

**The memorial of M.B. Wright in relation to the Medical College of Ohio : the official misconduct of its trustees, the maladministration of its affairs, and the dangerous position of the commercial hospital : made to the forty-ninth General Assembly.**

### **Contributors**

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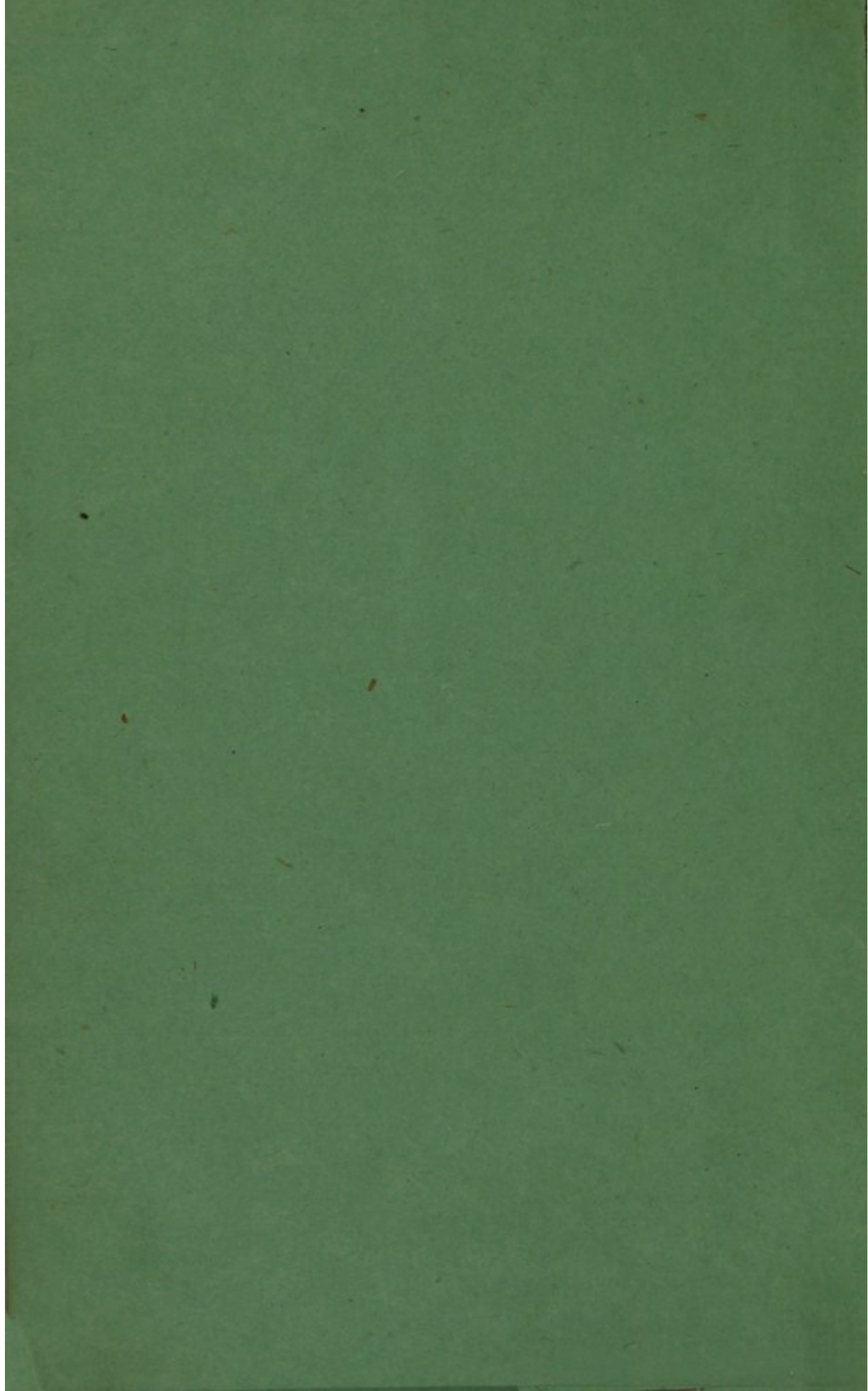
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MEMORIAL OF M. B. WRIGHT,

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MEDICAL COLLEGE OF OHIO,

THE

OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT OF ITS TRUSTEES, THE MAL-  
ADMINISTRATION OF ITS AFFAIRS. AND  
THE DANGEROUS POSITION OF THE  
COMMERCIAL HOSPITAL,

MADE TO THE

FORTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

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COLUMBUS:

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MEMORIAL COLLEGE OF OHIO

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MEMORIAL COLLEGE OF OHIO

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# MEMORIAL.

