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OBERLIN'S PART IN THE SLAVERY CONFLICT.

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Little did the Rev. John J. Shipherd, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Elyria, Ohio, realize that in the founding of Oberlin he was to change the destiny of a nation. He originated the plan in 1832. In November of the same year with his associate Philo P. Stewart, formerly a missionary to the Cherokees in Mississippi and at this time living with Shipherd at Elyria, he selected the site for Oberlin. (11); (26).

At this time the question of slavery was not a practical issue before the people of the North. The anti-slavery element was not incorporated into the original constitution of Oberlin. Indeed, the "Oberlin Covenant," a document expressing the design of the school and the settlement, has no allusion whatever to slavery. There was a deep seated feeling against it^a but the American Colonization Society was supposed to present the only practicable means of operating to rid the land of the evil. The early inhabitants little dreamed that the discussion of slavery would be the first topic to disturb the quiet of their wilderness.

It was due in great measure to the geographical location of Oberlin that she was able to play such an important part in the events which were to follow. Ohio was an influential State in the Union. She formed the connecting link between the East and the West. On the South she bordered on Slave Territory,—the States of Kentucky and Virginia. Ohio's sympathies were largely with the South; in fact her counties bordering on the Ohio River and for fifty miles northward were principally peopled from the Slave States. The interior counties of the State were occupied mainly by a population which took slight interest in public questions. It was therefore to the Western Reserve, covering twelve counties in the northeast part of the State, that the destiny of Ohio was committed. Here the Republican party was all powerful. Of influential factors on the Reserve, "no single, definite,

intellectual, and moral force could compare with Oberlin." (28); (312). The long southern boundary of Ohio offered the escaping slave a good chance to cross into free territory, so that the people of Ohio were afforded an exceptional opportunity in aiding great numbers of fugitives to freedom. The cruelties of the system were seen at first hand, and thus imbued many against it more deeply than any account of slavery could ever have done.

I. THE ABOLITIONIZING OF OBERLIN.

Oberlin did not lack for Abolitionists, however, even from the first year of its establishment. During the first year there were three or four young men who advocated immediate emancipation on the soil, in opposition to the colonization scheme of the American Colonization Society. This question was sometimes discussed in the Oberlin Lyceum which embraced those students and colonists who chose to join. The older and more influential men always upheld the colonization plan, with the one exception of Mr. Shipherd who was a moderate Abolitionist even at that early date.

Meanwhile the college was increasing. One hundred students, men and women, had already entered the institution, a large proportion coming from Eastern States. A Freshman Class of four members had been organized, the first Commencement held. At these exercises not a speech was made on the subject of slavery, nor the slightest reference to it heard. Thus Oberlin completed its second year without taking any prominent part in the question of slavery. But she was not to remain in the background much longer; the issue was to be thrust upon her, and once presented, she was to take up the gauntlet, and spring into the center of the conflict.

LANE SEMINARY.

Near Cincinnati, Ohio, at Walnut Hills, was situated the theological school of Lane Seminary. It numbered somewhat over one hundred students, some of whom were in the theological department, the remainder being connected with a literary department, in preparation for theology under the charge of Prof. Morgan. The theological professors were Dr. Lyman Beecher,

Prof. Stowe, and a gentleman whose name has passed into oblivion. The students were men of unusual ability and energy. Many had come from Oneida Institute, N. Y.; working their way down the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers on flat-boats, thus earning money for their college expenses. Among these Oneida men was Theodore D. Weld, later to become an influence in the cause of anti-slavery. Other students at Lane were sons of slave-holders, such as J. A. Thome and W. T. Allen, whose worldly prosperity was linked with the continuance of slavery. These men knew full well the significance of the question into which they soon were to plunge. As early as 1833, Wm. Lloyd Garrison and his "Liberator" were agitating the people. The students at Lane felt the excitement of this topic. For eighteen successive evenings, they held debates in their Chapel. Though at first there was diversity of opinion, yet at the completion of these meetings the sentiment was nearly unanimous in favor of Abolition. The young men, together with ladies of the city, gathered the negroes of Cincinnati into Sunday Schools and Day Schools, by this means doing much good. The trustees, fearful lest this should damage the school, passed a law (without consultation with the faculty, except one member, the others being on their summer vacation), forbidding any discussion of slavery topics, either in private or public. Prof. Morgan was dismissed without any reason being given though it was well known that his anti-slave opinions had caused him to lose his position. The students protested against this rule prohibiting them free speech. Four-fifths of the student body then left the institution of their own accord. James Ludlow, a wealthy gentleman, gave them use of a building near the city where they continued their studies for five months.

In November, 1834, Mr. Shipherd, by order of the trustees of Oberlin started on a journey to the East for the purpose of securing money, a President, and a Professor of Mathematics for the Institution. He planned to travel by the National Road from Columbus, but guided by an inward force, he went instead to Cincinnati. He met Rev. Asa Mahan, pastor of the Sixth Street Presbyterian Church, and upon several people recommending Mr. Mahan as fitted to be the head of a college, the matter

was presented to him. Mahan was ready to accept the appointment. He had been a trustee of Lane Seminary, had protested against the action that had been taken, and when the law had passed in spite of his opposition, he had resigned. Between Mahan and Shipherd the plan was formed of taking the seceding Lane students to Oberlin, and with them as a nucleus, adding a theological seminary to Oberlin. The work of securing funds for this addition to Oberlin was at once started. Arthur Tappan, a rich New Yorker, with several others, promised the endowment of eight professorships, and a loan sufficient to build a theological hall. The Rev. John Morgan was secured as one of the seminary faculty. Now arose a startlingly formidable obstacle. Tappan and his friends, Finney (pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle Congregational Church of New York, who had been asked to the chair of theology, but had declined unless some solid financial basis for the institution was assured), Mahan, Morgan, and the Lane students, all refused to have a thing to do with the project for which they all were so eager, unless negroes were admitted into all departments of Oberlin on equal terms with the whites. This aroused intense excitement at Oberlin. The general sentiment was against admitting blacks. It was thought that if they were let into the college, the place would be overrun with them and that the consequences would be terrible. Young ladies of refinement declared that if negroes were admitted, they themselves would return to their homes, if they had to "wade Lake Erie," to do it.

Due to the excitement prevailing in Oberlin, the trustees of the college held their meeting to deliberate on this subject in the Temperance House in Elyria, January 1, 1835. The principal colonists of Oberlin and several students sent a petition to the Board of Trustees asking that they meet in Oberlin. The petition read as follows:

To the Honorable 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 excitement in their minds in consequence of a resolution of Brother 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 question 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. (23: 57.)

The trustees did not know what to do, so they ended by doing practically nothing. Their record reads 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 the land.

At this same meeting Pres. Mahan and Prof. Morgan were appointed to the positions Mr. Shipherd had wished them to fill.

Mr. Shipherd sent urgent appeals to the trustees and colonists for them to change their opinions and come over to the Abolitionists' side. By his request, another meeting of the trustees was held at Oberlin, Feb. 9, at the home of Mr. Shipherd. This house was situated on the north side of the College Square. The outcome of the conference was looked forward to with intense interest.

The trustees met in the morning. The debate that followed was long and heated. The outcome was uncertain. Mrs. Ship-

herd gathered some of the ladies of the neighborhood and spent the time in prayer that the decision of the trustees would be in favor of the negro. At last the question was put to vote. The Board was exactly divided. The decision rested with Rev. John Keep of Ohio City (west side of Cleveland), who was President of the Board, and as presiding officer cast the deciding vote in case of a tie. He voted. It was in favor of admitting colored students. The die once cast Oberlin has never taken action concerning this matter from that day to this. Though the effect of the resolution which was drawn up was decisive, the wording was somewhat ambiguous. It ran 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.

At this time there was but one colored man resident in the county. But as a result of this resolution a tremendous influx of negroes was expected. So when at length a single colored man was seen approaching the town, a little boy, son of one of the trustees, ran to the house, calling, "They're coming, father, — they're coming."

At this last mentioned meeting of the trustees, Rev. Chas. G. Finney of New York City, was appointed Professor of Theology. Due to the anti-slavery attitude of the college. Messrs. Mahan, Finney, and Morgan accepted their appointments. Prof. Morgan was given the chair of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, instead of that of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, as first proposed.

Arthur Tappan now pledged \$10,000.00 to erect a building for the use principally of the Theological Department, and also promised to secure a loan of \$10,000.00 more, for other necessary buildings and other improvements. Together with several

other gentlemen, the Tappans started the "Oberlin Professorship Association", engaging to pay quarterly the interest on \$80,000.00 to cover the salaries of eight professors, at \$600.00 each. It was intended to finally pay the principal, and thus permanently endow the institution.

The coming of the Lane students in May, 1835, acted as a stimulus to Oberlin. Also about this time the Collegiate department was increased by students from Western Reserve College, where there had been trouble similar to that at Lane. This harboring by Oberlin of students from other colleges, as well as Oberlin's anti-slavery principles, drew upon her the hatred of many people.

Not all of the most prominent students of Lane came to Oberlin. Theodore D. Weld and Henry B. Stanton were among these. They devoted all their time to public anti-slavery work. A few weeks before the close of the Fall term, Weld came to Oberlin and gave a series of twenty lectures on slavery. These lectures dealt with the nature of slavery and its relations and bearings, personal, social, political, and moral. He was a wonderful speaker, and the house was crowded every evening of the three full weeks. Oberlin was converted to Abolitionism. (23: 67, 75); (30); (28: 32).

Some people in the United States thought that the Church was protecting slavery and that the Church must be battered down in order to reach the system of slavery. These people wished to treat the Christian Church as a failure, and they urged all Church members to leave their Churches and have nothing to do with them. But though the Church was slow in adopting the view that slavery was a sin, the people of Oberlin would not denounce it.³¹ However, in 1835, the (28: 193) Oberlin Church did pass the following resolution: "That as slavery is a sin, no person shall be invited to preach or minister to this church, or any brother be invited to commune, who is a slave holder."

OBERLIN'S RELATION TO SLAVERY; 1835-1850.

Near the close of 1838, the Oberlin Evangelist was started. It prospered and soon attained a circulation of 5,000 copies. The Evangelist was a semi-monthly of 8 quarto pages. With

the exception of the office editor who received compensation for his work, the labor of the contributors was entirely free; whatever profits there might be were given to further the educational work at Oberlin, chiefly in aiding men to prepare for the ministry. The principal writers for this paper were Finney, Cowles, Mahan, Morgan, and Thome. Mr. Finney was a regular contributor, almost every number containing a sermon by him, as well as other material. The Evangelist continued for 24 years, until, during the Civil War, it failed for want of support. It was largely of a religious nature, though it dealt also with current matters of secular importance. The paper was one of great influence. (23: 93, 94).

In 1845, the Oberlin Quarterly Review was established. Mahan and Wm. Cochran, and later Finney, were the editors. Its aim was a more thorough discussion of religious topics, and of other subjects of (23: 94) public interest. It was never well supported, and lasted only four years.

In 1839 the college was more than \$30,000.00 in debt. Bankruptcy stared it in the face. In the United States there was no one to come to their aid. Therefore, two trustees, Father Keep and William Dawes, went to England to endeavor to secure funds to meet the indebtedness. They were armed with letters of recommendation from prominent anti-slavery men in the United States, such as Gerrit Smith, Garrison, Whittier, and others. Their work was carried on chiefly among the Society of Friends, on account of this sect's common sympathy with Oberlin on the slavery question, and the education of women. Other anti-slavery people also gave them money and aid. Though it was more difficult to raise funds due to the remoteness of the object, still they obtained above expenses \$30,000.00 in money sufficient "to meet the most pressing liabilities of the institution, a large accession of books to the library, with good provisions for philosophical and chemical apparatus". The gifts received ranged from 100 lbs. the largest, down to a few shillings. The Common Council of the City of London held funds in trust for charitable purposes. The Oberlin men went before that august body and presented their cause. They did this with such effect that they came within a vote or two of securing an appropria-

tion. Mr. Hamilton Hill of London with his family returned with Messrs. Keep and Dawes, to become the secretary and treasurer of the college. He held this position for 25 years. The two Oberlin trustees were gone about 18 months, returning near the close of 1840. They had accomplished their mission; the college was relieved from its imminent danger. (23: 208-210); (10); (19).

Oberlin had several societies in its early days which are not in existence at the present time.

In the Oberlin Evangelist, January 8, 1850, we read of the formation of "The Oberlin Peace League". It held meetings once a month. Jennings was elected chairman on a board for business; D. M. Ide, Sec.; Pease, Treasurer. The object of the society was to abolish the custom of international war, and to promote universal peace among the nations of the earth.

On September 14, 1851, a meeting was held in the chapel to organize a Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society. The meeting was opened with prayer. A committee of three were appointed to draft a brief constitution and to nominate officers for the re-organization of the society. J. M. Langston addressed the assembly on the condition of education among the colored people of the state. By unanimous vote, Mr. Langston was appointed to visit the schools among the colored people, to establish others where needed, and to report on the general conditions among the negroes. The constitution of this society, Art. II, reads: "The object of this society shall be the social and moral elevation of the colored man." Art. V, states that, "Any person who is practically opposed to slavery, may become a member of this society by annexing his name to the constitution." On September 18, 1852, S. N. Hendall was elected President, and Orin W. White, Vice President.¹

The ladies of Oberlin also had an anti-slavery society, an address before which by Prof. J. H. Fairchild is recorded in the Oberlin Evangelist, July 16, 1856. The work done by the Female Anti-Slavery Society is well set forth in the Oberlin Evangelist, August 15, 1855. It states that the society began in December, 1835. That the object of the ladies was "to diffuse light and knowledge on the subject of slavery, to express our

sympathy for our oppressed brethren and sisters, to elevate the free people of color and emancipate them from the oppression of public sentiment, and equal laws. For years the society held meetings quarterly with appropriate exercises." Funds were collected and used to pay lecturers and teachers, besides relieving the wants of needy colored people both bond and free.

