circumstances, would have been an impossibility without the support of a sympathising community. But that a people sustaining such relations to the world without, as the existence of a large school implies, should still be peculiar in their habits and fashions, and permanently withstand the tendency to assimilation, so as to preserve their original simplicity, is a result not to be expected, however desirable. God has not given to any portion of his people in these latter days any such power of exclusion or seclusion. It is Satan's privilege to be present at every gathering of the sons of God. The angel sentry of Eden could not exclude the tempter, and from that day to this no place has been sacred from his intrusion. Such a condition of things is sometimes painful, but on the whole is wholesome. It is best that every community should find itself so linked with the world as to understand its wants and to share its

trials. It might be pleasant for a Christian family to build high its walls and to guard its gates to keep out the evil; but social obligations and mutual necessities forbid the undertaking. That Christianity is most vigorous and symmetrical which accepts its mission to a world in want and shrinks not from an encounter with its evil—not assailing it from retirement in cloister or cave, but in an open daylight struggle. Thus Truth shows itself in its beautiful proportions, and can lay out its strength without constraint.

The retirement of Oberlin in the wilderness may have been essential to its early growth, and was doubtless providential. It was certainly secluded by its position from the public gaze. At the outset no carriage-road reached it, and for two years or more the devious tracks through the forests which were called roads, were often impassable to carriages. There are probably ladies among us to-day who were obliged, in coming to the school from their Eastern homes, to walk the last two or three miles through mud and water to the ankle. Some ladies even walked from Elyria because the road was thought impassable, or there was no conveyance at hand. But this seclusion was long since broken up. Students gathered here by hundreds from the East and the West, the North and the South. The colony advanced gradually but steadily until it has become a wide-spreading village, of 3000 inhabitants; and one of the great thoroughfares of the country, finding its track ready graded along the clay belt of Northern Ohio, has taken Oberlin in its course. Thus Oberlin has become linked to the world, and must share its fortunes.

The policy of Oberlin too, whatever may have been "the pattern shown in the mount," has been from the outset anything but seclusive. Those who wish the world to let them alone, must let the world alone. This, Oberlin has not done, and never intended to do. The first summer, the students showed their aggressive tendencies by going out in scores three or four miles to *temperance raisings*, and by gathering sabbath-schools in destitute neighborhoods. The first winter, the Oberlin Church sent out deputations to visit neighboring churches and stir them up to love and good works, and the students taught the district schools throughout the region. The next summer the "Big

Tent" was brought on, and a campaign of protracted meetings was commenced in the region by the President, aided by Theological students. The next winter a bevy of Anti-Slavery lecturers was let loose upon the State. The world, thus rudely disturbed, in turn intruded upon our quiet, and the idea of seclusion passed away as a dream. The period of rest has not yet come.

THE OBERLIN CHURCH.

A Church was organized in September 1834 upon the usual basis of churches in Northern Ohio, Congregational in structure, but connected with Presbytery. The Confession of Faith set forth the doctrines of God's Existence and Attributes, the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, the Trinity, Divine Sovereignty, the Fall, Total Depravity, Atonement, Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, Election, Perseverance and Man's Free Agency. In 1836 the church united with several others on the Reserve, in a movement to form a Congregational Association, and the connection with Presbytery was terminated. Several of the prominent men here, President Mahan, and Professors Finney and Morgan, had always been Presbyterian in their associations, and, with the exception of President Mahan, were not specially zealous in this movement. The movement of the church too was not the result of any sectarian impulse, but of the practical want of a freer Christian action in the performance of its work. At this very time a change was made in its Confession of Faith to adapt it to meet the approbation of all evangelical Christians. The doctrines of Election and Perseverance were omitted, and those of Future Reward and Punishment, and the Christian Sabbath were added. The Covenant was also amended so as to give liberty in reference to Infant Baptism. This change was made, not because there were many here who objected to those controverted doctrines, or to infant baptism, but to preclude the necessity of the multiplication of churches, and in obedience to a prevailing conviction that any basis for a church less catholic than Christianity itself was unscriptural. Upon this basis the church has stood and prospered until the present time, its members coming from all the evangelical denominations, and never experiencing any want of harmony from this diversity of ear-

prepossessions. Its numbers increased from sixty at its organization, to one thousand or twelve hundred resident members; and at length, the congregation becoming too large for our spacious house of worship, a second Congregational church was organized in May last, a colony from the old hive going out with reluctance and dismissed with a benediction. The new church stands upon the same catholic basis with the old, and opens its doors to all who receive Christ Jesus the Lord. It numbers about 150 members. At the same time a Protestant Episcopal, a Methodist Episcopal, and a Wesleyan church have been organized here within two or three years past, in part because it seemed to good people abroad that so large a place, furnishing only a single church, must be an inviting missionary field. But there is room for all; each will find its work. No separate college church was thought of at the outset, nor has the idea of a separation between citizens and students in their church relations, ever found favor.

Rev. J. J. Shipherd was pastor of the church for a single year, 1835–6. He resigned because his health was not sufficient for the work, and because he felt called to give his efforts to the establishment of other schools. In his communication to the church conveying his resignation, he suggested the idea of uniting with the college in calling a man who should be pastor of the church and Professor of Pastoral Theology, but added that in his opinion the man was not living who could sustain the burden, and that it would be better to call a pastor; "but," he says, "wait until you find a man who will embrace the church with one arm and the Institute with the other." Professor Finney soon after accepted the pastorship with such reservations as his duties to the school and to the work abroad might require. This relationship has continued until the present time, other members of the Faculty acting in his absence, and aiding him when present.

EARLY SPIRIT OF THE PLACE.

From the earliest days of Oberlin there has been an earnestness and an energy of religious life in the Church which has been the secret of its power. This energy and activity were shown not merely in outward works and special revival efforts,

but in deep heart searchings and personal endeavor for higher spiritual attainments. Oberlin was the offspring of the revivals of 1830 '31 and '32. The aggressive missionary spirit which resulted from that great religious movement was the impulse which led to the establishment of the Institution and the place. The same impulse gathered here colonists and teachers and pupils. There was a deep conviction upon the minds of those who came that the field was the world, that the harvest was great and the laborers few. They were disposed not only to "pray the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth laborers into the harvest," but also to say, "Here am I, send me." It was no zeal for partial reform which characterized the people and the place —it was a broad view of the world in darkness and of the gospel as the light from above. This zeal for the gospel and confidence in its power had been strengthened and intensified by the experience of the few preceding years. Those great revivals were often spoken of as the dawn of the millenium, and the conviction was fastened upon the minds of those who gathered here that there was a special call for faithful labor and special encouragement in its performance. To this conviction the particular type of truth brought out in those revivals—man's moral agency, and his immediate responsibility for his own salvation and the salvation of others, had greatly contributed. This truth, then fresh and new in the churches, gave birth to Oberlin among its other results, and was at the foundation of the energy which characterized it. The natural stimulus of a new enterprise enhanced this activity. The ultimate aim of a large portion of the young men and women first on the ground was the foreign missionary field; but this work was in the future, and their attention was turned to present duty. The colonists too, though their hands were full of work incident to the new settlement, had many thoughts to spare in reference to the great end of the Christian life. This concentration of religious thought and action, found no sufficient employment in outward movements. The whole ground of personal obligation in reference to the outer and the inner life was thoroughly traversed. Questions of doctrine and of practice were reviewed with great earnestness and freedom, sometimes with temporary aberrations from the path of sound wisdom, but always perhaps with some

valuable result. All this tended to an intensity of religious life which the world has witnessed only at rare intervals. The churches abroad looked on with misgiving, with suspicion, with derision, and with here and there a manifestation of sympathy. The phenomenon was too startling to invite to a close examination. Good men kept their distance and called it fanaticism and heresy, and looked with confident expectation for the usual fruits of so corrupt a tree, the immoralities which heresy and fanaticism produce. Men not so good not only anticipated but discovered these outbreaking evils, and the echoes of the reports of all sorts of enormities perpetrated here have scarcely yet died out in the land. Bad men framed the stories and good men believed them, always with sorrow, we would hope; but often the sigh was followed with the self-consoling observation — "just as we expected." One not entirely unwholesome result of this was that Oberlin was held under strict surveillance by friends and foes. Every careless or hasty expression of religious truth uttered at home or abroad, every instance of immorality transpiring within the original three miles square, every outbreak of youthful indiscretion in the school, was trumpeted and misrepresented and exaggerated until at last it crystalized in the columns of the infallible New York Observer as "the latest Oberlinism" — all, the natural outcome of Oberlin fanaticism. This fanaticism, when calmly looked at, was no spirit of bitterness, cursing those who held different views, no claim of spiritual illumination, setting aside the sure word of prophecy and uttering its own dreams as authoritative; it was an earnest spirit of inquiry in reference to the teachings of God's Word, a self-denying application of these truths to practical life, and a hearty recommendation of them to the acceptance of others. It was a fanaticism that sent preachers of good tidings to scattered and shepherdless flocks on the western prairies—teachers of colored schools to southern Ohio and to Canada, where the labor was abundant and the pay was scorn — missionaries to the Indian tribes of the frozen North, and of the Rocky Mountains, to distant Islands and to Western Africa. If these people went on their missions of love without any visible means of support, if they were not careful to see that there was a well established society at home to sustain

them, this may have been enthusiasm, or folly if you please—it was not fanaticism. Such unwise steps may have resulted from too great confidence in "the foolishness of preaching"—and in the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; or they may have arisen from the fact that "James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars" in the land, failed to recognize the grace which was given, and withheld the right hand of fellowship from those whom God called to go to the gentiles.

With all the intensity of thought and action in reference to religion and practical morality, the various fanaticisms which have cursed the land during the last twenty-five years, have scarcely reached us here. Perfectionists as Oberlin men were *supposed* to be, the fanaticism of Perfectionism prevailed elsewhere—not here; nor did it go out from among us. Abolitionists as they *were*, the Anti-Slavery fanaticism and infidelity found their headquarters elsewhere and cursed Oberlin at a distance. The prophets of Second-Adventism set Oberlin off to destruction, because there were not ten righteous to save the city. All these, and seven other spirits, thought to find here a place for themselves, "empty, swept and garnished." These all had opportunity to show their claims, but they preached "another gospel." They were not received into the house nor bidden God-speed.

The Oberlin heresy, a shadowy form which has not yet faded from the imaginations of men, was a heresy that rejoiced in the Gospel, in "the grace of God which giveth salvation," in "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," by which Paul was crucified to the world and the world to him, and in those "exceeding great and precious promises, by which we are made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust." Some, perhaps, in the fresh joy of a pentecostal baptism, seemed to unsympathizing observers to be full of new wine; yet if you listened well you would hear them speak only "the wonderful works of God." Some may have shouted their eureka more loudly than was becoming, or called their experience by a name that was ill chosen, or proposed a theory for its explanation which could not be sustained; yet it was a reproach to the Christianity of the land that it should be thought a heresy to proclaim "the gospel of Christ the power

of God unto salvation to every one that believes;" and that a theory of sanctification which planted itself upon God's revealed word, should have been occasion for so persistent suspicion and distrust.

Among the results of this fervid religious action at home were many precious revivals, when daily recitations were suspended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. Even a brief record of these gracious visitations would be too extended for the present occasion. They have their record in many hearts, and the day shall declare them. Aside from these special seasons, there were often recurring cases of conversion, and of great quickening in spiritual life. Many received an impulse in those early days which energized their lives, and has not yet exhausted itself. Some, perhaps, gathering from their experience too hasty inductions, and going out to their work with more zeal than wisdom, have found it necessary to abate from their expectations. They thought they had something new to tell which the world could but listen to. They have ere this discovered that it was only the old gospel which the fathers knew, and which has been the hope of the good in all time. That particular turn of the gospel kaleidoscope which first revealed to them its glories, may not impress others as it did themselves, and they have learned to bring forth out of their treasures things old as well as new. It is the glory of the gospel that it has many sides, and that at any stand-point it reflects divine light upon the soul.

It may be supposed by those who were not in the midst of these early scenes, that the piety of Oberlin was specially noisy and demonstrative, as it was fervid and engrossing. Such an impression would be a mistake. There were instances indeed when the forest or the college hall echoed to a prayer which was over-loud, but these were exceptions. If the voice of prayer fell continuously upon the ear of one who traversed the hall at the morning or the evening hour, it was because the low pleading was repeated at every door. The power invoked was not that appealed to by the prophets of Baal; it was the Lord God of Elijah.

In the recital of these facts, I have not undertaken to trace this earnest religious movement to any one human agency. On

its heavenward side, it was the coming of the Lord to his temple; earthward, it was the united action of believing hearts. Yet the inference would not be warranted that all shared equally in the religious interest, and that there were none who were comparatively unaffected. The religious element was controlling and pervading; but there were always individuals and families among us whom it did not reach; and of those who were interested, some were much more thoroughly energized than others. But religious obligation was recognized in every movement; and in every gathering, whether for literary, social or political purposes, God's presence and blessing were invoked. This habit, originating in those early times, has come down to the present.