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*To the Honorable the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:*

The undersigned would respectfully represent, that to your honorable body is entrusted the enactment of laws, not only in regard to the social and political well being of a large and intelligent population, but also for the preservation of health and life. To secure the latter, charters have been granted for the establishment of medical colleges in different parts of the State. The only college for medical instruction, however, over which the General Assembly may exercise unlimited control, is the Medical College of Ohio. It is the property of the State—to be disposed of by the Legislature as circumstances may seem to require. To obtain such action of your honorable body, as will insure to the institution usefulness and durability, is the great object of this memorial. But the memorial would be imperfect and unsatisfactory, if it were not accompanied by some of those facts upon which it is founded.

More than thirty years ago the Medical College of Ohio was established. During this long period, its intrinsic advantages have been superior to those of any similar institution in the west. Situated in the midst of an almost countless population—easy of access—receiving liberal appropriations from the Legislature—sustained from feelings of State pride—connected with a large hospital overflowing with patients—and having as professors men of learning, industry and energy—of distinguished lecturing abilities, and of enthusiastic devotion to the interests of the profession and the institution, it was natural that the public should look forward with entire confidence to its eminently successful career. But the expectation of its friends never have been, and under its present charter, never can be realized. Her young rivals are leaving her fast and far in the rear. The latter stand



before us, representing healthful, vigorous manhood, increasing in strength with every effort and with an armour always bright and ready for renewed contests—while the former is constitutionally feeble, decrepid from periodical prostration and premature old age, and even the outer appearance is rendered unseemly by time and decay.

The charter of the college requires an election of the whole board of trustees, by the Legislature, every three years, and all vacancies occurring in the interval are filled by the remaining board. The entire body is composed of individuals residing in Cincinnati and its vicinity. And it may be seen at a single glance, how easily "*those opposition factions so commonly surrounding and impeding medical schools,*" to quote the language of an editorial written by Professor Lawson for the Western Lancet, can accomplish their nefarious purposes, and how much they are encouraged to renewed and frequent attacks. As the sagacious and lamented Charles Hammond once observed, "every unfledged doctor considers himself privileged to abuse and kick the old servant, and for no other reason than that she belongs to the public, and they live in Cincinnati." And it is only necessary to allude to the fact, that nearly every year since the organization of the college, it has been found necessary to send an agent to Columbus, to represent her interests, and to defend her against "*opposition factions.*"

It is admitted by all, whose inquiries have been in any way directed to the subject, that those medical institutions which have gone on in the quiet and even tenor of their way, have been most successful, and that their prosperity has been proportioned to their stability.

The Transylvania University, Lexington, at one time the leading medical school of the west, was subjected to one change after another, for many years, until finally it ceased to exist.

Ten professors have occupied chairs in the medical school at Columbus since its foundation. One vacancy was occasioned by death, another by resignation, and a third by transfer. Of the great success of this institution, in view of its comparative advantages, it is unnecessary to speak.

In the late circular of the Cleveland Medical College, it is stated, that "seven courses only have been given—the first term the class



numbered 67, the seventh and last, 253." And it is said further, that no changes have taken place in the faculty since the organization of the school.

The Louisville Medical Institute has been in operation twelve years. Up to the close of the last session, eleven professors had occupied chairs, and 367 students constituted the last class.

The government of the Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, was subjected to one modification after another for several of the first years of its existence, and its success seemed more than doubtful. But its organization became, at length, so firmly established as to put an end to unnecessary change, and for a long time the size of its classes has been gradually increasing, until the last exceeded five hundred students.

The University of Pennsylvania, the oldest and most distinguished medical school in the Union, has had in sixty years only thirty-four professors, by appointment, re-appointment and transfer.

In less than one year subsequent to the session of 1849, the Medical College of Ohio had twenty-two professors, which, with the addition of the three elected in October, would make twenty-five in a little better than one year!! There is not to be found, in any institution the wide world over, an increase parallel to this.

Every three years, as has been observed, there must be a contest before the Legislature in regard to the election of trustees for the college. The interests of the college, and the efforts of factions, are here brought in immediate conflict. Men are selected, also, and held in readiness to fill vacancies as they may occur during the periods intervening between the sessions of the Legislature. Thus is the institution in a state of constant agitation, each trustee being expected to favor the interests or wishes of those "opposition factions" through whose influence he may have been elected.