THE LORAIN COUNTY ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

The sentiment of the people of Oberlin regarding anti-slavery is graphically shown in the following quotation from the Oberlin Evangelist, September 11, 1839: "On Commencement evening, the Lorain County Anti-Slavery Society met by adjournment at Oberlin. The meeting was large, probably more than 1,000 people were in attendance. Mr. C. C. Burleigh, of Pennsylvania, addressed the Society for an hour and a half in his usual impressive manner, on the practical duties of Abolitionists. After the address the following resolutions were passed, first by the society, and then by the entire congregation, no one voting in the negative in either case. We hope no abolitionists will forget the principle of these resolutions in the excitement of the political campaign just now commenced. Let them abide firm and the disgraceful 'black laws', of Ohio will be repealed at the coming session of the Legislature. *Resolved*, That we will not vote for any man for President or Vice President of the United States, or for Congress, who is not in favor of the immediate abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and in the United States Territories, and of the abolition of the internal slave trade, and who is not opposed to the admission of new slave states into the Union. *Resolved*, That we will not support any man for the Legislature of the State of Ohio who is not in favor of the repeal of all laws of said State which are founded on a distinction of color."

"The exercises of the day were closed by singing the Passage of the Red Sea."

Another society in Oberlin was the Oberlin Lyceum, already mentioned. It was the first literary society in Oberlin. Its members embraced both students and colonists. (23: 42).

When the Lane students arrived in Oberlin, May, 1835,

they were followed by James Bradley of Cincinnati. Upon arriving at Oberlin he entered the Institution, being the first colored student admitted. (23: 74).

The Adult Colored School in Oberlin: This school was founded in about 1842, being designed chiefly for colored persons of adult age who had been debarred in earlier life by slavery or prejudice, from obtaining an education. The public schools of Oberlin were opened to colored students, but the mode of instruction for children and that for adults was so different that it was deemed advisable to have them separate. The Oberlin Evangelist, July 17, 1844, states that the success of the school is very encouraging. The scholars were often heads of families, but notwithstanding their age, they were greatly interested in their studies. Many of the more advanced members were fitted to enter Oberlin College; while the younger or less proficient ones were instructed so as to be able to pursue higher courses of study. To place the work on a permanent basis, a Committee of Trust was formed for seeking financial aid. Its members were: J. A. Thome, Amasa Walker, J. W. Mason, Thomas Brown, and Hamilton Hill. The negroes did what they could to pay their teachers, but they could not help much as they, themselves, were poor.

In those early days, like an island in the sea, the colony of Oberlin was isolated from sympathy in its work for the negro. The neighboring towns were pro-slavery. They were ever ready to assist the slave-hunter, and to injure Oberlin in any way possible. Often meetings were held and measures discussed for putting Oberlin out of existence. Anonymous communications were sent threatening to burn the town, and for years an armed patrol had to be kept to guard the place. Students were egged, stoned, and sometimes seriously hurt, simply because they came from this hated community. One man, an evangelist noted for his noble Christian character, while on a journey had the legs of his horse cut to the bone for the sole reason that the animal belonged to an inhabitant of Oberlin.²⁴

Due to this reputation of Oberlin as a stronghold of Abolitionism, Wm. Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglas, both noted Abolitionists, came to persuade the people that the anti-slavery

doctrine involved a withdrawal from all political action; that the Constitution of the United States was pro-slavery and corrupt, and that all who voted under it shared in its wickedness; that only those were doing their duty who abandoned all political organizations and refused to take any part in the affairs of the government. A debate on this subject was held. President Mahan led the discussion on the Oberlin side which was contrary to the views upheld by Garrison and Douglas. In this Mr. Mahan was aided by Prof. T. B. Hudson, and others. The outcome of it all was that the Oberlin people continued to vote, and the two Abolitionists went on their way. Douglas soon after changed his opinion and voted with the other Abolitionists, the same as the Oberlin men.

After this Stephen Foster and his wife, Abbey Kelly Foster, came to Oberlin on a somewhat like errand. They tried to show that it was compromising one's anti-slavery position, and sharing in the guilt of slavery to maintain any correspondence or friendship with churches whose members believed in slavery. They said that the continuous chain of fellowship united the Oberlin church with the slave-holding churches at the South, and bound all together in one "covenant of Hell". This man and his wife wished to divide the churches and alienate Christian people from each other. There was a public debate in which the Fosters were opposed by President Mahan, as leader of the Oberlin side, in the College Chapel for the evenings of one entire week. The result was that the church arrangements remained as before.

Other prominent speakers at Oberlin were Senators Chase and Hale. Both these gentlemen spoke in the First Church the evening of October 1, 1852, on the Anniversary of the West India Emancipation of Slaves. The time was chiefly occupied by Mr. Hale, whose subject was, "Are you, the people of this Nation, fulfilling the pledge on which is conditioned the inheritance of your liberties?" He faced a crowded house.

Later, in 1860, Cassius M. Clay, of Kentucky, and Hon. H. G. Blake unexpectedly passed through Oberlin August 3d. A hasty notice filled the First Church with an eager audience. Clay spoke for three-quarters of an hour; Blake the remaining quarter.^{4b}

Oberlin was accused of being all talk and theory ; and though as an Institution she did not favor direct rescuing of slaves from their masters on slave territory, still there were men within her portals who believed that God called them to do this very thing. And they obeyed their conscience, though by so doing they broke the laws of the Government, were imprisoned, beaten, starved. Some did this before entering Oberlin, others after being matriculated in the Institution. Still others suffered simply for their convictions.

Rev. Amos Dresser, Oberlin Seminary, 1839, though having no intention to assist the slaves, yet suffered merely for his belief. On July 1, 1835, he left Cincinnati, Ohio, for a trip into the Slave States in order to raise money so that he could complete his education. He had for sale a book called the "Cottage Bible". In packing his books he used pamphlets and papers to prevent the books from rubbing. These papers were old religious newspapers, anti-slavery publications, temperance almanacs, etc.

He arrived at Nashville July 18. On the way down most of his publications regarding anti-slavery had been distributed at Danville, Kentucky, where there was an anti-slavery society. With the aid of a man, he carried his books into the Nashville Inn ; but in so doing forgot the few remaining papers used as wrappers. The buggy in which he journeyed needing repair, was sent to a man to be mended. This man discovered the abolitionist papers. He spread the news, and the excitement grew more and more intense ; for the people feared that Dresser was giving the negroes printed matter in hopes of stirring up an insurrection, the horrors of which would be indescribable. Mr. Dresser was arrested and brought to trial before the Committee of Vigilance. The trial lasted from between 4 and 5 o'clock P. M. till about 10 P. M. Further evidence brought against him were some letters, found in his trunk, from friends mentioning slavery ; and this together with the fact that he had been a member of Lane Seminary, as well as of the Anti-Slavery Society formed there, convinced the Committee that he was guilty. Although absolutely innocent, he was taken out doors. the crowd forming a ring in the center of which Dresser was

placed. There, in the wavering light of the torches with a multitude of hostile faces peering at him from every side, this Oberlin man received 20 lashes on his bare back, given with a heavy, cow-hide whip. He was then taken to his lodgings. Next morning, due to the excitement still prevailing he left the city in disguise. Unable to bring anything along in his flight, he abandoned \$300.00 worth of unsold books, and was obliged to sell his horse and buggy at a \$200.00 loss. Neither did he ever again hear of his trunk or any of his personal property. Glad to escape with his life, his sole possessions, only those clothes he wore, Dresser made his way toward the North.³²

George Thompson, at one time a student in Oberlin, during July, 1841, with two men, Alanson Work and James E. Burr, made an attempt to take slaves from Missouri across the river and start them on the road toward freedom. Thompson waited in the row-boat while his comrades went ashore to get the negroes. They were gone some time. At last Thompson heard men approaching. The next he knew, he was covered by the rifles of several Missourians. The slaves whom they had come to aid had turned traitor, informed their masters of the plot to rescue them, and the capture of the three Abolitionists was the result. After a trial before a magistrate, which proceeding was a farce, they were cast into prison to await the sitting of the court, two and one-half months distant. Here they were chained to the walls of their cell like dangerous wild beasts. At last their final trial took place. The outcome was that they were sentenced to 12 years in the penitentiary. While imprisoned in the penitentiary, Thompson and his fellow sufferers did much good to their companion prisoners by preaching to them and also helping them to become better men. Work and Burr were released before their term was completed, and left Thompson behind them in prison. Shortly after, he also was pardoned, after being in confinement 4 years, 11 months and 12 days. During this period he was treated with comparative respect; he was never beaten, though one of his comrades received a flogging for not conforming to a certain prison regulation which his conscience forbade him to do on the Sabbath. (34); (4i).

And now we come to a man whose career reads like some

romance of fiction; this man is Calvin Fairbank. He came from Hume, N. Y., and was enrolled in the Oberlin Preparatory Department from 1844 to 1845.¹¹

Mr. Fairbank writes that "coming within the influence of active anti-slavery men at Oberlin, Ohio, I was led to examine the subject in the light of law and justice, and soon found the United States Constitution anti-slavery, and the institution existing in violation of law." Thus God, through the instrumentality of Oberlin, used this young man for untold good. As early as 1837, he made his first rescue, carrying a black man on a raft from the Virginia to the northern side of the Ohio River. Having once dedicated himself to the work of aiding escaping slaves, he plunged with all his strength into the struggle. He says in summing up his achievements, "forty-seven slaves I guided toward the North Star, in violation of the State codes of Virginia and Kentucky. I piloted them through the forests, mostly by night, — girls, fair and (33: 10) white, dressed as ladies; men and boys, as gentlemen or servants — men in women's clothes, and women in men's clothes; boys dressed as girls and girls as boys; on foot or on horseback, in buggies, carriages, common wagons, in and under loads of hay, straw, old furniture, boxes, and bags; crossed the Jordan of the Slave, swimming, or wading chin deep, or in boats or skiffs, on rafts, and often on a pine log. And I never suffered one to be recaptured. None of them, so far as I have learned, have ever come to poverty or to disgrace." This work was carried on principally in the vicinity of the Ohio River, across which stream Fairbank made it his duty to convey the fugitives. Among the many adventures of his eventful career, with the exception of his long imprisonment, he ranks the following incident as the most extraordinary. One day during May, 1843, while walking in the court-yard of the prison at Lexington, Kentucky, his attention was called to an upper window by someone rapping gently on the glass. Glancing up he saw a girl at the window. Her face was white. She beckoned to him and he went to her cell. Being allowed to speak to her, he learned that her father was a white planter; she, herself, one-sixty-fourth colored; that her father's legal wife becoming jealous of her beauty and many accom-

plishments (for this 18-year-old girl had educated herself, and Fairbank states that he never saw a more beautiful, genteel and talented lady), had conspired to sell the girl to the far South; her father being hard pressed for money, would be unable to save her; and that unless Mr. Fairbank, whom she knew by sight, was able to rescue her, her future would be horrible in the extreme. Promising to do what he could, Calvin Fairbank left her, and made all haste to Cincinnati, for he had only a few days in which to prepare before the girl was put on the auction block. Once in the city he visited a number of influential abolitionists, among them the Hon. S. P. Chase, and raised \$2,275.00 in cash. With this, and a paper authorizing him to draw \$25,000.00 in case of dire need, he returned to the scene of action. He was met by the girl's father who gave him \$100.00, saying it was all the money he could raise, but to use it in saving his daughter, if such a thing were possible. At last the critical moment arrived. On a platform elevated above the throng of 2,000 spectators, with the noon-day sun pouring down its pitiless rays upon her, a white girl, in all but name, was put up for public sale. At first the bidding was fast and furious, for the girl was very beautiful; but as the figures rose higher and higher, one after another dropped out, until only a half-breed French slave-trader, hired by her father's wife to get the girl and take her South, and Calvin Fairbank remained. Twice the brutal auctioneer handled the girl roughly in an endeavor to spur the buyers on, handled her so roughly that a murmur of disgust and rage swept through that southern crowd. The Frenchman wavered and with an oath turned to his rival. "How high are you going, sir?" he said. "Just one higher than you", Fairbank replied. The trader cursing, walked away. The girl was sold at a cost of \$1,485.00. She was taken to Cincinnati where as soon as possible freedom papers were made out and given her. (33: 26-34).