There has been a somewhat general impression abroad that the religion of Oberlin in those days was ascetic in its character, and that Oberlin must have been a dim and gloomy place, somewhat after the style of the religious institutions of the middle ages. No impression could be farther from the truth. Even the *Grahamism* which prevailed at one time was not asceticism. It was merely an attempt at applied Physiology—a blunder, probably; but one sustained at the time by such authorities as Prof. Hitchcock at Amherst, and Dr. Mussey at Dartmouth The whole constitution of the place, and its varied interests and occupations, precluded the prevalence of the ascetic type of religion. It is difficult to introduce practical asceticism into an institution embracing five hundred young people of both sexes taken from the middle classes in American society, with aggressive energy pervading their very bones, and all the hopes and plans of life leading them on. They may become vigorous and wholesome Christian workers, but not dreamers. Oberlin was always a cheerful place, and there was never a time when a hearty, well-timed laugh was thought unbecoming to Theological professor or student. There were individual instances of error in this respect, and occasionally in a limited circle the religious culture has tended to an unwholesome introspection, to the dreamy and the mystical; but these cases were exceptional, and scarcely produced an eddy in the great current of thought and feeling. The public religious instruction of the place has never led in that direction. If a single sermon has at times

looked misty, the next has scattered the clouds and brought in the sun-light.

Christian economy and simplicity in dress and style of living, were inculcated in the old Oberlin Covenant, and were embraced in the aims of the early settlers. The straitened circumstances of the people contributed to the prevalence of these views. Yet no extreme doctrine was ever taught publicly, and no position maintained which was inconsistent with a generous Christian culture, and with a liberal estimate of the character of others. Self-denial in outward enjoyments was held up, not as a thing to be aimed at on its own account, but as desirable only as a saving of time and strength and means of Christian usefulness. The shaping of the place thus far has been ordered rather by a regard to utility than to taste, not because taste was discarded, but because utility was more pressing. As the years advance, we see a change which, we would hope, indicates a real improvement, not a drifting from the true principles of efficient Christian life.

THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT.

The Anti-Slavery element was not incorporated into the original constitution of Oberlin, except as it is implied in the very idea of a Christian colony and school in a land where Slavery exists. The Oberlin Covenant was as free from any allusion to the subject of Slavery as the publications of the American Tract Society are supposed to be at the present time. The question was not then a practical one before the people. The original Oberlin men, like all good men at the North, were opposed to Slavery, but they did not dream that this would be one of the first topics which would disturb their quiet in the wilderness. The Colonization Society was supposed to present the only practicable means of operating against Slavery; and in a discussion which took place in the "Oberlin Lyceum" during the first summer, it appeared that teachers, students and colonists were all colonizationists with the exception of Mr. Shipherd himself, and two or three students who had learned the doctrine of Abolition at Mr. Monteith's school at Elyria. The prevailing sentiment was that it would never do to "let the slaves loose among us." Yet Oberlin was in its very birth a reformer. It was cast

out into an unbroken wilderness, and acquired a restless energy and aggressive habits in crowding back the forests and cutting high-ways to the neighboring towns. The conservatism of older societies, found here no material or scope. To pull down the old and build anew, was the only work on hand. The only relic of antiquity which we have, is the elm yonder, under which Fathers Shipherd and Pease first knelt to pray; and that was preserved simply as the connecting link between the old and the new. There is not a hillock or a rock which would be recognized by the hunter familiar with these wilds. Everything is new. Even the brook has been compelled to take a new channel, for the convenience of those who built upon its banks. The men who undertook such an enterprise, were strongly impressed with the conviction that the world was capable of improvement, and they had strong faith that they should live to see it move. It was almost necessary that such a place should become anti-slavery when once the issue was fairly made and presented. This actually occurred in the winter of 1834–5, under the following circumstances: Lane Seminary, a Theological School near Cincinnati, had been in existence two or three years, and had collected a class of students of unusual ability and energy. Many of these were from Oneida Institute, a school which enjoyed a few years of vigorous life in Central New York. They were manual labor students, energetic and self-relying. As an indication of their spirit, it may be stated that, in going from Oneida to Lane some of them went down the Allegheny and Ohio as hands on flat-boats, and pocketed a handsome purse to begin their studies upon at Cincinnati. Among these Oneida students was Theodore D. Weld, a young man of surpassing eloquence and logical powers, and of a personal influence even more fascinating than his eloquence. I state the impression which I had of him as a boy, and it may seem extravagant; but I have seen crowds of bearded men held spell-bound by his power, for hours together, and for twenty evenings in succession. Besides these Oneida students, there were others at Lane, prominent actors in the scenes to which I refer, some of them sons of slaveholders, and linked to Slavery in all their worldly interests. The whole number of students there at the time was above one hundred. Many of these were not theological students, but were connected with a literary department

in preparation for theology, under the charge of our own Prof. Morgan. The Theological Professors were Dr. Beecher, the elder, Prof. Stowe, and another gentleman unknown to fame.

About this time, as early, at least, as 1833, the quiet of Boston and New York, and some other eastern cities, had been disturbed by the startling utterances of Wm. Lloyd Garrison and his Liberator. He took issue at once with the Colonization Society, and called on all honest men to stand aloof from it, as false in principle and pernicious in its results. He enforced the duty of immediate and unconditional emancipation, as the only right and safe course. "Slavery is a sin, and ought to be immediately abandoned," was in those days the burden of his message. Men of strong anti-slavery feeling were at once brought over by his facts and his logic. Weld too, in the quiet of Lane Seminary, was moved, and others moved with him. The students requested of the Faculty the use of the public room occupied as a Chapel, for the discussion of Slavery. The Faculty recommended quiet—rather discountenanced the discussion, but did not prohibit it. The students gathered in the Chapel, and for eighteen successive evenings continued their debate. At the outset there was great diversity of sentiment, but in the end the anti-slavery view prevailed almost unanimously. We may well suppose that the discussion would be earnest and thorough; for there were men there whose course for life was to turn upon the result. It was not like an ordinary discussion in a literary society where the main interest lies in the debate itself. Some of the young men well knew that the position they took might alienate friends, and prevent for many years, perhaps forever, a return to the home of their youth. Yet even these were convinced, and took their stand against Slavery at the sacrifice of friends and home.

As a result of the anti-slavery movement in the Seminary, the young men were stirred up to do something for the colored people in the city. They gathered them in Sabbath schools, and established day schools among them, and made use of all the means at hand to elevate and advance them. Some of the ladies of the city aided in the establishment and superintendence of the schools. The efforts were not limited to the colored people. Communications were sent to the religious journals, which

elicited spirited discussions that attracted the attention of the city generally. Movements like these disturbed the quiet of the Trustees of the Seminary, some of whom were wholly men of commerce, and understood better the pork market than the management of a literary institution. Others sympathized in the general apprehension of evil from the anti-slavery excitement.

The summer vacation of twelve weeks came on, and the professors, with one exception, had left for the East. The students too were mainly scattered. The Trustees held a meeting at this juncture, and passed a law, without any consultation with the Faculty, except the single member who remained, prohibiting the discussion of Slavery among the students, both in public and in private. They were not to be allowed to communicate with each other on the subject, even at the table in the Seminary commons. At the same time, the Trustees dispatched a message to Prof. Morgan in New York, that his services were no longer required. No reason was assigned him for so abrupt a termination of his relations. Perhaps they already apprehended, what they soon realized, that his occupation was gone. But in the Seminary it was well understood that he was sacrificed on account of his sympathy with the anti-slavery movement. The other professors returned to swallow, as best they could, the bitter pill which had been prescribed for them. The students returned to enter their protest against the oppressive gag-law of the Trustees, and to ask dismissions from the institution. Four-fifths of them left in a body, and Lane Seminary has to this day scarce recovered from the blow.

The protesting students, upon the invitation of James Ludlow, a gentleman of property who resided a few miles from the city, took possession of a building which he provided for them; and for five months they continued their studies together, with such instruction as they could afford each other, and a course of lectures on Physiology given them by the late Dr. Bailey, editor of the National Era.

Arthur Tappan, of New York, sent them an offer of $5,000 for a building, and the promise of a professorship, if they would establish a school under anti-slavery influences.

In December of this year, 1834, Mr. Shipherd, who w

then the principal financial agent of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute, visited Cincinnati for the purpose of soliciting funds. There he met Rev. Asa Mahan, who was at the time pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church in the city. He had been one of the Trustees of Lane Seminary—had protested earnestly against the action which had been taken, and had resigned his place when he saw that the majority would pass and sustain the odious law prohibiting the discussion of Slavery. He was in sympathy with the protesting students, and between him and Mr. Shipherd the plan was devised of adding at once a Theological Department to Oberlin, and bringing on the seceding students from Lane to constitute the first Theological classes. Mr. Shipherd's anti-slavery zeal was quickened by contact with the exciting influences there; and under date of December 15, 1834, he writes, urging the appointment of Rev. Asa Mahan as President, and Rev. John Morgan, Professor of Mathematics. He also writes: "I desire you, at the first meeting of the Trustees, to secure the passage of the following resolution, to wit: 'Resolved, That students shall be received into this Institution *irrespective of color*.' This should be passed because it is a right principle, and God will bless us in doing right. Also because thus doing right, we gain the confidence of benevolent and able men, who probably will furnish us some thousands. Moreover, Bros. Mahan and Morgan will not accept our invitation unless this principle rule. Indeed if our Board would violate right so as to reject youth of talent and piety because they were *black*, I should have *no heart* to labor for the upbuilding of our Seminary, believing that the curse of God would come upon us, as it has upon Lane Seminary, for its unchristian abuse of the poor slave."

This letter was addressed to the acting Secretary, and of course was communicated to the officers and teachers on the ground. The doctrine proposed was a new one, and the people of Oberlin were not prepared to embrace it at once. There were no precedents in its favor. No such thing had been heard of in the land, nor, so far as they knew, in any other land. There was earnest discussion and intense excitement. It was believed by many that the place would be at once overwhelmed with colored students, and the mischiefs that would follow were

frightful in the extreme. Men who afterwards stood manfully in the anti-slavery ranks, when the battle was hottest, and whose lives had shown that they could face duty in its most forbidding aspects, were alarmed in view of the unknown and undefined evil which threatened. Young ladies who had come from New England to the school in the wilderness—young ladies of unquestioned refinement and goodness, declared that if colored students were admitted to equal privileges in the institution, they would return to their homes, if they had to "wade Lake Erie" to accomplish it. These same young ladies, afterwards, showed their New England spirit, not in wading Lake Erie, but in stemming a torrent of abuse and reproach, which they encountered in their fearless advocacy of the cause of the oppressed. The excitement here was intense, and was not at all allayed by an arrangement on the part of the Trustees to hold their session in Elyria, in the hope of finding a calmer atmosphere, more congenial to deliberation. This session was held at the Temperance House in Elyria, on the first of January, 1835, at the time of the winter vacation. A petition was presented to the Board, signed by the principal colonists, and by several students, who remained during the vacation. It reads as follows:

"*To the Hon. Board of Trustees of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute, assembled at Elyria:*

"Whereas, There has been, and is now, among the colonists and students of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute, a great exitement in their minds in consequence of a resolution of Bro. J. J. Shipherd, to be laid before the Board, respecting the admission of people of color into the Institution, and also of the Board's meeting at Elyria; now, your petitioners, feeling a deep interest in the Oberlin Collegiate Institute, and feeling that every measure possible should be taken to quell the alarm, that there shall not be a root of bitterness springing up to cause a division of interest and feeling, (for a house divided against itself cannot stand;) therefore, your petitioners respectfully request that your honorable body will meet at Oberlin, that your deliberations may be heard and known on the great and important questions in contemplation. We feel for our black brethren—we feel to want your counsels and instructions; we want to know what is duty, and, God assisting us, we will lay aside every prejudice, and do as we shall be led to believe that God would have us to do."

Those who constituted the Board of Trustees at the time, were two or three of them residents of the place; the rest were prominent men from the neighboring towns, with Rev. John Keep, then of Ohio City, as President of the Board. The Trustees were in a state of doubt and perplexity, corresponding with

the condition of the petitioners as before presented. Their action was conservative and non-committal. The record is as follows:

"Whereas, information has been received from Rev. J. J. Shipherd, expressing a wish that students may be received into this Institution irrespective of color; therefore, resolved, that this Board do not feel prepared, till they have more definite information on the subject, to give a pledge respecting the course they will pursue in regard to the education of the people of color, wishing that this Institution should be on the same ground in respect to the admission of students, with other similar institutions of our land."

At the same session of the Trustees, Pres. Mahan and Prof. Morgan were appointed, according to the request of Mr. Shipherd, although the platform on which they had placed themselves was not adopted.

This action of the Board was not satisfactory to Mr. Shipherd, and another meeting was called, about six weeks later, at Oberlin. The meeting was held in the house north of the College square, now owned by Mrs. Sumner, then belonging to Mr. Shipherd. Many of the good people of the place, had by this time become deeply interested in favor of the proposed movement, and the results of this meeting were looked for with intense interest.

The Trustees convened in the morning, and the discussion was warm and long. Mrs. Shipherd was occupied with her household duties, but, in her anxiety, she often passed the door, which stood ajar, and at length stood before it. Father Keep comprehended the case, and stepped out to inform her that the result of the deliberation was very doubtful. He greatly feared that the opposition would prevail. Mrs. Shipherd dropped her work at once, gathered her praying sisters in the neighborhood, and spent the time with them in prayer until the decision was announced. When the question was finally taken, the division of the Board was equal, and Father Keep as the presiding officer gave the casting vote in favor of the admission of colored students. The resolution which at length passed was not simple and direct, like the one proposed originally by Mr. Shipherd, but it seems the expression of timid men who were afraid to say precisely what they meant. It is as follows:

"Whereas, there does exist in our country an excitement in respect to our colored population, and fears are entertained that on the one hand they will be left unprovided for, as to the means of a proper education, and, on the other, that they will, in unsuitable numbers, be introduced into our schools and

thus in effect forced into the society of the whites, and the state of public sentiment is such as to require from the Board some definite expression on the subject; therefore, Resolved, that the education of the people of color is a matter of great interest, and should be encouraged and sustained in this Institution."

