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The Faurot Failure at Lima

By Harvey S. Ford

Nearly sixty years have passed since the collapse of the complicated financial empire created by B. C. Faurot, and only those with very long memories can still recall it. Yet it was an event of considerable importance in Lima, northwestern Ohio, and even perhaps, in the country as a whole. But more than this, Faurot's story is a reminder that fortunes were not as easily made in the post-Civil War era as we now like to think, and that for every one who succeeded and who is remembered today there were a great many more who failed and were quickly forgotten.

Benjamin C. Faurot was born on a farm in New York state on October 29, 1829. His grandfather had emigrated from France in the eighteenth century: his father, David Faurot, was born in Jersey City in 1799, while his mother was of German extraction.[1] David Faurot moved his family to Ohio while his son Ben was still a child, and settled first in Marion county and then in Kenton in Hardin county. Young Ben Faurot's schooling ended at the early age of 7, and it was a tradition that he earned his own living from that time onward. After a boyhood on the farm Faurot worked as a teamster hauling gravel in Hardin county; then, in the early 1850's, when the Pennsylvania Railroad's Fort Wayne and Chicago line was building through Lima, Faurot moved there. Lima at that time was a tiny village, quite unaware that it had acquired a new citizen who was to transform it into a booming industrial town.

Faurot soon gave up hauling gravel to run a livery stable, at which he appears to have prospered. When the Civil War broke out Faurot got a government contract to supply horses and mules for the army, and the profits from this venture formed the base from which his fortune was to grow and expand. Five years after the war Faurot put his accumulated capital to work and organized the Lima Paper Mills Co. for the manufacture of straw board and egg cases. The company was very successful, and soon came to be one of Lima's largest employers: at one time Faurot was president of the national association of straw board manufacturers.

Using the paper mill as a solid foundation, Faurot rapidly created a network of important business organizations in all of which he was the key figure. He acquired the Lima street railway system soon after it was built in 1878, and electrified it as early as 1885, so that Lima was one of the first towns in the country to enjoy this advantage. In 1882 he organized the Globe Machine Works, Inc., for the manufacture of portable engines. Faurot had a great deal to do with bringing the Erie Railroad to Lima, and he was also instrumental in bringing to the city the repair shops of the Lake Erie and Western (now the Nickel Plate), which made an important addition to the regular employment available in Lima.[2]

In 1865 Faurot was one of the incorporators of the National Deposit Bank in Lima. Later this institution became the Allen County Bank, and by 1880 Faurot was its president. On January 16, 1883 the latter was reorganized as the Lima National Bank, with Faurot remaining as president, and with an original capital of $100,000, which was afterwards increased to $200,000. This bank played an important role in the financing of Faurot's business ventures.[3]

On May 2, 1881 work was begun on a project which Faurot had been considering for two years: the building of the Faurot block. This five-story structure faced on High and Main streets and contained many offices, eight stores, the Lima National Bank, a music hall, and the Faurot Opera House. It was completed in 1882, at a cost of $225,000: within a few years its value rose to $300,000. It was said to be "a composition of the French Renaissance and Queen Ann styles of architecture, Americanized," and its outstanding feature was the elegant and ornate Faurot Opera House. Of the latter it was maintained that there was but one opera house equal to it in all Ohio: it was widely thought "to have been the finest between New York and Denver." Adjacent to the Faurot block (and originally designed to furnish it with light) its owner built the first electric power plant in Lima.[4]

Perhaps Faurot's greatest contribution to the future prosperity of Lima came as the result of a fortunate accident. In the spring of 1885 Faurot began drilling for water on his paper mill property, and he also had some hope of finding gas, which had been recently discovered in Findlay. On May 9, 1885, at a depth of 1251 feet, Faurot struck oil. At 1272 feet the well was shot: it developed into a pumper which produced about 25 barrels a day. Out of this modest beginning grew a spectacular boom,

and the area was soon thronged with oilmen from the western Pennsylvania fields. By October 1, 1886 the Lima field had become the largest in the United States in volume of production, and by the spring of the next year it was considered to be the largest in the world. There were 70 wells within the city limits of Lima alone, and about 500 in the whole field, with a volume of production approximating 20,000 barrels a day. With the oil rush came refineries, pipe line companies, establishments for the manufacture of oil well machinery, and other enterprises, all of which gave a powerful impetus to the growth of Lima.[5]

While the foregoing by no means exhausts the list of Faurot's interests in Lima, it does give some idea of his contributions to the expansion of the city. Among other things, Faurot planned and designed the Lima public park system, and there seems to be no reason to quarrel with the verdict of one local history:

> *B. C. Faurot in the prime of his vigor and manhood was an heroic figure. To Lima he was not only an aid but a benefactor. Much of his energy, determination and grit have been woven into the growth, development and prosperity of Lima. He could forsee with the eye of the seer, the city's needs in the future.*
>
> *Mr. Faurot was ever ready to give his means and his time for the advancement of the churches of the city as well as the regular business interests. His charity was well known and when the good of Lima was at stake, he could always be relied upon.*[6]

* * *

By the time he was sixty Faurot was a millionaire. He was of small build, about five feet, five inches tall and weighing only one hundred and twenty-five pounds, with the pugnacious and combative temperament that small men sometimes have. He was a staunch Republican and a devout Methodist. He neither smoked nor drank, nor would he permit property which he owned to be used as a saloon. Like most self-made men he had the utmost confidence in himself, and was often impatient of the advice of others, particularly when it ran counter to his own opinions. Lima, which he knew so thoroughly and where his investments had prospered so greatly, was growing too small for him. He decided to branch out into new and larger fields of endeavor.

The new start was made on April 13, 1887, when Faurot incorporated the Columbus, Lima and Northwestern Railway. The capital stock was only $200,000, and the proposed terminals of the railroad were announced as Columbus and Bryan. This, however, was merely the beginning, for in 1888 Faurot sold his paper mill and used the proceeds to increase the scope of his enterprise. On April 23, 1889 the Federal Valley, Floodwood and Columbus Railway Co., the Columbus, Lima and Northwestern Railway Co., and the Columbus and Lake Michigan Railroad Co. were consolidatel and reincorporated as the Columbus, Lima and Milwaukee Railway Co., with a capital stock of $10,000,000. Faurot's scheme was to build a railroad from Columbus to Saugatuck, Michigan, where it would connect with a fleet of railroad car ferries running across Lake Michigan between Saugatuck and Milwaukee. He planned that his new road would tap the coal fields of Ohio and West Virginia and distribute that commodity through Milwaukee into the northwest.

This project was sufficiently ambitious in itself (and, moreover, it aroused the opposition of a fellow Liman, Calvin Brice), but Faurot had even more grandiose plans. He secured a land concession of 2,700,000 acres near Las Palomas (in Chiluahua, south of the New Mexico border and east of El Paso) from the Mexican government, and made a contract to colonize it. He planned to build a railroad into the region, and the colonists were to be Mormons. This put an additional strain upon Faurot's already over-extended credit, and by the autumn of 1890 rumors began to circulate.[7]

On November 22, 1890 E. S. Lacey[8], the comptroller of the currency in Washington (whom the law made responsible for the supervision of the national banks), addressed the following letter to George H. Ford,[9] the national bank examiner for the district which included Lima:

> *Information has reached this office to the effect that B. C. Faurot, president of the Lima National Bank, Lima, Ohio* (*No.* 2859), *has been recently sued in New York by the Chase National Bank of that city, under circumstances which indicate that both Mr. Faurot and his bank are to some extent embarrassed.*
>
> *Please therefore visit No.* 2859 *without delay, and make a thorough examination of its affairs, forwarding a prompt report of same to this office. This bank was last examined by you on September*

27, 1890, *at which time it appeared that the bank held a large amount of doubtful paper, including some* $50,000 *in notes made by farmers and others, representing subscriptions for building a railroad in which Mr. Faurot was interested. The condition of the bank at that time was sharply criticized by this office, and the directors in a reply from them over their individual signatures stated that the objectionable paper had been properly provided for.*

In making these examinations, every possible precaution should be used by you to avoid attracting attention to the bank or exciting any public distrust or apprehension.

The examination was duly made by Ford in the last week of November, and evidently the condition of the Lima National was satisfactory for no further action was taken. There was one curious aftermath. On January 8, 1891 Lacey wrote to Ford that he (Lacey) had heard that Faurot had been showing his (Lacey's) letter of November 22 (ordering an examination of the Lima National) in New York, and asked if Ford still had the letter. Ford still had it, and Faurot wrote to the comptroller that he had never had the letter in question in his possession. Faurot had, however, been exhibiting a memorandum containing a distorted version of Lacey's letter, and he obligingly furnished a copy thereof. Faurot's version made it appear that the Chase National had instigated the comptroller's action, and Faurot's motives in showing this in New York financial circles are obscure, unless possibly he was using it to press a grievance against the Chase bank.

All went well for more than a year, until on February 25, 1892 Lacey telegraphed Ford to go to Lima where, it was reported, Faurot was hard pressed, and had been attempting to raise cash by selling some of the Lima National's assets to other banks in the city. Ford went at once, and on February 27, he drew up a preliminary report for Lacey, containing the ominous opening statement that the bank's "available assets are less than total liabilities." The report continued:

There appears to be a difference of opinion among the bankers here as to value of total assets, and they have decided that they will not take the assets & assume the liabilities. Or in other words they will not assist towards voluntary liquidation.

Nearly all here are of the opinion that the bank can be carried along as it has been for the last year, without danger of suspension, and Mr. Faurot & others interested in the bank ask for more time.

If deposits should remain at present amount, of course this [is] possible, but on further consultation with Dr. Baxter[9] *& others, I am of the opinion that this is very doubtful. To carry the bank along another month or two, & then close, would be an injustice to new creditors & depositors who remain in.*

Of course if Mr. Faurot could have more time & be successful in realizing upon his enterprises all this would be changed.

On Monday, February 29, Ford met with the directors of the Lima National (but not Faurot). The cashier informed them "that the deposits of the bank had decreased over sixteen thousand dollars during the day, and that with the cash on hand at close of banking hours and without obtaining additional funds it would be unwise and imprudent to open bank tomorrow for fear of another heavy call from depositors." The cashier was then authorized to try and sell the notes, commercial paper and other assets of the Lima National to the other banks in town, in order to raise the needed cash. He tried, but the other banks refused to buy.

At 8 a. m. on Tuesday morning March 1, Ford and the Lima National directors met again, and this time Faurot was present.

Mr. Faurot arrived at 8 o'clock, stating again that he had good prospects of soon completing a deal with parties in Chicago. All of which was encouraging but without a considerable amount of ready cash to be placed in bank this morning it was viewed by all that it might be detrimental to the interests of all concerned in the bank to endeavor to open and do business for fear of demands of depositors in excess of cash on hand, and at 9 a. m. Bank Examiner F. took charge of the affairs of the bank.[10]

Ford immediately wired Lacey: "Serious run occurred yesterday afternoon. Convened directors and all banks in Lima who refused to assist. Have with approval of directors closed its doors, and await instructions." Lacey replied: "Remain in charge and in possession of all assets. Change vault combination immediately and permit no interference

with anything belonging to the bank . . . Be circumspect as to your intentions . . . Give out no information."

Some days later Ford made a rather lengthy report on the failure of the Lima National:

In making search for the remote cause of the failure of this bank I find that from the very beginning it has almost constantly violated certain provisions of the National Bank act, and has been the object of severe & well deserved criticisms by the Comptrollers of the Currency since its organization, some of them going so far as to threaten to bring suit to deprive the bank of its franchises, others recommending that it voluntarily withdraw from the system if it had no intention of complying with the law.

The President of the Bank Mr. B. C. Faurot a man of wealth & reputed business sagacity, was largely interested in a number of manfg. enterprises local & foreign and did not hesitate to crowd their paper into the bank with his personal endorsement to almost the entire exclusion of other & legitimate loans. To do this & evade the scrutiny of the Bank Examiner, he resorted to the use of "dummy" paper, i. e. notes of clerks & other employes in the enterprise for large amounts, endorsed by himself & having the appearance of commercial paper.