But it was not possible for Fairbank to aid so many fugitives and go unharmed. He was caught, tried and convicted February 18, 1845, of helping slaves to escape. The sentence was for 15 years in the Frankfort, Kentucky, penitentiary; his head was shaven, he was dressed in stripes and put to sawing

stone. On August 23, 1849, after an imprisonment of 4 years, 10 months and 24 days, he was pardoned. During these years he preached and worked among the other prisoners, holding prayer-meetings and Sunday-schools. On the whole he was treated well. His father came to Kentucky to petition for his son's release. While there he was taken with the cholera and died. Calvin Fairbank, on being freed, wished to take the body of his father North for burial. He went to Cincinnati, preparatory to going to Lexington for the body. The weather was too hot for its removal, however, and while waiting for the temperature to moderate, he was appealed to, to rescue a young mulatto woman. Ever ready to help the oppressed, he brought the woman across the Ohio River in a leaky skiff, and took her to a place of safety. He then returned to Jeffersonville, Indiana. Sunday, November 9, 1851, he was attacked and kidnapped into Kentucky by A. L. Shotwell, owner of the girl, and Marshals Ronald and Hamlet, of Kentucky. He was lodged in jail; his name was not yet known. When brought to trial before a pro-slavery jury, he was sentenced to 15 years at hard labor for aiding the colored woman to escape. The entire proceedings were illegal, added to which was the fact that this court had no right to try the case as it came under the jurisdiction of the District Court of the United States for the District of Indiana. Fairbank was again taken to the penitentiary at Frankfort, Kentucky. The jailor was this time harsh in the extreme. He sent Fairbank to the hackling-house, keeping him there four weeks. Here the hemp was dressed. The room was filled with poison dust, so full that on a still day it was impossible to make out a person from a block of wood even in a window or door. He saw six men out of twenty-four in one week taken from this place, only to die inside another week from the effects of the dust. Another man took charge of the prison. Under this brute, whose name was Ward, conditions were worse yet. He increased the amount of work required, making it so great that it was impossible to accomplish it. Fairbank, who was put at weaving, could not do all that was set him; therefore he was beaten each day cruelly. He was a very noted prisoner, so noted that on February 14, 1858, he addressed an assem-

bly of the elite of Kentucky. In the audience were Gov. Morehead, of Kentucky, State officers, both Houses of the Legislature, and many other distinguished personages, including a number of ladies. Mr. Fairbank spoke on the text, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." In his address, he prophesied the coming of a Civil War. This statement caused quite a sensation. When the war did come the penitentiary was now in the hands of the Federal, now in those of the Confederate forces. Sometimes in the latter case Rebel soldiers sought to kill him. At one time he had to defend himself with an axe. Most of his imprisonment he suffered cruelties such that it is scarcely believable that a man could endure and live. He says, "During the eight years from March 1, 1854, to March 1, 1862, I received 35,105 stripes from a leather strap 15 inches to 18 inches long, one and one-half inches wide, and one-quarter to three-eighths inches thick. It was of half tanned leather, and frequently well soaked so that it might burn the flesh more intensely. These floggings were not with a rawhide or cow-hide, but with a strap of leather attached to a handle of convenient size and length to inflict as much pain as possible with as little real damage as possible to the working capacity." The number of beatings he received were 1,003. The number of blows administered at each flogging ranged from 5, 10, 20, 50, 60, to 108. He says that every 10 stripes were as bad as a living death. His ordinary weight was 180 pounds; he was reduced to 117½ pounds. Once he was struck over the eye with a piece of wood by a brutal overseer, knocking him senseless and gashing his forehead above the eye. For many years after he had a feeling of vertigo due to this blow. During the last six years of his imprisonment the noble girl to whom he was engaged, leaving her New England home and securing a position as a teacher in Oxford, Ohio, visited him whenever she was able. She not only encouraged Fairbank during those awful days, but she petitioned the Governor of the State for his release. Finally Lieutenant-Governor Jacob came into power. He was friendly to Fairbank, and at once wrote his pardon. His second imprisonment had lasted 12 years, 5 months and 6 days. This brought the

total period of his confinement to 17 years and 4 months. Shortly after his pardon he was married to the lady, Miss Mandana Tileston, who had waited so long for his release.

He died at Angelica, N. Y., October 12, 1898, and went to meet his wife who had passed on before him.³³

In 1836, Hiram Wilson, a Lane student on graduating, went to Upper Canada to commence work among the 20,000 freedmen who had fled there for refuge. He found them very poor, and becoming vile and depraved. He devoted his life to teaching and Christianizing them. At the end of two years 14 teachers from Oberlin were assisting him, at an actual²⁸ cost of \$1,000.00, but with only \$600.00 received to carry on the task. In 1840, thirty-nine Oberlin people were teaching schools in Ohio; one-half of them being Oberlin women who received only their board in pay. As many more were in Canada. (28: 323).

In 1846, a meeting of the "Friends of Bible Missions," was held at Albany, N. Y., and the organization of the "American Missionary Association", took place. This society took the work of the then existing Western Indian Committee of N. Y., the Union Missionary Society of Hartford, and the Western Evangelical Society of Oberlin. Lewis Tappan was appointed Treasurer, and the next year Prof. George Whipple, of Oberlin College, became Corresponding Secretary of the new society.

From the earliest moment that Oberlin became abolitionized, her students commenced to spread the belief far and near. During the winter vacation following the addresses in Oberlin by Mr. T. D. Weld (already referred to), twenty or more students went out as lecturers through Ohio and Pennsylvania, under the auspices of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Their receptions were varied. At some places they found friends; at others mobs.²⁹

Oberlin students, also, went to the South as teachers, partly through curiosity, partly through the chance of better salaries, for the scarcity of teachers in the South made a demand for their services. But those traveling in the South ran great danger of personal violence if it were once learned that they were from the hated Oberlin.³¹

In speaking of the wide scope of Oberlin's influence, Gen. J. D. Cox, an Oberlin alumnus, in his address at the Oberlin Semi-centennial upon, "The Influence of Oberlin College on Public Affairs during the Half Century of its Life," said, "I unhesitatingly assert that there is hardly a township west of the Alleghanias and north of the central line of Ohio, in which the influence of Oberlin men and Oberlin opinions cannot be specifically identified and traced. It was a propaganda of a school of thought and action having distinct characteristics, and as easily recognizable in its work as was that of Garrison and the American Anti-Slavery Society in their methods and work." He also says: "Their uncompromising devotion to reforms of all sorts, so far as they thought them true reforms, was really based on this principle — fighting with might and main against all wrong. Slavery only happened to be the demon wrong at that moment in the way."²¹

The early inhabitants of Oberlin were Whigs. Then Oberlin on becoming anti-slavery, took a rather active part in politics. Dr. N. S. Townsend, a trustee of the College, was in the Ohio State Legislature. He with two other men held the balance of power between the two parties. They sent Salmon P. Chase to the United States Senate. At the Presidential election in 1840, a Liberty candidate for President was voted for by the majority of the Oberlin people. A portion still hoped for anti-slavery from the Whig party. In 1844, almost the entire Oberlin vote was cast for the liberty party candidate, James G. Birney. In 1848, a large majority voted for Van Buren, the Free Soil candidate. After this the Oberlin vote was with the Republican party. (23: 109-111).

OBERLIN'S RELATION TO SLAVERY, 1850-1861.

Oberlin not only took part in politics by voting, but the Oberlin Evangelist for January 30, 1856, tells us that a petition was circulated in Oberlin regarding slavery. It was then sent to the Senate and House of Representatives at Washington. This paper urged the enactment of laws as necessary for securing the privileges of Habeas Corpus to any person in the

United States who was restrained from his liberty under pretense of his being property.

In 1850, by act of the State Legislature, the name of the College^s was changed from "Oberlin Collegiate Institute", to "Oberlin College".

In 1842, the hatred for Oberlin grew so strong that the State Legislature once more thought of repealing Oberlin's charter. Judge Harris, Representative from Lorain county, was not only a fair-minded and honorable man, but he had also married an Oberlin lady. He sent to Oberlin for 20 or so catalogues to distribute among his fellow^{4k} Democrats that they might see what kind of a place it was that was threatened with the loss of its charter. They changed their viewpoint and the scheme was quietly dropped. Thus Oberlin escaped. A Democratic Legislature four times in all agitated the question of repealing the charter. The last attempt was in 1843, when the bill was indefinitely postponed by a vote of 36 to 29. (23: 368-370).

The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law of 18— ushered in a new era of slave-hunting on the part of the South in the North. This period extended through the Fifties. ("The Fugitive Slave Enactment became the means of pushing the two laws, moral and statutory, to their sharpest point of contradiction." The conscience of the time was aroused to strong opposition to this law. (The chief scene of the clash between these warring parties was in Ohio, due in a measure to its geographical position.) The chief spot in the state where the slave-hunter and the men who believed in doing as their conscience directed, came in collision was in Oberlin. Here was located what was known as the Higher Law, a belief that it was one's duty to follow what one's conscience dictated, irrespective of the law of the land. (36: 244-261).

The Editor of the Canadian Independent says the Oberlin Evangelist for January 30, 1856, declared that "Oberlin is perhaps the most important station along the whole line of the Underground Railway. It has rendered the most important services to Freedom. It is second only to Canada as an asylum for the hunted fugitive."

The fugitives who reached Oberlin were conveyed to some lake port between Cleveland and Sandusky. There the captains of certain sailing vessels would let the negroes steal aboard, and when the slave once more stepped on land, he was in Canada. There were at all these ports people who sent word to Oberlin when a friendly boat came in.

But in all the good work that Oberlin did, she never resisted the capture of her colored friends with force; no violence ever occurred. And she can say that no fugitive on once reaching her protection was ever carried back into bondage. A certain law greatly helped the Oberlin people in preventing the recapture of a fugitive. This law was that only one warrant at a time, to search one house at a time, could be issued in Elyria. So that by the time an officer was able to investigate the house in which the negro was hidden, the slave had been conveyed to some other part of the town, or was on his way towards Canada.

On all sides of Oberlin were towns and country-people in opposition to her belief in the Higher Law. On Middle Ridge Road, 6 miles north of Oberlin, a guide post was erected by the authorities there. This post had on it the life size figure of a fugitive negro running with all his strength towards Oberlin.

The sign on a tavern, 4 miles east of town, was decorated on the side facing Oberlin with the scene of a slave pursued by a tiger.

As early as 1841 a negro and his wife were caught by the slave-hunters in a house in the forest one mile east of Oberlin. It was a Friday evening in the Spring. A public meeting was taking place at the College Chapel, when word of the seizure was brought. The meeting broke up at once; the people in a body pursued the slave-catchers, and though the Oberlin men were unarmed they, on overtaking the Southerners, induced them to go to Elyria. Their papers were found to be irregular; the negroes were placed in jail until the hunters could go and return from Kentucky with evidence. A warrant was served on the slave-hunters for assault and battery with deadly weapons, and threats towards the members of the house in which the slaves were found. The Kentuckians were bound over to appear in

court. Before the trial took place one of them had died; the other returned to the trial to find the slaves had broken jail and escaped; that this escape was due to the fact that another prisoner in the jail, a basket-maker, had broken out, and that the negroes had followed him. The Kentuckian was released without trial. (23: 118). (28:38).

Sometimes the ruse was accomplished of sending off a load of make-believe fugitives with a great show of carefulness; while the real negroes would be quietly taken in another direction.

Sheffield, an Oberlin student, rode on horseback in daylight to Huron with a negro man attired as a woman, with face chalked white and veiled.

Another rescue was effected when the fugitive was in the sorest need; a capture seemed inevitable. The slave-hunters were watching the house in which the negro was concealed, and to leave was impossible. Mr. Pease, the Oberlin artist, was sent for. He brought with him his paint and brushes. For an hour he worked on the visible portions of the man. When he ceased, there was no more before him a negro slave escaping from bondage, but a white man to all appearances the same as other white men. In this disguise the negro left the house, entered a carriage, and was driven safely away, all being accomplished in plain sight of the slave-hunters.²⁴

A rescue was carried to a successful conclusion by transferring the fugitives from the old-boarding hall where they were concealed to a load of hay in which they were covered. Then the next morning the load was hauled to the lake, and the slaves embarked for Canada.²⁴

One Sabbath a beautiful octo-roon sat in church beside an Oberlin lady, Mrs. Holtslander. The girl was tall and slender with black hair slightly waving over a broad white forehead, large pensive eyes, a small mouth, and Caucasian features. Her story was as follows:

"That her mother was a house servant of her father and master, and that she had had the same educational advantages as were given to her white half-sisters. They had lived together in perfect harmony. There was an abundance for all. Her mother had been housekeeper for 20 years. Several other chil-

dren were born to her, and were equally well treated, but this one's love for music and ability to learn had been even a value above the others. One evening she overheard a discussion in which it was said that 'Minerva,' calling her by name, would bring a very high price in the New Orleans market. She was now at an age to be appreciated, and no man but a man of wealth could afford to buy her. She would not be knocked down for less than \$2,000.00, and that would release the mortgage on the farm. 'It must not be,' cried the mistress. 'She is too good a girl. I would rather take one-half and know where she is, and if she is well treated. Remember she is attached to us and it might cause her death. Do not think of it for the present, I beg of you.' To this the master and father of the girl replied, 'Think of it! I can think of nothing else. What are we to do? We shall be sold out at Sheriff's sale if nothing is done. What have I had these people here for but to fit them for the slave market, do you suppose? That is what makes our expenses so great, and we can keep it up no longer. Do you think I am a fool?'

Minerva did not stop to listen longer. She knew her fate was sealed. She was to be sold. A journey to see the world and finish her education, was to put her on the auction block to be the mistress of some brute. "No, never," she soliloquized, "I will go to-night. I will tell no one, not my mother or sisters or brothers. Where shall I go? To the North. Follow the North Star. Which is it I wonder?" and she peered into the heavens and said, "even that I must not ask or they will suspect me. My clothes, where are they? Oh I am so dazed, but I will go. I will need rubbers, and my woolen underskirt and my black dress and my mother's black shawl. I will try to find a little money, for that is a good friend."

Hastily she put a few things in a black silk reticule, and with a thick veil, ran down towards the boat landing, just as a boat anchored at the wharf. She hid away in a state-room until the boat whistled to leave, and after she heard the engine rotate regularly, she ventured out and asked for a berth and a passage to Cincinnati. She was closely veiled, and it was towards

midnight. She was given her ticket by the captain and no questions asked.

When she awoke the sun was shining in her room, and the boat was passing farms and villages. She was very hungry, and had but a piece of corn cake in her pocket, which she ate and felt better. She watched the passengers as they passed her state-room. Now and then an old gentleman with gray hair and benevolent countenance stood on deck alone. "Would he be a good one to ask for the North Star, or for some place to go in Cincinnati?" thought Minerva. "I have no one else to ask, so God go with me and shape his thoughts toward me." About noon she ventured to approach him, and said, "Do you know anyone in Cincinnati?" He replied, "I should hope so for I have lived there for forty years."

"Could you tell me where to go on the Underground Railway? I want to get to Canada. I wish I knew which was the North Star."

"Ah yes," he replied, "I will write the name on a paper and my own. You can give it to the cab-driver and he will take you without any questions. You have asked the right person this time, but you had better rely on names given you, for all along the line are enemies and only a few friends. Out of this boat load I do not know of another. For there is money in betrayal, and few can resist money. I have helped many a one. Do not speak to me again. Go right out to the busses and give your destination and they will take you, for they too work for money."

"I have money," said Minerva, "I brought a little with me."

"Pay the hackman two dollars; it's a good way out of town. He will ask that and you pay it, and you will need no more."