The logic of the resolution is not very luminous, nor is the conclusion entirely unambiguous, but the effect was decisive and unequivocal. It determined the policy of the Institution on the question of Slavery, and no other action has been needed on the subject from that day to this. It was a word of invitation and welcome to the colored man, as opposed to the spirit of exclusion which was then dominant in the land. That this decision was regarded as involving grave consequences, is manifest from the intense excitement which existed here at the time. There were no colored students at the door seeking admittance. Indeed there was but one colored person at the time resident in the county; but they were very generally expected as the result of this decision, and when, at length, a solitary colored man was seen entering the settlement, a little boy, the son of one of the Trustees, ran to the house, calling out, "they're coming, father—they're coming!"

At the same meeting of the Trustees, when the anti-slavery action was taken, Rev. Charles G. Finney, of New York city, was appointed Professor of Theology — an indication that the Institution was not about to devote itself to the single idea of opposition to Slavery, but to prosecute this as one part of the more comprehensive work of Christian labor.

In the spring of 1835—twenty-five years ago, Oberlin received the accession from Lane. The place was already *full*, and a building was extemporized for the accommodation of the "rebels" as they were called. It was one story high, one hundred and forty-four feet long and twenty-four wide, called "Cincinnati Hall." Its walls, and partitions, and floors, were of beechen boards, fresh from the mill. These, on the outside, were battened with "slabs," retaining the bark of the original tree, which gave the building quite a rustic aspect. One end of this "Hall" was fitted up as kitchen and dining-room, for the accommodation of "boarders." The remainder of the building was divided into rooms twelve feet square, delightfully uniform in the conveniences which they presented — a single window and a door

opening out upon the forest. Thorough ventilation was secured, both summer and winter. Two students were assigned to each room. Such accommodations may seem meagre now, but they were princely then. Oberlin strained a point to give to the new comers a reception worthy of their fame. The enthusiasm of a new enterprise lightened hardships, and smoothed down asperities. All were satisfied.

The effect of this accession upon the Institution and the place, was, of course, decided and manifest. The school was at once transformed from a Collegiate Institute—as it had been modestly called—to a University, embracing the same departments as at present, with students in every stage of advancement. Hence, the mistake has often been made abroad, of attributing the origin of Oberlin to the explosion at Lane Seminary. The Collegiate Department received considerable accessions about the same time, from Western Reserve College, the Trustees of which had been exercised somewhat after the manner of the Trustees of Lane, by the anti-slavery zeal of Professors and students. Thus Oberlin incurred odium not only by its anti-slavery position, but by becoming an asylum for discontented students. If these students had been such as could well be spared by the schools from which they came, the case would have been far different; but the "glorious good fellows" of Lane, as Dr. Beecher called them, were well matched in the earnest and thorough-going young men from Hudson.

Such an amount of anti-slavery material thrown together, still warm from the crucibles where it had been elaborated, of course involved some vigorous effervescence. There was no inert matter present upon which to act. Within the circle of the forest which bounded the vision, all was life and animation. Anti-slavery principles and facts were then fresh and new. They took a strong hold upon the hearts of old and young. They were the theme of private thought, of social conversation, and of public discussion — the burden of song and of prayer. Fourth-of-July celebrations were transformed into anti-slavery meetings; and the whole ground of Slavery, in its relations to morals and to political economy — to the Constitution and the Bible—was traversed again and again.

In the autumn of this famous year, just before the winter va-

cation, Weld came among us, to lay open the treasures of his anti-slavery magazine — to equip the young warriors for their winter campaign; and more than twenty long, dark November evenings he illuminated with the flashes of his genius and power. Under such influences, Oberlin became, of course, thoroughly "abolitionized." Students, and Faculty, and citizens, set themselves vigorously about their appropriate work. But the building proceeded much after the fashion of the walls of Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah. Every man "with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held a weapon." The battle was not then as now, between the great sections of the country, but it was a sort of guerrilla warfare, brought home to every man's door. It was not uncommon for our students, as they went abroad into neighboring towns, to be assailed with abusive words, even when passing quietly along the street; and when they ventured to address a public meeting on the subject of Slavery, they sometimes encountered rougher arguments than bitter words. Several of the more advanced students devoted the winter vacations to lecturing on Slavery, under the auspices of the original American Anti-Slavery Society. The mobs which they were called to encounter, were sometimes amusing, and sometimes terrific. They found warm friends wherever they went — friends whose fidelity was often proved in the hour of peril. There are those among us who could tell some startling tales of anti-slavery campaigns. The ruffianism and malignity of the Missouri border at a later day, scarce exceeded the bitterness and mean hatred which anti-slavery men encountered in many portions of Ohio, and of which Oberlin and its students received a double portion. The terrible mobs which sometimes occurred, were, perhaps, less annoying than the low and contemptible abuse, which was matter of almost daily experience. The schools which our students taught, were characterized as "nigger" schools—the churches where they preached, were "nigger" churches. At length, this expressive adjective was exchanged for the prefix "Oberlin," as embodying all that was odious in abolitionism, and pernicious in religious heresy. Even the guide-boards at the corners of the highways pointed the finger of scorn at Oberlin. Those that undertook, in good faith, to direct the traveller to the hated

place, were bespattered with mud by the street boys, or served as targets for older ones to shoot at. Those only were left unmolested, which embodied the hatred of the lower class of society. On the Middle-Ridge road, six miles to the north, there stood, at a very recent day, a board directing to Oberlin, not by the ordinary index finger, but by a full-length picture of a colored man, running with all his might to reach the place. The tavern sign, midway between us and Elyria, was ornamented on its Oberlin face with the representation of a fugitive slave, pursued by a tiger. It was meant as a taunt, but it conveyed a truth too striking and too sad, to be relished even by the meanest negro-hater. It was soon removed. Such devices were employed to render Oberlin infamous; but it was even then a matter of doubt whether it was becoming rather infamous or famous.

Oberlin was, in those days, a sort of general depot for various branches of the "underground railroad." The charter of the road allowed, at that time, only *night trains.* The daylight system is of more recent date. It would be easy to fill a volume with incidents and adventures connected with this business. Shrewdness, and endurance, and firmness, and daring, all were called into exercise on the part of the managers of these excursions. It is true that men who valued their own self-respect or the respect of others, would never interrupt or expose a fugitive; but there were those in almost every neighborhood who would undertake the odious work for the reward which was offered. The fugitives were sent off by night to Cleveland, or Charleston, or Huron, or Sandusky, wherever a steamboat or vessel might be found, whose captain would receive the contraband goods. Sometimes it was necessary to dispatch a load of pretended fugitives, to mislead those who were on the watch, and, when the diversion was effected, to start off the real fugitives, in the opposite direction. In one instance, a student escorted a colored man, attired and veiled as a lady, on horseback, to Huron.

There is one circumstance upon which we may look back with satisfaction. No fugitive was ever taken here and returned to Slavery; and this result has been secured without an instance of bloodshed or personal harm. An arrest took place here some twenty years ago, at a house on Lorain street, about a

mile east from the church. This house then stood in the forest. It was evening, and some meeting was at the time in progress, in the College Chapel. When the alarm was given, crowds of students and citizens turned out unarmed, and followed the slave-catchers. They overtook them on the State road, two or three miles to the south-east of the village, and effectually interrupted their further progress for the night. The slave-catchers were induced, the next day, to go to Elyria, and substantiate their claim to their victims—a man and a woman. They failed to produce the evidence required, but the trial was adjourned, and the slaves were committed to jail. The two Kentuckians narrowly escaped a similar catastrophe, by giving bail for their appearance at court, on the charge of house-breaking and threatening of life. Before the day of trial came, one of these received a summons to stand before the "Judge of all the earth." The other returned, sad and dejected, to the double trial; but the slaves had broken jail and were safe, and the Kentuckian was released. There was no evidence of any help to the slaves from without. An inmate of the jail, a basket-maker, had been furnished with the tools necessary to his calling, and with these he opened a passage for himself, and the rest followed. It was scarcely more a human plan than was the release of Peter by the angel.

The only other "rescue" case which has occurred among us, is too recent to require rehearsal. It involved a more decided human interposition, but was attended with no harmful consequences.

COLORED STUDENTS.

Oberlin College was never designed to be a colored school; that is, to furnish facilities peculiarly adapted to the wants of the colored people; nor has there ever been an effort on the part of its managers, so to modify it as to meet these wants. It has aimed to offer to the colored student one advantage, as pressing as any other—that is, to the extent of its influence, to break down the barrier of caste, and to elevate him to a common platform of intellectual, social and religious life. This result, it aims to secure, by admitting him, without any reservation or distinction, to all the advantages of a school, having a fair standing among the Colleges of the land. Such a work, a

distinctively colored school could not effect. However high its literary character, it must lie on the other side of that barrier of caste, which a false system has reared between the races. To furnish such a school, might be a good work; but it was a far more difficult task to make a breach in that division wall, to found a school in the breach itself, and secure such influences as that the student from either side should feel at home. The gratifying success which has attended the effort, is the result of a combination of influences, literary, social, and religious, the absence of any of which would have caused a failure.

The first colored student who entered the Institution, was James Bradley, from Cincinnati, once a slave, brought here by the students from Lane. He was not remarkable as a scholar, but had excited the interest of those students, by the simple pathos with which he told his tale of sorrow. The numbers increased for some years, but for many years past, the ratio has been constantly four or five per cent. Ten young men have taken a degree, and nine young ladies have completed the "Ladies' Course." Most of those who have graduated, have occupied a fair position among their fellows in scholarly attainment and cultivation. It might be safe to say of one of them, that he has had no superior in literary taste, or in ability as a linguist. Others have excelled in other departments of study. The work accomplished must not be estimated by the smallness of the number of those who have graduated. Many have taken a partial course, and have qualified themselves for respectable positions in the various walks of life, and many are now successfully employed as teachers of colored schools in various parts of the land. Only one has completed the Theological course, and he takes his leave of the Institution to-morrow.

But the indirect influence upon the elevation of the colored race, can scarcely be over-estimated. In the twenty-five years past more than ten thousand students have been connected with the Institution, and few of these have been here so short a time as not to have their prejudices removed, their feelings liberalized, and their interest quickened in reference to the colored race. To this result, no special means have been necessary. They meet, from day to day, those whom nature has tinged with a darker shade than themselves, but engaged in the same pursuits,

cherishing the same aspirations, gifted with the same powers, and sharers in a common destiny. A supercilious air seems out of place. The lip that at first curled with contempt, will at length smile a recognition of a common humanity. What men most require for the cultivation of a fellow feeling, is to look each other fairly in the face. So have we found it here; and, of the ten thousand who have gone from among us, there are probably few that may not be relied on as the enemies of oppression, and the friends of an abused and neglected race. The wide-spread influence which these must exert in the family, in the school, in the church and in the State, cannot be compassed by human vision.

PREVAILING OPPOSITION.

Without any wish to revive unpleasant recollections, it may still be proper to ask, what was the secret of that wide-spread odium which prevailed against the people and the place? What common impulse led men of all classes, the good and the bad, to cast out the name of Oberlin as evil? Was the general conviction that there was unutterable mischief here, merely an epidemic illusion, which comes and goes no one knows how or why? What had Oberlin done to incur this prejudice?—for prejudice it was, persistent and cruel, after all due allowance for blunders and follies here and misunderstandings abroad. The first and fundamental mistake which Oberlin made was to presume to exist at all. The territory was already appropriated. Western Reserve College existed, and what more natural than that its friends should claim for it the rights of prior possession? and its friends were almost all the prominent ministers and influential men of Northern Ohio. They had the public ear. It was trying to their patience to see another school established within fifty miles of that which they had reared, threatening to divide the field and to attract a share of public attention and patronage. The anxiety was natural and the dissatisfaction scarcely to be blamed; but it is no proper excuse for injustice. The first term of the school here, in the Spring of 1834, an article appeared in the "Ohio Observer," a paper published in the neighborhood of Western Reserve College, giving expression to this feeling and calling in question the right of Oberlin to be.

The article was signed "Scrutator," and was taken here as an indication of the views of influential men. Nothing was farther from the thought of Mr. Shipherd, than an intentional opposition to any school whatever. In his first published circular, on the very first page, he says: "Being distinctive in its character, it was thought by the principal of the nearest literary institution, [Elyria High School,] to be no more an interference with that or others in the neighborhood than if located more remotely. It stands not as a *competitor* but as a *sister* of all institutions of Christian science." One of the original corporators of Oberlin was also a founder and prominent trustee of the Western Reserve College. He resigned his place here in the Fall of 1834 because, as he remarked, he could not "stand between two fires." Thus there was a predisposition to look unfavorably upon Oberlin because it was regarded as an intruder, a difficulty which every school encounters, commencing in the vicinity of one already existing. It has taken a generation to allay the irritation, and establish kindly courtesies between Williams and Amherst.