In 1888 *Mr. Faurot sold his interests in a paper mill here for* $500,000 *cash, which, instead of using to take up liabilities in his own bank he deposited in N. Y. banks, & undertook the building of the Columbus, Lima & Milwaukee Railroad, and also became involved in a colonization & railroad scheme in Mexico. These two ventures exhausted all his own ready means & he again resorted to the use of his own bank, with paper signed by persons interested in said schemes & by the corporations themselves. So that when your present examiner first visited the bank in* 1890, *he found the entire amount of Mr. Faurot's endorsements aggregated* $332,000, *the paper itself being largely of doubtful value.* (*These have been since then very much reduced by Mr. Faurot's efforts & the assistance rendered him by Mr. T. W. Cornell a stockholder*).

Immediate Cause—The condition of Mr. Faurot's ventures gain-

ed notoriety, the depositors lost confidence, deposits decreased. The bank was obliged to rediscount all its good paper, & some that was not good, in order to meet demands of creditors. Mr. Faurot asked other banks in Lima to help him into safe voluntary liquidation. This fact was communicated to the Comptroller of the Currency, who ordered me to give the matter attention. The banks of Lima evinced a willingness & a desire to assist, but upon an inspection of the paper of the Lima National Bank, decided that there was little or no paper upon which they could safely advance money.

On Monday afternoon Feb. 29th a run upon the bank occurred. The result was inevitable and the doors of the bank were announced closed, Tuesday March 1st at 9 a. m.[11]

As of the day of its failure, the capital of the Lima National Bank was $200,000; the surplus and undivided profits totaled $51,234, and other liabilities came to $215,835. It was the fourth largest bank to fail in 1892.[12]

On March 15, 1892 Otho L. Hays was appointed receiver of the Lima National Bank. Ford had in the meantime converted $44,216.31 of the bank's assets into cash, which was deposited with the comptroller of the currency for the benefit of the creditors of the bank. On May 26, 1892, $54,075.92 was paid to creditors of the bank, amounting to 50% of its outstanding debt. Further payments were made, and on November 30, 1892 the sum of $5,322.60 was turned over to the creditors, which erased the debt, principal and interest. The receivership ended on April 12, 1893. Faurot had been able to pay off the bank's creditors by means of a loan of a quarter of a million dollars which he had obtained from a Cleveland bank.[13]

Although Faurot himself had voted to close the bank, its failure left him very bitter, and he came to believe that he had been a victim of a conspiracy. On November 8, 1893, he wrote to Ford as follows:

On the 9th of October, about thirty days ago, I wrote you a letter in which I made some requests of you, such as I had reasons to believe would be [word omitted] and my request granted, but in this it seems that I am mistaken, you do not answer. I had supposed you to be my friend, at least so far as to grant a request where I had

been made a victim, and not only my property seized and spirited away and my business broken up and an effort made to ruin my credit and dishonor me for life; all of this is a fact and you have papers and letters and messages in your possession that you could let me have which would very much assist me in preparing the attack I propose to make for my rights. Now, Mr. Ford, I had hoped that you would do with me in this as you would want me to do with you under like circumstances, but this does not seem to be your aim, as you do not see fit to answer me. I know my rights and I know where I have been wronged and my rights tampered with. I know what a true, good man is, and if there is any one thing I admire in a man it is for him to do as he would be done by. Now in this matter, it seems to me you have not treated me well; let that be as it may, I have asked you for certain things and I want you to come out manly and deny me or send them to me. When you were in trouble over some letters and papers I did not go back on you but I gave you copies and even offered to go to Washington if necessary to help you out.[14]

Now, Mr. Ford I do not propose to allow this Government and its officers to light down on my business and spirit my property away and break up my business and turn it back to me one hundred thousand dollars short, and refuse to make a showing as to what disposition had been made of this property, and tell us "there is what's left, take it, collect it up, disburse it among the stock holders and ask no questions." This is the treatment we are receiving from the hands of this Government and you, as an officer of this Government refuse to give to me such proofs as will help me to get at the facts of one of the most damnable conspiracies that was ever perpetrated upon any set of men on the earth. I do not propose to be bluffed or set down on, but I do propose to have fair play or to pull the sheets off of every man from the Comptroller down to the type writer and let the people know the corruption. I do not propose to have my Bank and business discriminated against as is being done and stand it.

No one knows better than you yourself, taking it for granted that you knew, being the bank examiner, and when you told me about the assets of the First National Bank being worthless and that their capital stock was invested in Lima Natural Gas stocks, which has

become almost entirely worthless all of which you have known for months and almost years, for you to sit down and let those people run is clearly a case of favoritism or neglect of duty. This Bank you know is rotten and has been for years; but you were ready to jump on to a good sound concern and break it up. What do you call this? Please explain. I do not propose to stand still and allow this to be done and not expose those who have had a hand in this business.

You will see by the newspaper clipping that they have found it necessary to throw Baxter overboard and you should not want any better evidence than this that there is something the matter with that bank. They have put a lawyer in as President, another lawyer to do as Brice may direct, and where would the people's interest be if that Bank had a special examination today as it should have. You would find it a rotten case, there is no doubt about, and as an officer of the Government, I call your attention to it, though I am sure you know this as well as I do.[15]

Now, Mr. Ford, I feel that you should have answered me, but there is no law that will make you answer, but I can possibly bring you in and have you make a showing of these matters I have asked copies of you as a special favor.

Ford at once wrote to Washington, and inclosed Faurot's letter. The comptroller replied "that it would be contrary to your instructions and highly improper for you to furnish Mr. Faurot with copies of the official correspondence asked for, and such copies therefore should not be furnished." Apparently Ford was moved by Faurot's desperate plea, however, for he wrote again to Washington. Again he was informed by the comptroller that "correspondence of a similar nature has been going on between Mr. Faurot and this office," and that "that information asked for by Mr. Faurot should under no circumstances be furnished him by you." Finally, Ford was coldly advised to "pay no further attention" to any additional requests that Faurot might make. In any case, the documents which Faurot desired are those upon which this article is based: they would have been of no help to him, for there was, of course, no conspiracy to uncover and expose. Faurot's bank had failed because of his own bad management.

* * *

During the years of financial disaster which followed the failure of the Lima National Bank, Faurot was further embittered by personal tragedy. His wife died in 1895, and was followed in death by one of his two daughters and the husband of the other (he had been vice-president of the bank). His widowed daughter was forced to turn her home into a rooming house; her three sons, all of whom had grown to maturity, succumbed one after another to tuberculosis, and she herself was finally evicted from her home.

Notwithstanding these tragic blows, Faurot continued to struggle to recoup his fortunes. By the end of 1899 he had succeeded in getting the Columbus, Lima and Milwaukee completed between Lima and Defiance, and one of the happiest events of his later years occurred on the day he took a party of friends in a special car over the newly opened line. He was still widely regarded as a rich man,[16] although of course it was common knowledge in financial circles that this was not the case.

Faurot's creditors could not be put off indefinitely, however, and within a few years he was remorselessly stripped of his properties in a series of foreclosures: first the street railway was lost, then the electric power plant, and then, in June, 1902, the Columbus, Lima and Milwaukee.[17] In the latter instance the bondholders first offered Faurot $45,000 for such interest as he had left, but he stubbornly refused the settlement, so the railroad was sold over his head, and he did not receive a penny. In the fall of 1902 the Rockefeller interests (which had come to Lima with the oil boom) took over the Faurot block and opera house.

Early in 1903 the news that Faurot had applied for the postmastership of Lima suddenly awakened the public to the fact that he was bankrupt, and the Cincinnati *Enquirer* sent a reporter to Lima to get the story. The reporter found Faurot to be a pathetic figure. He still kept an office in the Faurot block, and each morning he rode down town in a buggy drawn by Chief, a pet of twenty-two years, arriving at the office promptly at nine. Faurot continued to spend six or seven hours in the office every day, although he had nothing to occupy him but "delving over past plans and future dreams:" at that particular time his hopes were centered around a suit against a Cleveland banker who had been his partner in the Mexican land project, from which he thought to recover some of what he had lost in that ill-starred venture.[18]

Faurot did not get the postmastership: instead, he lost his fine 700 acre farm. Finally, In January, 1904 his handsome house in Lima (later the home of the Lima Club), the last piece of property that still remained to him, was taken by the mortgage in an out-of-court settlement of a law suit. The newspapers reported that Faurot was still in good health, but something more than good health is required to sustain life. Faurot was nearly 75, and he had failed to attain the goals for which he had striven and to which he had devoted all his efforts since childhood: it is not pleasant to think what must have been in Faurot's mind during the last months of his life.

Late in the summer, on September 7, 1904, Benjamin Faurot died in Sandusky, attended in his last moments by his widowed daughter and his sister. Suddenly Lima seemed to remember what it owed to him. His body was returned to the city, where it lay in state all the next day. The funeral was public and held on the afternoon of September 9. The streets were filled with people who watched the funeral procession pass on its way to the cemetery (which Faurot had planned and promoted), and a large crowd collected to hear James M. Brown,[19] a friend of many years' standing, deliver an eloquent eulogy. The newspapers reported that the one-time millionaire had died penniless.[20]

Faurot was the product of an age which we have become accustomed to regard as the era of easily made fortunes. It is true that after the Civil War opportunity was present on a scale never afterwards reproduced, but there never was a time when skill and sagacity were more necessary in business. Venture capital was then more than a phrase used by economists: the risks run by the investor were enormous, and the safeguards were insignificant or non-existent. There was really no adequate standard of measurement upon which to calculate, for the pre-war volume of business had been too small to serve as a useful guide for what was to follow—and who could accurately estimate in advance the productivity of the new machines, the size to which the new markets would attain, or the percentage by which the population would increase? A man would launch an enterprise, succeed, and gain confidence; another would follow, another success, and another addition to his stock of confidence. In the end, self-confidence backed by the hunch—the feeling that a given enterprise was bound to prosper—came to be the main reliance of the entrepeneur as he moved step by step into larger and less familiar fields. Inevitably, of course, most of them were overwhelmed, soon or late, for

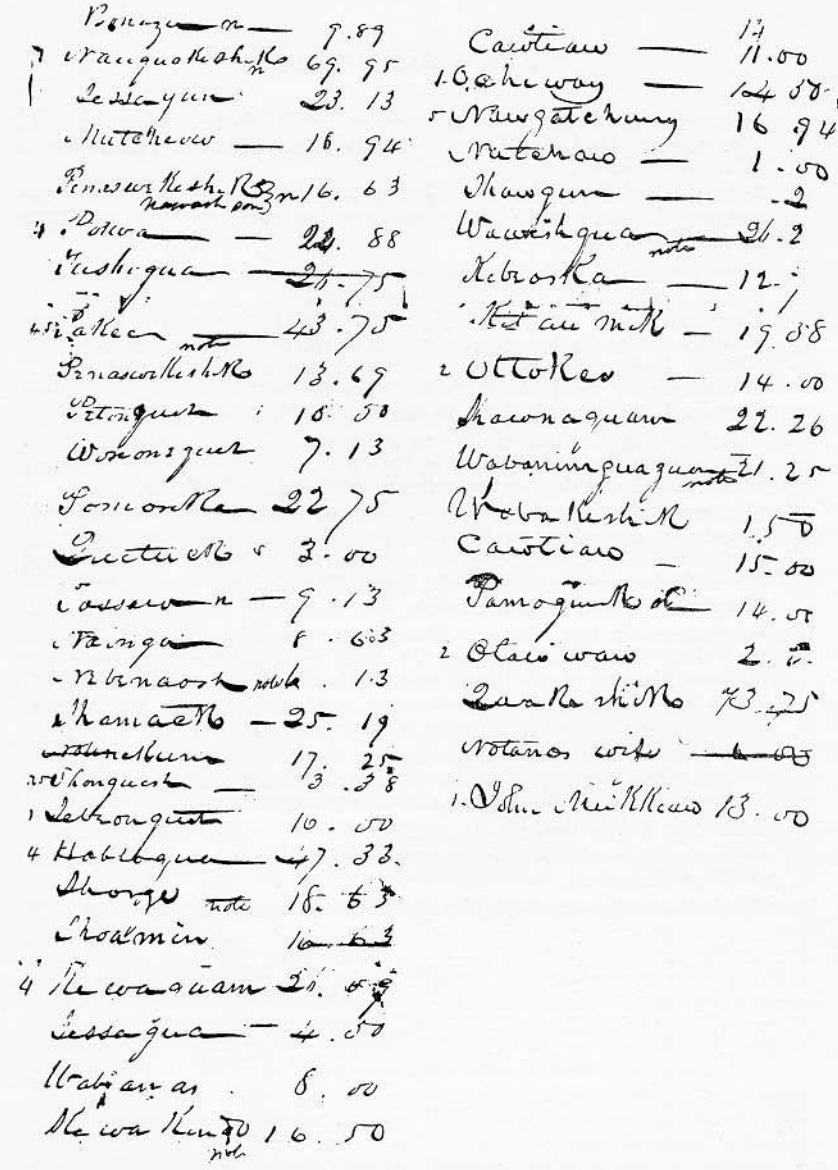
the Faurots far outnumbered the Rockefellers. Yet, though Faurot failed, the street railway, the power plant, the opera house, the paper mill, the oil field, the city of Lima—all these remained, for the failures made their contributions to growth and progress, no less than the successes.