A full history of the college cannot be given in this memorial. It would require a volume too ponderous for convenient use. The undersigned will, therefore, confine his remarks mostly to a period subsequent to February, 1849.

Dr. Mussey and the late Dr. Shotwell had requested Dr. Drake to become a candidate for the chair of Theory and Practice in the Medical College of Ohio. To this request he acceded, or rather, he al-



lowed the faculty to present his name to the board, after the close of the session of 1849, and after he had resigned his professorship in the Louisville Medical Institute. The introduction of Dr. Drake into the school could not be effected without a re-arrangement of the chairs, to accomplish which and to satisfy those who were clamorous for places, the trustees deemed it advisable to vacate all the chairs. In the reorganization eight professorships were established. Dr. Bayless was now for the first time, introduced into the school, and at the urgent solicitation of Dr. Shotwell, was placed in the chair of Anatomy. Having an eye to the teaching of Surgery, Dr. Shotwell became a candidate for the eighth chair which had just been created. In a short time after the faculty had been organized, a vacancy was created in the chair of Materia Medica by the death of Dr. Harrison. This vacancy was filled by the transfer of Dr. Shotwell, in accordance with his own wishes and request. Before the commencement of the next lecture term, he resigned his place, and withdrew entirely from the college. These facts are noted, as having a bearing upon important subsequent movements.

The session of '49, '50, closed with serious forebodings on the part of the faculty, in regard to the future condition of the college. The characters of some of the new trustees, and their known hostility to a portion of the faculty, left but little doubt as to their contemplated course. Professor Locke, whose labors in behalf of the college had been felt and acknowledged, to ward off as far as possible the impending blow, addressed the trustees in part as follows :

“The question naturally arises, what regard shall be paid by the trustees to the opinions of the faculty? The trustees have certainly power to act independently of the faculty. But, it is hardly presumable that a Board, meeting only at remote periods, and then only for an hour, can understand the needs of an institution so well as those who are continually managing its concerns, or that they can act judiciously without advice with regard to medical matters. This creates a propriety that the faculty should at least be heard with regard to all questions and changes in which they are immediately concerned.

This condition has established the custom throughout the country, that the faculty have, at least, a recommendatory *privilege*, and in many cases a recommendatory *right*.



I beg leave most respectfully to recommend a conservative policy, and I give it as my candid opinion, that the interests of the institution will be best subserved, by continuing the professors with whom I have served, and especially those who have been and now are the incumbents of the six several chairs.

There is always an effort from without, from various interested motives, (some to get friends into place, whether they be qualified or not for duty,) to become the trustees of the trustees, viz: to prejudice the minds of the trustees, and to get them to come in committed to carry out such measures as they may have dictated, and thus the individual dictating such advice becomes the actual trustee. Let the chairs be vacated, and the cliques gratified to day, the same will be as much needed to-morrow, and so on *ad infinitum*.

I feel assured that the Board will discard all trifling, petty, ephemeral prejudices, will oppose all the machinery of skulking intrigue, and act openly, independently, to the promotion and advancement of those high purposes for which the Medical College of Ohio was instituted, and which, under numerous embarrassments, difficulties and interested animosities, she has for so many years most honorably fulfilled."

This advice, dictated by an ardent desire for the welfare of the college, and from an experience of sixteen years in its government, was treated with marked contempt, and used only by the secretary of the Board of Trustees, to create hostile feelings between the adviser, and one who had been recently elected a professor. The revolutionists adopted the sentiment, that as they were all, with one exception, new men, it was better to begin anew and in ignorance, than to be governed by advice, growing out of the vicissitudes of the past.

The revolutionists obtained their places for the express purpose of gratifying a malicious feeling, which had been strengthening and expanding for a long series of years. And they had hardly taken their places, when they commenced the work of destruction, and in a short time, to use their own published language, they had the satisfaction of looking complacently upon the college, "in a prostrate and fallen condition."