It is a fact worthy of note that soon after the appointment of Prof. Finney to his chair, at Oberlin, and before he had visited the place, the Trustees of Western Reserve College tendered him an appointment to the chair of Pastoral Theology in that Institution, and sent a deputation to meet him at Cleveland, on his way to Oberlin, to turn his face towards Hudson. Failing to see him, they sent another deputation directly to Oberlin, to propose a transfer of the entire establishment, Professors and Students in a body, to Hudson, showing that the competition was more dreaded at that time than the fanaticism. Whatever may have been the antagonism between the friends of Western Reserve College and those of Oberlin, it may be said in all sincerity that no other than kindly feelings have ever been cherished here towards that Institution, and no allusion to it has ever been made in the "Evangelist" or elsewhere, but such as was courteous and respectful. Oberlin men, in common with other friends of Christian learning, have felt sad in view of the shadow which rested upon it for years, and rejoice now in its returning prosperity.

The foregone conviction against Oberlin soon found abundant occasion to justify itself. The absurd decision in reference to

colored students, was the first evidence to conservative and prudent men that Oberlin lacked good sense and must be short-lived; and it was on this point that general popular opposition first displayed itself. The next offence was an ecclesiastical one, that of co-operating in the organization of a Congregational association, in a region where, from the earliest settlement, only Presbyteries and the "plan of union" had been known. This ecclesiastical arrangement had undisturbed possession of the territory; and good men who had lived and labored among the churches for years, naturally looked with disfavor and alarm upon a movement which seemed to them subversive of the general harmony. Gray-headed and worthy men were heard to say, "We have had peace here these many years, and now Oberlin has come in to trouble Israel." These men could not see that the temporary adjustment which had served them so well, must terminate by an inherent weakness, and that premonitions of a convulsion had already appeared. The movement did not originate at Oberlin. Oberlin served more as a pivot upon which the movement turned, than as a force to generate it. Here was another point of antagonism with the ruling interests of the region, an occasion of misunderstanding on the part of all with whom Oberlin was naturally connected. How easy to speak of it as a divider of the churches.

Then came the Theological heresy to which allusion has been made, and men who before had wished that Oberlin would go down, now felt it their duty to *put* it down. Non-intercourse acts were passed by Evangelical Conventions and Presbyteries, and warnings against error were addressed to the churches—the greater and lesser excommunication of latter days. Education and Missionary Societies were soon posted in reference to heresy at Oberlin; and students here asked for help in vain, in their preparation for the ministry, and offered their services in vain when they were ready for the field. An effort was made, which was persevered in for years, to write Oberlin out of the fellowship of Presbyterian and Congregational churches—to represent it as wholly peculiar in its religious views and as entitled only to the place of a distinct denomination. It seemed in vain that Oberlin declined to be a distinct denomination, and protested against this false position. Theological students went

to the Presbyteries embracing the churches with which they had been connected from childhood, and the pastors to whom they had always looked up as instructors, and asked for examination in regular form. They were met with distrust and suspicion and exclusion. A committee of judicious men was constituted, who asked them in a private room, "Do you believe in the doctrines taught at Oberlin and in their way of doing things?" In vain the young men expressed a wish to be examined as to their views, and promised a full and frank statement of them. They were given to understand that a general repudiation of Oberlin, in doctrine and practice, was requisite as a *condition of examination.* To administer such a rebuff to young men who had for years looked forward to the ministry, and who had worked their passage through a full course of education in preparation for it, must have been painful to good men. They did not enjoy it. But they had possessed themselves of the conviction that they must do it. It is no part of our purpose to reproach them, but to illustrate the intensity of the opposition which had arisen.

The educational influences of the country, as distinguished from the religious, were enlisted against Oberlin by the representation that sound and substantial education was not aimed at here, that the prescribed course of study was defective, and that the actual performance was more shallow still. The indulgence to which a new school is entitled was not accorded. It was not enough that prominent on the board of Trustees were men who had, in other places, stood by the interests of sound learning—that the Faculty embraced two valedictorians, one from Yale and another from Williams, besides other honored graduates of New England Colleges. It was of no avail that the course was placed side by side with that of Yale, and shown to be equal in the amount of linguistic study afforded. The fact that a few students had burned their Virgils one evening, after listening to a spirited discussion on the study of the ancient classics between the President of the Institution, then just arrived, and the Professor of Languages, was triumphantly quoted as a demonstration of the permanent attitude of the College. Yet these same young men had prepared their lessons for the next morning, and continued, from that day on, the prescribed course of classical study. Then again, Oberlin received ladies

and admitted them to college privileges and honors. Who ever heard of such a College? It might be a High School or Academy—a "Collegiate Institute," as it styled itself, but never a College; and so Oberlin was voted not a College. The society for the promotion of collegiate education at the West has not yet heard of Oberlin College; and scarce ten years have passed since a financial agent of Western Reserve College, half a score of whose students from the higher classes had graduated here long before, stood in the pulpit of a distinguished Alumnus and former Professor of Oberlin College, and in his presence commended to the audience the Institution he represented, as "the only college on the Western Reserve." A fact so singular implies a general and profound conviction that Oberlin College did not exist.

A combination of influences such as these, united the political, social, educational, ecclesiastical and theological interests of the region against Oberlin, and predisposed all classes to receive any evil report which might be fabricated. A renegade student, excommunicated from the Oberlin Church for infidelity, and expelled from the Society of Inquiry for ribald and blasphemous language, who recently figured for a brief term as a Democratic U. S. Senator from Oregon, availed himself of this readiness to receive such scandal, and entertained the public with a scurrilous pamphlet called "Oberlin Unmasked." That he should choose to gratify his spleen in that way was not strange; but that leading ministers of the gospel, men of piety and good sense, within twenty-five miles of Oberlin, should accept his vile fancies as facts, was passing strange.

This contempt for Oberlin was wide-spread, and pervaded the entire region; but it did not embrace all. In almost every neighborhood there were two parties, those who believed in Oberlin, and those who did not. This line of division traversed churches, and sometimes sundered them. It was of course laid to the charge of Oberlin; but in general Oberlin had little more to do with the division, than had the suspended shield under which the two knights fought and fell to settle the question whether it was gold or silver. The man or the place may seem unfortunate, whose very presence tends to separate neighbors into two classes, friends and foes. Yet it is true that the friendship is the

more ardent which flourishes under such difficulties; and Oberlin had its faithful and devoted friends. Next to Heaven itself they were its "tower of strength."

In general, the policy of Oberlin was to make no reply to attacks from abroad, and offer no explanation of misrepresentations. Religious papers came, freighted with weighty communications on Oberlin, number after number, from one to seven, but there was none to answer nor any that regarded. The only exception was on a single point of doctrine. The result at length was that Oberlin attained an immunity from such assaults. The tales, whether false or "founded on fact," finally came to be regarded as of no significance, and ceased altogether, except where the habit had become inveterate, as in the case perhaps of the "Cleveland Plaindealer."

Oberlin men are sometimes spoken of, as distinguished by a high degree of assurance and self-confidence. Now we hold modesty to be one of the cardinal graces of character, and nothing is more desirable than an atmosphere in which it can flourish; but it required a good degree of self-assertion for an Oberlin man to presume to live in those days of general reproach. What right had he to be, when the prevailing conviction was that he had no right to be, that he was an intruder, "outside the pale of all healthy organizations," political, ecclesiastical, literary, social and domestic? With little in the shape of common sympathy to encourage him, he must fall back upon his own convictions and his conscious rectitude. Under such a dispensation, back-bone would flourish, even if modesty should fail. We may hope that the gentler grace will appear, since circumstances have become more auspicious. Let us turn to more grateful matters.

JOINT EDUCATION OF THE SEXES.

A Female Department was in the original plan of Oberlin, and young ladies have been connected with the school from the beginning, constituting at the outset more than one-third of the entire number. The place which this department occupied in the mind of the founders of the school is indicated in the first circular, where the "grand object" is said to be "the diffusion of useful science, sound morality and pure religion, among the

growing multitudes of the Mississippi Valley," and the means, "primarily the thorough education of ministers and pious school teachers — secondarily the elevation of female character, and thirdly the education of the *common people* with the higher classes, in such a manner as suits the nature of Republican institutions." The circular says further: "The Female Department, under the supervision of a lady, will furnish instruction in the *useful* branches taught in the best female seminaries; and its higher classes will be permitted to enjoy the privileges of such professorships in the Teachers', Collegiate and Theological Departments, as shall best suit their sex and prospective employment." It does not appear that any new philosophy of woman's rights or duties was involved in this new movement for female education; but rather that old philosophy that "it is not good for man" or woman "to be alone," that neither can be elevated without the other, and that their responsibilities in the work of life, though different, are equal. Such has been the theory of the institution from that day to this, and its aim has been to realize this idea. If a few of those who have gone out from us appear as the advocates of, what some think, more advanced views, they have never been disposed to give Oberlin credit for their better light.

At the beginning, a specific course of study was prescribed for ladies, extending through four years, after a good common school education, and was so arranged as to run parallel with the course for young men in the Preparatory and Collegiate Departments, omitting some studies and adding others. The ancient languages are omitted, with the exception of two years' study of the Latin; French and some other branches are added. The "Ladies' Course" embraces all the mathematics with one slight exception, and the entire course of Natural Science, Philosophy and General Literature, pursued by the college students. This course requires about a year more time than is devoted to study in the best female seminaries.

It seems not to have been anticipated that the young ladies would require the college course; but this fact first appeared in 1837, when four were admitted to the Freshman class, three of whom graduated in 1841, and were the first ladies who have received a literary degree from any college in the country.

Within the past, year the claim for precedence in this respect has been set forth for another college, whose charter is yet scarcely ten years old. In all, 47 ladies have completed the full college course of study here, and 249 have completed the ladies' course. The number of graduates represents very inadequately what has been done in the way of female education. Large numbers have enjoyed the advantages of the school for a single year or more, before entering upon the duties of life, and have been permanently helped thereby. The average proportion of young ladies to the entire number of students is, at present, about 40 per cent. The whole number the first year was 44—the present year about 500.

A peculiarity in the constitution of the Female Department here is, its government by a "Ladies' Board of Managers," who have the general supervision of the young ladies, and attend to all cases of individual discipline, where any authority besides that of the Principal of the Department is called for. The Principal and an Assistant give their time to the personal supervision of the young ladies, and to their general culture, while in their literary duties they fall into the college classes corresponding with their advancement in their course. Such an arrangement of the government, seems best conformed to the proprieties of their condition, and has given satisfactory results.

The attempt to bring the two sexes together, in a school for higher education, was regarded, a quarter of a century ago, as a hazardous experiment. Has the experiment been fairly tried? Has sufficient time elapsed to judge of results? Have the circumstances of Oberlin been so peculiar as to preclude the application of our experience to other cases? In reference to time, it may be said that institutions of learning grow old rapidly. Every four years, gives us a new generation of students. More than half a dozen generations have passed through our Institution in its brief life. Any vice implanted in our social arrangements should have sprung up and yielded a harvest, in such a period. But no such harvest of evil has appeared in the Institution, springing from this arrangement. On the contrary, those who have had the responsibility of directing the affairs of the Institution and watching the tendency of things, have had constant occasion for satisfaction with the working of the system.

But in many respects our circumstances have been favorable. The school has been surrounded with a sympathizing community of intelligent, Christian families. We have been favored from the outset, with the wisdom and experience and unrecompensed labor of educated Christian ladies, who have felt a maternal interest in all that pertained to the welfare of the young people. There has been a pervading religious sentiment, powerful in the direction of good order, marking the entire history of the Institution; and last, not least, we have been favored in the class of students who have come among us. To a very large extent, they have been from pious, industrious families, and from those parts of the country distinguished for intelligence and good order. These advantages have favored the experiment. But on the other hand, our numbers have always been very large, and for the last eight years, almost overwhelming; precluding the idea of such strict personal supervision as would counteract the tendencies of a vicious system. Our anxieties have sometimes been aroused, but our apprehensions have not been realized. Good order has triumphed. Again, among a thousand young people, embracing representatives from almost every State of the Union, and from every condition of society, there must be a number, more or less, who are destitute of principle and propense to evil. These, if not restrained by our system and reformed, must be detected and eliminated. In the disposal of this element, we seem to be successful. Nor is the difficulty increased by this peculiarity of the system. To friends who anxiously inquire if there are not hidden mischiefs which our eyes cannot reach, we can only say—look for yourselves. We have been looking, these many years, with that intentness of vision which a sense of responsibility, and a jealous interest in the school must give. We have seen things to regret, but more to rejoice in; and find occasion every day to congratulate ourselves upon the satisfaction we are permitted to feel in our work. If this characteristic of Oberlin were set aside, full half the attractiveness of the work would be lost. If any new school or college should inquire of us in reference to the matter of joint education, we would say without any misgiving, or any particular inquiry as to circumstances—try it. I speak solely upon my own responsibility, without consultation or in-

struction; but I have no doubt that I express the unanimous conviction of all who have been engaged in the work here, from the beginning until now.

DISCIPLINE OF THE COLLEGE.