FOOT NOTES

1. MS, dated 1924, by D. J. and J. L. Cable, in the files of the Allen County Historical & Archaeological Society, Lima. The elder Cable (D. J.) was Faurot's attorney for a number of years.
2. It is possible that Faurot engineered the latter deal through Calvin S. Brice, who was his attorney at one time, and who was also deeply involved in the affairs of the Lake Erie and Western. Later, when Faurot himself began to take a hand in railroad promotion, he and Brice came to a parting of the ways, and the two men opposed each other in many epic business battles. Yet, although Faurot was a strong Republican and Brice a Democrat (he was elected chairman of the party's national committee in 1889), I found no evidence that their quarrel originated in politics.
3. *Annual Report of the Comptroller of the Currency,* 1892, p. 66.
4. Cable MS; *The Reporter,* No. 33, October, 1946 (published by the Allen County Historical Society, Lima); *Toledo Bee,* Jan. 15, 1903, p. 1; Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (3 vols., Columbus, 1889-91), Vol. I, p. 244.
5. Howe, Vol. I, p. 246; Cable MS; William Rusler, *A Standard History of Allen County, Ohio* (2 vols., Chicago and New York, 1921), Vol. I, p. 347; *Toledo Bee,* Jan. 12, 1902, p. 17; Raymond Foss Bacon and William Allen Hamor, *The American Petroleum Industry* (2 vols., New York, 1916), Vol. I, p. 231-233.
6. C. C. Miller and S. A. Baxter, *History of Allen County,* quoted in Cable MS.
7. Cable MS; *Toledo Bee,* Jan. 15, 1903, p. 1; *Toledo Blade,* Jan. 23, 1904, p. 4.
8. Edward Samuel Lacey was born in New York state on November 26, 1835, and was brought to Michigan as a boy in 1842. He was educated at Olivet College. He settled in Charlotte, where he founded a bank in 1871, and of which he became the first mayor. He was a Republican in politics, and a delegate to the national convention of 1876 in Cincinnati. He was a member of Congress from Michigan, 1881-85, and was appointed comptroller of the currency by Benjamin Harrison in 1889. Lacey resigned late in 1892 to become president of a Chicago bank, and died October 2, 1916.
9. George Henry Ford was born in Burton, Ohio on March 10, 1842, the second son of Governor Seabury Ford. He graduated from Western Reserve College in 1862, served briefly in the 85th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and left the army to study law in Cleveland. After a year he returned to Burton to enter the Boughton, Ford & Co. bank, and was admitted to the bar. He was a Republican in politics, a delegate to the convention of 1876, and the first mayor of Burton. He served three terms in the Ohio House of Representatives, 1872-76 and 1884-86, and two in the Senate, 1886-90. He was appointed a national bank examiner by Harrison in 1889. Ford died on October 10, 1912. The bulk of this article is based on the correspondence, notes, telegrams (some of which, however, are partly in code) and memoranda relating to the Faurot bank failure which Ford preserved.
9. S. A. Baxter, president of the First National Bank of Lima.
10. The accounts of the two board meetings are taken from the minutes thereof

as recorded (and signed) by the secretary, Jacob Moses. It may be noted that everyone (including Faurot, of course) was agreed that Ford should take over the bank.

11. In his *Annual Report* for 1892 (p. 70) the comptroller simply printed this summary of Ford's as the official report on the causes of the failure of the Lima National Bank.
12. *Annual Report of the Comptroller of the Currency,* 1892, p. 66.
13. *Toledo Bee,* Jan. 15, 1903, p. 1; *Annual Report of the Comptroller of the Currency,* 1892, p. 74; *Annual Report,* 1893, p. 195; *Annual Report,* 1894, p. 287. Curiously, the comptroller stated that the receiver for the Lima National Bank was appointed on March 21; but among Ford's papers is a detailed receipt, dated March 15, 1892, for all the bank's assets as received from Ford, and signed by Hays as receiver.
14. This is, to say the least of it, a rather curious reference to the episode in 1890, when Faurot had exhibited in New York a distorted version of Lacey's letter to Ford, ordering an inspection of the Lima National Bank.
15. This rancorous reference to the First National Bank of Lima was evidently brought on, at least in part, by Faurot's animosity to Brice; but whatever the condition of the First National, to call the Lima National "a good sound concern" was simply to ignore the facts. No one knew better than Faurot how shaky his bank really had been.
16. For instance, in 1901 the *New York Herald* published a list (reprinted in the *Toledo Bee,* April 30, 1901, p. 2) which purported to contain the names of the millionaires of the United States, and Faurot's was among them. This was a newspaper feature story, in which painstaking research had no part, and in Faurot's case, at least, it was wide of the mark.
17. In 1907 steam was abandoned on the line of the Columbus, Lima and Milwaukee, which was acquired by a traction company and became a link connecting Lima and Defiance in an electric interurban system.
18. Cable MS; *Toledo Bee,* Jan. 15, 1903, p. 1.
19. A prominent Toledo attorney, postmaster of the city 1890-94, and the father of Walter F. Brown.
20. *Toledo Blade,* Jan. 23, 1904, p. 9; Sept. 8, 1904, p. 2; Sept. 10, 1904, p. 1.



$69.95 Due G.B. Abell & Co or order Sixty nine 95/100 Dollars at Demand for Value Rec'd

Providence Sept 12 1837

Nawquegashick his X mark.

Witness Wm. Ewing

List of accounts owed by Indians to Abell & Company, 1837 and a note given by Nawquegashick covering his account.
From manuscript collection of Mrs. Olive Ewing Hersh, Toledo, Ohio.

"Easy Payments" Among the Ottawa Indians

By J. W. Cunningham

Reading the advertisements, one might well come to the conclusion that customer credit plans had just lately been invented—and all for the good of the buyer. Unfortunately, history and experience teaches us that the idea is far from new—and that the chief benefits sometimes, if not oftener, accrue to the seller. It is at least significant that these schemes seem always to originate in the mind of someone with something to sell. "Easy Payment" plans are usually "Easy Sales" devices—with the label reversed for obvious psychological reasons.

Following my article on the ghost town of Miltonville in a recent QUARTERLY, I got acquainted with Mrs. Olive Ewing Hersh of 5872 Nebraska Avenue, Toledo, who is a daughter of the William Ewing mentioned in the Miltonville piece. Mrs. Hersh has a lot of historical data in her mind, and a lot of documentary evidence to back it up. A couple of items that particularly interested me are lists of accounts owed by Indians to Abell & Company back in 1837, and a note given by one of the debtors to cover his account.

Mrs. Hersh permitted me to have these papers photostated, and you will find them reproduced herewith. On the back of the list of accounts is the notation: "Indian a/c and notes satisfied. By McElvain." We are told in Dr. Downes' *Canal Days* that John McElvain was a government Indian Agent sent to Maumee in 1837 to supervise the removal of the Ottawas to the far west. Obviously Mr. McElvain was rounding up the debts owed by Indians to white traders, so that they could be paid, and the money deducted from the amount the government was to give the Indians for their lands in this area.

On page 48 in *Canal Days* we find this item, which will explain the procedure, as well as the ease with which the Indians got credit:

Above all, they (the Ottawas) were always in debt to the white

traders. This was because the Indians could not resist the traders' wares, especially skutawabo (whiskey), and because the trader could not resist the temptation of easy sales. The traders knew they could always get paid, either in the form of furs, or by the funds that the government would eventually pay for buying the Indians' land.

You will notice that the note shown was obviously to take up the second item on the list of accounts. On the back of the note is the memo "Big Son note," and figures indicating a $3 payment, leaving a balance of $66.95.

Gypping the Indians seems to have been a favorite pastime with many white traders from the earliest days. We all recall the story of how the Dutch "bought" Manhattan Island in the early 1600's for some $24 worth of trinkets. There is some difference of opinion as to who really did get gypped on that occasion, and I suppose the argument will never be resolved unless a foreign A-bomb should be dropped there sometime.

In another issue I hope to tell you more about Mrs. Hersh's father, William Ewing, including another interesting document or two she has.

When "A" Was For "Amateur"

By Marion S. Revett

That Nineteenth Century Toledo had a running start in the world of arts is evidenced by the long list of teachers who came to visit, offering rather diffidently a few weeks of specialized training—and then simply moved in.

Local amateurs welcomed, with outstretched wallets, the classes in piano and melodeon, guitar and flute and clarionet, violin and organ and zither; lessons in harmony and composition. There were teachers of Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, German, Italian and French. Lessons in Draught playing at the Chess and Checker Club and even a class in the Delsarte System of Physical Culture and Relaxation. There were teachers of the Dance, Elocution and Oratory; Art classes in sketching (with a loan exhibit in 1885 for inspiration, and "a collection of over one thousand paintings for use of the students, as well as the finest art gallery of oil paintings in the West" by 1887).

The first Toledo High School (private) included a class in piano and vocals by Miss Jenks, in 1843. The school was located "in the east end of the Court Room Building, corner Summit and Cherry." Admitting a certain amount of charlatanism among itinerant self-styled "Professors", the great majority were qualified teachers, who, with admirable foresight, brought with them letters of introduction, or obtained local sponsorship, before advertising for pupils. Often teachers in music and voice first gave a public recital to prove at least some acquaintance with their subjects.

Since resident Germans had been playing most of the other musical instruments: viola bass, cello (and certainly all the brasses) for twenty years, it is safe to say there were pupils in these media as well. Yet by 1876, when a Centennial Jubilee was planned, Louis Mathias found it almost impossible to fill a 37-piece orchestra with entirely local talent.

Why, then, had not more of the sheen of instrumental technique clung to the pupils of string, brass and woodwind instruments? As the *Blade*

editor observed (concerning the Jubilee concert): "The obstacles which he (Mathias) met at the outset would have appalled most leaders. He found several good first violinists in the city and reinforced them with two from Detroit. Three very competent second violinists, with one from Detroit. So it went. One good trombonist was known to be in the city, and by a happy accident Mr. Mathias lighted upon another in the person of an Italian fruit dealer. Enough French horns could not be found and parts had to be written for other instruments to make up the deficiency."

(It is said Mathias shut himself up in his studio for four days, to bring forth an arrangement of Dudley Buck's "Centennial Cantata" which could be played by the instrumentalists at his disposal).

"One cello, one double bass, one oboe, one bassoon, two French horns, one trombone and two kettle drums were from Detroit."

In 1879, when Toledo played host to the Second Saengerfest of the Peninsula Saengerbund, with singing groups from eleven cities throughout Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, the 52-piece orchestra of Fred Abell of Detroit had to be employed to furnish the instrumental music.

In 1880, Toledo's Amateur Orchestra of 40 pieces, conducted by H. H. Darby, a Cleveland tenor (another who came for a concert and moved in) was organized. That it had dwindled down to 25 members in 1881 and ceased to exist by 1882, was simply history repeating itself.