She returned to her room and counted her money. She had more than enough. "I am hungry," she said to herself. Just then some one tossed into her window a paper of crackers. It was enough, life so intense did not need more. It was the hour of nine, in the evening, when the boat anchored at Cincinnati. She watched for a hack-driver whom she thought kind and careless,

and he came, read her paper and said "All right," put her in, shut the door, and was off before the others had come from the boat. When she alighted, two grave Quakers came to the door and said, "This is the right place; the driver is paid; no trunk of course. Come right in," and she did; and in the stately home she felt safe from blood-hounds, whether in human or brute form.

They heard her story, and said, "The papers are full of it. That boat was too well loaded to come fast, and the water is low, and thus you have escaped detection. We have a room in here, cheerful and bright." They took down a painting, pushed the wall paper, and it swung back as a door. Within was a fire-place, a cupboard to be filled with food, a closet, and sky-lights. It was evidently kept for just such occasions. After a light supper, she slept as sound as a young woman could who had been running for life, and reached a place of comparative safety. For three weeks she made this place her home. To and fro the detectives had gone, but there was no one to reveal it but the aged couple, and they said nothing, not even to their friends. With two more stops of a day each, Minerva had reached Oberlin. At midnight the carriage had brought her from Wellington, the nearest railway station in 1859. After a week in Oberlin she had ventured to Church. She came for several Sundays, and then disappeared."⁹ She had doubtless gone to Canada.

This story has been told in full, to show more distinctly the kind of work which Oberlin did; the kind of folks whom she often helped to life and freedom.

Numerous other stories could be told of escaping slaves who, but for the help received at Oberlin, would have been retaken and severely punished, in addition to being once more enslaved. But enough has already been related to give the reader a conception of the practical good that Oberlin did in those days before the War.

Oberlin had a goodly number of resident colored folk. They lived mostly on one street, and had their own social set. They were allowed privileges, and were not treated with disdain. A few rose to distinction.⁹

In 1854, Mr. Chambers, a wealthy planter of Salisbury, North Carolina, freed his slaves. Seventeen he sent to Oberlin

to settle. He gave each family money to start themselves on; to at least one he gave \$500.00 in gold.

Mr. Patton, of Kentucky, liberated his slaves after his wife's death; the negroes having come to him through his marriage. This act of kindness so angered his neighbors that he was thrown into prison for inciting a negro insurrection. The slaves he had sent to Oberlin. Once in his prison cell, he looked around him for some means of escape. He saw a bucket hanging from a hook on the wall. Seizing this hook he finally managed to wrench it free. When night came and the prison had been locked, he made his escape by opening the locks on the doors by means of his hook. He scaled the outer wall of the jail, and fled for the ferry. He was conveyed into Indiana where for a time he lay in hiding. Then he made his way to Oberlin. When it was safe he returned to Kentucky, but came back to Oberlin every few months to see how his former slaves were getting on.⁹

One little slave boy of Kentucky thanks his Creator that there is such a place as Oberlin. The Sabbath School children took part in raising money to buy Henry's freedom. He cost \$210.00. All funds received over that amount were to be used for his education.^{4m}

Some of the escaping blacks liked Oberlin so well that they made it their home, in spite of the danger of detection and capture. So in one way and another the number of these colored folks increased; they became part of our town.

The enrollment of negroes in the college was not large. From 1840-1860, there were only 4% or 5% of this race in the Institution. Soon after the War the percent rose to 7% or 8%. The courses of study were never altered to suit these people. No white person was obliged to sit beside a negro in the classroom, or elsewhere. It is not known definitely how many colored students have attended Oberlin, as no separate list, or any distinction regarding color, has ever been made. The only reliance that can be placed on the past is by taking the word of instructors and others, who tell us what they can remember. (23: III-III2).

That these negroes who studied here were not educated in vain is shown from the work which they did on leaving Ober-

lin. A circular soliciting funds for the college, issued in 1860, states: "Instruction is invariably given equally to black and white persons. A large number of the 500 colored students already instructed there, are now engaged as teachers of their own race in the Western States and Canada." The education imparted (at Oberlin), is of a high order, students in Classics, Mathematics, etc., obtain degrees irrespective of color." It goes on to say that, "The College is not intended to be a school for the education of the colored race exclusively; its great object in educating the colored and white races together, is to break down that cruel spirit of caste which unhappily prevails so extensively throughout the Northern States of America."

One colored student rose to National prominence. This was John M. Langston. He was born a slave in Virginia in 1820; at the age of six years he gained his freedom. He studied at Oberlin during the first days of its colored members. After a noted career, in which he was United States Minister and consul-general at Haiti, during 1877-1885, he was elected to the 51st. United States Congress. He is now dead. (28:421).

Due to the friendly way in which the white students treated their negro classmates, reports became prevalent among those of the pro-slavery sentiment in Ohio, and elsewhere, that amalgamation between the two races was practiced at Oberlin. An example of the strength of these accusations is seen in the following instance: Mr. Shipherd had a black servant girl who was in poor health. At the advice of a physician, Mr. Shipherd had Henry Fairchild, a brother of President Fairchild, take the girl for a carriage ride. On this the county-paper published an extra giving a vivid account of their version of the affair. In the next Cleveland paper's issue was an article headed, 'Marriage Extraordinary,' with a story of the same character as the heading. This was copied in 40 other newspapers all over the United States. (25); (28).

A dismissed student wrote a book entitled, "Oberlin Unmasked." It contained a choice collection of venomous lies; lies of the filthiest order. It was believed by many, and aided in setting up a hatred of Oberlin on other grounds than those of anti-slavery. But Oberlin went calmly on her way, and in time

these false accusations were shown to be without support, and the good name of Oberlin flourished.

The only time blows were struck in the peaceful town of Oberlin in regard to slavery was when a negro struck Deputy United States Marshal Daton. Slave-catchers while stopping in Oberlin took up their lodgings at Wack's Hotel. This building was situated on the corner of South Main and Mechanic Streets. Wack, himself, was a strong Democrat and pro-slavery man. While these hunters were there, the anti-slavery people of the town kept a sharp watch on their movements. On even a hint that the Southerners were here, the streets would be patrolled at night; sometimes from 15 to 25 men would be on guard. They kept a watch on Marshal Daton for he was a Democrat and friend of the South. Any visitor of his received attention. A mulatto, named Smith, so near white that one would not have known of his colored blood unless told of the fact, had escaped from bondage and taken up his abode in Oberlin. He obtained information that Marshal Daton was endeavoring to secure his recapture. One day while walking along the street near where now stands the Electric Car Waiting Room, Smith turned and spoke to Daton who happened to be behind him. An exchange of words ensued. Smith was carrying a heavy stick. Suddenly he struck the Marshal with this club. He continued to shower blows upon him till Daton turned and ran into the hotel where the present Park House is located. Smith was arrested. At the trial he produced letters from the South showing that Daton was in correspondence with slave-traders regarding the recapture of Smith. The Justice of the Peace let Smith go free, for said he, the mulatto had a right to protect himself. Smith continued to live in Oberlin for a time after the fight—the only fight that ever occurred in Oberlin over the slavery question.¹²

When Congress declared the Missouri Compromise void, Oberlin organized an emigrant-aid society, and sent forward several companies of emigrants from Oberlin and the surrounding country to pre-empt Kansas as a Free State. These people went prepared for troublesome times, and they did their part in making the State of Kansas a Free State for the Union. Several Oberlin ministers were in the rough scenes of the border

warfare. (23:157). They were sometimes hunted over the prairie like wild beasts.

The Oberlin Evangelist, June 4, 1856, states how a great mass meeting was held in the Chapel on the news reaching here that Lawrence, Kansas, was in ruins. "A hasty call on three hours' notice was sent out for a public meeting; the Chapel was crowded to its utmost capacity; a series of resolutions were adopted, expressive of the sense of the meeting in regard to the recent outrages,"—the assault upon Senator Sumner on the floor of the United States Senate; and the destruction of Lawrence, Kansas. The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. C. White, of Cleveland, Prof. J. Monroe, H. E. Peck, and T. B. Hudson.

The father of John Brown, of Harper's Ferry, was a trustee of Oberlin College. John Brown's younger brothers and a sister were students at Oberlin. John Brown, himself, surveyed lands belonging to the College in West Virginia. He was more or less associated with the Oberlin men in Kansas; but his raid at Harper's Ferry came as a total surprise to the majority of the folks of Oberlin. (23:157).

Shields Green, a colored man, once a student and citizen of Oberlin, was secured by Brown to aid in his undertaking. With Brown were two other Oberlin colored men, Leary and John Copeland. Leary was killed in the fight; John Copeland died on the gallows a few days after his leader. Green could have escaped but remained faithful to the man who had led him to the scene of death. It happened this way: When Brown surrendered, Green and one companion were in the mountains on some errand. On returning to the Ferry, they found that to effect a rescue would be impossible. Green's companion advised flight, and did himself escape; but Green replied that he preferred to "go down and die with the old man," and he died. He was executed at Charlestown, Virginia, December 2, 1859, the same day that John Copeland offered up his life in payment for his endeavor to help the people of his race to be freed from the bondage in which they suffered.²⁴

Prof. Monroe made a journey to secure the remains of Copeland but was unsuccessful in his mission.²⁸

In pro-slavery circles, Oberlin was suspected of complicity

in the Harper's Ferry Raid. The "Pennsylvanian," of Philadelphia, Penn., gives a good example of the Democratic opinion of Oberlin. It said: "Oberlin is located in the very heart of what may be called 'John Brown's tract,' where people are born abolitionists, and where abolitionism is taught as the 'chief end of man,' and often put in practice. * * * Oberlin is the nursery of just such men as John Brown and his followers. With arithmetic is taught the computation of the number of slaves and their value per head; with geography, territorial lines, and those locations of slave territory supposed to be favorable to emancipation; with history, the chronicles of the peculiar institution; and with ethics, and philosophy, the 'higher law,' and resistance to Federal enactments. Here is where the younger Browns obtain their conscientiousness in ultraisms, taught from their cradle up, so that while they rob slave-holders of their property, or commit murder for the cause of freedom, they imagine that they are doing God service." (23:157-8).

The sentiment of Oberlin upon the raid of John Brown was set forth in the Oberlin Evangelist. It read: "We object to such intervention, not because the slave power has any rights which mankind, white or black, are bound to respect, and not therefore because it is properly a moral wrong to deliver the oppressed from the grasp of the oppressor; but entirely for other reasons. We long to see slavery abolished by peaceful means, and as a demand of conscience, under the law of righteousness; which is the law of God. Such a result would be at once glorious to Christianity, and blessed to both slave-holders and slaves. It is especially because an armed intervention frustrates this form of pacific, reformatory agency, that we disapprove and deplore it. Perhaps the day of hope in moral influence for the abolition of slavery is past already; we cannot tell. If so, it is a satisfaction to us to be conscious of not having unwisely precipitated its setting sun. If a mad infatuation has fallen upon Southern mind, and they will not hear the demands of justice, nor the admonitions of kindness, let the responsibility rest where it belongs. We would not have it so. 'We have not desired the woeful day, O Lord, thou knowest.'" (23:158-159).

In the Oberlin cemetery, near the southeast corner, stands

a monument of clouded marble, about 8 feet in height. On it is the inscription :

S. GREEN,

Died at Charlestown, Va., Dec. 2, 1859.

AGED 23 YEARS.

J. A. COPELAND,

Died at Charlestown, Va., Dec. 2, 1859.

AGED 25 YEARS.

L. S. LEARY,

Died at Harper's Ferry, Va., Oct. 20, 1859.

AGED 24 YEARS.

These Colored Citizens of Oberlin,
The heroic associates of the immortal

JOHN BROWN,

Gave Their Lives for the Slave.

Et Nunc servitudo etiam mortua est, laus Deo. (28:439) ; (24).

OBERLIN—WELLINGTON RESCUE CASE.

From 1835 to 1860, Oberlin was an important station of the Underground Railroad; but in all this time only two overt attempts were made at Oberlin to recover fugitives. The first of these occurred in 1841; the outcome of which was that the slaves, a man and his wife, escaped from the Elyria jail through an opening made by another prisoner, and the slave-hunters, one of whom died, gave up the pursuit. (This incident has already been told in detail in this article).

The second endeavor to retake a fugitive at Oberlin led to the following celebrated trial; a trial National in its importance.

A very ordinary event was the beginning of the whole affair; —John Price, a slave, escaped from Kentucky. He came to Oberlin where he lived six months or more without attracting any special notice.

Some time in January, 1856, a slave called John, a boy of about 18 years of age, escaped from the plantation of John G. Bacon. Bacon lived in the northern part of Mason County, Kentucky.

Late in August, 1858, Mr. Anderson Jennings, a neighbor of John's master, while pursuing some runaway slaves belonging

to his uncle's estate, stopped a few days in Oberlin. While here he learned of John Price. The astute Mr. Jennings at once saw that here was a good chance to secure an able-bodied slave at practically no expense. He forgot, evidently, that he was in Oberlin. From Richard P. Mitchell, a former employee of Mr. Bacon's, Jennings received a document purporting to be a duly drawn and certified power of attorney for capturing John. Jennings also went to Columbus, Ohio, and obtained a warrant for John from a man named Sterne Chittenden who certified himself to be a United States Commissioner. Jacob K. Lowe, a deputy for the United States Marshal of the Southern District of Ohio, was intrusted with the execution of the warrant. Lowe secured the assistance of Samuel Davis, an acting deputy-sheriff of Franklin county, and these three men with R. P. Mitchell, set out for Oberlin where they arrived Friday evening.