The discipline of the school has had from the beginning some peculiarities. Circumstances were favorable for the initiation of changes in the usual system of college discipline. The students first gathered here, were not *sent* to school—they *came*. They were serious-minded, earnest young people, with no thought but to make the most of their time and opportunities. They needed suggestions and instruction—not much restraint. The early students will remember that for years we had no roll called for recitation—no marking for performance—no monitor to note absences from public exercises, and no account rendered in any way. There were published regulations—not printed—to which all were expected to conform. A high degree of familiarity was maintained between Faculty and students. The least advanced member of the Preparatory Department felt free to salute the President of the Institution as brother, and the salutation was accepted as sufficiently respectful. To an outsider, this familiarity sometimes seemed shocking. He did not apprehend the spirit of it; and because of the absence of certain formalities usual in colleges—the lifting of the hat and the stately recognition—he arrived at the conclusion that the students were lacking in genuine respect for their teachers. There could be no greater mistake. The respect and confidence were so hearty that stately formalities would have seemed as much out of place as between parents and children.

Such a field afforded a good opportunity for dispensing with the strict surveillance of the monitorial and marking systems, and making large account of the principles of confidence, self-respect and honor. The self-reporting system has been in operation these many years, each student giving account of his performance of certain prescribed duties. The appeal is made to his honor and self-respect; and while these doubtless fail at times, the tendency of the system is not to break them down. It is not considered smart to give a false report of attendance

upon prayers and public worship, as it is wont to be to evade the observation of a monitor, or deceive an obnoxious tutor. The past eight years, a record has been kept by each teacher of the performance in recitation—not for the purpose of grading or indicating the standing in any public way, but for the more exact information of teacher and pupil, giving each an opportunity, as surveyors say, for back-sight and fore-sight.

The cases of individual discipline among us have always been surprisingly few, and are mostly confined to the Preparatory Department, which almost all new-comers enter. More than ten years have elapsed since a student has been expelled or dismissed, in the way of discipline, from any of the college classes. The average number of college students during that time has been 109, and stands now at 181. About eight years ago the number of students in the Institution rose, in a single year, from 571 to 1020, and the next year to 1305, and since that time has averaged more than 1200 yearly; yet there has been no corresponding increase in the number of cases of discipline. A more thorough system of supervision has been secured, and all operations are more completely systematized; but the time spent by the Faculty upon *cases*, has not been perceptibly increased.

There are many influences which conduce to good order; and among these I would mention, first, the sense of responsibility which attaches to each pupil, to maintain his good name. Our college community is not so secluded that a student can have a college reputation, as distinct from his reputation in general society. The presence of both sexes in the school, does much to secure this result. Few of the hundreds here will ever find a place where their personal reputation will seem of more value to them, than at present. If they ever intend that a good name shall forward their interests, this is the time and the place. It is difficult to over-estimate this force.

Then again, the interest which has always prevailed in the school, in questions of moment in the outer world, such as slavery and politics, has been favorable. The intellectual activity, generated in a large school, must have an object, and if nothing worthy and elevated is afforded, it will fasten upon things trivial or degrading. It seems eminently fit that youth, in process of education, should ponder and form opinions upon the great

moral and political questions which agitate the world. Even erroneous and partial opinions are better than indifference. Exclude such questions from a school, and other questions will be raised, unworthy of attention. College politics take the place of general politics, and the question—who shall be President of a Literary Society, awakens intenser feeling, than who shall be President of the Republic. These graver questions are, by some, thought to produce unwholesome excitements in schools, but the enthusiasm which they call out is a generous emotion, not like the petty and contemptible strifes which sometimes agitate the college community. The spirit begotten is elevated and manly, and conduces to an elevated and worthy character. In this respect we have been favored. Questions of serious and weighty interest, of right and wrong, pertaining to the duties of the government and the rights of citizens, have been thrust upon us, in such practical forms as compelled thought and action. We have needed no artificial employment of our activities. All this has tended to good order. Small matters become occasions of excitement and rebellion in colleges. It would often seem that the less the occasion, the more intense the feeling. But these small matters are excluded by greater. We have never had a rebellion here, not from the absence of spirit and excitability, but from the presence of worthier objects.

Still another feature in our college system, is the employment of so large a number of the more advanced and influential students, as teachers of the classes in the Preparatory Department. This arrangement is valuable in many ways. It secures to the student a desirable means of discipline and culture; an arrangement, according to Sir William Hamilton, essential to the best system of education. It furnishes substantial material aid to many who, without such resource, would be straitened for means to pursue study. It secures to the Institution, instruction of a high character, at rates lower than are paid in common schools, thus greatly reducing the price of tuition to the pupil. But beyond this, it is a disciplinary arrangement of immense value, bringing a large number of leading students into the double relation of teachers and pupils. Thus a link is established between Faculty and students, which enables them better to understand and appreciate each other; and thus the govern-

ment is brought, in the least offensive way, into immediate contact with the mass of the students. These teachers have no authority out of the recitation room, but they are a powerful influence on the side of good order.

While the general outcome of our system of discipline is thus satisfactory, it must not be supposed that it is in all cases successful, and that there are not instances in which the aims of teachers are frustrated, and the hopes of parents and friends disappointed. There is no complete immunity from temptation in Oberlin, and has never been. Those who are propense to evil company have always been able to find it; and those to whom a direct, vigilant oversight is essential, are not likely to prosper here. But many who would resist such supervision, and deteriorate under it, are found susceptible to more generous motives, and make rapid progress.

THE MANUAL LABOR SYSTEM.

The early students and friends of Oberlin often inquire with anxiety in reference to the manual labor feature of the school. Has it been a success or a failure? The true answer would probably be—neither, but rather a mixture of the two. The expectations of the founders of the school were very sanguine in reference to the results of manual labor. Mr. Shipherd was accustomed to express the conviction that an investment of $150, in buildings, apparatus and other equipments, would afford a perpetual foundation for a single student, so that he would be able to defray the entire expense of his course, and his successors after him forever, by four hours' daily labor. This was the idea of the original "Oberlin Scholarship," which was in the early days the source of some misunderstandings. It guarantied nothing but the privilege of staying here, and enjoying the advantages for learning and for labor, upon condition of paying for them; but it was expected that the labor would pay. No such pledge, however, was given. The purchaser of the scholarship was expected to invest his money upon the ground of faith in the system. Pecuniary results were not the only, nor the prime aim of the manual labor system. The original circular which sets forth the "plan," contains the following paragraph: "This Department is considered indis-

pensable to a complete education. It is designed, first, to preserve the student's health. For this purpose all of both sexes, rich and poor, are *required* to labor four hours daily. There being an intimate sympathy between soul and body, their labor promotes, as a second object, clear and strong thought and a happy moral temperament. A *third* object of this system is its pecuniary advantages. For while taking that exercise necessary to health, a considerable portion of the student's expense may be defrayed. This system, as a fourth object, aids essentially in forming habits of industry and economy; and secures as a fifth desideratum an acquaintance with common things. In short, it meets the wants of man as a *compound* being, and prevents the common and amazing waste of money, time, health and life."

To carry out this system, an Institution farm of 800 acres was secured, a steam engine, with mills and other machinery, was put in operation, and a work-shop erected and supplied with tools. At a given hour the manual labor bell was rung, and the students repaired to their four hours' work—some to the mills, others to the shop, and the remainder to the fields or forest. The young ladies performed domestic labor in the Boarding Hall. The prices paid, ranged from four to seven cents per hour for young men, and for young ladies, three to four cents. Board, at the same time, was seventy-five cents a week for young ladies, and one dollar for young men. The circular of the first year adds, in a closing paragraph: "The testimony of one year's trial is, that students, by four hours' daily labor, may preserve their health, clear and invigorate their minds, guard against morbid influences, earn their board, and yet *facilitate*, instead of retarding, their progress in scientific attainments. The most delinquent in manual, have been the most deficient in mental labor."

The second year, the number of students was increased nearly three fold, although "more than half the applications for admission were refused." The catalogue of this year states that "students, both male and female, and in all the Departments, are expected to labor *three* hours daily." The next year, 1836, the numbers still increased, and auxiliary schools were opened at Sheffield and Abbeyville, where manual labor facilities were provided; and students were transferred to these and to

the Grand River Institute, and the Elyria High School. The catalogue for this year announces that "nearly all the young ladies, and a majority of the young gentlemen, have paid their board by their manual labor." Three hours' daily labor was still required.

The Institution was too poor to publish a catalogue in 1837. The catalogue of 1838 says: "At present no pledge can be given that the Institute will furnish labor to all the students; but hitherto nearly all have been able to obtain employment from either the Institute or Colonists. It is thought that the same facilities for available labor will be continued." Of course when the ability to furnish labor failed, the requirement to labor passed into a recommedation. From that day to this, the Institution has held out no pledge to furnish labor, and of course the requirement has never been revived. The present announcement on the subject of manual labor is as follows: "The Institution does not pledge itself to furnish labor for the students; but arrangements have been made with those who lease the lands of the college, to furnish employment to a certain extent. The college also gives employment to a few around the buildings. Diligent and faithful young men can usually obtain sufficient employment from the inhabitants of the village, every facility being afforded by the college to give students an opportunity of laboring. Many, by daily labor, have been able to pay their board. Others have not been able to do this, while others still have paid their board, washing and room-rent." This is certainly a letting down from the first announcement. The manual labor system could not stand here upon the plan first adopted. Some of the difficulties were inherent in the plan itself, and some perhaps in our particular situation. The expense of the manual labor system, as first arranged, was almost overwhelming. The amount of superintendence required for students, employed either on the farm or in shops, is vastly greater than for the same amount of labor under other circumstances. A student working his three hours a day, requires twice the oversight needed for a laborer working continuously, in the same employment. The time he gives to labor is not sufficient to enlist his interest. His heart is where his treasure is—not in his work. He drops his implements when

the hour of release from labor comes, and gives no more thought to the work until he is summoned to it again. To carry on a farm with such labor, is out of the question, and it is almost as difficult to conduct any systematic operations. Then the soil here was specially ill adapted to management by such labor. It requires to be treated with the utmost consideration—moved at the right time and in the right manner; handled otherwise, it is particularly obstinate. Repeated efforts were made to secure labor in such forms as would be suitable to students. During the time of the silk-worm mania, in 1836, a large expenditure was made for mulberry trees, and the entire force of young men turned out day after day to plant them. There are still standing, back of the Laboratory, a few relics of the old mulberry plantation; but not a cocoon was ever spun upon the farm. Excellent farmers and superintendents of manual labor were employed—men whose hearts were in the work; but it would not do. The wheat and corn raised, even when there was a successful crop, cost twice the market price. The same difficulty was found in the shop. The superintendence cost more than the outcome of all the labor. From absolute compulsion, the enterprise in this form was abandoned, and the lands were leased to permanent occupants, who engage to furnish employment to students, in proportion to the amount of land they occupy. The families occupying these lands, require and secure more students' labor than could be provided for on these lands as an Institution farm. The young ladies of the Boarding Hall have always performed a large portion of the domestic labor required there. Thus it will be seen that we have not realized the high ideal of a manual labor school which was indulged at the beginning. The spirit of labor has been cherished here, and work has always been held in honor. "Learning and Labor," is the motto of the college seal, and a large proportion of our students rely upon their own exertions for support, realizing more however from winter teaching than from summer work. The concentration of vacations upon the winter months, provides successfully for such occupation. This arrangement has been thought unfavorable to the best results in study, but it is essential to our students, and has many advantages to recommend it. Some other schools have adopted the plan.

STUDY AND LITERARY CULTURE.

Oberlin College was not established with the idea of a less extended or less thorough course of education, than was common in other colleges; nor has any such idea obtained currency here at any time. The first announcement on the subject is as follows: "The Collegiate Department will afford as extensive and thorough a course of instruction as other colleges; varying from some by substituting Hebrew and sacred classics, for the most objectionable Pagan authors." The first college class, entering Freshman in 1834, was well prepared, and would have been received at any college in the land. Similar preparation has always been insisted on, and a course pursued coinciding in all essential points with that established in American colleges—comprising the usual amount of Languages, Mathematics, Natural Science, Belles Lettres and Philosophy. The ancient authors which were introduced at the beginning, were Cicero, Tacitus, Xenophon, Plato, Demosthenes, Sophocles, and Æschylus. Instead of Horace, Buchanan's Psalms were prescribed, but never used, because the book was out of print; and we had a taste of modern Latin, in Grotius de Veritate. The study of the Hebrew took a prominent place, inaugurated the second year by a four months' visit from Seixas, a celebrated teacher of Hebrew. His classes here numbered 127 pupils in the aggregate, and the entire Institution seemed likely to become Hebraized; but the tide ebbed and left the Hebrew, for many years, in the last four terms of the college course. At length so distinct a peculiarity was found to produce inconvenience. A student coming from another college to enter here, was out of joint with our course, and our students going abroad were equally out of joint. The Hebrew has at length been dropped, and is taught only in the Theological Department.

Another specialty in the Oberlin course, was the prominence early given to Mental Science and Metaphysical studies. This was due mainly to the influence of President Mahan, whose tastes and culture led him in that direction It was also due in part to the fact, that Oberlin was a sort of Western centre of the New School Theology; and Theological discussion naturally

led to the preliminary investigations in Mental Science. The progressive spirit of Oberlin found, too, a wider range in this field, than in any other. There was room for discovery, or at least for apparent discovery; and this was a stimulus to enthusiasm. The other departments of study were maintained in wholesome vigor, and even the Ancient Languages were studied as thoroughly as they have been in any western college; but the general enthusiasm centered about the Philosophical and Theological studies of the course. The early students will remember with what interest the entire Institution attended upon an extended discussion of the fundamental principles of obligation, held in the old Chapel, between President Mahan, a stern advocate of the "theory of intrinsic ultimate rightness as the foundation of obligation," on one side, and Professor John P. Cowles, a keen and able champion of the New Haven doctrine of Utility, on the other, with President Finney in the chair. It was under such a heat that President Finney elaborated his own views of the foundation of obligation, embodying in his system the truth from both the opposing theories, and eliminating what was false. To this day a similar prominence has been given to philosophical studies; but that the old enthusiasm should survive in all its force, was not in the nature of things. The interest has increased in other departments of study, and in general literature; thus affording a more symmetrical, perhaps not a more vigorous culture.