For the First June Festival in 1880, which lasted four days, Darby's Forty were ignored and Fred Abell's Detroit Orchestra was again utilized. In 1883 for the six-day Mid-May Carnival, for 1884's six day June Reveille, and for the 1886 Bugle Call Festival, Wolff's Wheeler Opera House orchestra was considered adequate. The local standing of amateur musicians can be summed up with a short picture of the Oratorio Society's final concert of the 1886 season. For a program including Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" with 146 Toledo vocalists Speil's Detroit orchestra was imported and exactly SIX local instrumentalists took part. In 1887 the Oratorio Society's presentation of the "Messiah" included the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

Energetic little string quartets and quintets remained active, down through the years. Occasionally they played in small towns around To-

ledo, but for the most part they upheld the vocal-instrumental programs given at church and benefit concerts.

Only once, in all those years, did a local instrumentalist stray far from home—far enough, that is, to obtain national recognition. JAMES P. LOCKE was an enthusiastic young cornetist, who played at every opportunity in parlor musicales and public entertainments. One morning early in February, 1883, so the story goes, Jimmy awoke to find a cold sore on the right side of his mouth and a playing engagement just forty-eight hours away. With no desire to resign from the program, James tried practising cornet from the left side of his lips. It was awkward at first, threw him off balance, there was lack of control—but when the concert was played, Jimmy was in it. Then it occurred to him that, since he was already proficient as a rightside cornetist, and could improve his left-side playing, why not play duets?

Borrowing a second instrument, and perfecting this new art, his first duet caused something of a sensation in Toledo's amateur musical circles. Encouraged, young Locke ordered a left-hand cornet from the famous Chicago firm of Lyon & Healy. Soon he was playing out of town engagements, and the Pittsburgh "Dispatch" reported:

"The hitherto unknown art of playing on two cornets at once has been accomplished by Mr. James P. Locke, nephew of Petroleum V. Nasby, who lives in Toledo. Mr. Locke places the mouthpiece of each cornet at the corners of his mouth and blows with apparent ease in perfect time and tune the same air on each horn, or he will play the air upon one and the accompaniment on the other."

In 1885, when the Theodore Thomas orchestra played Toledo, Mr. Thomas was invited as guest of honor to a large dinner party, and was asked to hear Jimmy Locke play a duet with his two cornets. After the exhibition, with all eyes on the Maestro, his host asked: "And what, Mr. Thomas, do you think of THAT?" "Well", growled that notably irascible gentleman, "he didn't play it one whit better than ANY two cornetists could have done."

Toledo pianists, for the most part, were satisfied with a few months of European study and a return home, to teach locally. NELLIE LOCKE, sister of James and his accompanist, accepted a teaching position in Bos-

ton. ED HARDIK, who played his first Toledo program in 1853, became Professor of Music at the Monroe, Michigan Academy in 1876. FRED PEASE became Professor of Music in Michigan State Normal College at Ypsilanti.

NELLIE COOK, one of Mathias' most talented pupils, studied piano for six years in Europe: two years with Carl Reinecke, Dr. Oscar Paul and Bruno Zwintscher of Leipsic; one year with Clara Schumann at Frankfort-on-Main, and in 1887, after two years, graduated with diploma from the Imperial Conservatory of Vienna under Professor Epstein. She then spent one year in Paris and Berlin before returning home.

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At a time when Germany and France, and even Russia, endowed State Schools of Music in all branches, including composition, counterpoint and harmony, American public schools were specializing in languages and voice culture. Instrumentalists were strictly the wards of studio teachers or private schools, and except for the pianists, history would seem to indicate that they remained wards. Those same few talented amateur instrumentalists who were active, played with healthy catholicity in church programs all over the city.

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A great deal of credit must go to the conscientious, patient and persevering professionals who "moved in." Among the piano teachers, not the greatest, perhaps, but certainly one of the most enthusiastic, was WILLIAM WILLING. Coming to Toledo from Erie, Pennsylvania in 1876, Professor Willing was instrumental in organizing Saturday night concerts in Gymnasium Hall. He loved composing "a little piece" for whatever civic cause was at the moment being advanced, and his unselfish efforts in local benefits, his gentle encouragement of pupils, made him one of the most popular teachers in the city. In the nine years he lived here, Professor Willing's friends and pupils tendered him two "benefits"—those happy amateur affairs when all one's well-wishers turned out to perform as a token of esteem. When Professor Willing passed away, the *Blade* wrote, on Dec. 8, 1887: "A Wandering Minstrel—Prof. Willie Willing is dead . . . The music for which he was famous will never be forgotten by the citizens of Toledo."

For professional greatness, there is to this day divided opinion. Louis Mathias, it is agreed, was the Grand Old Man of Toledo music. ARTHUR KORTHEURER, son of a minister who was also a musician and teacher of history in Europe and America, was born in Terre Haute, Indiana in 1863 and made a concert tour at the age of fourteen, throughout Ohio and Indiana. At sixteen he graduated from Bucyrus (Ohio) High School and went to Leipsic for four years of study in piano, theory, choral and orchestra conducting. At 20 he conducted the Euterpe Opera Company for a year and in 1884 came to Toledo to teach music at Smead Ladies Seminary. In 1887 he returned to Germany for further study in orchestration. During the 1890's he organized the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, and it has been said that if he had at any time, cared to discontinue his music, he could have become a nationally famous lecturer.

It is JOHN EMIL ECKER, however, who seems to have made the most lasting impression as musician and teacher. Born in Upper Austria in 1853, he was brought to America by his family in 1857. Settling in Indiana, John Emil began music studies with his father at the age of six and discontinued at ten. By the time he was 19, he was teaching German in the public schools and it was not until he had become 29 years old that he was able to return to Europe and continue his interrupted musical studies. After four years at the Royal Conservatory at Leipsic, he graduated with a "Directorial Zeugniss." Returning to Toledo, he became the protege of both Professor S. C. Bennett and Professor W. A. Ogden, the latter taking him to Sedalia, Mo. in 1887 for two months as assistant Conductor of the Normal School of Music there. His work as a composer received early recognition when his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra was given in 1886 at the Gewandhaussaal in Leipsic.

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It was the Vocalists, bless 'em, who travelled farthest and at least in quantity, if not always in quality, made the list of Nineteenth Century Toledo's exports quite an impressive one. Those singers who, as one observer has remarked, "never get any pay, anyway," were perfectly content to rehearse, reorganize and rehearse under the direction of anyone with the gumption to lead them—and thus saved the day for local musical history!

Until 1870, the burden of local music and drama had been carried by the Germans. With the opening of the Wheeler Opera House, and

its well balanced menus of comedy, tragedy, music and operettas, every local amateur who could carry a tune or memorize a line, gesture gracefully and emote in a mildly authentic mood, became stage-struck. In a very rash of exhibition, drama clubs sprang up, from the Temperance Union Club with "Ten Nights In A Barroom" and "The Drunkard", a French group, the G.A.R. with "Drummer Boy of Shiloh" and "Union Spy", to young ladies and gentlemen of society who formed their own group called the "Star Wanos" and gave parlor entertainments. They became so good that they graduated to the stage of Wheelers. Their enthusiasm lasted eight years. Another group was the Dickens Drama Club, which with various changes in name and personnel, survived six years. Those who could sing were learning a sense of timing, acquiring a stage presence which their work in church choirs and home entertainments could never have given them.

ANNIE V. RUTHERFORD was perhaps the first of Toledo's female amateur talent to step into the national picture. After singing in local groups for two years, she was invited to sing in the choir of one of Philadelphia's largest churches. Within six months, she was hired to sing the "Buttercup" role in the first company of "H M S Pinafore" at the Broadway Theater, N. Y. in 1879. In 1880 she carried the same role in Haverly's Church Choir "Pinafore" Company, out of Chicago. Two years later, travelling with the Maria Litta Concert group, she received from the St. Louis "Globe" this encouragement: "The rising contralto, who is acknowledged to be one of the most promising contraltos in the country."

In 1879 DIGBY BELL and CHARLES THOMPSON were also in road companies of "Pinafore"—that fabulous "Oklahoma" of the past century which at one time had eighteen companies on tour. Bell later joined the McCaull Opera Company, and Thompson was hired at $1,000 a year as leading tenor in the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. In 1886 he joined the American Opera Company, with Theodore Thomas.

The most talented of all these young people, was CHARLES O. BASSETT, born in Toledo in 1859. In his 'teens, he studied piano and played Chopin at every opportunity. Then his voice changed and he found himself possessed of a pure tenor which, with proper training, he was told "might amount to something." Studying locally for the next two years, he sang with the Toledo Vocal Society. In 1881 he moved to De-

troit for another year of study and then went to Europe. In Milan he made his debut in "Faust" and following the trend of the day, changed his name, for a short time at least, to "Carlo Bassetti". After five years in Europe, Bassett returned to America and became leading tenor with the newly organized American Opera Company, returning overseas each summer to study additional roles for the coming season.

In 1887, when the Wilbur Opera Company played a summer season of operettas at the Presque Isle Opera House, Toledo youngsters flocked to the stage door for chorus work, and several continued with the company as it went on tour. ANNIE SHARPE, who had changed her name to "Dolly Clarke" and was billed with the Corrine Comic Opera Company as "the American Langtry", left the cast at Toledo to join Wilbur. ANNIE and BESSIE OESTERMAN were also with Wilbur, as was WILL BROWN. Annie changed her name to Anne Belmont and played several successful seasons in New York, including one with Joseph Jefferson. Bessie left Wilbur to play a season with Billy Barry & Hugh Fay, those great Irish comedians of the 1880's.

Will Brown later joined the nationally known Boston Ideals Opera Company. CARL HIGH travelled with the McCollin Opera Company.

GENEVRA JOHNSTON-BISHOP, who as Neva Johnston had sung soprano leads in church and benefit concerts for a number of years, moved to Chicago for further study, and in the opening concert of the Artist's Club there, in 1887, the Chicago "Journal" reported: "She is rapidly becoming one of the most popular singers in the city . . . her voice is full and very sweet in quality; intonation true and style charmingly simple and unaffected. She understands how to hold a note without torturing ones' ears with the everlasting vibrato, she enunciates her words so clearly one can understand without aid of libretto exactly what she is singing about—a virtue very rarely met with on concert stage."

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Full scale opera had been wisely ignored as a form of entertainment by local amateurs, since the 1850's when the German Philodramatics had made some attempt at serious portrayals of "Othello", "William Tell" and "Der Freischutz". In 1873 the Mendelssohn Union had given a series of four operas, concluding with "Der Freischutz"; but they also concluded $600.00 in debt, and that ended opera in Toledo for many

years. In 1877, an amateur group had produced "L'Africaine" but were wary enough to advertise it as "burlesqued", thereby saving the reviewer the effort.

It was an easterner named S. C. Bennett, however, who first made a whole-hearted endeavor toward training localities in this form of the drama. He had come to Toledo in 1881 as Supervisor of Music in the public schools. Within a few months of his arrival, he had re-organized the old Choral Union into the Toledo Musical Society, and during the next five years continued teaching music in the schools, conducting the Musical Society which had, in 1885, become the Oratorio Society, and was leading Trinity Church's choir as well. In 1886 he announced a tentative program of opera for the coming season and brought to Toledo two of his New York pupils: Ivan Morawski and ex-Toledoan Charles H. Thompson, for the leads in "La Somnambula". Their second opera, "Fra Diavolo" was previewed at Fremont, and, preceding its Toledo engagement, Bennett hit upon something new in advertising. He ordered printed the full story of "Diavolo" in the form of handbills and distributed them all over town, to whet interest in the coming performance. "Pirates of Penzance" and "Bohemian Girl" concluded the season.

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Just names, in the year 1951, long since passed away and many forgotten—but for the record, these talented and ambitious amateurs should be placed in local history as pioneers in Toledo's music and recreation.

With October, 1952, marking a Centennial of musical progress which began with the coming of Louis Mathias, one could hope that Toledo might AGAIN produce a Festival of music and drama, with accent on "Amateur", in that early spirit of generosity to the community as a whole.