At the first meeting of the Board, before there was time or opportunity to know anything of the condition of the college, and without consultation with the faculty, an effort was made to vacate the chair of anatomy and the one held by the undersigned. At several subsequent meetings, the same ineffectual attempts were made. Suddenly, a new view burst upon the visions of the revolutionists, and it was suggested as a most magnificent project, that all the chairs should



be vacated, and left open until after the meeting of the forthcoming National Medical Association. The first branch of the proposition being carried out, it was suddenly and most wisely discovered, that the hospital was without medical attendance, and then it was suggested, with as much gravity as if there had been no premeditation, that it was absolutely necessary to elect, and without delay, a part of the old faculty. Thus did the revolutionists accomplish by trick, and the low, unscrupulous cunning for which some of them are distinguished, what they had failed to accomplish by direct action, for after the chairs had been made vacant, it required eight votes to refill them.

The following resolution and the disposition made of it, will throw some light upon the feelings and motives of the revolutionists:

MEDICAL COLLEGE OF OHIO,  
APRIL 24, 1850.

WHEREAS, a resolution has been introduced into this Board, by one of its members, having for its object the vacation of the chairs of Professors Bayless and Wright in this institution, which resolution now lies upon the table; and whereas, that before removing any Professor from his chair, it is but just to the parties and ourselves, to assign and establish sufficient cause for such removal; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the party introducing said resolution, be and he is hereby requested to assign in writing, the charges and specifications upon which such removals are sought to be effected; that a copy of such charges and specifications be furnished to each of said professors, and that a day be fixed for a public trial of the parties implicated.

*Yeas.*

Miles Greenwood,  
Eden B. Reeder,  
George W. Holmes,  
Flamen Ball.

*Nays.*

John L. Vattier, M. D.,  
Jacob Strader,  
Adam N. Riddle,  
John P. Foote,  
Edward C. Roll.

Dr. Bayless, as well as the undersigned, was then *forcibly* put out, and Dr. Shotwell *forcibly* put into the college. The latter part of this sentence is introduced, because it is not reasonable to suppose that a Professor would resign three different chairs in the same number of months, and then ask his friends to replace him in a chair occupied by one who was recommended by himself, and one, too, eminently calculated to discharge its duties.



Your honorable body will perceive that up to this time, the revolutionists were influenced in the government of the college by personal considerations—that they consulted nor regarded neither the opinions of the faculty, the wishes of the students or of the profession throughout the State. They were willing, nay, anxious to place all the interests of the institution in peril, rather than allow one to serve under them, for whose destruction they had so long labored, and sacrificed so much.

The undersigned will proceed to show to your honorable body, that in the government of the college, since the revolutionists came into power, falsehood and malice have occupied too prominent a place.

One would naturally suppose, that for any purpose whatever, and for almost any offence, real or imaginary, your memorialist had been dealt with harshly enough, when he was ejected from the college by the revolutionists, and when they had feasted to gluttony upon his character. They, however, thought otherwise. They were unwilling to bring your memorialist to a trial, such as would have been granted in any other institution in the land, with the right of self-defence; but they were eager to invent and circulate accusations against him after condemnation. Some of these accusations are contained in a pamphlet, issued in behalf of the revolutionists, and signed "John L. Vattier, M. D., one of the Board of Trustees." They, with the accompanying replies are herewith presented, not so much in vindication of your memorialist, although complete in this regard, as a part and parcel of the government of the college.

Charge 1. "To all who have had the opportunity or the interest to look into the condition of the Medical College of Ohio, for some time past, it is well known that Dr. Wright failed to give satisfaction to his classes, and in many instances so great was this discontent, that it was embodied in petitions for his removal, numerously signed by the students and suppressed only by the urgent entreaties of one or more of his respected colleagues."

*Explanation.* The writer of the above, has been long a resident of Cincinnati, and the selfish, sulky and revengeful spirit he manifested at an early age, has risen with his height, and strengthened with his years. He is ambitious, but has not yet learned the difference between notoriety and reputation. Unfortunately, perhaps, for the un-



dersigned, he has had no great appreciation of such a character. But he was taught at an early age, that, to avoid the bite of the growling mastiff, he must pass him unnoticed, or bestow upon him marked kindness. The undersigned reasoned from analogy, and following the natural inclination of his feelings, chose the latter course. In this his judgment was doubtless at fault, for it is well known to the profession, that this "one of the Board," has used all his efforts for many years to excite opposition in the classes against your memorialist. And even the petitions to which he alludes, originated in his office, if not actually written by him.