They took up their lodgings at an obscure inn where they would attract little attention; and the frequenters of this inn would favor their mission. They at once set about the work of capture. About 4 miles from town they found a man who would help them. This man had a son, a lad of about 13 years, who was to be the principal actor in the snaring of John. The scheme was arranged on Sunday. Monday morning the boy came into Oberlin with a horse and buggy. He found John and offered him large wages to go with him into the country to dig potatoes. It was now September the 13th, 1858. John accepted and rode off with the boy. They had proceeded but a mile or two out of town and were driving along at a leisurely gait, when a carriage driven at a fast pace overtook them. In the carriage were three men. They stopped the buggy, pulled John out and with threats and a great pointing of weapons, compelled him to enter their carriage, which was then driven rapidly off along the diagonal road two miles east of Oberlin which leads to Wellington nine miles south. The three men were the gallant Kentuckian, Mitchell, and his two official assistants. The boy was paid \$20.00 for his share in the cowardly proceedings. So far their plan had worked out to a nicety; but from now on they were doomed to failure. Two men coming from Pittsfield met the carriage with its helpless victim. They reported the fact

in Oberlin. Some of the colored people had already been suspicious of the three strangers, and now the news spread like wild-fire; and without concerted action whites and blacks alike, started on a mad race toward Wellington. Every manner of conveyance was pressed into service. Probably 200 or 300 people went to Wellington that afternoon. Wellington also furnished its share of the crowd, so with those who fell in with the Oberlin folks along the way, the throng that surrounded the hotel of a Mr. Wadsworth, where the kidnappers held their prey, was of such numbers that it might well strike the slave-hunters with fear. They took John to a room in the garret to await the coming of the first train south. Though no gun was fired, quite a number appeared. The Kentuckian later claimed at least 500 guns were in evidence; other people to whom the weapons would have brought no harm estimated the number as about fifty. It is not certain that any of the weapons were loaded. The crowd had no leader and did not act in unison; but thronged the hotel rooms, as well as completely surrounding it outside. Some of them wished to let the man-hunters proceed with their captive; but the great majority insisted on a rescue. Different persons, among them a magistrate and a lawyer of Wellington, were shown the warrant in the hands of the marshal for the arrest of John. Patton, an Oberlin student, read the warrant of Lowe's to the crowd. Not one word of the power of attorney was heard of at Wellington. The throng still surrounded the hotel. The train for the south came. It puffed away again, and still the southerners with their prisoner were in the Wellington hotel, around which the crowd surged and murmured. The sun was about to set as a little group of men who had gathered around John in the garret of the hotel, started down the stairs. In their midst was John. Once outside the crowd passed him on to a buggy standing near, he was lifted in, the buggy started rapidly off towards Oberlin.

President Fairchild had been out driving with his family that afternoon. He never had seen or heard of John, but he too was now to be implicated in the affair. James Monroe and James M. Fitch went to Mr. Fairchild and asked him to take the poor fellow in. He did so. For three days and nights John

was hidden in a back room; but no suspicion fell upon the house and no United States Marshal ever made a call of inquiry. John Price was then sent on to Canada.

The Fugitive Slave law was supposed to be vital to the maintenance of the Union. This law had been violated; and since the Union must be upheld, the government at once set about to punish the offenders. A trial in the United States Court at Cleveland was determined on. Judge Willson brought the case before the grand jury with an elaborate charge. In conclusion, he said: "The Fugitive Slave law may, and unquestionably does, contain provisions repugnant to the moral sense of many good and conscientious people; nevertheless, it is the law of the United States, and as such should be recognized and executed by our courts and juries, until abrogated or otherwise changed by the legislative department of the government." The grand jury, influenced by this charge, made out 37 indictments against 24 citizens of Oberlin and 13 of Wellington. In both towns some of the leading men were included in these indictments. Among the Oberlin names were those of Prof Peck, of the College; J. M. Fitch, superintendent of the large Sunday-School; Ralph Plumb, a lawyer; and others of good standing.

No time was wasted. That same day, Marshal Johnson appeared in Oberlin to make the arrests. He went first to Prof. Peck and asked him to introduce him to the other men whose names were on his list. This was done, and the Marshal received the promise of each one to appear in court at Cleveland the next day. In Wellington, without the aid of Prof. Peck, the Marshal found but few of those he sought. These few he requested to appear in court the next day, and himself left for Cleveland empty handed.

At 10:40 A. M., December 7th., fifteen of the Oberlin men left the station amid the cheers of a large throng of ladies and gentlemen who had assembled to see them off. "A considerable number of the most prominent men of the village, including Mayor Beecher, volunteered to accompany the prisoners and see them comfortably quartered or safely returned. Marshal Johnson was in waiting when they left the cars, and pointing the prisoners to omnibuses bound for the Bennet House, directed

them to take good care of themselves and be ready for a call at 2 o'clock. After dinner, the Hon. R. P. Spalding, the Hon. A. G. Riddle, and S. O. Griswold, Esq., who had volunteered their services for the defense, free of charge, were called in for consultation. Soon after 2 o'clock, the parties proceeded to the courtroom." ³

The trial was begun. Judge Spalding, acting for the defense entered a plea of not guilty, in behalf of all. He gave notice that the accused were ready, and requested trial immediately. The District-Attorney, Belden, (he was assisted in the prosecution by Judge Bliss), begged that the trial be postponed till he could send to Kentucky for witnesses. He would need at least two weeks. "Judge Spalding thought that citizens of Ohio might think two weeks some time to lie in jail for the convenience of citizens of Kentucky." ³ The defendants declined to give bail and were finally allowed to leave upon their own recognizance of \$1,000.00 each. The case was adjourned, first to March 8th, and again to April 5th.

The "Felons' Feast" was the next event of public interest. The Cleveland Morning Leader said of the affair: "A strange and significant scene for this enlightened and Christian age, and in our boasted Free Republic, transpired at the peaceful and God-serving village of Oberlin on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 11th of January, 1859. It was literally the 'Feast of Felons,' for the 37 good citizens of Lorain county, indicted by the Grand Jury of the United States District Court of Northern Ohio under the Fugitive Slave Act, for the crime of a conscientious and faithful observance of the Higher Law of the Golden Rule, sat down with their wives and a number of invited guests to a sumptuous repast at the Palmer House (in Oberlin). It was in the best sense a good social dinner, followed by a real 'feast of reason and flow of soul.' The entertainment was given by the indicted citizens of Oberlin to their brethren in bonds, as will be seen by the following card of invitation: At a meeting of the citizens of Oberlin who had been indicted by the Grand Jury of the United States District Court at Cleveland, charged with rescuing the negro boy John Price, held on the evening of January 4, 1859, it was *Resolved*, That it is expedient for the whole number of the

citizens of Lorain county who have been thus indicted, to meet for the purpose of consultation, and agreement as to the course to be pursued in the present emergency and for mutual comfort, and for this purpose to meet at the Palmer House on Tuesday, January 11, at 2 o'clock P. M., for dinner, and such other good things as may follow, and that we invite the citizens of Wellington implicated with us, to participate on the said occasion as our guests.³

“JAMES M. FITCH, *Chairman.*

“JACOB R. SHIPHERD, *Secretary.*”

On the 5th of April, the trial commenced, and continued with slight interruptions up to the middle of May, when the cases were put over to the July term.

At 10 o'clock in the forenoon the case of Simeon Bushnell was called.

Before the organization of the jury, the District Attorney told the court that he should need a writ of habeas corpus and testification in behalf of Jacob K. Lowe, a witness for the government. For Lowe had been arrested at Grafton the evening previous on his way from Columbus to Cleveland, by Richard Whitney, a deputy-sheriff of Lorain county, under a warrant issued by the Lorain County Court of Common Pleas on an indictment for kidnapping which was found by the Grand Jury of Lorain county at its last session. Lowe was at this time confined in the Lorain county jail at Elyria. While the court was considering this matter, Lowe walked in, having been discharged on the bond of Mayor Sampsel, of Elyria. This bond was for \$1,000.00, and Lowe was to appear for trial on the 17th of May following.

“The political aspect of the trial was very obvious in the fact that, with the exception of three members of the petit jury, every person connected with the court and prosecution, from the judge on the bench down to the claimants of the fugitive, was a member of the predominant party in the government. Within the court room the Fugitive Slave Law had full sway. Without

in the city and the State, the sympathies of the people were with the men in jail." ²⁰ The prisoners were tried separately.

Some striking evidence in favor of the defense brought out by the lawyers for the prisoners was the following: Mr. Riddle, one of the Oberlin lawyers, said: "And will you mark it well, gentlemen, that this man Jennings, being only an agent and not the actual owner, although clothed by his power-of-attorney with full authority to arrest the boy with his own hands, or by posses, in his immediate presence, had no power to confer upon another, either by parole, or writing, the authority vested in himself to seize and arrest this boy John." "I know, gentlemen, that this man Mitchell, sent to Ohio for the express purpose of acting as a witness, says that the power of attorney was actually shown to John. A most gracious favor that, indeed, especially since in the next breath he tells us that he thinks John didn't read it, because he couldn't and hadn't time if he could; and Mr. Jennings swears positively that, at the time Mitchell avers he showed it to John (when the arrest was made), it was in his own (Jennings), breast pocket, in the Russia House (a hotel run by a Mr. Wack), at least two miles from the affecting interview between John and his old friend Mitchell. But who seizes John? It matters nothing in law, to be sure, since it is not Jennings, the only man who could seize him, or direct it to be done for him." "Can there be a particle of a reasonable doubt concerning the real capacity in which Lowe acted? He came as a marshal armed with a warrant to be served by a marshal, went out with his assistant and did serve it, and arrested John and held him as a marshal; which he cannot and dare not deny."

"The owner comes up here and swears that when he (John), left Kentucky at the age of 18, he was 5 feet, 8 or 10 inches high, and would weigh 165 or 170 pounds, and was copper colored. At Oberlin they arrest a John who is positively sworn by a number of unimpeachable witnesses, who have the best means of knowing, to have been not over 5 feet, 5 or 6 inches tall, weighing 135 to 140 pounds, and so black that he shone. Even Jennings swears the John they captured was black. If they say the Kentucky boy and the Oberlin boy were both Johns, they don't come any nearer; for the Kentucky boy was simply John,

while the Oberlin boy was John Price. In no solitary point do the descriptions agree. Slaves never have more than one name. They are all Boys till they get to be Uncles. Do we then, gentlemen of the jury, claim too much in claiming that the boy captured at Oberlin by no means answers to the description of the boy who ran away from John G. Bacon in 1856? Certainly, if evidence is worth anything, it has most clearly established a glaring discrepancy here." ³

In spite of all this evidence and a great deal more to the contrary, Bushnell, the prisoner who first came up for trial, was found guilty, convicted and sentenced. He received in sentence 60 days' imprisonment, a fine of \$600.00, and costs of prosecution. This latter fine (cost of prosecution), was understood to be about \$2,000.00 more. Charles Langston was the next case called. The same jury was kept to try all the cases. The lawyers for the defense made a great outcry at this outrageous ruling, but the Court would not change. The defense then said that they would not call any more witnesses for the defense, and that they would not appear by attorney before such a jury, that the District Attorney could call up the accused as fast as he pleased. The Court then ordered the marshal to take the prisoners into custody. The Oberlin men agreed to give no bail, enter no recognizance, and make no promises to return to the court. They were therefore taken to the Cleveland jail where they were confined. They were well cared for, provided with apartments in that part of the jail kept as a private dwelling, were well fed, and treated kindly. Indeed, Sheriff Wightman treated them with every courtesy. Great numbers of people visited the prisoners. On Sunday afternoon April 17th, Prof. Peck spoke to the other prisoners and a throng of visitors who packed the jail yard and every point of vantage. Prof. Peck read his text from Matthew 9:9, then preached an able sermon.

The next conviction that was made before the cases were put over till the July term, was that of Charles H. Langston, a colored man. When asked if he had anything to say for himself, he made an eloquent speech, so thrilling to all those who heard that the courtroom thundered with the applause, and the sentence was made a light one. He concluded his speech with the fol-

lowing fiery declaration: "And now I thank you for this leniency, this indulgence, in giving a man unjustly condemned, by a tribunal before which he is declared to have no rights, the privilege of speaking in his own behalf. I know that it will do nothing towards mitigating your sentence, but it is a privilege to be allowed to speak, and I thank you for it. I shall submit to the penalty, be it what it may. But I stand up here to say, that if for doing what I did on that day at Wellington, I am to go in jail 6 months, and pay a fine of \$1,000.00 according to the Fugitive Slave Law, and such is the protection the laws of this country afford me, I must take upon myself the responsibility of self-protection; and when I come to be claimed by some perjured wretch as his slave, I shall never be taken into slavery. And as in that trying hour I would have others do to me, as I would call upon my friends to help me; as I would call upon you, your Honor, to help me; as I would call upon you (to the District Attorney), to help me; and upon you (to Judge Bliss), and upon you (to his counsel), so help me God. I stand here to say that I will do all I can for any man thus seized and held, though the inevitable penalty of 6 months' imprisonment and \$1,000.00 fine for each offense hangs over me. We have a common humanity. You would do so; your manhood would require it and no matter what the laws might be, you would honor yourself for doing it; your friends would honor you for doing it; your children to all generations would honor you for doing it; and every good and honest man would say, you had done right." ³ There was great and prolonged applause, in spite of the efforts of the Court and the Marshal, as Langston finished.

Langston was sentenced to a fine of \$100.00, to pay the costs of prosecution, and to be committed to the jail for 20 days.

Langston's trial completed, the cases were, as has already been stated, postponed to the July term. Several of the indicted from Wellington entered a plea of *nolle contendere*, and were sentenced to pay a fine of \$20.00 each, costs of prosecution, and an imprisonment of 24 hours in the jail; the same being considerable less than Langston had been sentenced to. One old man from Wellington wished to stay by the other unjustly imprisoned men so much, that it was nearly with entreaties that he

was at last prevailed on to go home. Thus all that remained were 14 Oberlin men, and those convicted. From the 15th of April on, they lay in jail.

The unjust ruling of the Court regarding the calling of a new jury, was afterwards recalled, and the prisoners were notified that their own recognizance would be accepted as before; but a false record had been made which put the defendants in the wrong and the court would not correct it. The discussion arose concerning the placing in jail of the prisoners (already described), when they were fulfilling what was expected of them when they gave their recognizance; for a person who has given his recognizance is not supposed to be placed in custody. The Oberlin men would not give bail or renew their recognizance, and therefore they remained in jail.