Midwestern: The Founding of Oberlin (1)

By Alfred Vance Churchill

1. *"This Perishing World"*

The decade of 1830-40, justly considered one of the most important periods in our country's history as regards material development, was characterized by gross ignorance, immorality and lawlessness. Conditions in the East were bad enough but on the frontier and in the newer parts of the West, where the settlement of the land was proceeding with inconceivable rapidity, they were infinitely worse. The struggle for bare existence and the long exile and isolation from the influences of their former homes had debased the people and lowered their standards and ideals of life.

The lack of educational advantages was appalling. Schools were pitiably insufficient in number, and where schools existed it was next to impossible to get good teachers. The new generation was growing up in ignorance.

Disregard for decency and order was common throughout the land. Even in Massachusetts, a state justly proud of its educational system, over three hundred schools were broken up in 1837 alone because the teachers could not keep order. In New England the church and the schoolhouse had been traditionally the first care in every new community. But in the West, at this period, men had become so mercenary that half the time they refused to pay out money for a school-house, not to mention a living wage for a teacher.

Drunkenness was frightfully common. Liquor was served at cornhuskings, house—and barn—raisings, marriages and even funerals—not innocent beers and light wines, be it understood, but hard liquors—rum in the East, whiskey in the West and South.

Educational institutions were cursed with drunkenness. According to the testimony of Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, a tutor at Harvard in 1829, "the habits of the students were rude and outrageous involving not only large destruction of property, but peril of life—as, for instance, the blowing up of public rooms in inhabited buildings—were occurring every year." . . . "The entire Common . . . was completely covered, on Commencement Day and the night preceding and following it, with drinking stands, dancing booths, mountebank shows and gambling tables; and I have never heard such a horrid din, tumult, and jargon of oath, shout, scream, fiddle, quarreling and drunkenness as on those two nights."

In 1834, for eight weeks, "rioting was incessant, the breaking of windows and smashing of furniture continued . . . the University work was practically discontinued—" There was a change for the better under President Quincy, but even so, according to Francis Parkman (Harvard '44) habitual and excessive drunkenness must have been common in his time. (Quoted from A. S. Pier's *Story of Harvard.*) If such things could be in an educational center of the enlightened East, it is not difficult to guess at conditions in the rude West.

The clergy themselves set a bad example. The parson making a pastoral visit was offered his glass of rum as a matter of course. At the ordination of a minister the congregation provided enough liquor for a merry feast. The era of the great temperance movements was not yet. When we reflect on the abuse of alcohol in the 'thirties, we can understand that these were bound to come, and can almost forgive the excesses of temperance reformers of a later time; for the pendulum, by every law, was bound to swing too far.

The traditional religion had greatly declined in power throughout the country. Beard writes of this period that "the old Puritan fervor had long been dying." At the time of the Revolutionary War some of our ablest men had abandoned the belief in revealed religion and had turned to Deism,—Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, for example, Paine, John Adams and many others. At that time and in the years following, English rationalism, reaching us by way of France, made further inroads on the "orthodox faith." Meanwhile an intellectual elite were building up, in the East, the species of "heresy" known as Unitarianism.

The good that was in these movements was not for our people—not

at that time and in that form. The experience that had wrought on the minds of men like Voltaire and Rousseau, resulting in a cataclysm in which monarchy and church were alike violently dethroned, had not been our experiences. Our mental and spiritual growth had to be a gradual evolution in harmony with our own temperament and history. Most of our scholars, educators and preachers were professing Christians, descended from a score of generations of Protestant Christian believers. For these reasons French thought failed to acquire a firm hold on us, and, with the revolting excesses of the Reign of Terror, there came a definite reaction against it. It is true that individuals here and there professed adherence to Rationalism and Deism, while "progressive" clubs, in various centers, and in some colleges, burnt Bibles and indulged in other childish antics. Yale, for example, was full of amateur skeptics. But, in general, skepticism at that time was a pretty superficial affair.

> *"Nothing is good for a nation," says Goethe, (to Eckermann in* 1824) *"but that which arises from its own core and its own general wants, without apish imitation of another; since what to one race of people, of a certain age, is nutriment, may prove poison for another. All endeavors to introduce any foreign innovation, the necessity for which is not rooted in the core of the nation itself, are therefore foolish; and all premeditated revolutions of the kind are unsuccessful, for they are without God, who keeps aloof from all such bungling. If, however, there exists an actual necessity for a great reform amongst a people, God is with it, and it prospers. He was visibly with Christ and his first adherents; for the appearance of the new doctrine of love was a necessity to the people. He was also visibly with Luther; for the purification of the doctrine corrupted by the priests was no less a necessity."*

In the West the weakness of the church was due to zealous ignorance rather than unbelief. Illiterate and self-constituted preachers and "exhorters" were the rule; educated ministers were rare indeed. Dr. Lyman Beecher has somewhere stated that in certain evangelical conferences of 1821, with two hundred and eighty preachers in attendance, it was publicly announced, with apparent pride, that there was "not a single literary man among them."

The state of the common people, under these circumstances, may be justly inferred. They had sunk to the lowest level of mental and

spiritual life. These were the "damned human race" spoken of by Mark Twain. Conditions were so desperate that missionaries refused to go into the field. The young towns and cities, the river-ways and state-roads were infected with vice. " Don't talk to me of the good old times," my father used to say, "I know all about them." Life was so hard and decent entertainment so rare, that men drank to forget their troubles and went to hangings for amusement—taking their women-folk with them . . . The great West lay like a rich field sowed with good grain but choked with weeds and poisonous vines.

Such was the situation as viewed by the great majority of serious-minded thinkers throughout the country. Their picture of it was doubtless one-sided, though the darker aspects of it have not, I believe, been exaggerated here. We can see, now, that idealistic tendencies and movements were on foot which could not at that time be fairly appraised. Then, too, men and women of sterling character and high ideals were to be found here and there among the swarming millions that were taking possession of the new country; and good communities that held to their best traditions; that built school-houses and churches, secured good teachers and preachers and stood as lights in the darkness. But these, it must be added, were few and far between and even these were engaged in a perpetual struggle to keep from sinking to the common level.

On the whole it is not difficult to see what high-minded men meant when they spoke of the "spiritual destitution of the frontier" and talked about "saving the West." They spoke of their world as "this perishing world," and if we had seen what they saw we might have agreed with them.

2. *"Saving the West"*—1832

In those days arose one who saw the desperate need of his fellowmen and resolved to dedicate his life "to cheer a benighted world" and to "save the West." Frail in health, without money and without experience; lacking, so far as could then be seen, any exceptional mental endowment; with only an academy education, and with a family to support —having married in his twenty-second year—this man was ready to give himself, even to the last drop of his blood, to the cause. The story of his life and achievement is calculated to strain the credulity of the reader

to the breaking-point. But whatever we may think of his mystical experiences, the practical results of his work are beyond doubt or question.

John Jay Shipherd, a man of profound seriousness of character and restless activity, had prepared for college at Pawlet, Vermont, intending to enter the ministry. He was just ready for college when an accidental poisoning permanently deprived him of health, leaving him with an incurable stomach trouble and ruining his eyesight to such an extent that he "could not use his eyes more than three minutes without pain," and could never again hope to study as others do. Regarding a sound education as essential for a minister he accepted his misfortune as divinely ordained, gave up his plans and went into business.

But now began for him a series of inward experiences which were to continue throughout his life—mysterious providences, as it seemed to him—visions, or voices, perhaps, like those of Jeanne d'Arc—sacred experiences which he rarely spoke of, and only in veiled language. Inspired by some such illumination he was led to resume the study of theology, privately, under the instruction of a clergyman. He saved his eyes as well as he could by learning short-hand and was helped by his fellow students. A year and a half later, with only this brief preparation, he entered the ministry and in 1830 was installed pastor of an infant church at Elyria, a village in the wilderness of Northern Ohio.

Though successful in his pastoral labors and greatly loved by his people, Shipherd soon came to believe that God had a greater task in store for him, and was watching for his opportunity. In this state of mind he was joined by another young man, Stewart by name, a lay preacher of equal devotion and similar training—or lack of training—a friend and companion of his boyhood whom he had known as a student at Pawlet. Stewart had been for some years a missionary to the Choctaw Indians.

Living together at Shipherd's home in Elyria, the two men waited and prayed for weeks and months during the summer of 1832. Fairchild tells us that at length, while on their knees asking for guidance, the whole plan developed itself to Mr. Shipherd's mind, and before rising to his feet he said, "Come let us arise and build." He then proceeded to reveal to his companion the plan that had come into his mind, and to which, ever afterward, he was wont to refer as the "pattern shown in the Mount."

It is not necessary for us to accept the implication that the whole plan was revealed suddenly. It had no doubt been canvassed in all its phases; probably the final synthesis alone was lacking. Fairchild continues his tale with a quotation from a brief record of those days, left by Mrs. Shipherd who had shared in all these matters. "They came down from the study," she tells us, "and Mr. Shipherd with a glowing face said, 'Well, my dear, the child is born and what shall its name be?' "

3. *The Origin of a Name*

Now it happened that Shipherd had been reading of the life and labors of the German philanthropist, Oberlin, whose death had occurred only five or six years before. It was the story of a wonderful devotion to humanity. The name seemed of good omen; it came easily to the tongue and fell pleasantly on the ear. Shipherd decided to bestow it on his offspring. We may take leave of the Founder and his plan for a few moments, in order to have a look at the man whose life has been an ideal and an inspiration to Oberlin since the beginning.

Johann Friederich Oberlin, scion of a family of intellectuals, was born in 1740 in Strasburg, then a city of France. Here he enjoyed a first-class university education, receiving at twenty-three the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. After that he added to his equipment extensive researches in botany, medicine and surgery. Then, having studied for the ministry, he took orders in the Lutheran Church. With what friendly envy must Shipherd have learned of so magnificent a preparation!

After all this, with every prospect of a brilliant career, young Friederich, at twenty-seven, proceeded to "bury himself" in one of the most hopeless parishes in Europe—the Steinthal—a French peasant community of the Vosges mountains in Alsace. There he went and there he stayed for nearly sixty years until his death. He had selected the worst spot he knew of—like Father Damien when he chose the leper's island; like Vincent van Gogh when he went to the Borinage. "The best work for me, "said Friederich, "is where I can do the most good for the least recompense."

The peasants of the region were starving, body and soul. Their farms were all they had and they were too ignorant to cultivate them. They

were cut off from the world because their roads were impassable. They had no money because they could not market their produce. There they were, without hope, in a poverty so desperate that they were sometimes reduced to eating grass and wild herbs.

Among these unfortunates Oberlin lived as a friend and neighbor. He longed to help them. He was eager and able to help them. But he found them bitter, pig-headed, and resentful of interference. They did not want to be taught their own business by any twenty-seven-year-old parson! Slowly, subtly, with inconceivable tact and infinite patience, setting them an example in his own fields and garden but careful not to give advice, he at last began to impress them. They saw the enormous superiority of his results. Gradually they felt the brotherly sweetness of his spirit and discovered his willingness to share his seed, and his secrets, and even to toil with them on their own farms. They began to love him.

When the time was fully ripe the Pastor dropped a casual hint about a road. Too bad, now, that there wasn't a road to Rothau! If there had only been a road to Rothau one might have marketed these fine crops. But the peasants of Waldbach knew there could be no road. A safe road to Rothau—and Strasburg—meant a stone wall more than a mile long, not to mention a bridge over a dangerous mountain torrent. A man must be crazy to talk about such a thing. But when their Pastor went out and started the road alone, or assisted by two or three of his new friends, the others came to help for very shame. The wall was built; then the road; then the bridge, with the Pastor as sole engineer and master of works—a new type of Pontifex Maximus . . . The markets were open.

Then came the plowing of new fields, the reclaiming of waste lands, the introduction of modern irrigation and modern fertilizers. Flax seed was imported from Riga and clover seed from Holland. New fruits and vegetables made their appearance—above all the potato which became an important export. Trees were planted by hundreds and thousands. Pleasant homes and thriving farms began to take the place of hovels and thriftless husbandry. Oberlin's hand was everywhere. He knew every man, woman and child in his parish. His personal superintendence was given to every enterprise, great or small.