*Refutation.* Dr. Downs, one of the resident physicians of the commercial hospital, states in a letter now before me, "I can speak merely of the time I was connected with the college. During that time I never heard of but one petition for your removal among the students, and that I never saw, nor could I upon inquiry find any one who had signed it." (The secretary thought he would see how the noise of such a thing would take, before resorting to the thing itself.) "During the first two winters I was in the college I paid but little attention to the comparative popularity of the members of the faculty. But, during the winter of '49, '50, I believe you gave satisfaction to a large majority of the class, and several students having learned that you had a number of enemies in the city, spoke to me concerning the propriety of offering a series of resolutions complimentary to yourself, which proposition I opposed on the ground, that the enmity and opposition of persons not connected with the college, was not sufficient cause for us to make a distinction between our teachers, as would be done by complimenting one and not all. I am aware, however, that you have a number of bitter enemies and opposers *among those students who reside in the city*, and who, I believe would do every thing in their power to promote your downfall."

Professor Locke has addressed me thus: "It would be extraordinary, that a professor in a medical school, should discharge his duties for many years, even very ably, without some attempts at movements against him. Mostly, these movements are traceable to some single point of ferment, excited by some unaccountable individual pique, or by the interference of prejudice from without, arising not unfrequently from *professional competition*."



There has not been on the part of the students of the Medical College of Ohio, at any time, an expression of disapprobation of yourself as a teacher, which I considered as having a foundation more substantial than the above. Some sessions I have heard from students not a word of disapprobation, but, on the other hand *universal and warm commendation*. This has been more particularly the case with regard to the last session. Especially have I heard the students and former graduates, speak in the highest terms of yourself as a practitioner, as a prescriber at the bed side of the sick, and of your clinical instructions at the hospital, a point of concession I consider a vast one. I do not know that there ever was more than once an attempt to circulate a petition for your removal amongst the class, and so little attention did I think it deserved, that I had forgotten it, until my attention has now been called to it. It is true, we have adopted as a sound principle of college policy, never to encourage legislative movements in our classes, but, I did not consider the above attempt, as requiring any interference, or as endangering the position of an esteemed colleague." The revolutionists then, will pocket the first charge as a base fabrication.

*Charge 2.* "The attempt of Dr. Wright to excite the professional sentiment and feelings of the country Physicians against the government of the college, is in perfect harmony with his character, a pestilent and restless agitator, his whole career while connected with the college, was characterized by ceaseless manœuvres to keep himself in place, and now that he is out, to undermine its prospects by unscrupulous fabrications."

*Remarks.* If the revolutionists had been governed in this charge by information derived from the faculty, those who had been my colleagues for many years, instead of their own wish that it should be so, they would have established a more lasting and enviable character for veracity. The undersigned has had charge by appointment of the faculty, of some important matters connected with the welfare of the college, nearly every year since their interests became identified; and never in a single instance will the faculty say he violated his instructions. Even in those cases where his opinions were adverse to theirs, as will be seen by the letters of Governors Bartley and Ford, he acted in strict conformity to their wishes. And in the expression



of his opinion in regard to the unfitness of "John L. Vattier M. D.," to act honestly in the capacity of a trustee, there has always been a concurrence of opinion between the undersigned and his colleagues. In the assaults which have been made from time to time upon the professional and private standing of his colleagues, both the living and the dead, and in the several attempts at intrigues against them, the undersigned has never faltered in their just defence, and has even received the blows intended for them.

By "pestilent agitator" is meant a producer of plagues. That "one of the board" has had a plague spot festering in his heart for many years, is well known to the profession in this community, and the agency the undersigned has had in producing this most loathsome affection, will be briefly explained, inasmuch as the explanation constitutes a part of the history of the college.

Some years since a difficulty arose between the then Professor and Demonstrator of Anatomy. The dispute was referred to the Faculty for adjustment. The undersigned was of opinion, that the right was on the side of the demonstrator; but the professor obtained a majority of the Faculty in his favor, and the Demonstrator left the college. John L. Vattier was a candidate for the place left vacant by the removal of Dr. Judkins. The undersigned opposed his appointment, on the ground of incompetency and hostility to the college. The professor of anatomy, to whom had been entrusted the appointing power, acknowledged the propriety and force of the objections, and although reluctantly, turned his friend aside. An individual was then nominated by the undersigned; it was understood that he had enjoyed superior advantages for the prosecution of anatomy, and that he had sufficient talents to make a Demonstrator, if he could be stimulated to industry and energy. He received the appointment; and thus is explained one of the causes of the *plague spot*.