It has been the aim of the authorities of the college to make the entire course subservient to a broad and generous Christian culture, placing the Bible in the centre, and making all studies contribute to it. This has seemed better than to displace all other studies by the Bible. In the literary course, the entire New Testament is read in the original, and a weekly lesson is given in the English Old Testament. All departments of the Institution are in vigorous operation. In the Theological Department, the number of students, though small, is greater than at any time for the past fifteen years, and in the other departments greater than at any other time.

BUILDINGS.

To the multitudes of new-comers, new and better buildings seem very desirable, and the want is indeed a pressing one—when or how to be met, we cannot foresee. Yet to the early students, some of whom are gathered here for the first time in many years, the old buildings have a charm which cannot be transferred to new or better buildings. Each hall, each room has a history, unwritten indeed, but never to be forgotten. Battered and weather-beaten as the old buildings are, many a heart would feel a pang to see them so transformed as to rob them of their identity; yet such changes have already befallen some of them, and in the course of nature must come to the rest.

The oldest building is Oberlin Hall, erected in 1833 to receive the expected school—about forty feet square, two full stories, with a peculiar third story, called the "attic." This building contained the germ of the entire establishment nearly two years. It embraced Boarding Hall, Chapel, Meeting-House, School-Rooms, College Office, Professors' quarters, and private rooms for about forty students—that same attic story, with its hall four feet in width, receiving twenty young men, giving to each pair a room eight feet square, with a single window of six common lights. No hive of bees, just before swarming time, was ever more full of life and activity than was Oberlin Hall in 1834–5. It would puzzle a student of that time to recognize the building to-day. More than twenty years ago, the attic gave place to a full story, thus robbing the building of its most distinctive feature. Several years since, it passed from the ownership of the College; and now, dining-room, chapel, sitting-room and Treasurer's office, are devoted to mercantile uses.

The second building erected was the present Boarding or Ladies' Hall, raised in the summer of 1834, but not completed until the autumn of 1835. Such an addition gave a sense of enlargement to the school. The dining room afforded sittings for 200, and it was soon filled. The third story and the western flights of stairs, were appropriated to young men, the first

year or more. Afterwards it was wholly surrendered to the ladies, except the claim upon the dining room. This dining room, for several months before it was completed, and afterwards, was used as a place of worship on Sabbath.

About this time, 1835, a church in Walton, N. Y., sent on several of their young men, and put up a building for them called Walton Hall—a two story building capable of rooming twenty-four students. This is now private property—a cabinet ware-room, on the west side of Main street, midway between College and Mill streets. In the spring of this year, Cincinnati Hall, already described, was erected. It stood to the south-west of the present Laboratory, extending north and south, on what is now the east side of Professor street. It was occupied two or three years; but not a vestige of it remains except the well, which is buried three or four feet under the surface of the ground, in the front yard of one of our citizens. Some portions of the timbers exist in the frame of a stable belonging to another citizen—useful to the last.

Colonial Hall was erected in the autumn of 1835, and completed the next summer. It was so named, because the people of the colony subscribed a considerable portion of the funds required to build it, and were entitled in return to the joint use, for Sabbath worship, of the lower story completed as a chapel. This building remains in form as it was first constructed, except that four recitation rooms have taken the place of the old chapel. How many experiences will it require to make any other chapel the centre of such memories, as cluster about that dingy old room!

Tappan Hall was commenced the same year, 1835, and its walls stood through the winter at about half their full height. When this was completed, within a year afterwards, the College seemed comfortably furnished with rooms, both public and private, and building operations were suspended for many years, except that the Laboratory and Music Hall were added a few years later. The Laboratory stands, occupied by its presiding genius, as it was, twenty years ago; the Music Hall has experienced various fortunes, and is now used as a Cabinet of Natural History.

The new Chapel was erected in 1854, necessitated by the sudden increase in the number of students. It affords sittings for about 900, and is barely sufficient for our daily wants.

These buildings have been erected with little regard to architectural appearance, and some of them, as is incident to a new country, without sufficient attention to stability. The early decay of such is inevitable. Their aggregate first cost was probably about $40,000, and much has been expended upon repeated renovations. The early commencements were held in the "Big Tent"—a circular canopy 100 feet in diameter, capable of sheltering 3000 people. It was spread on the college square, east of Tappan Hall. The manufacturers thought the structure unfinished without a flag upon the central mast, and accordingly sent on a blue streamer with the Millennial inscription, "Holiness to the Lord." This seemed to the people too pretentious, especially as the Millennium had not yet come; and it was never raised except at the first putting up of the tent. One summer, the Sabbath services were held in the tent, the students spreading it every Saturday evening, and removing it Monday morning.

In 1842 the Oberlin Church edifice was commenced, of such dimensions as should serve for commencement occasions; and here, since that year, our anniversary gatherings have been held. It admits on these occasions 2700 people, and affords shade for half as many more.

EARLY OCCUPANTS OF THE HALLS.

The buildings stand here, to tell their own experience of a quarter of a century; but where are the multitudes whose history leads through those halls? Who shall tell their tale? Whither are they scattered, and what has been their work? With the catalogue of twenty years ago in our hand, let us call the roll of the occupants of Tappan Hall, not by their names, but, as is done in some public institutions, by the numbers on their doors, not omitting a single number. Some echo of a response may reach us now and then. We take them as they stand: 56, went to Africa with the "Amistad captives," a pioneer in the Mendi Mission—a home missionary on the western

prairies—gone to his rest; 24, pastor in northern Ohio—pioneer in the free settlements of Kansas—encountered the tug of war at Osawatamie, and stands there still to lay the foundation of Christian institutions; [we pass many worthy names because the significant T does not stand against them,] 20, pastor in Vermont and northern Ohio—still at work; 34, helped to found a second Oberlin in Michigan—now a pastor in Iowa; 31, pastor in western New York—then in eastern Massachusetts—now in an eastern city; 25, pastor in Michigan, New York and Ohio—now Principal of the Preparatory Department; 21, pastor in southern Ohio—now a business man in northwestern Illinois; 85, "the poet's corner"—for many years a teacher here—now a farmer in Wisconsin; 35, one brief year a preacher of the Gospel—asleep in Jesus these eighteen years; 27, several years a pastor in central New York—went to his rest four years ago; 19, pastor many years in western New York—the last three years in Kansas; 28, pastor at the West—a laborer in the cause of female education in western cities—now a pastor in eastern Massachusetts; 51, went an invalid to the West Indies—performed vigorous missionary work there several years—returned here to die in triumph twelve years ago; 22, pastor at the East—and now these many years in Michigan; 48, farmer in central New York—now helping to lay the foundations of society in south-western Iowa; 50, pastor in northern and north-western Ohio; 55, pastor in northern Ohio—physician in Iowa; 33, pastor at the East—dug for health and means in California—pastor in Wisconsin and Illinois; 23, these eighteen years a pastor in Illinois; 39, pastor at the East—at the West—and now in Michigan; 26, preacher and professor of Logic and Philosophy—his grave was made on the hill yonder thirteen years ago; 36, pastor in central New York—now in Kansas; 59, pastor in western New York—twelve years a missionary in the West Indies—pastor in northern Ohio; 60, pastor these many years in Wisconsin; 58, pastor in Iowa; 37, minister—horticulturist in California; 52, now and for many years pastor in Illinois; 38, pastor in western New York—and in Illinois—rests from his labors; 53—an honest man, gone West; 54, pastor in Ohio—professor of Mathematics in a new University—died at his post nine years ago; 49, pastor in western Pennsylvania

--now for many years in Illinois; 10, a lawyer in Ohio; 6, missionary teacher and farmer in Minnesota; 18, pastor in Ohio—now in Michigan; 64, pastor in Ohio—resting at present; 45, pastor in Illinois and in Iowa; 81, pastor in Illinois —died a year ago; 57, pastor in western New York; 62, pastor in Iowa; 47, pastor in Massachusetts—died after a two years' ministry; 63, pastor in central Ohio; 9, teacher in Iowa; 41, farmer and colporteur in Ohio; 55, a short time a preacher—now a good deacon in Ohio; 11, at first a minister —now a lawyer in Ohio; 7, physician in an eastern city; 3, lawyer in a western city—one of the few Oberlin students who have attained wealth; 44, an honest citizen and merchant in Ohio; 2, pastor in Ohio—leader of a Christian colony to south-western Iowa—Congregational bishop of the diocese of the Missouri River; 8, missionary to the West Indies—founder of a manual labor school in the mountains of Jamaica; 83, pastor in Ohio—now in western New York; 77, pastor in eastern Massachusetts; 73, pastor in Ohio and in western New York; 76, pastor in Illinois and Iowa; 69, minister at the West; 78, business man in Ohio; 61, missionary among the North-Western Indians; 84, physician in western New York; 14, missionary to the North-Western Ojibwas; 82, distributor of excellent books in Connecticut; 89, pastor in Ohio—a pioneer missionary in Kansas through the struggle; 62, pastor in Iowa these fourteen years; 70, pastor in Ohio and Illinois; 72, teacher in Iowa; 88, lawyer—for many years mayor of a prominent city in Ohio; 1, itinerant preacher in Ohio; 42, lawyer in Michigan; 74, farmer at the West; 90, business man and lecturer in an eastern city; 79, missionary to the Cherokees—now farmer in Michigan; 43, lawyer in central New York; 67, brilliant but reckless—a fate too sad to mention—his bones lie on the Pacific coast; 75, lawyer—serving his country in a government office, a rare privilege for an Oberlin student; 16, a long-settled pastor in Illinois; 69, preacher at the West; 80 merchant in Wisconsin; 68, pastor in Illinois; 66, pastor in Ohio; 46, farmer in Ohio; 57, preacher, residence unknown; 86, minister in Ohio and Missouri; 15, pastor in Minnesota; 65, no response.

Thus closes the roll of Tappan Hall for 1840—a single gen-

eration of its occupants. They may serve as a sample brick from the building. Each other Hall would present a similar, though briefer record. Yet this gives only the outside of the structure—for the polished stones of the inner temple we must pass over to the Ladies' Hall. And here a difficulty meets us. The numbers of the ladies' private rooms were never published. We must take them in course as they stand on the same catalogue—not omitting a single name—beginning with seniors and going down. Number 1, wife of a pastor in Massachusetts; 2, pastor's wife in Michigan; 3, professor's wife at home; 4, wife of a pastor in Iowa; 5, wife of a pastor in Michigan; 6, missionary teacher among the Cherokees, wife of a merchant in Iowa; 7, wife of a manufacturer in southern Ohio; 8, wife of a merchant in Connecticut; 9, wife of a pastor in Iowa; 10, wife of an editor in Iowa; 11, wife of a minister, president of a college in Michigan, died two years ago; 12, wife of a missionary in Asiatic Turkey; 13, died a teacher in Tennessee; 14, wife of a lawyer in Iowa; 15 and 16, two excellent members of the Smith family, difficult to trace; 17, wife of a citizen of New York, herself deceased, represented in the Institution, as many others, by a daughter; 18, wife of a pastor in Michigan; 19, wife of a judge in central New York; 20, wife of a teacher in a manual labor school, herself a teacher in Ohio; 21, wife of a pastor in Illinois, now a widow in central Ohio; 22, wife of a physician in western New York; 23, wife of a worthy citizen of Ohio; 24, poetess, editress, wife and mother in an eastern city; 25 wife of a pastor in central New York; 26, wife of a pastor in Illinois; 27, wife of a pastor in Wisconsin; 28, wife of a physician, at the head of a home for invalids; 29, wife of a wealthy citizen of Massachusetts; 30, wife of a citizen of Michigan, died twelve years ago; 31, wife of a pastor in Ohio, again of a citizen of Iowa; 32, wife of a pastor in Iowa; 33, mother, counsellor and support of six children deserted by their father; 34, an interesting young lady, died in early life; 35, wife of a minister and farmer in Michigan; 36, wife of a teacher and again of a farmer in Ohio; 37, wife of a minister and merchant in Illinois; 38, wife of a minister and president of a youthful college in Michigan; 39, wife of a citizen of Ohio, died

early; 40, wife of a merchant in Michigan; 41, no response; 42, wife of a pastor in Illinois and again of a professor of music; 43, no response; 44, wife of a pastor in central New York; 45, wife of a farmer in Iowa; 46, no response; 47 and 48, two more Smiths; 49, wife of a minister in Ohio; 50, wife of a professor in central New York; 51, wife of a pastor, now a widow in Ohio—and so to the end; scarce a name which may not be recalled with satisfaction, and few which do not bring with them a volume of precious memories—few which are not in themselves a history, to those whose lives have run in the same channel these twenty years.

COLLEGE FUNDS.