But all this, for the good Pastor, was merely the beginning. He

wanted above everything else to feed minds and hearts. Now having attended to their bodies he cherished hopes of doing something for their souls. One of his first cares was for education. He borrowed money on his own responsibility to raise a schoolhouse—incurring obligations that took him years to repay. He secured admirable teachers, well-educated and devoted to their work. He developed methods of instruction that astonish educators today, anticipating those of Pestalozzi and Froebel.

Besides the usual branches, he introduced the study of nature—plants and animals—instilling at the same time his own love of beauty. He used drawing and painting as means of expression in these fields and made much of music. In the infant schools, kindergarten methods were practiced, for the first time so far as we know, using the principles of liberty and interest and giving attention to play, but without losing sight of the value of discipline and the necessity of obedience.

The Pastor's deepest thought was for the spiritual welfare of his flock. He did not fail to teach them their duties to God and man, or to offer them the strength and consolation of religion. The liberality of his mind was astonishing. The spirit of his sermons was far indeed from that of Jonathan Edwards and his "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Oberlin told of a God of love. "If God," he dared to say, "could damn one of his creatures eternally, he would cease to be God; he would become devil." Oberlin held fraternal relations with clergymen of the Roman Catholic Church when Protestants and Catholics were violently at odds, and toiled hand in hand with them. He was venerated by both people and priests and Catholic churchmen in full canonicals were mourners at his grave.

So this lifetime of incredible devotion was crowned with more incredible success, resulting in the redemption of a whole people. Their uncouth manners were changed and even their language. In the second generation "their rude patois had given way to a pure and correct French and they could write it accurately." Though he toiled in obscurity, looking for no earthly reward, the name of Oberlin became illustrious. Louis XVIII gave him the medal of the Legion of Honor; he was revered by Emperor Alexander of Russia, who sent him a kiss of brotherhood; he was cited before the National Agricultural Society for the introduction, "in a district almost savage, of the best methods of agriculture and the purest lights of civilization." One of Strasburg's beautiful avenues bears

his name, while France and Germany dispute the right to claim him for their own.

One can imagine how Shipherd's ardent nature would respond to a soul so akin to his own and ideals so nearly identical. Besides that, Oberlin, with all his practical sense, was a mystic like himself and thought he received visions and guidance from the other world. It is just as well that our Founder didn't know all that is now known about the great Pastor. We may permit ourselves a discreet smile (the Devil must have chuckled audibly) remembering certain things. That doctrine of everlasting punishment for instance. For in this matter Johann Friederich anticipated the ideas of the great majority of Protestant believers by a hundred years. Johann thought it no sin to enjoy his pipe and his innocent game of cards. If he objected to a glass of wine or beer the fact is not on record. Fortunately Shipherd was ignorant of these "failings." Had he been aware of them he might have hesitated long.

In baptizing the infant school with the name of Oberlin the sponsors took a good deal on themselves. But they did honor to a name that deserves to rank with the great philanthropists of history.

4. *"The Pattern Shown in the Mount"*—1832-33

We may now return to Shipherd and his marvelous "Plan". The Plan had two distinct parts,—the planting of a Colony, and the establishment of a School. The idea of the Colony was somewhat peculiar. The godless were to be rigidly excluded and the settlement was to consist of Christian families, interested in the movement and pledged to sustain it. These would form a center of light in the surrounding darkness. As for the School, it was very modestly conceived. In his earliest known presentation of the scheme, Shipherd writes that there will be good elementary instruction for the children, and an "academic school which shall afford a thorough education in English and the useful languages; and if Providence favor it, at length instruction in theology—I mean *practical* theology."

From these words it is evident that the Founder had in mind an institution of High School grade for general education and for college preparation. In addition to that, if his hopes were realized he would

eventually be able to add Bible courses and other offerings for training lay preachers like himself and Stewart. Nothing was farther from his thought than the founding of a great college.

First of all he must have land. It must be a large tract—several square miles in extent—for there must be enough for a village center with church and schools and houses and a score or more of farms. The land must be isolated and completely under the control of the projectors, so that the community might develop its own social life and its social and religious institutions in complete independence. Shipherd had no money. However, he thought he could get the land.

As to financial support for the School, he foresaw no insuperable difficulties. The buildings would cost almost nothing. They were to be built of wood, in the midst of a forest where wood could be had for the cutting; and they could be constructed by students under the direction of colonist carpenters. Running expenses must of course be provided for, and teachers' salaries, but the tuition fees would doubtless take care of these. Whether those fees could be counted on might have appeared doubtful, seeing that the incoming students were expected to be poor in this world's goods. But in Shipherd's view that would work out all right, because the students were going to earn their tuition fees by manual labor in the school shops and on the school farm!

Certain as he was that the Lord would provide, there was one detail which may have caused the Founder some anxiety. He could see that there would have to be a fund—a large fund—some two thousand dollars according to his calculations, for "outfit". But he felt confident that when the time came the money would be there.

As to the land, he was hoping to get it as a gift. He was aware that blocks of the wilderness had before this been offered "for educational purposes," a species of generosity well known to land agents as a stimulus to sales of real estate. The two men knew of a tract only nine miles away, the owners of which had made such an offer. Having lived for some time in the Western Reserve, Shipherd had divined its importance as a strategic base of operations for "saving the West."

On the morning after their mystical experience, he and Stewart were off on horseback to have a look at the land. The tract lay in the un-

broken forest, ten miles south of the Lake Erie shore and about thirty miles west of Cleveland, then a village of some five thousand inhabitants. The land was fairly well suited to their purpose. The soil was not any too good but this was the only available area they knew of that was large enough for the project.

It was now the end of October. Shipherd resigned his charge at Elyria, with its small but safe living, and things began to move. He bent his first effort to the appointment of a Board of Trustees. He got an excellent Board. One of them was Stewart, who was made Treasurer of the institution. Another was Peter Pindar Pease, the first man Shipherd thought of when he began to look for colonists. Pease was a pioneer of the finest type. Once before he had cleared his own land and built his cabin in the wilderness. At thirty-eight, still young and eager, he gladly accepted Shipherd's offer of a new opportunity to serve God and his fellow man. Having built a log cabin and carved above the door "PRESENT YOUR BODIES A LIVING SACRIFICE," he moved his family to Oberlin.

Pease was a remarkable carpenter and builder. But aside from this and his duties as Trustee, his services were invaluable. The Founder, revealing a knowledge of men which no one had hitherto suspected, appointed this man as a kind of reception committee to greet incoming students, when the time should come, to make them as comfortable as possible and give them a feeling of home. As soon as title to the land was secured, Pease was to begin clearing a fifteen-acre lot for the school "Square" and to put in fall wheat.

Having made all necessary arrangements for the conduct of things at the front, Shipherd turned his attention to his family. His wife Esther must go to her parents in Ballston, New York, who would be only too glad to get her back. The Stewarts were very willing to take in the three boys until the mother's return. (They had no children of their own). Stewart himself was to remain in Elyria, have an eye on things and keep Shipherd informed. The Treasurer had also a scheme by which he hoped to create a fund for the Colony, and he was to work hard at that.

Within a month, in spite of the November winds, Shipherd had mounted his horse and was off for the East, "with three dollars in his pocket," to see the land agents. *Three dollars?* Yes, dear reader, there is noth-

ing improbable in that. Perhaps you do not yet understand the times and the man. Finney once said he would think little of a missionary who couldn't start for the Rockies "with a corn-cob in his pocket." But how were such things possible? Well, folks were hospitable in those days. The lonely cabin of a trapper in the forest would gladly welcome a traveller. Shipherd would say grace at table and baptize the baby (they were sure to have one). Then on Sunday or any day he might preach. People would come miles to hear him. When the hat was passed there might be two or three dollars in it and his working capital would be doubled.

Two weeks brought Shipherd to the end of his journey and the following morning saw him in the offices of Street and Hughes, real estate dealers of New Haven. Now came the moment when the mild dreamer was to face hard-headed business men of precisely the opposite stripe—not a bit mild, and anything but dreamers; for so far as we know the agents had not the slightest interest in "saving the West." To such men Shipherd was to present his plans and make his preposterous "proposals."

The proposals were as follows:—

I. That the agents should give him five hundred acres outright for his "Manual Labor School."

II. In addition to that, they were to let him nine square miles (five thousand acres) for sale at two dollars and a half an acre; from which, as soon as he could sell it to his Colonists, and get the money from them, the agents were to receive for each acre one dollar and a half. The balance would bring him five thousand dollars for his School!

Of course, the agents declined. They just couldn't see it. But day after day Shipherd was readmitted and allowed to continue his plea. One morning, coming down from his room, his face glowing with sacred ardor, he said to his landlady, "I shall succeed today." Accordingly he went over to the office as before, and after the usual greetings one of the firm said, "Well, Mr. Shipherd, we have concluded to accept your proposition."

This comparatively simple matter having been attended to, Shipherd turned at once to others of greater difficulty. He had still to secure Colonists, students, and faculty. Also he was beginning to suspect that the project might cost more than he had at first anticipated. But he hoped to obtain funds, as it were on the side, while doing other things.

First of all, the Colonists. This was no easy matter, because Shipherd was searching for men of ability and strong religious faith who would be a power in the community. He had "not a foot of land," he said, for any others. Christian families of New England ideas and culture were what he was after.

He began by publishing his plans far and wide, letting it be known that the Colony would need men of that character—men of all the common occupations of life. There must be farmers to raise cows, hogs and grain for food, and a miller to grind their wheat. There must be men for the sawmill and the blacksmith shop. They must have a grocer, a butcher, a clothier, a wagon-maker and a harness-maker. They must have a doctor to care for their sick and bring their children into the world. And they must have a number of first-rate builders—carpenters and masons—for besides houses and barns there would be a church and school buildings to be built.

In return he offered to his Colonists, first the privilege of working for the Kingdom of Heaven and of rearing their children in a godly community. He also offered land in the unbroken forest, at two and a half dollars an acre, and a promise that the settlers should find a sawmill and a gristmill in operation when they arrived.

Shipherd got his Colonists. These extraordinary inducements seem to have been sufficient. One after another they came in from the East, with their families, in covered wagons drawn by horses or oxen, struggling through the yellow mud of the trails that served for roads. Before long all the activities of frontier life were represented.

Some of those who answered the call might better have stayed at home. It is easy to imagine that such an invitation would be eagerly seized on by pious cranks and religious zealots. So it was. There were some, too, who pretended to a piety they did not possess. But the body of the community was composed of worthy citizens, and among them there

were high-hearted men and women who supported the enterprise with a spirit no whit inferior to that of the leaders, and without whose aid the project must certainly have perished. These felt themselves to be children of God united into one family for the fulfilment of a mighty purpose. They called each other "Brother", "Sister", "Father", or "Mother"—and they meant it. Years afterward I knew many of these sincere and noble people, as well as some of the "sinners" that Shipherd did not invite, but who, according to Fairchild's testimony, "soon found their way to the Colony without an invitation."

The records show that the winter, spring and summer of 1833 found Shipherd constantly on his travels in New England and Ohio, looking for Colonists, students, faculty and funds. He had a wide acquaintance but not among wealthy people; and though held in great affection by many, his friends were inclined to regard him as an impractical enthusiast. Well, he got his students—all he wanted to begin with and applications without number from far more than he could possibly take care of. He got his faculty—young, enthusiastic, efficient teachers, trained in the best colleges of the East . . . And he got his funds. In this, as in other things, his performance at each step outstripped his intention. In May he writes to the Trustees of the school, requesting them to confirm his appointments to the new faculty and informing them that he is now confident of being able to raise (instead of the two thousand he had at first proposed) "fifteen thousand dollars before very long." "This," he says, "will doubtless be much easier than to do what we have already executed." He did it, too, getting the fund in cash gifts, in pledges, and by the sale of scholarships.

Travelling to and fro on horseback Shipherd had time to think, and with every week his vision was enlarged. Herein he showed one of his great qualities. He saw that the opportunities opening up before him were far wider than he had suspected, and at every point he was ready for them. He gave up his early plan without a struggle and began to foresee the establishment of a first-rate college and theological seminary.