Again: application was made to the Faculty for the use of the college, in behalf of those engaged in delivering summer lectures. A portion of the Faculty opposed the application for several reasons, but, mainly upon the ground, that the applicants would be encouraged in their attempts to control the destinies of the college. The undersigned was in favor of granting facilities to *all* who were ambitious to become lecturers. If they should be successful, well and good, if not,



they would be satisfied to remain in a position far less perplexing and dangerous. The Secretary was the confidential friend of one of the Faculty, and soon learned the opinions of individual members. He was dissatisfied with the views, expressed by the undersigned, because he knew that if brought into competition with others, and not taken into special favor, he must necessarily be disappointed in his desire of promotion. Thus was the *plague spot* extended.

*Charge 3.* "Dr. Wright, not many winters since, directed his whole legislative efforts to obtain the passage of a law to transfer the institution in toto to himself and to his colleagues, thereby desiring to secure to himself a professorship for life. But the remainder of the Faculty, to their credit be it said, entered their solemn protest against the measure."

*Explanation.* In their annual report to the Legislature in 1845, the trustees of the college asked for an appropriation to improve or enlarge the college edifice. The undersigned was appointed by the Faculty and trustees to represent the condition and necessities of the college. He soon ascertained that the finances of the State were not in a condition justifying such an appropriation as the trustees had estimated to be necessary, and especially as other institutions had applied in vain for similar favors. An inquiry then arose in regard to the relations subsisting between the college and the State. The opinion was expressed also, that the Legislature would never again appropriate money for the support of the college, and especially, as she gave such doubtful evidence of permanency. Again: it was asked, why the Faculty did not advance the necessary amount? To this it was replied, that they held their places by too uncertain a tenure, to justify an outlay so necessarily heavy; that under the present charter, and under the influences surrounding the college, a member of the Faculty might become responsible for a large amount to-day, and to-morrow he might be removed from his place. The sentiment very soon prevailed, however, that the college was injured by its connection with the State, and by its reliance upon the Legislature for aid. The chairman of the finance committee (Governor Ford) introduced a bill in the House of Representatives, transferring the college property to the Faculty. It passed the lower House with but three dissenting voices and would have passed the Senate unanimously, if the undersigned had not received a letter from his colleagues declining the transfer.



During the pendency of the bill in the Senate, John L. Vattier, M. D., who at that period, as well as now, was exercising a peculiar regard over the affairs of the college, wrote to a Senator denouncing the measure as one concocted by your memorialist, to keep himself in place, and to secure the rejection of certain obnoxious members of the Faculty. It is true, your memorialist was willing, individually, to accept the transfer, and he looked upon the matter as one every way calculated to give new life and energy to the college. And he is now more fully satisfied than ever, that if the bill, or one transferring the college to some one of the literary institutions of the State, had become a law, it would have been beyond the reach of malign influences, and her class would have been double its present size. But acting for the Faculty, the undersigned was not authorized, nay, he was forbidden from having them incorporated in any law, without their express sanction. To protect himself against the fabrications which were being circulated by "John L. Vattier, M. D.," the undersigned obtained the following, among other letters, which are in as full force now as on the day they were written:

*Refutation.* In a letter to Professor Locke, dated 27th December, 1845, the Hon. Mordecai Bartley, Governor of the State, says: "I discovered last session, that an appropriation to aid in the erection of a college edifice could not be had, therefore come to the conclusion, that the only way by which you could, for some years at least, have a building sufficiently large, would be by giving the whole property into the hands of the Faculty and trustees. With this impression, I stated the opinion in my message. While Dr. Wright was here at the last session of the Legislature, I well recollect that he did not want the transfer of the college property from the State to the trustees and Faculty; still, as no appropriation could be obtained, I supposed that all parties would be willing to see such transfer made at the present session; hence the proposition, although entirely my own, was made with the most friendly intentions."

Again: Governor Ford, chairman of the finance committee, very kindly forwarded to me the following letter:

COLUMBUS, December 27, '45.