The funds of the college, at the close of its first year, were reported at $17,000; consisting of 500 acres of land, money raised by an advance of $1 on each acre of the original purchase, and subscriptions made at the East and in the neighborhood of Oberlin. The next year, able men in New York City took hold of the enterprise. Arthur Tappan gave $10,000 to build Tappan Hall; another gentleman loaned $10,000, and these and others united in a "Professorship Association," pledging themselves to pay regularly the salaries of eight Professors. This arrangement was the basis upon which President Mahan and Professors Finney, Morgan, Cowles, and others, received their appointments. It served the purpose of bringing those men here, and was thus an important step in the establishment of the Institution. But it did not pay their salaries, more than a single year. The great fire in New York City, and the great monetary convulsions of 1836 and 37, followed, prostrating the entire business of the country. The Professorship Association went down, never to rise again. But the men were here, and the work assumed such interest on their hands, that they could not find it in their hearts to leave. They consented to live on meagre pay, and this coming in no definite form or channel. Money was sometimes loaned to weather a point—sometimes obtained by contribution. From time to time, a load of debt accumulated, and special efforts were made to lift the burden. In 1838, when debts were pressing, and friends in this country seemed dis-

couraged or exhausted, Messrs. Keep and Dawes undertook a mission to England. They went sustained by the commendations of distinguished philanthropists in this country, and were cordially received by men of similar spirit there. By untiring diligence, they raised, in the course of eighteen months, $30,000, sufficient to cancel the debt. It was chiefly the fidelity of Oberlin to anti-slavery principles, that brought forth such a response from British Christians.

Students were abundant during those years; but the charge for tuition was very low, and the income from this source was not half sufficient to meet current expenses. The balance was made up, by keeping a soliciting agent constantly in the field. The early friends of the Institution stood by it manfully, but were sometimes disturbed by these repeated applications. In 1850, a movement was made to secure an endowment of $100,000, by the sale of scholarships, guaranteeing free tuition to their holders. These sales were conditioned upon the making up of the required sum, and no transaction was confirmed until the pledges amounted to $100,000. The work of securing pledges was accomplished in a little more than a year; $22,000 being subscribed in the place, and $37,000 in this county. Of course, in the subsequent collection of these subscriptions, there would be some failures; but, on the whole, the effort was a success. As a result, the college has a fund of $89,000, secured on bond and mortgage; and unpaid, reliable obligations, to the amount, perhaps, of $5,000 more. By the interest of this fund, the literary departments of the Institution throughout, are furnished with instruction. This interest is about $6,700 yearly—a very small sum for the vast amount of work involved. Probably no instance can be found in the country, where the pay seems so inadequate to the work done. It is because the work itself is so inviting and satisfactory, that the men employed are not tempted to desert their posts. The highest salary paid from this fund is $600—a sum entirely too small to meet the wants of a family in a town where a moderate rent is $200. The scholarship system has been in operation nearly nine years, and in that time, of course, no tuition has been received; because the use of a scholarship can be obtained at about two-

thirds of the regular tuition charge. The scholarships sold were of three varieties—for six years, eighteen years, and perpetual. The whole number issued was about 1,400. The scholarships of short period are expiring at the rate of twenty-five each term; but it will be several years before there will be any deficiency in the market, or any necessity for paying tuition, even if the number of students should continue as at present.

After the movement for the endowment of the college, the Theological Department was sustained entirely by annual contributions from friends in New York and New England, until two years ago. Then an effort was commenced for securing a permanent fund, adequate to its support. The work was begun at home, by a subscription of $10,000; and has been prosecuted abroad, until the sums paid and pledged amount to about $20,000. Meanwhile, the friends who have stood by the work so long, are still depended upon to help us through.

In a few instances legacies, small in amount, but valuable in the interest and confidence which they indicate, have been left to the college, and we may reasonably hope for an increase of such remembrances. Want of confidence in the stability of a new institution, precludes those large donations and legacies, by which good men seek to perpetuate their beneficence in the world. A college must show itself able to live, in general, before those resources will gather about it which are essential to its highest efficiency. This is the way of the world, and perhaps it is as well. Every individual and every enterprise must have its probation.

PRESSING WANTS.

A glance at the present condition of the college, will show some obvious needs. Foremost among them is the necessity of a *larger income* for the purposes of instruction, sufficient to afford some additions to the teaching force, and an adequate support to the men already on the ground. It is found that teachers can live on inadequate pay, but it has not been found that they can give their undivided energies to the work, when duty to their own families requires them to engage in pursuits outside of their professional engagements. In the first years of a school, such distractions must be tolerated; but permanent

prosperity can only be secured by undivided labors. In a school as large as this, there is an imperative demand for a concentration of the entire intellectual, moral and spiritual force of the board of instruction, for the welfare of the pupils. It is not enough that each teacher meets the classes assigned him, and performs respectably the duties of his particular hours. His thought and soul must be given to his work. The interests of the school, aside from his particular branch of study, must be matter of daily and hourly concern. The teacher's influence must be felt everywhere, to guard every point of danger, and to secure every available advantage—a quiet, unobtrusive influence, but none the less potent. Such work cannot be performed by men whose strength must be partly given to a provision for their daily wants, by work out of their appropriate sphere. Yet it is only in this way that men, inadequately sustained, can work. They must work thus, or leave their posts to be filled by others of less experience, who will be subjected to the same necessity. Oberlin College will one day look to her children to avert this danger. At present she must fall back upon friends who have stood by her in many emergencies.

A new and commodious *Ladies' Hall*, is the next great necessity. The grounds are waiting to receive the structure; the improvements of the village are intruding upon the quiet of the old hall, and still we are not able to arise and build. The sum of $30,000 could be wisely devoted to this improvement. Does the country present any better opening for an investment of the kind? The old Boarding Hall has served its generation, and might properly be relieved from further duty.

More *books*—enlarged libraries, are anxiously looked for. The time to use them has arrived, and the want is seriously felt. Something has been done, of late, to meet this necessity. The Theological Literary Society has made a beginning in the way of collection. Their library numbers about one thousand volumes. The two College Literary Societies united in a movement, some four years since, and have an excellent collection of one thousand volumes. The two Literary Societies among the ladies, made a beginning a year and a half ago, and have now three or four hundred well selected volumes, with an interest in the matter which promises well for the future. No

large additions have been made of late to the College Library. It embraces about five thousand five hundred volumes, with room for more. Four years ago, the Alumni of the College made a movement to raise $10,000 for the library, and nearly one-third of this amount was subscribed. The general pecuniary revulsion of 1857, arrested the work; and the committee intrusted with the matter, await the action of the Alumni assembled to-day.

Another building is wanted, affording safe and commodious rooms for Libraries, the Cabinet of Natural History, Philosophical Apparatus, and suitable Lecture Rooms adjacent, with rooms, also, permanently appropriated to the Literary Societies. This building would stand north of Tappan Hall, corresponding in position with the Chapel, and should cost $15,000. The room secured, an appropriation would be needed to extend the Cabinet, and provide for its wholesome and steady growth. A substantial beginning has been made towards a Cabinet, but it is no time to stop. The tower of the building would give a place for such a telescope as the college needs. To furnish this, with moderate appointments, will require $2,000.

The only remaining money want which we shall mention is, some *provision to aid*, moderately and discriminately, *worthy students*—young men and young women, whose course of education must be interrupted and perhaps fail, for want of a little timely help. The education societies of the land are too much occupied to attend to Oberlin students, and have, in general, seemed willing to be relieved of the responsibility. A beginning has been made in the work, by a legacy, of the late Dr. Avery of Pittsburgh, left to the college, in trust, for the aid of needy and deserving colored students—the income only to be expended. This legacy will yield a fund of $6,600. A fund of $600 has been secured to the female department, by a legacy of a lady of Syracuse, and by a donation from a lady of Philadelphia. These funds are open for additions, and there is room for the establishment of others. Timely relief has been afforded occasionally, to individual students, by benevolent men who have felt moved to such deeds. These good deeds have not been conspicuous, but they are known to Him who seeth in secret.

This list of wants is somewhat formidable, and may seem disheartening to the friends of Oberlin; but it is better that we should go forward with open eyes, and not imagine that the pressure is removed, or the work done.

RESULTS.

The outcome of all this expenditure of labor and means, cannot be given in a few brief words. Nor can it be embraced by human thought. Some portions of the work lie upon the surface, and might be expressed in facts and figures; others reach the foundations of society, and can neither be computed nor revealed. A few hasty suggestions must suffice.

The contribution made to the grand total of *Christian Education* in the country, is a very obvious result. This is to be estimated, not merely by the numbers graduated from the different departments, but by the impression made upon the minds and hearts of the thousands who have received more or less training here. These have averaged 1,200 a year, for the last nine years; and nearly 500 a year for the fifteen years preceding. They have not been children, such as are found in common schools, but young men and young women, averaging probably not less than twenty years of age, just ready to enter upon active life. About 10,000, in the aggregate, have gone abroad, into every order of society, into every State in the Union, and into almost every region of the globe; bent, as we have reason to believe in reference to the larger portion, upon worthy aims, inspired with the purpose of serving their generation, and furnished, to some extent, by their training here, with an adaptedness to the work.

Many of these have engaged in teaching, and may be found in the schools of the land, of every grade. This business of teaching is largely pursued, both by those who have permanently left the Institution, and those who go out to find employment for the winter vacation. Sometimes more than five hundred of our home students have been employed in teaching, in a single year, giving more than one hundred and sixty years of school-keeping, allowing one term to each teacher, and three terms to the year. These teachers have, in general, well sustained the reputation

of the Institution, and the best schools in the land are open to them. A large portion of our students are drawn from these schools, led here by their teachers. Large numbers of these teachers are not interested merely to earn their money, or to secure a reputation for themselves. They go forth "bearing precious seed," and "come again with rejoicing."

Something has been done in the way of *popularizing education*, and adapting the style of educational institutions to Western society and Western wants. The mistake has sometimes been made, of attempting to transplant Eastern educational systems, the growth of Eastern thought and social forces, without any modifications, to the West. We have our "Yales" and "Mt. Holyokes of the West"—intended, avowedly, to be reproductions of distinguished and successful Eastern schools, upon the assumption that if they are successful anywhere, they must be so everywhere. Now, even an Eastern fruit, transferred to some portions of Ohio, finds itself out of its proper "habitat;" and the forces of society must be regarded, at least as carefully as the laws of the material world. These Eastern schools are the growth of the society in which they exist. A successful Western school must have a similar connection with Western society. We hear of recent endeavors to establish a "New England College" in California. Would it not be wiser to rear a California College there? The school which shall furnish to California the advantages which it requires, must be a California College. The schools of New England are not a reproduction of the universities of Old England, and could not be. The descendants of the Pilgrims, at the West, should exercise a similar wisdom.

Oberlin was the pioneer in a system of higher education at the West. This system is indigenous to the soil, and has shown its vitality in a vigorous growth. Nearly a score of colleges have sprung up in the different Western States, since Oberlin began, modeled upon the same general plan. Several of these have been founded, and are now manned, by Oberlin students; in others, Oberlin students bear a part. If the system be not adapted to Western society, the discovery will soon be made; for it is to be tested upon a wide scale.

Oberlin students have been, to a very great extent, pioneers in *Western Evangelization*. A very large majority of the preachers who have gone from Oberlin, have found their work in the frontier settlements of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas and California. They have usually sallied out to find their work, expecting their support to come with it—not always careful to have it secured in advance by some missionary society. Many of them have been sustained by the American Home Missionary Society, and the American Missionary Association; but many, and far the larger number, have accepted what their people could afford them, and have stood cheerfully at their posts, until their silvered locks begin to show that the days of their youth are past. At their side may be found representatives of the female department, of like faith and courage, and bearing their part in the battle of life. Their children are coming back to us from time to time, imbued with the spirit of their fathers and mothers, to drink, we would hope, from the same fountains of wisdom and inspiration, and to go forth on the same errands of love. No tables can give the results of such labors, and we have no disposition to attempt them.

The *Foreign Missionary* field has not been overlooked by Oberlin students. The American Missions among the emancipated colored people of Jamaica, have been established by Oberlin students. The missionaries and teachers there have been, with few exceptions, from Oberlin. The first who went, were self-sustaining, and those who have succeeded them, have relied greatly upon their own field for their support. The two missionaries who led the way in the Mendi mission of West Africa—Steele and Raymond—were Oberlin men, and the larger portion of the laborers there have gone from this place—most of them to lie down in early graves. The flowers of the tropics are already blossoming, over the resting place of one who left us less than a year ago. The missions of the American Missionary Association among the Ojibwas, at the North-west, were established by Oberlin students, and have been carried on almost solely by laborers from this school, sustained at the outset by the "Western Evangelical Missionary Society," established here. From these three missions, and several com-

mitteeships, organized to sustain them, sprung the American Missionary Association of New York. Its leading founders and officers were from the early friends and supporters of Oberlin; its first secretary, still at his post, was of the Lane Seminary protestants—a student and professor here; its missionaries have been drawn chiefly from this school, both for the foreign and the home field—for the free and the slave states. The one who now stands alone, in the mountains of Kentucky, is a downright Oberlin man, preaching boldly against slavery as against other sins. Several of those banished a few months since, received their training here. These and others are ready to enter the field again, when the storm subsides.