During the recess of the court an attempt was made to free the prisoners by appealing to the State courts. One of the Judges of the Supreme Court, granted a writ of habeas corpus ordering the sheriff to bring Bushnell and Langston before the court, that the reason for their imprisonment might be considered. For a week the case was argued before a full bench, at Columbus; but the court in a vote of three to two declined to grant a release.

President Fairchild points out that if the vote had gone in favor of the prisoners, Ohio would have been placed in conflict with the general government in defense of State Rights, and that "if the party of freedom throughout the North had rallied as seemed probable, the War might have come in 1859 instead of in 1861, with a secession of the Northern instead of the Southern States. A single vote apparently turned the scale." (23: 127, 128).

During this recess of the court, a mass meeting was held in Cleveland on May 24th, to express the sympathy that was felt for the imprisoned Oberlin men, and their condemnation for the Fugitive Slave Law. A great procession, with banners, passed through the streets, around the square, and in front of the jail. Many noted men addressed the people. Among these speakers were Joshua R. Giddings, and Salmon P. Chase. Mr. Chase was at this time Governor. Numerous resolutions were adopted in favor of State Rights. The closing feature of the

day were speeches in the jailyard by Langston, Peck, Fitch, and Plumb, in behalf of the prisoners. The meeting had no immediate result in favor of the prisoners, and no result was expected; but it was simply a declaration that the Fugitive Slave Law would no more be executed in Northern Ohio.

The Oberlin prisoners now settled down to the monotony of their confining life.

THE 'RESCUER.'

This publication was edited and printed in the Cleveland jail by the Oberlin prisoners. It is a paper about the size of the 'Saturday Evening Post;' (the exact dimensions are 18 inches x 12 1/2 inches); there are four pages in all; the print is clear and black; the letters are of medium size; the style of its contents is witty, bright, and very much in earnest; it makes interesting reading.²

Regarding the foundation of this paper let us quote from its own pages: "After the 'political prisoners' had remained in jail for 75 days. they began to find themselves possessed of 'thoughts that breathed and words that burned.' We not only wished to utter them, but we wished to print them. Could the thing be done? We looked around for printers and found among the prisoners two rusty and dilapidated 'typos,' one of whom had not handled a 'stick,' for 15 years. Would the sheriff allow us a corner of the jail for a printing-office? We asked him. Generous as ever, he replied, 'certainly and I'll help you too if I can.' 'Oh, where shall type be found?' we next inquired. The generous purchasers of our old printing office responded by lending us a font of small pica, and the liberal publisher of the Cleveland Daily Leader, (the very paper which would please you, gentle reader), added more, with other things. For a 'plane,' we used a carpenter's with the irons knocked out. A policeman's club answered for a 'mallet,' in taking 'proof,' and for other purposes we would select a pounding instrument from a large pile of shackles which lay at our feet. A fellow prisoner supplied us with 'side sticks,' 'quoins,' and 'reght,' made from a white-wood board. Another prisoner sawed up a fence board to make a 'rack,' (quite like a felon that, but we must settle it with the

Commissioners). For a 'shooting stick'—not the dangerous kind which we have understood 'rescuers,' sometimes use, but a simpler instrument,—we hewed out a piece of stone, and the door-stone answered for a 'table.'

"Thus furnished and with the ample space of just 5 feet by 10 feet for a printing-office, we proceeded to establish the 'Rescuer.' If we labor under difficulties it is but appropriate for 'Rescuer,' always do. We forgot to express regret that we could not procure italics. Many were needed. We must ask our readers to supply the emphasis according to taste."

The front page of the Rescuer, is like this:

THE RESCUER.

DELIVER HIM THAT IS SPOILED OUT OF THE HAND OF THE OPPRESSOR.

Vol. 1.

Cuyahoga County Jail, July 4th, 1859.

No. 1.

THE RESCUER

will be published at the
Cuyahoga County Jail,
every alternate Monday, by the
Political Prisoners there confined.
Five thousand copies of the first number
will be issued. Price 3 cents per copy.

The Rescuer was thus named, "because we rather like the idea it conveys. To be rescued is to be saved, often from serious evil, and even death. Many an innocent man would have gone into helpless slavery, but for the timely and determined aid of some friendly 'rescuer.' Indeed there is so much rescuing to be done, that we intend to spend our lives at the business."

In another part of the paper is an article by one of the prisoners which shows clearly what the imprisoned men thought of the people who were striving for their conviction. This gentleman writes: "That the Marshal and District Attorney felt refreshed when they fancied they could procure the indictment of 37 citizens of Lorain county, we cannot doubt, since the expected fees accruing to these great sticklers for obedience to law must reach thousands of dollars." He goes on to say, "it is well known that the names of such persons as it would be desirable to have indicted were furnished by a certain govern-

ment official, and that the names of Messrs. Peck, Plumb, and Fitch were on the lists, and further, that the Grand Jury took a recess for some ten days, after agreeing to inflict all except these three, to gain time to find some testimony against them. Not one of these men, viz., Peck, Plumb, and Fitch, were within nine miles of the spot when the rescue took place that day. Nor is there truthful testimony in existence on which any of them could be convicted by a court of justice. But the plan would utterly fail of its object if these devoted men should escape indictment, so the faithful jury met again, and one Bartholomew (a tin peddler, who has since been indicted for perjury committed in these trials, and left the State), was produced and furnished the required testimony, and thus the great object of the honorable court was secured, and these 'Oberlin Saints', as the District Attorney called them, were indicted. We cannot close this article without alluding to the fact, that Democrats were well known to have been actively engaged in the rescue, and were not indicted, while two of the indicted proving to be good Democrats, were nolle, on motion of the District Attorney. We should also state that the suits were commenced without the knowledge of the kidnappers, if their own statements can be relied on."

It thus appears that the trial was merely a political move of the Democrats against the Republicans and was not conducted solely in upholding the Fugitive Slave Law, as was claimed by the Democrats.

Regarding the life of the prisoners, the Rescuer tells us: "Our quarters are in the third story of the prison. We have a sitting room 18 feet by 12 feet; two bedrooms about 12 by 10 feet; and three cells of about the same size. Unfortunately for us, Ohio is guilty of keeping her incurably insane in her jails, and we have upon the same floor, with, and separated by a thin partition from ourselves, six lunatics, who, for a habit, 'bay the moon', early and late with howlings and ravings which do not promote the sleep of those who are near. Our lodgings are kept as neat as they can be by ourselves and our excellent jailer. Our food is good and is served with neatness. Our 'landlord', Sheriff Wightman is as noble a man as ever drew breath, and has treated us with fraternal kindness. Jailer (Henry R.) Smith

is like the sheriff. We daily maintain morning and evening prayers and divine worship twice on the Sabbath. We add to reading, writing, and waiting on our abundant company (which together has made an army not less than 4,000 strong), useful labor. Our shoemaker makes shoes; our saddler, harness; our cabinet makers, furniture; our lawyers, 'declarations'; and our ministers, sermons. Occupation keeps us contented".

On July 2d, 400 Oberlin Sunday-school children made a visit to the prisoners in the jail. Mr. Fitch was their superintendent and had held this position for 16 years. Now he was in jail his faithful little flock came loyally to him. The Oberlin Sabbath School was the invited guests of the Plymouth Church Sabbath School of Cleveland. There were brief addresses by the prisoners, and music. The program lasted for an hour.

The little people not only expressed their sentiments by visiting the prisoners in the jail, but they wrote their superintendent notes of indignation at his imprisonment and hope for his speedy release. Sixty letters were received by him in a single day. The contents of all these notes were much like the following examples: "I think it is very wrong for those horrid men to keep you there." Another wrote: "I have often wondered if those wicked men ever had such a faithful teacher as you have been to us to teach them the 'Golden Rule'."

The Rescuer had accounts of all the foregoing, and also many articles dealing with anti-slavery in other parts of the country. Only the one number was ever published as the prisoners were released before another alternate Monday, which was their day of publication, had come around.

The release of the Oberlin prisoners came about in the following manner: The four men who had endeavored to kidnap John Price were indicted in Lorain county for kidnapping. Their trial was set for July 6th, six days before the resumption of the trials in the U. S. court at Cleveland. The four slave-hunters were out on bail till near the time of their trial at Elyria. "Then a writ of habeas corpus was obtained from a judge of the United States court and an attempt was made to deliver up the four men to the sheriff of Lorain county that the writ might be served upon him, and his prisoners be released by order of the U. S.

judge." Various circumstances hindered this plan. The hour of trial was at hand, when the writ would be useless. The four men became frightened. Through their counsel, Hon. R. H. Stanton of Kentucky, the U. S. attorney was asked to capitulate with the counsel of the Rescuers. It was finally agreed to propose to the Oberlin lawyers that the suits on both sides should be dropped. This was consented to; the marshal went to the Cleveland jail and told the Oberlin prisoners that they were free. This took place on July 6th.

In the afternoon of the same day the Rescuers prepared to leave the jail. But just before they went out into the street, they stepped into the parlor of the jail, where were present their attorneys, Messrs. R. P. Spalding, A. G. Riddle, F. T. Backus, S. O. Griswold, Sheriff D. L. Wightman, Jailer J. B. Smith, and H. R. Smith who had rendered the Oberlin men so many services. With these gentlemen were their wives and numerous friends. Mr. Plumb, in behalf of the prisoners, presented the ladies for their husbands, each a beautiful silver napkin ring, fork and spoon, engraved with the initials of their husbands, and "From Rescuers; Matthew 25:36."

About 5 o'clock a hundred guns were fired on the square, and several hundred people gathered at the jail to escort the Oberlin men to the depot. "At half past 5 the whole company, headed by Hecker's Band, marched two and two to the depot, through Superior and Water Streets, the band playing 'Hail Columbia', 'Yankee Doodle', etc." After speeches at the depot, the train pulled out for Oberlin amid the cheers of the great crowd who had come to see them off.

At Grafton, for in those days the railroad passed through that village, the wives of Peck, Plumb, Fitch, and Watson boarded the train, while the returning prisoners gave them cheer after cheer. As they drew into Oberlin the whole town appeared to be out to meet them. "A sea of heads could be seen extending for a long distance on both sides of the track."³

Nearly 3,000 people joined in the great shout of welcome that went up as the Rescuers came down the steps of the train. There were speeches and much cheering. Then the returned prisoners were escorted to the Church where until midnight the

people gave vent to their feelings in song, prayer, and talking over what had just transpired

The Oberlin-Wellington Rescue was a thing of the past, but its effects remained, for no more did the slave-hunter ever venture to pursue his victim into the domains of these people where Jennings and his associates had fared so badly. (2); (3); (23: 119-132); (20).

OBERLIN IN THE CIVIL WAR, 1861-1865.

The quiet of Oberlin was not to be left unbroken for many months to come. Fort Sumpter was fired upon. The United States Government issued a call for troops. The enemies of Oberlin tauntingly declared "Oberlin has been valiant in words, let us see how she will stand when it comes to deeds." They were not left long in doubt. Though the college authorities never urged the students to enter the army, still when the time came they offered no obstacles to their doing so of their own free will. The first act of the Faculty was to suspend the law, long in force, which stated that no student should be a member of any military company.²⁷

Friday evening, April 19th, 1861, a meeting of the students was called in the College Chapel, and was addressed by speakers from each of the regular college classes who urged their fellow classmates to rally to the defense of the Union. A committee of five were appointed to get volunteers.

Saturday Prof. Monroe arrived from Columbus, for at this time he was a member of the State Senate. A meeting was called in the First Church and was addressed by Prof. Monroe and Col. Sheldon from Elyria. At the close of the meeting the muster-roll which lay on the pulpit, it was announced, was opened for enlistments. The great, crowded church was very still. It was no easy matter to enlist. To go from a town where peace and quiet reigned supreme, to the horrors of the battle field, and to go calmly, knowing what was before them, required a sublime devotion to the cause in which they were asked to enlist. If they went up there to the pulpit and placed their names on that roll of paper, they would do it not because honor and advance-

ment lay before them, but because they saw it to be God's Will.
 * * * And now a man got to his feet and started towards where lay that roll of blank paper. Then from all over the Church the boys came, and as they passed down the aisles friends leaned forward, some urging them on to do their duty, others to persuade them to stay at home by mention of parents whose sole support were these boys who, it was thought, were going to their death. The first to enroll was Lester A. Bartlett. Forty-nine names were secured that evening; \$10,000.00 were pledged to equip and sustain the Company.

During the next day, Sunday, the enlistment continued and people thought it nothing strange that this should be so. At 8 o'clock, Monday morning, it was announced that no more could be received. Before noon the Company had become partially organized. The Faculty required all under 21 who wished to enlist, to first secure the consent of their parents or guardians. One hundred and thirty names had been enrolled but the number was cut down to 100 as that was the number of men required to form a single company. For two days college exercises were suspended and the class-rooms were occupied by ladies from the college and town who made such things as a soldier was supposed to need.

Copy of a letter written by W. W. Parmenter, Sergeant in Company C, to his mother telling of his enlistment, and of the sentiment of the college boys toward the war:

OBERLIN, April 22, 1861.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

Saturday evening the people here raised about \$5,000.00 for the benefit of those who go from here, and agreed to take care of all families of persons who go. Mary (his sister) says you were afraid I would volunteer, and urged me not to do so. Your feelings are the main thing which hold me back, and so I wrote Saturday, before I received Mary's letter, asking the opinion of all of you at home upon this subject. Now I wish to say a little more about it.

The Government, which has protected our family for thirty years and has furnished the means for all our material prosperity and happiness, now calls for help, and calls loudly, too.