DR. M. B. WRIGHT:

*Dear Sir*—Understanding that the question has been raised, with whom the plan originated to give to the trustees and professors of the



Medical College of Ohio, all the interest which the State has in the property of the institution, on condition they should make the buildings and keep them in repair, and use them for that purpose, and no other; and I can only say, I believe the whole matter originated with myself, though I cannot say with certainty. This *I know*, when I first mentioned the subject to yourself, you objected to it, saying that it would not be satisfactory, or might not be satisfactory to the Faculty, and as you thought would not enable them to make the necessary buildings. I told you, in the condition of the State, we should not be justified in doing more, or giving money, and that too when the institutions in the other parts of the State, which were now asking, had never received anything—that we could not give to each one—that we could not single out *one*, and that *one*, too, which had already received *much*, to bestow upon it *more*. You said that you could not consent to that proposition till you could write and obtain the consent of the *Faculty* (or those whom you represented, the exact terms used I may not now use,) but you doubted whether they would assent.

Very respectfully yours,

SEABURY FORD.

Other letters might be given equally conclusive. The undersigned then is exonerated from the charge of having given direction to the affairs of the college for selfish purposes, and the *accusers* occupy a position of which *trustees* should be ashamed.

*Charge 4.* "In his twaddle about his mission to the Legislature, his reference to Edward C. Roll, Adam N. Riddle and myself, there is a ridiculous assumption of consequence and display of vanity, at which one could scarcely repress his risible faculties, but for the *depravity exhibited in the unblushing falsehood* that he acted as agent of the college and the faculty; for I am fully authorized to state, that he was not appointed, delegated or requested, by either the trustees or faculty, to go to Columbus, last winter, on any business connected with the institution, and that his business, wholly voluntary, has, like all his preceding agencies, real or pretended, but one object, that of securing himself in his professorship, while he was neglecting its duties."

*Refutation.* In reply to a note addressed to the Dean of the Faculty, he says, "In answer to your inquiries of yesterday, I submit the following statement:



You was not *formally* elected an agent on behalf of the faculty, but, in various conversations which occurred, it was deemed advisable that some one should be in Columbus when the trustees were elected; and as you mentioned your intention to go at that time, it was, I believe, understood that the faculty *expected* you to promote, if necessary, the re-election of the old board of trustees.

When you presented a bill of expenses for the trip to Columbus, I thought proper, as Dean of the Faculty, to allow it, and it was so entered on the books. This, among other items of expenditures, was returned by the Dean to the Treasurer of the Board, all of which were received by him, without particular scrutiny, for the purpose of being presented to the Board of Trustees for their examination.

This statement, according to the best of my recollection, embraces the facts of the case.

Respectfully,

L. M. LAWSON.

The above letter, it will be observed, is conclusive, in regard to the point at issue. Some may think, perhaps, that it is unnecessarily evasive or manifests too strong a desire to palliate. A word or two in explanation.

At an early period in the last session, the undersigned mentioned to the Dean that it might become necessary for him to go to Lancaster, to attend to some important private business, and if so, he should take Columbus in his route. This necessity was not presented until after the adjournment of the Legislature, hence his appointment could not have arisen from the fact of his "expectation" to go to Columbus, especially as the Dean was the only one of the Faculty to whom he mentioned his contingent visit.

Again, the undersigned was not only *expected* to promote, if necessary, the re-election of the old board of trustees, but, he was so far *instructed*, by the faculty, as to have placed in his hands the names of persons suitable as trustees, and who, it was supposed, would act independently of "opposition factions" and for the general good. The names thus agreed upon, were submitted to the chairman of the Medical committee of the House of Representatives, Dr. Fee, with such explanations as seemed to be proper, and by him they were embodied in a resolution and reported to the House. Subsequently, at the earnest and repeated solicitations of a portion of the delegation from Hamilton county, the ticket was so modified, as, in the course of events, to place the control in the hands of the revolutionists.



That the Treasurer accepted the accounts of the Dean "without particular scrutiny," is a point of little consequence, inasmuch as he sustained the correctness of the charge before the board, when it was there presented for acceptance.

Fortunately, the rod of terror did not impair the recollection of Professor Locke, who says, "In relation to your being an agent of the faculty at our last Legislature, I must answer as follows: Early in the session, we were apprised that measures were being taken in our city, to revolutionize our board of trustees at their approaching appointment. Mostly satisfied with our trustees, and believing that the proposed changes would not contribute at all to the public good of the college, the subject was several times discussed, and finally it was, I think, unanimously agreed, (Dr. Mussey not being present) that you should go to Columbus, to see as far as possible, that truthful representations were made there. Your hour of lecturing was to be occupied by your colleagues during your absence, and you were to have again after your return their hours, to give your full course of lectures, a plan which was executed by you. No formal action was taken in reference to your appointment, and no record made, because it was not a formal transaction, but an act in our capacity as private citizens and humble petitioners to our Legislative body. In my presence, a most excellent member of our board of trustees, whose kind counsels had ever proved sound, requested you to go to Columbus. His words were, "Professor Wright had better go to Columbus and attend to the interests of the college there."