This is shown in a letter to the Trustees written while he was still in the East and dated May, 1833. "You perceive in my recent communications that I have latterly enlarged our plans of operation, and it may seem to you unadvisedly, but I trust the following reasons will satisfy you all." He proceeds to explain that if the school is to be only a pre-

paratory school for college, "there is no institution to which students could be sent where they could continue to earn their own way by manual labor. Furthermore, the school is going to be filled with students most of whom can not hope for an education, unless we provide them with the means of getting one by their own industry and economy . . . Let us therefore begin with the academic, and, as Providence permit, grow into the collegiate and theological, which, I doubt not will be as fast as our students shall advance in their studies. Had we to raise the ordinary permanent fund for president's and professors' salaries, we should fail, but the assurance of all the students we can accommodate is as good a pledge (for salaries) as permanent funds." The Founder had no doubt that there would be a hundred students by the following year. It turned out that he was right.

Shipherd's "communications" were read at home with mixed feelings. His friends were considerably astonished, and some of them not a little alarmed. The Trustees especially, including Stewart, their worthy Treasurer, watched the course of events with much anxiety.

We had come near forgetting Shipherd's associate and co-founder, who, since the preliminaries, had enjoyed but a very small share in the action. Pease was already on the ground and trees had been cut down on about five acres. But there was nothing for Stewart to do there as yet; and in fact he and his wife were still in Elyria, taking care of Shipherd's children, their mother having gone as we have seen to her parents' home in the East, where she was awaiting the birth of her fourth child.

The picture would be incomplete without some further description of Stewart and his ways of thinking and acting. Philo P. Stewart was a valuable man and a valiant soul. He had begun life as a saddler and harness-maker. He was a handy fellow who could make all sorts of useful things, including boots and shoes. He was also an inventor. Indeed, he was at work at that moment on a design for a cast-iron-cook-stove. He thought this would be a service to humanity. Moreover, his wife was not very strong and he believed that such a stove would relieve her from work before the open fire and conserve her health. He hoped also to make some money—not for himself, be it well understood—but for the School.

In both temperament and gifts Stewart presented an extraordinary con-

trast to his associate. Except for their whole-hearted and selfless devotion the two were fundamentally unlike. Shipherd was all ardor; Stewart was slow, cool, cautious, and calculating. He was very conservative and likely to object to almost anything in order to be sure that the grounds for action were good and sufficient. It may be said that he had a talent for objecting, which, though often irksome to one's colleagues, is a very useful talent indeed—and only too rare. As every man knows who has served on a board or college faculty. In addition to these traits, the Treasurer was a frugal person and a strict economist.

The physical contrast between the two was no less striking. Stewart was a rugged specimen, while Shipherd was delicately built and poor in health. Human nature being what it is, the strong man must have looked with a certain pity on this "invalid"—an invalid, however, of the stamp of Delacroix or Darwin. Frail but not feeble. The kind that does the work of ten or twenty normal healthy men in the world.

It might be said that Stewart played Sancho Panza to Shipherd's Don Quixote, the comparison suggesting itself inevitably. Yet Shipherd was fighting the Powers of Darkness—not windmills—and he sure was a "bonnie fighter." Though he seems a bit crazy at times, we are compelled to honor him, "We all have within us a Don Quixote and a Sancho that we listen to," says the sage of France, "and even when Sancho convinces us, it is Don Quixote that we have to admire."

Now the good Treasurer, though he had unbounded faith in his friend's intentions, had often been obliged as a practical man to object to his visionary ideas, and these "latter enlargements" filled him with alarm. Things were going too fast and too far. He couldn't see the sense in trying to build up a regular college and a full-fledged theological seminary. *He* hadn't had a college education, and Shipherd hadn't; yet they had done good work in the Master's vineyard. He thought they would do very well,—v-e-r-y well indeed—if they succeeded in building up a good academy. If a student wished to go to college, he could find a good college *somewhere else.* No—he was opposed to the idea of a college. And as for a theological seminary, that first plan for "practical theology," with courses in Bible and other useful courses for lay preachers and missionaries, like himself, was "the pattern shown in the Mount," and it was good enough for Stewart.

He voices his objections in a somewhat despondent letter to Shipherd, dated May 21, 1833, a few quotations from which will sufficiently reveal his state of mind. "Colonists who have come on say that Brother J. J. S. has given the pledge that young men who come on from the East shall receive as good an education for a minister as if they been at college. The constitution says that the pupils of Oberlin Institute shall receive a thorough academic course. This is all I have expected they would receive, and all I think that we ought to promise . . . Let students come to this institution with the expectation of obtaining a collegiate education . . . and find the advantages far inferior to those which are to be enjoyed in other institutions, and the result would be disappointment and probably dissatisfaction . . . If we have in addition to a common manual labor school, a female seminary, and a system of labor connected with that also, I think this is all that we ought to attempt at present. By attempting too much the whole work will be likely to come to nothing."

As to other affairs in the Colony Stewart complains that they are prospering but "slowly." *The steam-engine is not on the ground,* and some of the Colonists are considerably disappointed. "They say you encouraged them to expect to see the engine on the ground, at the time they should arrive there. You will recollect that to lay a plan is not the same thing as to carry it into execution . . . With our best efforts, I am confident the work will not go on as fast as you have calculated, and it seems to me we ought studiously to avoid raising expectations which can not be realized."

There were many who shared Stewart's anxiety. There were those who thought it a mistake to plan for even an academy. What would be the use of another "literary institution" when there was already a "good High School at Elyria," prosperous and flourishing, and "less than ten miles off?" (!)

Shipherd read these communications with perfect patience, answered them with the most exquisite Christian courtesy and tact, and went right ahead doing very much as he pleased. He attained his ends and reported his results. At the last, such were his sweetness of spirit and persuasive eloquence, Trustees and friends were won over to his views. Even the recalcitrant Treasurer was brought to his side . . . It was now September. Shipherd announced the opening of the School for December 3, 1833, and at the appointed time it was opened.

Finally, having secured, in the space of a few months, land, funds, Colonists, and faculty; having accomplished everything he had set out to do and ten times more, he turned his face homeward. His strength had been badly taxed and he needed rest. Moreover, his heart yearned for his beloved Esther and the sight of his children, one of them born since his departure. He rejoined his wife in Ballston, and from there, Fairchild tells us, "In an open buggy, with a willow cradle at their feet they made the journey to Ohio, remembered by Mrs. Shipherd, to the last, as the most pleasant journey of their lives. The last two miles of the road before reaching Oberlin was only a track cleared of underbrush, winding among trees, the roots of which extending across the track made it so rough that Mrs. Shipherd could not keep her seat, and she walked that portion of the way with her babe in her arms."

5. *Expansion,* 1833-39

The school opened according to schedule on December 3, 1833, in its own building, with forty-four students. They were "mature, earnest young people, ready for any sacrifice in obtaining an education." Some of them had walked all the way from the East. Eleven families were already on the ground—a few months later there were thirty-nine—while the student enrollment by the opening of the summer term in May had increased to a hundred and one. Of these, sixty-three were men and thirty-eight women. Accommodations were strained to the uttermost limit. Many students found living quarters in the families of the Colonists. But the one school building—a structure about thirty-five by forty feet, with two stories and an attic—had to serve not only for schoolrooms, offices and lodgings for professors, but as a dormitory for about forty students. Fairchild, an eye witness of these days, writes that "in a room about fifteen feet square and seven feet high, in the basement of that building, Mr. and Mrs. Shipherd with their four little boys, and another family with three or four boarders, found their home." Yes, reader, that is what Fairchild says in his history (p. 37). He was the most truthful of men. Not once have I known him even to speak with exaggeration. But this, I confess, gives me pause.

Now at last things were really humming in both Colony and School. Nearly everything had turned out exactly as Shipherd had foreseen. There was one exception—the financial situation. He had been right about the

professors' salaries. The tuition fees paid for those, so far, and the students were actually earning their tuition fees by manual labor. But he had not imagined how much money it would take, aside from salaries. That fifteen thousand had vanished like chaff before the wind. They were in urgent need of funds, with further big expenses in sight. The faculty would have to be enlarged. They needed a president and a professor of mathematics right away. We have seen how great was their need of buildings.

After fasting and praying, as he was wont to do before taking the field, Shipherd again mounted his horse and went forth in search of president, professors and funds. This time, guided as he believed by his Voices or some inward light, he set his face southward to Cincinnati. This was in December, 1834. It was cold. The roads were awful and Shipherd was far from well. After covering the first hundred and fifty miles of the journey and reaching Columbus, he decided to go the rest of the way by the mail-wagon. "The only public conveyance between the cities was a two-wheeled cart drawn by four horses, upon which was a rude box holding the mail." In this open box he completed the journey to Cincinnati, a hundred and fifty miles, arriving in such a state of exhaustion that he had to take to his bed . . . But he was soon up again, ready for the most extraordinary adventure of his eventful life.

He found "the Queen City of the West" in the throes of a terrific anti-slavery agitation. The whole country was in an uproar on the slavery question. Mobs and physical violence were common. Murder was not unknown. Cincinnati standing on the border-line between North and South was a natural burning-point. The citizens were divided into two camps. Opinions ranged all the way from those who maintained that slavery was a "divine institution," sanctioned by Holy Writ, to those who believed that it was a crime to be rooted out—if need be by the sword.

Among those most intensely alive to the great issue were the students of Lane Theological Seminary. A serious and able lot they were, and determined to get to right conclusions through study and discussion. They had held many meetings for this purpose and were preparing for more. Needless to add that nearly all of them were coming to the conviction that they must take a stand against slavery. Dr. Lyman Beecher, President of the institution, was on their side, and Dr. John Morgan who was

in charge of preparatory courses in the Seminary. They also had the support of the Reverend Asa Mahan, a resident Trustee, and pastor of a local church. If other Trustees were in sympathy with the cause they were afraid to speak. They were apprehensive that the agitation would injure their institution and they were bound to stop it.

Waiting until the summer vacation, when Beecher and Morgan were absent in the East, and without consulting their Faculty, the Trustees passed a rule forbidding the discussion of slavery among students, either in public or private; adding that students not complying with this order would be expelled. Not content with this they dismissed Morgan from the Faculty without assigning any reason. Mahan made vigorous protest against these foolish measures. When the Trustees passed them in spite of him he resigned from the Board.

If the Trustees were inclined to be proud of the boldness and manliness of their action, they could hardly congratulate themselves on its subtlety. Knowledge of the human material they had to deal with would have suggested a less drastic procedure. For these students averaged twenty-six years of age, and many of them were graduates of Eastern colleges. Moreover, they were strong, self-reliant men, earning their own way through the theological course by manual labor; able students, "well-grounded in classical studies and practiced in debate." We know what Beecher thought of them. "Glorious good fellows," he called them, "the finest class of minds I ever knew."

Possibly the reader may not realize who is speaking? It is Dr. Lyman Beecher—no less—known to most as the father of a wonderful family,—Catherine the educator, Henry Ward, the preacher, Harriet, the creator of Uncle Tom. This man—one of the most famous preachers in the land—had given up his Boston pastorate and a brilliant position in the East, to take charge of a new and struggling seminary and train young ministers for "saving the West."

The result might have been anticipated; it was a violent explosion. Out of the hundred students at Lane, eighty men or thereabouts left in a body and withdrew to temporary quarters in the suburbs to continue their studies "with such help as they could afford each other." It came near wrecking the Seminary. Beecher tried his best to ward off the blow, but he was too honest to support his Trustees. He upheld the students

in leaving Lane on account of these odious, "abominable laws." Such was the dramatic situation revealed by Mahan to Shipherd, when the latter was taken as a guest into his home.

The sequel may be told in a few words. Shipherd saw almost at once that Asa Mahan would make an ideal President for Oberlin. The proposition was made and accepted. After that, Shipherd offered Dr. Morgan the chair of Mathematics and Physics. This also was accepted. The Founder immediately communicated with his Trustees at home, requesting them to confirm these appointments. At the same time he asked them to put themselves on record as friends of the Negro by passing the following resolution:—"Resolved, that Students shall be received into this Institution irrespective of color." He insisted that this must be done "because it is a right principle and God will bless us in doing right . . . Morever Brothers Mahan and Morgan will not accept our invitation unless this principle rule."