If you had stayed in England, some of your family would have

been obliged to go in the service of the Government long before this. Here only those are wanted who are willing; because it is expected all will be willing. Now, when the best men throughout the land are volunteering, would you wish a son of yours, no better than other sons everywhere, should stay at home, through fear or through your feeling on his account? I really would not disgrace you by thinking such a thing. This is not a mere sentiment of patriotism, either. Christian people throughout the North have been praying for this time, and God has answered their prayers. The conflict is now between Liberty and Slavery, Christianity and Barbarism, God and the Prince of Darkness. There never was a time when Christians were so united in one common cause, and there never was a cause which received so many prayers from praying people. No man is worthy the name of Christian, who shrinks from any duty which the Lord places before him. The Lord holds all nations in his hand, and will surely bring good out of these times, but He will try the faith of His people.

One company has been formed in Oberlin composed mainly of students and another is nearly formed. These two will contain about 160 men. A half dozen or more Theologues are going, as many Seniors, Juniors, also Sophomores and Freshmen, preparatory, and everybody.

Now, I have been wanting to know your opinion, but I cannot doubt what it would be. "Go, do your duty to your country, and God speed the right." I have long ago consecrated my life to the service of God, to do anything, to be anything, to suffer anything, for the furtherance of His cause upon earth. Now, when duty plainly calls, I cannot, I will not shrink, and I am going. This is just what I want to tell and have not known how. Now, rejoice, my mother, that you are able to do your share, and I know I shall have your prayers.

Our company is the first one formed, and is composed mainly of Christians.

Tutor Shurtleff (at that time an instructor in Oberlin College, later made Brevet Brigadier General), is our Captain.

I was the twenty-fourth to enlist. I subscribed Saturday night. About a hundred first joined, and then a committee of the Faculty cut off the number down to go. Notwithstanding my size, (he was short), I was kept on, which I consider somewhat of an honor. We have enlisted for three months, when we can be discharged if we wish it. The Seniors will be graduated just the same as if they stayed. We will first go to "Camp Taylor," Cleveland, where we will stay several weeks. There is where you may direct to me. Institution is doing nothing now. Those few who stay will organize and go when wanted. We have a brave, strong, God-fearing Company, and we are all in the best of spirits. We go to Cleveland, Wednesday morning. May God be with us and sustain us, and may His cause be glorified through us. Now I hope you will not be cast down by what I am doing, but rather

be thankful. Everyone will be comfortably furnished by the people here. I have no time to write more now. Write to me every day or two, some of you.

Your affectionate son,

WILLIAM.

On Thursday, April 25, the Company took the cars for Camp Taylor, Cleveland, Ohio. About the entire town went to the depot to see them off. Prof. Ellis and others made speeches, the sad farewells were said, and the train pulled out of the station, which in those days was situated a little east of where the freight depot now stands.

A second Company had been formed, composed of those who had not been able to enroll in this first Company. This second Company was not accepted and it soon disbanded.

The Company that left for Camp Taylor was mustered into the U. S. service for three months at Camp Taylor, April 30, 1861; that being the length of time for which they had enlisted. G. W. Shurtleff, a tutor of Latin in Oberlin College, was elected Captain. The Company was assigned to a place as Company C in the 7th Regiment of Ohio Volunteer Infantry. This regiment was put under the command of Col. E. B. Tyler, Lieut. Col. Wm. R. Creighton, and Maj. Jno. S. Casement.

Sunday morning, May 5th, the regiment left Cleveland for Camp Dennison, Cincinnati. It reached Columbus at 4 P. M. and spent the night there; Company C, quartering in the State House. The following day at noon it arrived at its final destination, Camp Dennison. This camp occupies a beautiful valley on the line of the Little Miami Railroad, about 17 miles northeast of Cincinnati. The valley is slightly curved, more than a mile in extent, with the railroad bordering it on the east, while on the west lies a line of hills rising to 100 or 200 feet. Near the foot of these hills were the barracks, in a triple, compact row, with the kitchens for the soldiers immediately behind the barracks. Farther back were the tents of the officers. In front of the barracks was the parade ground; while on the east was an irregular range of hills.⁴⁰ In this valley were gathered about 8,000 men — Ohio Volunteers — undergoing drill, preparatory to the work which lay before them. The letters written from this camp to their

friends at home by the soldiers, have printed on the envelopes pictures of camp life, pictures of soldiers marching, of soldiers standing guard, etc.; making a rather striking contrast to the envelopes of to-day.

Although far from the influences of Oberlin, the Company held daily prayer-meetings, usually in the street between the barracks. Often men from outside companies would gather around, and much good was done to men other than of Company C. The Company was as a whole in favor of religion. It was divided into messes of about 16 men each. A chaplain was appointed to each mess. He saw to it that morning and evening service were observed. This practice was continued in most of the messes throughout the war. The Oberlin boys were ridiculed by a great number in the camp for their religious customs. The sneers of "There goes an Oberlinite," or, "There is one of that praying-company", were often heard. The Company was nick-named "The Praying Company". Indeed the contrast between the Oberlin men and the mass of the others in the camp was striking; the former, educated, cultivated; with genteel, polished manners; none of them drank, only a few smoked or chewed; and the majority of the volunteers from the other companies, common, uneducated, crude and rough of manner, swearing, drinking, smoking, chewing. But despite the jeers hurled at them, the Oberlin men continued to live upright, Godly lives. One of the statements made of Company C, was that, "such soldiers could never be valiant in battle, nor endure the severities of military service, in the camp and on the forced march." (7: 6, 7). These statements were never made after the first battle, and the first few marches, however.

In the latter part of May, the Governor of Ohio, invited the 7th Regiment to re-enlist for a three years service. He promised to date their muster roll back to their first enlistment for three months. This promise was later broken by the Government, the regiment not being allowed to be mustered out until July 6, 1864.

On May 23d, at 9 P. M., the Company was marched out of the lines and up the grassy hill at the east of the camp. Here they were addressed by Gen. Cox and Prof. Monroe with regard to entering the service for three years. The question was

a serious one, for to re-enlist meant to give up one's aims and chances of the success in life which were only just opening to them. The Seniors were to be graduated the same as though they had remained in Oberlin; this had been promised on the first enlistment. But some had parents dependent on them; some were not fitted physically to endure the hardships of a prolonged campaign; and thus for one reason and another some of the men did not re-enlist when they were a few days later given the chance. Most of these men who did not re-enlist in Company C did so in some other company before the war closed. Those who did re-enlist were given a furlough of 10 days. When they returned to camp they brought with them enough new recruits to fill the company to the required number. In the re-election of officers that took place, G. W. Shurtleff was once more made Captain. (7: 9).

The Regiment remained at Camp Dennison until June 26, when they were ordered to Western Virginia. Then commenced for Co. C the hardships of a field campaign. They made many forced marches, but with the exception of the wounding of Corporal Adams while on picket, the Company had not come under fire when on the 15th of August it encamped at Cross Lanes on a beautiful, sloping meadow.

Here the regiment remained drilling until August 21st, when in the evening an order was received to march to Gauley Bridge. In an hour they were on the way. At 10 A. M. of the next day they reached Twenty-Mile Creek, where a halt was made. At this place the 7th Ohio encamped until the 24th, notwithstanding the fact that Gen. Cox, at Gauley Bridge, ordered it back at once to Cross Lanes.

The reason for these marches and counter-marches was this: Cross Lanes was the point of intersection of the road from Summersville to Gauley Bridge with one from Carnifex Ferry which is on the Gauley River near the mouth of Meadow River. The 7th Ohio was withdrawn to Twenty-Mile Creek to guard a road passing to the rear of the force under Gen. Cox. As soon as the attack which had been made on Cox was repulsed, the 7th had been ordered back to Cross Lanes to watch the roads and river crossing there. Tyler, Colonel of the 7th Ohio, delayed

fulfilling this last command by remaining at Twenty-Mile Creek to issue shoes and clothing to his men. When he did approach his former position at Cross Lanes he found that Floyd, the Confederate general, was reported to have crossed the Gauley River at Carnifex Ferry. Without waiting to reconnoitre, Tyler retreated several miles to Peter's Creek. It was afterward learned that Floyd had crossed by raising two small flatboats which Tyler had sunk but had not entirely destroyed. He used these as a ferry, crossed the river and entrenched where he was afterward attacked by Rosecrans. In the hope that only a small force had made a crossing, Cox ordered Tyler to "make a dash at them". Cox writes, "I added, 'It is important to give them such a check as to stop their crossing.' Meanwhile my advance-guard up New River was ordered to demonstrate actively in front and on the Sunday Road, so as to disquiet any force which had gone towards Tyler; and I also sent forward half a regiment to Peter's Creek, (6 miles from Cross Lanes), to hold the pass there and secure his retreat in case of need. But Tyler was new to responsibility and seemed paralyzed into complete inefficiency. He took nearly the whole of the 25th to move slowly to Cross Lanes, though he met no opposition. He did nothing that evening or night, and his disposal of his troops was improper and outpost duty completely neglected." (29: 78-97).

Regarding the final advance of the 7th Ohio to Cross Lanes, Sergt. W. W. Parmenter writes in his diary: "We went on and reached Cross Lanes just before dark. Several companies were already there. In the advance a hanger-on to the regiment, who was ahead, was shot by the enemy's pickets. At Cross Lanes seven or eight slaughtered oxen were captured. This to me was sufficient evidence that there was a large force of the enemy somewhere near. When our companies all came up, we had a force of about 600 men. Company A went up a hill near, and exchanged several shots with some of the enemy on a neighboring hill. Soon after dark, pickets were sent out, and the companies were lodged around, several companies in a church, and the rest scattered around in little log houses some distance from each other. It was difficult keeping warm. The house our company

was in was overflowing, and some had to stay outdoors. These last built a fire along towards midnight and afterwards were comfortable. In the morning we were up bright and early. Two wagons had come on in the night, and we had pilot bread, beef, and roasted ears of corn for our breakfast. While we were in the midst of this work, some roasting pieces of beef, others cooking corn or filling canteens and all as little prepared as could be, firing was heard in the direction of the river. Shots which at first were scattered, soon became rapid and continuous, and evidently near at hand. We had no time to form the Company, but pushed off rapidly towards the firing in any order we chanced to fall in. Company A was ahead of us on the same road a few rods, having slept near us in this direction. We had gone but a short distance, when we began to receive the fire of the enemy who were advancing at a double quick through the open fields and woods to the northeast of the road." ¹⁸ (End of Parmenter quotation.)

In the gray light of the dawn the lines of gray clad men, moving swiftly forward in perfect order, could be distinctly seen. Over the sombre ranks a battle flag, slanting forward, gave a touch of color to the grayness of the scene. Down the road came Major Casement, riding at breakneck speed. "Company A, take that hill"; "Company C, take that hill", he cried, pointing to two hills about 200 yards distant from the road. Company C turned off the road, and at a run made for the ridge. Across an open field they rushed, here receiving the first severe fire from the enemy. They climbed a fence and started to ascend the hill which had a gradual slope towards the road. A battalion of rifle-men, concealed in a cornfield on the same side of the road as Company C, and close at hand, opened with deadly effect. The bullets which before had whizzed by their ears, now rained on them in a continuous stream, tearing the ground all around them, and wounding many. Jeakins was the first one struck. He had his arm shattered. Almost immediately, Sheldon staggered backward, a bullet through his breast. Kellogg caught him and helped him and Jeakins part way up the hill to a wheat stack. "Sheldon, when last seen, was lying on his face spitting blood. He was no doubt mortally wounded." (18a).

The rebels had set up a fiendish yelling, and this added to the deafening roar of the musketry, made the din indescribable. Biggs of Elyria, dropped part way up the hill. Burns, though with a ball through his body, struggled to the crest of the ridge and fired his gun. Here and there a man would stop, turn, and with deliberate aim, return the fire of the enemy. At last the crest was reached. The Company took shelter behind what few trees and stumps there were; many laid down on the further side of the crest, thus escaping to some extent the storm of bullets which was continuously poured into them. And now they added to the uproar, their muskets, loaded with one bullet and three buck-shot, making a great crash at each discharge. A wall of grayish smoke rose before the Company; now and then, a gust of air rent the cloud apart, sending it drifting upward in feathery, fog-like streamers. Through the rift the dense masses of the enemy could be plainly seen. They fired by battalion, pouring in a ceaseless hail of lead. Then the smoke would settle down; a wall of gray, pierced and slashed by yellow flame, would rise before the regiments. Avery, squatting behind a stump, was just aiming his musket when a bullet hit his shelter, sending chips of wood flying in his face. He went white with fright, but fired his gun. Collins was shot through the body, and fell mortally wounded. A detachment opened upon the little band from a hill close on their right. At first it was thought to be Company A, mistaking Company C for the enemy, but it soon became apparent that Company A had retreated and their places been taken by the Confederates. While ascending the hill, heaving firing had been heard over by the church where the other companies had bivouacked, but this had now ceased, and all was still save where on the hill Company C withstood the Rebel Army. The men dropped oftener now. Jones received a ball through the lungs and fell severely wounded; Sergt. Morey was struck by a ball on the side of the head, cutting through the flesh but not injuring the skull; Noble, of Bowling Green, received a flesh wound in the leg; Claghorn had the face of his thumb shot away; Stephen Cole had a slight flesh wound in the thigh. Lieut. Cross was hit in the left arm, wounding him severely. He cried out, "Boys, I'm hit; but fire away, don't mind me." Sergt. Orton,

while stepping from behind a tree to fire, was shot through the thigh, and fell, dangerously though not mortally wounded. He shouted to Captain Shurtleff that the enemy were coming over the hill to the right. Shurtleff stepped out from behind the tree which a minute before had sheltered Orton. A volley of bullets whizzed by him on every side; one passed through his blouse. But the brief glance was enough. On an eminence to the right was a detachment of the enemy who were advancing, firing as they came. The position was now well nigh untenable. Advancing on their front was one regiment; on the right another, together with a battery of artillery; still another over on the left at the corners cutting off retreat by the road; and several companies over by the church to the left of their rear. They were nearly surrounded. The rest of the 7th Ohio had retreated, and were entirely separated from Company C, who were keeping back a full regiment commanded by Col. Heath, an old army officer. In a moment more the position would be swept by the cannon of the foe. Shurtleff turned to Sergt. Parmenter, whom he considered the best drilled soldier in the Company, and one of the best in camp. "Sergeant, the enemy are pressing upon our right flank, the regiment I think must be retreating, what do you advise, shall we hold our position and all die, or shall we retreat?" Parmenter was as cool as though at drill. "I see no advantage, Captain, in fighting so strong a force." He spoke very calmly. Without waiting longer, Capt. Shurtleff ordered a retreat. "So great was the din, and so much were the boys interested in what was going on, that after the captain had started with most of the Company,"¹⁵ Parmenter had to run over to the left and call several by name to induce them to leave. They retreated in good order through the woods to the rear. The enemy supposing they had gone to the left fired several rounds of grape-shot in that direction, wounding slightly one of their own men.