The *style of culture* which the men and women of Oberlin have carried out with them into the world—the *habits* and *principles* of personal and social life and action, have been a contribution to the wholesome influences of society. They may, in general, be relied on for earnest and generous work—ready to lay hold of anything that needs to be done, with more interest in the work than in the pay. They have seemed to regard their personal influence as good to use, if good at all, and are not found nursing it with such jealous care as to let the opportunities for its employment slip. They have learned that suspicions and misrepresentations will, in the end, fly before an honest heart and an open face; and they have secured to themselves a freedom of movement in their work, which even abler men have sometimes coveted. Such exhibitions of earnest, aggressive, working habits, the world has need of. The same men and women may be relied on to take the right side of every good cause. They are for freedom and temperance, and all practical applications of Christianity. If an Oberlin minister can be found who smokes or chews tobacco, let him be caught as a specimen for the Cabinet. He would prove the creation of a new species, in this "rest period" of the world. No "development" could produce him.

The *freedom of thought* and liberality of sentiment, encouraged and vindicated here, are a heritage in which Oberlin students have occasion to rejoice; and which they have done something to communicate to others. While "holding fast the form of sound words," they have been taught to maintain a

Christian independence, in the formation and utterance of their opinions, which is equally removed from bigotry and latitudinarianism. They have believed, with John Robinson, the pastor of the Pilgrims, "that the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of his holy word," than was revealed to the leaders of the Reformation, or than the Westminster Divines were able to express. The grand old names of Augustine, Calvin and Edwards, they can love and reverence, without bowing to them as ultimate authority, or flying before them as a terror. A somewhat stern discipline has taught them to discriminate between words and things. Ready to give a reason for the faith that is in them, we would hope, with meekness and fear, they are not disconcerted because their expressions of truth are said not to be found in the "standards," or because Pelagius or Arminius is supposed to have once used a similar phrase. It is the fact of heresy, and not the name, which has significance with them. Our Alma Mater has won for her children this birth-right of free thought and free expression, and the world has acknowledged the claim. If an Oberlin preacher or politician, agrees in opinion with other men, it is placed to the credit of his discretion and conservatism; if he differs from them, it is accorded cheerfully to his Oberlinism. He is not expected to agree with others, except when it is perfectly convenient; it is no part of the contract he has made with the world. It might not become us to say these things abroad; but we may congratulate each other upon our heritage, in our own mother's house and presence. Let us transmit it, unimpaired, to our successors.

The *catholic spirit and organization* of the Oberlin Church, have done much to liberalize the Christian sympathies of the thousands who have been gathered here, and to relieve many from a sectarian bias. The example which has been furnished, of a Christian community, making sectarian differences subordinate, and co-operating in earnest Christian labor, and in an efficient church organization, is not without its value in the world.

The *fresh and exalted views of the grace of the Gospel*, and of the fulness of salvation, which have here found expression, and which have been realized in the experience of many, have served

as an impulse to a higher Christian life, in many branches of the church—even beyond their immediate influence. It is not necessary to claim that those views or experiences were altogether new, or that they were different in kind from Gospel truth and Christian experience everywhere inculcated. It is only another example of new vitality given to old truth, by a fresh exposition and experience. It was no new announcement that lifted Luther from his slough of despond, and sent him to preach to the nations the great doctrine—"the just shall live by faith." So it was an old doctrine that "Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption;" but all the old doctrines need, from time to time, to be charged afresh with the electricity of living thought and feeling. It is thus, by the grace of God, that they exist in the world a vital power, instead of dead formulas—dried specimens, preserved in the cabinets of creeds and symbols. If any fresh energy has been imparted to the least of these "exceeding great and precious promises," by reason of the thought and feeling which they have here aroused, it is occasion for devout thanksgiving. To maintain in the church "the form of sound words," is unquestionably an important work; but to inform those words with new power, is a higher aim of Gospel preaching.

Of positive *contributions to Theological Philosophy*, it may seem presumptuous to speak. If any such have been made, it is properly the work of another generation to bring them out and classify them. It might surprise the world generally, but it would not surprise those who have been familiar with the current of thought here and elsewhere, the last twenty-five years, if it should hereafter appear that, now and then, a substantial boulder has been brought down by the Oberlin rivulet, and deposited in the Theological alluvium of the present age. Some of these apparent nodules may turn out only "Oberlin clay," but others bid fair to stand the test of the hammer. Let us submit to some future analyst, the theory of the nature of virtue, or, in Oberlin phrase, "the foundation of moral obligation," as it has been here set forth. It will perhaps appear that the great doctrine of benevolence as the sum of virtue, was taught substantially by the elder Edwards—more distinctly by Dr. Hopkins of Newport, positively discarded or overlooked

by later writers on morals, except Dr. Taylor of New Haven, in whose system it is corrupted with utilitarianism, and is now thoroughly elaborated and shown to be the corner-stone of the entire science of morals in "Finney's Theology." If this should not be seen or acknowledged in our day, the fact would not be without a parallel. It is said that antiquarians, in the heart of Europe, puzzled their brains over dreamy theories of the Hieroglyphics, long after Young and Champollion had read the Rosetta stone, and let in a flood of daylight upon the Egyptian tombs. Truth can bide its time.

The doctrine of *the unity or simplicity of moral action*, as the necessary consequent of any theory which limits moral action to the voluntary states and exercises, is among the peculiarities of Oberlin Theology which deserve examination. This doctrine has been maintained by Theologians of New England, and cannot be considered original here. Some originality may appear in the position assigned it in the system of morals, and in its proper adjustment and development.

The grand characteristic of the Oberlin Theological system, is, the doctrine of a self-determining will—the rigid limitation of all moral action to voluntary states and acts, and such a modification of the Calvinistic doctrines as the scriptures permit, and as leaves no necessary conflict between the great facts of Divine sovereignty and man's responsibility. A philosophical as well as scriptural basis for these doctrines, was greatly needed for the cause of evangelical Christianity—also a bold and clear definition of sin and holiness. New Haven has done much to supply these wants, and it may one day be seen that something has been done here. Oberlin Theology, in its leading features, has been inculcated, not merely in the lecture room, but impressed upon vast numbers of vigorous, active minds, here and throughout the land. Many such have been saved from a rejection of Christianity by the clearer and more rational exposition of its doctrines.

Something has already been suggested of the influence of Oberlin in promoting an anti-slavery sentiment in the country. The anti-slavery work has brought the Institution and the place into connection with the politics of the region. This *political*

action dates back to 1837, when Oberlin held the balance of power between the Whig and Democratic parties in the county, and exercised its right to question candidates on their anti-slavery views, and on other points of fundamental morality. From that day to this, the political action of Oberlin has been of a direct, practical character—such as promised to tell with most effect in favor of the anti-slavery movement—not always such as to please those who have claimed for themselves the most advanced position in the battle. This action has been effective, in infusing higher and better principles into political parties, and securing the appointment of better men to office. To what extent it has operated, does not become us to say, nor is it easy to define. Enemies and friends agree that the influence has been wide-spread, and to some extent controlling.

Oberlin men have had little leisure for *book-making*. A single shelf would contain all the books which have been written by Oberlin students, at home and abroad—not that they have had nothing to do with the literature of the land. A stray volume, here and there, of "Home Whispers," or "Household Songs," has given us a taste of what Oberlin ladies can do; and if literature must be wrought out before it can be embodied in written records, we may suppose that much labor has been expended, during the last quarter of a century, upon the raw material of books. The books themselves will be forthcoming during the next twenty-five years.

CHANGES.

But the inquiry is often made, is Oberlin what it once was? Has it not experienced changes which have divested it of its original character and of its peculiarities? There are two classes of persons who are interested in this inquiry—those who hope for an affirmative answer, and those who deprecate it. Many who have been wont to think of Oberlin as a place of extravagances and fanaticisms—of some honest intention and much want of good sense—on a careful survey of the field, do no not see the frightful things which they had apprehended. They find themselves drawn towards the place by common sympathies, and interest in a common cause. They naturally

explain their new position by the suggestion that everything is changed—that Oberlin is not what it was. They forget that "the stand-point alters the view;" and that much of the change attributed to Oberlin, can be explained upon a simpler hypothesis. If there is anything which these good men now approve—any soundness of views, any steadfastness of principle, any earnestness of soul, any energy or efficiency of action, any liberality of sentiment—all these were here of old, when the name of Oberlin was cast out as evil, and could be seen by those who were in an attitude to see. If any valuable results have been realized here, they are the harvest from the sowing of the early years. There have been changes, but none such as to separate the present from the past, in identity or character.

Others, again, who look back to the time when the place was new, and all, students and colonists, shared in the enthusiasm of a new enterprise—when the ideas which have been elaborated here were fresh, and all circumstances conspired to a high degree of intensity of thought and action, feel the absence of that intensity—a sort of spiritual electricity with which the very atmosphere was charged. They have, perhaps, not well considered the question, whether such a state is possible to any people in perpetuity, or is a permanent normal condition of life. Must it not be the result of forces which are, in their very nature, transitory? and is it probable that such forces can ever be concentrated here again? The kind of unity of action which was secured when the people were few, and every one knew his neighbor's outer and inner life, can never be restored. On many accounts it would seem desirable that the place should never have outgrown the capacity of a single house of worship, or extended beyond the attraction of a single social centre. Thus the same ideas and impulses would be diffused throughout the body, and all would contribute immediately to one result. But such a unity would be impossible to us now, even if all were "of one heart and one soul." There must henceforth be various centres of influence; diverse impulses and ideas, different, but, it may be hoped, not conflicting, must prevail among the people. This is inevitable, and should not be regretted; but it precludes that concentration of thought and feeling which was a char-

acteristic of the early times. These altered conditions require a diffusion of influences and activities, to reach the entire community, and render it impossible for one thought to regulate or control the whole.

That reaction of the world without, upon the place, which tended to stir up the energies and arouse to action, has to a great extent passed away, and its restoration is not to be desired. It is, on the whole, better that we should be known for what we are, and be permitted to pursue our work in peace, even at the risk of losing something of the stimulus which the old antagonism afforded. It is sometimes said that Oberlin is becoming popular, and that this popularity is corrupting. The probability is that danger in this direction is not imminent. The most that we can expect is, that the world around will accord to us the privilege of living, and of enjoying in quietness our modicum of good and evil, not requiring us to be better than other people, nor insisting upon it that we are worse. That sort of respect, implying a conviction that the Institution and the place are a power in the land, and must be counted, in a general inventory of facts and forces, we have frequent indications of; but the confession is often accompanied by a sneer, which affords no prospect of popularity. You may take the gauge of the general current of feeling upon the subject, from a quiet corner in the cars, when the brakeman announces, "Oberlin." Many heads will turn to get a view of the interesting landscape. Some look in silence; others indulge in a ventilation of their wit, for the edification of the company, and any stray Oberlinite that it may chance to embrace. It is easy to discover that the place enjoys some notoriety, but its popularity is still dubious. The latest testimony upon this point which I have personally encountered, was offered a few weeks since in a car containing some of the delegates returning from the National Republican Convention. The wit who achieved the deliverance, bore on his hat the Seward badge, although the nomination had transpired some days before. "Oberlin!" he says —"the largest place of its size in all the country—capital of the state of Ohio—more land to the acre than in any other region—the people are negroes and some whites—but the Seward men are very respectable folks." This may be taken as an ex-

pression of the average of current sentiment, as it flows along our thoroughfare, and may serve to allay any apprehension that Oberlin is to be imperiled by over-much public favor. Still, its relations to the world are so changed that the pressure of opprobrium is removed, and one of the energizing forces is thus withdrawn.

While it is true then, that with the change of outward circumstances and relations, there must necessarily be an abatement from the intensity which characterized Oberlin in its youth, it is still true that the earnest hearts are here upon whom the old inspiration fell, with hands ready for the same good work. With a few honored exceptions, the men who bore the burden and heat of the day—preachers and teachers and colonists—affording in their varied characters, such a blending of ardor and discretion, of zeal and wisdom and fidelity, as have made the past bright with success, in spite of many imperfections—these are unchanged, except as the passing years have laid gently upon their heads, the good man's "crown of glory." Associated with these are others, brought up at their feet, ready to stay up their hands, glad to be counted worthy of a share in the work. The good men and women who have been with us and have passed away—the living and the dead, have left a savor of their goodness as a heritage. All the precious associations to which the past twenty-five years have given birth, remain, a vital force, surrounding every new-comer, as an impalpable atmosphere, to inspire him with a love for the things which are "pure and honest and of good report." The early students, with their earnest hearts, are gone, and our halls are filled with a new generation; but to a great extent they are worthy successors—children after the flesh and after the spirit, of those who have preceded them. It is true that the first-born of the household, in a new country, commonly do sturdy work, and acquire an early and vigorous manhood; but those that come afterwards, sometimes exhibit accomplishments which were beyond the reach of their predecessors. In the eyes of sensible parents, they are equally precious. But more than all, the God before whom our fathers walked, the God who has guarded Oberlin all along until this day, the Angel that has redeemed it from all evil, is still our God—rich in mercy unto all that call

upon him. Amid all changes he is unchanged, and thus "the foundation standeth sure." There is every encouragement then to go forward with the work. That work is not completed—it is merely begun. The "grand object" lies out before us to-day, as it opened to the mind of Father Shipherd, more than a quarter of a century ago, when he announced it to be, "the diffusion of useful science, sound morality and pure religion, among the growing multitudes of the Mississippi Valley." And as he opened his first "annual report" with the cheerful exclamation—"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," so let us inscribe upon the memorial stone which we erect to-day, the same grateful tribute—HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US.