The next step followed almost inevitably. Shipherd saw that if he could draw the seceding students to Oberlin he could establish his Theological Seminary at one stroke. Of course, a faculty would have to be provided for it. Also there would be further heavy expenses; but he was getting used to that. He found the students delighted at his proposal. They were unanimous in the conviction that Mahan was the man for the place and said that if he went as president they would go too.

These things settled, Shipherd set out at once for the East, with Mahan as associate agent, to get his Theological Faculty and secure funds. The outcome is almost fabulous. Within a few weeks he had secured, as head of his Seminary, Charles G. Finney, an eminent theologian and the most famous preacher in the country. Meanwhile Arthur Tappen, the great-hearted philanthropist (a member of Finney's New York church) had offered ten thousand dollars for a theological building; had engaged with others to provide ten thousand more for necessary expenses; and had guaranteed funds for the endowment of eight professorships.

These wonderful provisions seemed to solve every difficulty. Shipherd must have felt that his troubles were over. Instead of that he found himself facing a new crisis and an obstacle—totally unexpected—that might put an end to all his hopes.

One positive condition was attached to these promises and gifts. Finney and Tappan would not move an inch unless colored students were received on the same footing as whites. It will be remembered that Mahan and Morgan had made the same condition; that Shipherd had assumed that his Trustees were ready to accept it; and that he had requested them to place themselves on record by a formal resolution.

But for once he had misread them. They were with him, no doubt, in his anti-slavery sentiments, but like the Trustees of Lane, they were afraid; afraid of injury to their institution; afraid the place would be "overwhelmed with colored students" (though none was even applying for admission); afraid even, of intermarriage between blacks and whites and of other nameless evils . . . Shipherd's Trustees had failed him. They had confirmed the appointment of Mahan and Morgan but they had not passed the resolution!

The news must have struck Shipherd like a blow. He answered the Trustees with the most eloquent of all his letters. He had been aware, he says, that some were against immediate abolition of slavery, because the slaves were not qualified for freedom; but he had supposed they thought it a duty to educate them as fast as possible, and that they would of course receive colored students. He had been so completely confident of their views that he had committed the institution to this policy. He insists that young men of color must be educated for teaching, and for the ministry, both here and in the "land of their fathers". He reminds the Board that colored youth have already been received in other institutions for whites and "Will doubtless be received into all such institutions by and by; and why should beloved Oberlin wait to do justice and show mercy till all others have done it? Why hesitate to lead in the cause of humanity, and of God . . . If we refuse to deliver our brother, now drawn to death, I cannot hope that God will smile upon us."

He follows this appeal with an argument that must have staggered them all, even the canny Stewart who—as usual—was strenuously objecting to the resolution and who "cast his vote against it to the last." Shipherd reminds them that unless they promise to admit colored students Mahan will refuse the presidency, Morgan his professorship, and Finney his position as head of the Seminary. They will lose the three best men in the country for those positions. Not only that. They will lose the endowment promised by Tappan and his friends; for this had been sub-

scribed on the express condition that students should be received "irrespective of color." Besides that the Lane students would follow their leader to some other place. There would be no Seminary. Oberlin would get nothing at all.

And then, having exhausted every argument, having played both on the sentiments of humanity and of self-interest in the hearts of these men he knew so well, in language that is very subtle but very clear and honest, and full of delicate and tender feeling toward them, he adds a threat—the gentlest threat on record but not less a threat. "Such is my conviction of duty in the case, that I cannot labor for the enlargement of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute if our breathren in Jesus Christ must be rejected because they differ from us in color. You know, dear brethren and sisters, that it would be hard for me to leave that institution, which I planted in much fasting and prayer and tribulation . . . laboring night and day, and watering it with my sweat and my tears . . . You know, beloved, that it would be heart-breaking to leave you for another field of labor, but I have pondered the subject well, with prayer, and believe that if the injured brother of color, and consequently brother Finney, Mahan, and Morgan with eight professorships and ten thousand dollars must be rejected, I must join them; because by so doing I can labor more effectively for a lost world and the glory of God —and believe me, dear brethren and sisters, for this reason only."

The conduct of the Trustees and Colonists before this ultimatum did them little credit. In the light of subsequent events it is somewhat incomprehensible, for Oberlin was to stand before the world as the champion of the Negro. The town was to be famous as a trunkline station of the "Underground Railway" and a symbol of freedom for the slave. Before very long the whole institution had come around to Shipherd's side, and nearly the whole community; but at this critical moment they were weak. The feeling in the Colony, including the Faculty and the student body, was against receiving "students of color." Young women from England asserted that if it were done they would go back home if they had to "wade Lake Erie."

In the Trustees' meeting that followed the receipt of Shipherd's letter, eight members being present besides Father Keep, the chairman, the Board did finally pass "a resolution"; and a sickly and most irresolute resolution it was. Even so the chairman had to cast the deciding vote, the

division being equal. In that pusillanimous article, after a few whereases and generalities which committed them to nothing, we come to these wonderful words . . . "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."[1] How different from Shipherd's simple words "that students shall be received irrespective of color"; how unlike the full, warm-hearted support he might have expected at their hands! How did Father Shipherd take the resolution? Father Shipherd took it as if it meant all it ought to have meant; and went right ahead with his plans.

In less than three months after the appointments of Finney, Mahan and Morgan were confirmed, the eight professorships were filled and more than eighty thousand dollars had been subscribed for the institution. Besides that, Arthur Tappan "whose heart," says Finney, "was as large as all New York, I might say, as large as the world," had given his private promise to Finney to stand behind the movement until they should no longer need him. "My own income," he said, "averages about $100,000 a year. Now if you will go to Oberlin, take hold of that work, and go on and see that the buildings are put up and a library and everything provided, I will pledge you my entire income, except what I need to provide for my family, till you are beyond pecuniary want."

The enterprise was on its feet. Shipherd had not only established an academic school, but a full-fledged College and Theological Seminary. The annual Catalogue for 1835 presents an institution fully organized in all its departments, with two hundred and seventy-seven students. Most of these, to be sure, were preparatory students. But there were thirty-eight in the regular college courses and thirty-five in the Seminary. The senior class in Theology numbered fourteen and it was "such a class," Fairchild says, "as any seminary might be proud of."

We may linger for a moment on the exciting events of that spring of 1835. The Colony was filled with enthusiasm on the arrival of the new Faculty and the "Rebels" from Lane. Some of the young fellows had walked the whole distance from Cincinnati and slept "under the beautiful stars" for lack of better shelter. A more usual solution of the problem of sleeping-quarters was the "camp-bed". This consisted simply of fir branches and the like, spread on the floor without division or

partition. It could be made up on the floor of the living room or the attic from one end of the house to the other, in two rows or even three, thus accommodating an indefinite number of sleepers—a flexible arrangement of great utility.

We read that recitations took place "to the singing strokes of the axe and the falling of great trees." We know that the boys—and some of the girls too—earned their keep and tuition helping to fell the trees and hew the beams; and that after the beams were hewn the whole school would take a day off and raise the building. There is a record of a dormitory improvised for the Lane contingent—a huge, uncouth affair a hundred and forty-four feet long, twenty wide, and eight high to the eaves, battened with rough slabs with the bark on. "Each room had an outside entrance and one window, but there was no communication between the rooms."

It seemed that the worst was over. Hardship was no longer or but little felt. The farms were thriving; the village was growing; the College was solvent and filled to capacity. Students and teachers were eager and enthusiastic. Heaven seemed to smile on the Colonists and to approve the work of their hands.

The "trials and tribulations" that the Devil still had in store for Shipherd and his devoted band must not detain us here for more than the briefest mention. A few months after the pledges had been made the friends that made them were crippled by the great fire in New York. Arthur Tappan was ruined in the terrible financial crash of 1837. Those were dark days for Oberlin. Her strongest supporter had gone under. Teachers and Colonists were in actual want. "There was a significance not often realized," says Fairchild, "in the prayer—'Give us day by day our daily bread.' "

By 1839 the College was in dire extremity and $30,000 in debt. As a last desperate resort it was decided to send Father Keep and another Trustee, William Dawes, to England to plead for help. Their success was phenomenal. England was on fire with anti-slavery sentiment. Finney's evangelical labors in England had made his name known and loved among Christian people throughout the British Isles. The name of Finney and the feeling against slavery got the funds and once more victory was wrested from defeat. Eighteen months of hard work and the two

men returned with $30,000 in cash, enough to meet the most pressing liabilities of the institution. The devoted pair, paying their own expenses, had left no stone unturned. They had even had the hardihood to approach the Common Council of London asking for money and had come within two votes of getting it. What the English thought of John Keep may be seen from the fact that they hung his portrait in the National Portrait Gallery.

EDITORS NOTE

1. Recent scholarship has revealed that the Oberlin Trustees did not really fail Finney on the question of the admission of Negroes. In the Trustees Minutes of February 10, 1835 there is the record of a Resolution which gave the determination of student admissions to the Faculty. The Resolution as quoted by R. S. Fletcher is his *History of Oberlin College,* vol. I, p. 178, reads:

   "*Resolved* That the question in respect to the admission of students into this Seminary be in all cases left to the decision of the Faculty & to them be committed also the internal management of its concerns, provided always that they be holden amendable to the Board & not liable to censure or interruption from the Board so long as their measures shall not infringe upon the laws or general principles of the Institution."

   Fletcher than adds: "Leonard, Fairchild and Barnes are mistaken in their selection of the resolution which gave Negroes access to Oberlin. The resolutions referred to by them (F and G in the minutes) are merely a supplementary expression of sentiment on the question of Negro education. See Leonard, 144-145, Fairchild, 64, Barnes 232. Prof. Finney wrote a formal acceptance of the position after his arrival in Oberlin in which he restated the conditions: that he have yearly leaves of absence to preach in New York or elsewhere, that sufficient funds be secured 'to put the Institution beyond the pressure of pecuniary embarrassments,' and 'that the Trustees give the internal control of the school into the heads of the Faculty.' "

The President's Page

Declaration of Independence
(July 4, 1776)

In previous numbers we have referred to Magna Carta (1215), Petition of Right (1627), Habeas Corpus Act (1679), English Bill of Rights (1689). We now come to the American Charters of Freedom. In this connection mention should be made to the Mayflower Compact (1620) and the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (1639).

During the first year of the Revolution, sentiment changed from loyalty to the British crown to a demand for separation and independence. On April 12, 1776, the North Carolina provincial congress instructed its delegates in the Continental Congress to agree to independence. After somewhat indirect but similar action in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, on May 15th Virginia directed its delegates to move for independence. A resolution for independence and for confederation was introduced in Congress by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia and John Adams of Massachusetts on July 7th and a committee was appointed to draft the declaration. Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman and Robert R. Livingston comprised the committee. Thomas Jefferson prepared the draft. The resolution for independence was actually adopted by the Continental Congress on July 2nd. The Declaration itself was under discussion for two days, amended, and adopted on July 4th, when it was signed by John Hancock as president and attested by Charles Thomson as secretary of the Congress and made public. The engrossed parchment copy was signed by the members present on August 2nd and later during the year by other members. Some members of the Congress who signed the document did not have the opportunity to vote for it on its adoption. Several signers did not become members of Congress until after July 4th. The original text of the document has a heading reciting:

> *In Congress, July* 4, 1776, *The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.*

It is interesting to note that the "u" in the word "united" was not capitalized. The preamble and resolution are printed below without the

statement of specific grievances which will be carried in a subsequent issue.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation . . . We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness . . . That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed . . . That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security . . . Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.

(Here follow the specific grievances against George III.)

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish

and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do . . . And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

The Declaration in the concluding paragraphs reveals the transformation by authority of the People of the United Colonies into Free and Independent States. "The United States of America" as such did not come into being until the ratification of the Articles of Confederation on March 1, 1781.