On the field of battle were left Cross, Orton, Jeakins, Sheldon, Collins and Jones, all severely wounded. The Company, with Shurtleff and Parmenter at the head, wandered for some hours in the woods. At length about noon (the Company retreated into the woods about 6 A. M.), while going along single file up a moderate hill, they came suddenly upon half a regi-

ment of the enemy, and were within four paces of them before they made them out. They were ordered to surrender. After parleying a sufficient length of time to enable those of Company C hidden by the hill to escape, Capt. Shurtleff surrendered with 14 of his Company. The men not captured made their way back to the main Union Army as best they could. They suffered extreme hardship and in spite of the greatest carefulness, some of them were taken prisoner.

Joseph Collins died the day after the battle. He was buried on the field. Burford Jeakins lived until 10 o'clock Sunday evening, Sept. 22d., when he, too, passed away. Lieut. Cross, Sergt. Orton, Sheldon, and L. J. Jones were recaptured by Gen. Rosecrans in the battle at Carnifex Ferry, Sept. 10.

After the stragglers had all come into camp, it appeared that 29 of Company C had been taken prisoner. In the entire Union forces engaged in this battle 15 were killed and 50 wounded, the latter with some 30 others falling into the enemy's hands. The Confederates had in the action about 4,000 men. They claim a loss of 125. (13); (27); (4p); (4q); (18a); (21); (29: 78-97); (15); (7: 12-14); (23: 164).

The "Dispatch", a Richmond newspaper, in its Sept. 7th issue, had the following letter from a correspondent with Floyd's Command. It is dated Camp Gauley, Floyd's Brigade, Aug. 28, 1861. "On yesterday, I attended one of our Yankee captain prisoners to the hospital to see the wounded men. It is on the opposite side of the Gauley, distant, two miles. His meeting with his men was quite affecting. Shaking them by the hand, he said he was glad to see them, 'under any circumstances.' He was a tutor in one of the Ohio colleges, and among the most dangerously wounded were four of his old scholars. One of them died before we left, and some of the rest will".

The prisoners not in the hospital were put in an enclosure of rails, like so many cattle. August 28th, the day of their College Commencement, officers tied their arms preparatory to the journey to a southern prison. They were poorly fed and suffered from exposure. They were marched on foot, and transported by rail to Richmond, Virginia. Many of their guards wanted nothing better than a chance to shoot the Oberlin men.

As Mr. Stephen Cole expresses it, "They thought we had horns, and hair on our teeth." But before the journey was completed these guards were the best of friends with their prisoners. They admitted they did not know what the principle was for which they were fighting. All they knew was what their politicians had told them, and that the Northerners were invading their land.

In Richmond they were put in tobacco houses where they remained until they were taken to more Southern prisons. A good number of the Oberlin boys were sent to Parish Prison, New Orleans.

It is interesting to note the difference in account of the version in Parmenter's diary, and that in a New Orleans newspaper, concerning the entrance of the Union prisoners into New Orleans. Sergt. Parmenter writes, and we can easily believe his story to be the true one: "At the depot was a battalion of soldiers, a large force of police, and an endless crowd of people. We were mustered from the cars and arranged in fours, a rank of soldiers marching each side of us. In advance was a troop of cavalry, followed by a body of infantry. In the rear was a large force of infantry. Outside of the soldiers were the police. In this order they marched us under the broiling sun, through a number of the principal streets, so as to give the immense crowds a chance to look at us. I noticed in passing, the famous St. Charles Hotel and other buildings. The soldiers who escorted us were men finely uniformed and well drilled, in fact the best appearing body of soldiers I had seen in the Confederacy. There was a good deal of hurraing and jeering at us. Many looked at us as the most arrant cowards, and thought they could see in our features marks of all kinds of depravity. One Texas ranger remarked that he could whip fifty such as we were. Before we reached our destination we were heartily tired of the turn out. After some time we approached a large grey building with grates to the windows which we soon learned was the famous Parish Prison, our destination. We were marched in through a grated door, into a vestibule, thence through a door with 'Assault and Battery' over it, into a yard about 100 feet long by 25 feet wide. At one end was

an apartment labelled 'Kitchen'; in another was a hydrant and tank. In three sides were galleries, 3 stories high, opening into cells. The fourth side is a wall as high as the building. So we seem to be in a pit, the only opening being at the top. We were soon sent to our cells. In the one I occupy, there are 24. The size of it is about 12 x 18 feet. There are two little semi-circular ventilators (grated), and a grated hole in the heavy door. The walls are solid, apparently stone." In this place the men remained from Oct. 1, 1861, to Feb., 1862, when they were removed to Salisbury, N. C., for exchange.

Let us now consider the viewpoint of the people of New Orleans as expressed in one of their papers, a clipping of which was brought North in Parmenter's pocket-book after his death, when his belongings were carried to his relatives. The item in brief is the following: An enormous crowd waited all morning at the depot to see the arrival of the Yankee prisoners. At last a train drew in. Among the ordinary passengers were several Confederate soldiers in uniform. The crowd took these to be the guard, and the passengers to be the prisoners. They began, forthwith, to yell at the passengers and to make uncomplimentary remarks about their looks. They soon learned, however, that this train contained entirely Southern people and that their remarks had been wasted on their own partisans. As the morning wore on some bales of cotton caught fire, the crowd not being careful where they threw their cigars. The fire department was called, but before they arrived the fire was extinguished. They waited with the others to see the prisoners, and thus helped swell the numbers of the crowd. The special train arrived about noon; and under a heavy guard the Yankees were marched through the streets to the prison. On their debarkation from the train, the people crowded forward to get a glimpse of these curious men. The crush became terrific. The newspaper states that "Numerous hoops exploded" in the jam. It further says that as the Yankees passed, a silent decorum was maintained by the onlookers. This last is somewhat different from the account given in Parmenter's diary. It illustrates, however, the difference in the point of view between the spectator and the captive.

While in Parish Prison the men were not half fed. They were so crowded in their cells (where they were locked during the night, in the day they were allowed in the court), that they had to lie spoon fashion. There were hardly any blankets among them, and their bodies became nearly raw from lying on the hard floor. In the morning besides washing in the tank in the yard, one of the necessary things to do, was to turn one's clothes inside out and kill the vermin which had collected since a like operation the day before. The surroundings were unhealthy. Parmenter died of typhoid fever, and was buried in the cemetery of St. Vincent de Paul in New Orleans.

While in Parish Prison the Oberlin boys helped edit a paper. They wrote on any piece of paper they could find, then these slips were kept after being read, and on being restored to freedom they were published in a book, called "The Stars and Stripes", which was the name it bore while only written on fragments of paper. It was published in the prison weekly. The organization getting this paper out was the society of the "Union Lyceum of Parish Prison, New Orleans". This society held debates. These debates were on subjects such as "Resolved, That the present war will be ended by the Spring of 1862." In the Nov. 28, 1861, issue, we find this announcement: "There will be a prayer-meeting in cell No. 4 on Sunday A. M., at 9 o'clock; and in cell No. 2 Wednesday at 2 P. M. A Bible-class is held in cell No. 8 each Sunday at 1 o'clock P. M. All are invited to attend." We read in a later number, "One of the most beautiful sights we have ever witnessed is to be seen every Sunday morning in one of the cells of this prison where formerly nothing but blasphemy and vileness ascended and reached the ears of the Recording Angel; now in this place a band of devoted disciples of Christ meet and adore their Redeemer where the name of the Deity is only mentioned with reverence and love."

We thus see that even in prison, Oberlin did not cease in its works of good to her fellow men.

Some of the Oberlin men studied French, German, etc., from books which they had been able to secure. They made bone ornaments for which the more wealthy Southerners paid

a high price. Military companies were formed to give the men exercise.

The heading of the "Stars and Stripes", in one of the issues is the following: "The Stars and Stripes. A Weekly Publication Devoted to Literature, Science, the Arts, and General Intelligence. Published every Thursday in the Parish Prison, New Orleans. Price, Attention."

On May 21st, at Salisbury, N. C., they were paroled, promising not to fight against the Confederacy in any way whatsoever until they had been exchanged. The war went on and it was not long before these men had been exchanged and joined their Company or one in some other regiment. In the fighting that ensued Company C was ever in the fiercest of the action, always bearing itself with marked credit.

Let us take a look at what was transpiring in Oberlin while her boys were engaged in the desperate struggle with Slavery.

The first war funeral in Oberlin was for a member of the class of '65. His class-mates, such as were there, sat in a body behind the mourners; and his intended bride, in deep mourning, sat with the family. In the next few years, death was to be a not unfrequent visitor to the quiet town.

The girls of the town and college, as well as the older ladies, did their share towards the winning of the conflict. They made woolen socks, in the toe of each of which they tucked a piece of paper bearing the name, address and some message to the boys so far away.⁶ They also scraped lint for the wounded, of whom there were far too many.

One day while the ladies were thus working in the Chapel, a great commotion suddenly started out of doors. It was the only mob that Oberlin has ever seen. A man shouted, "Hurrah, for Jeff Davis". He was seized. A crowd sprang up from no-where. A rope was called for, but fortunately for him, a flag was brought instead. He was made to carry the flag, and hurrah for Lincoln, much to the delight of the crowd.⁶

The girls of those days had privileges such as have never been granted before or since. There were nights when not only the 7 o'clock rule was suspended but 10 o'clock had no meaning to them; when great mass-meetings in the First Church or

demonstrations in "Tappan Hall Yard", held the crowds till near mid-night.⁹

While these events were occurring in Oberlin, Company C was rapidly becoming a veteran body of troops. Among the battles in which they took part are Winchester, Port Republic, Cedar Mountain, Chancellorsville, Antietam, Gettysburg, Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge, Ringgold, and Resaca. (27). During these three years 150 *students* were at various times members of this Company. (23: 167). Of these only three died of disease; two of them of typhoid fever in Parish Prison, New Orleans. Twenty-eight fell in battle and 15 were discharged on account of serious wounds. It was their temperate habits and upright lives that kept them so free from the ravages of disease. They remained in action as well as in name throughout the entire war, "The Praying Company". The history of this company in summary is this: "The whole number of names on the three-months and three years rolls, is 179. The number on the three years roll, is 148. The Company marched 2,400 miles, and traveled by rail and steamers 4,800 miles. It encamped 194 times. Thirty-one men lost their lives by battle, 7 by disease and one was drowned." (7: 83). This death by drowning was especially sad. Trembley, Company C, had fought in every battle, except one, in which his regiment had been engaged, and had suffered no harm. He was on his way home. He had written to his mother telling her to worry no more, for their fighting was all over, and he would soon be with her at home. A few miles below Cincinnati, he slipped on the deck of the steamer, fell into the river and was drowned. His comrades recovered the body and bore it to his mother. (23: 172).

Others beside those in Company C. went from Oberlin and did their full share in the war. A company from Oberlin joined the 41st Ohio Volunteer Infantry; and about this same time, quite a number of Oberlin townsmen and students entered the Second Ohio Cavalry. Among these men was A. B. Nettleton. He started as a private, rose to the command of his regiment, and helped win the battle of Five Forks.

In 1862, another company went from Oberlin. They joined the 103d O. V. I. This same year, when Kirby Smith threatened

Cincinnati, nearly all the college students who were able to bear arms, with many of the Preparatory students and citizens of the town, marched on a few hours' notice to the defense of the city. When the peril had passed they returned to Oberlin. The year that Gen. Banks was driven down the Valley and Washington was in danger, a company went directly from Oberlin to the scene of action. They had several skirmishes, and at last were included in the surrender of Gen. Miles at Harper's Ferry.

In 1864, when Grant was smashing his way toward Richmond, Oberlin sent a second Company C into the field. They formed part of the 150th Regiment of National Guards. They were almost the only company of the National Guards in Virginia who were under fire, for the Oberlin Company helped repel Gen. Early's attack upon the fortifications near Washington. Besides these companies which went from Oberlin, every call for troops was answered by students and citizens. They went as privates and as officers. The alumni of the college enlisted from all over the land. They served as officers, chaplains, and privates. One, J. D. Cox, rose to the rank of Major General.

During 1861, the first year of the war, out of 166 men in the four college classes, 100, or 60%, were in the army as soldiers. Of alumni and undergraduates 197 were in the army. Among these were two Major-Generals, one Brig.-General, ten colonels, and officers of lower rank in larger proportion. Taking graduates, undergraduates, and preparatory, it is estimated that at least 850 Oberlin College and Academy men served at one time or another in the army.

Of those who went from Oberlin, about one in every ten never returned.

We have spoken of Trembley's death as he was nearing Cincinnati on his journey home. Another loss at the final moment should be mentioned. It is that of Tenney, of the Second Ohio Cavalry, who was killed by almost the last shell that exploded in the vicinity of Richmond. (27); (23: 172).

The Chapel bell tolled ceaselessly. Hour after hour, hour after hour, it sent its solemn message out over the town. The flag on the corner was at half mast. Still the bell tolled on, and

the people of Oberlin with one accord, unsummoned, gathered at the Church to weep and pray. Lincoln was dead.⁶

And now the War was over. The armies disbanded. The men came home.

At Oberlin the number who returned were pitifully few compared to those who had gone, and of these few many were maimed and crippled for life. But they did not complain; they had saved the Union; they had freed the slave, and in so doing, had completed Oberlin's part in the Slavery Conflict.

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