In addition, the undersigned would state, that other members of the board of trustees made similar requests, among whom may be mentioned at this time, Dr. Wm. Mount, President, and Adam N. Riddle, Treasurer. And, as already stated, the traveling expenses of the undersigned were paid by the *dean* of the faculty, *approved by the treasurer* of the board of trustees, and *allowed by the board* itself. Now, around whose neck is that serpentine coil "*the depravity exhibited in the unblushing falsehood?*"

*Charge 5.* This charge embraces part of the foregoing, viz: "*neglect of duty.*"

*Statement.* In arranging the order and number of lectures, previous to the session of '49, '50, the undersigned expressed his inability to examine the entire range of his subjects with satisfaction to himself or his class, by giving the number of lectures only, required of him



by the laws of the institution, and requested an additional hour each week. This request was granted, and the undersigned delivered in the aggregate, twenty extra lectures, and without any additional compensation. Censurable neglect!

*Refutation.* One of the graduates of last session, in a letter now before me, says, "Concerning the charge spoken of in your last question, I may say, that during the last session, you lectured five hours a week instead of four, as is required, During the absence of Dr. Lawson, you filled his hour as well as your own, (and I believe he was absent the same time as yourself;) and besides this, you on several occasions lectured six times a week."

Another quotation from the letter of Professor Locke: "With regard to *neglect of duty*. Every professor has, so far as I know, not only been prompt to deliver a full course of lectures, but when there has been a spare hour, there has been an emulous competition to know who shall have it. None has been more prompt than yourself, and I have no doubt you have given more than the constitutional number of lectures.

"Finally, permit me to say, that while I must submit to constituted authorities, I feel it my duty to say to you, in view of so many years of harmonious, nay, cordial co-operation as colleagues, I sincerely regret your removal from the institution."

*Charge 6.* The pamphlet of the revolutionists closes with this paragraph: "In conclusion of this reply, which has already extended beyond the limits I have prescribed to myself, I beg to give the gentleman this parting admonition, that when next he finds it necessary to bolster himself up by a laudatory letter from the township trustees, who really know as little about the professors, and the Medical College of Ohio, as any other three worthy individuals in community, he should be more careful to have the letter indited by some other hand than his own. Chirography is often a most potent, as well as unwelcome witness."

*The letter, and general explanations.* During the efforts that were being made to vacate the chairs, and the revolutionists having refused to assign any tangible reason for their hostility to the undersigned, a portion of the board addressed the township trustees, with a view of



obtaining their opinions and observations, in regard to the conduct and qualifications of the undersigned. The following is a part of the letter given in reply, and which the revolutionists have been pleased to condemn :

“Your letter of the 22d inst., asking for information as to the nature, extent and value of the services of Drs, Wright and Bayless, as physicians in the Commercial Hospital, has been received, and we cheerfully respond to your enquiries. There are from 150 to 200 patients almost constantly in the hospital, and of these about 70 are females. For about twelve years past, Dr. Wright has had, we believe, the sole charge of the female wards, and at some periods he has had charge of the other departments ; and during the whole time, his professional conduct has been characterized by untiring industry, great ability and success. He has seldom been absent from the city for a period longer than a few days together ; and in the numerous, varied and difficult cases which have come under his charge, he has always evinced great alacrity, cheerfulness and humanity in the discharge of his duties. In short, he seems to have taken a deep interest in the hospital, as a humane institution.

“It is with profound regret that we learn of the efforts made to remove him from his chair ; for without derogating from the character of any other physician in the city, we think, should the effort succeed, that the loss to the hospital will be very great, if not irreparable.”

Signed :

WILLIAM CROSSMAN,  
JOHN HUDSON,  
JESSE B. BOWLIN,  
*Township Trustees.*

The revolutionists intimate in terms sufficiently strong not to be misunderstood, that in the above letter the township trustees have certified to what they did not know to be true; while the statements contained in their own delectable pamphlet, were founded upon personal knowledge. A few remarks will show the falsehood of such a statement.

With one of the Township Trustees, the undersigned has been officially associated in the hospital, for a period of twelve years, and with



the others a considerable portion of that time. They visit the hospital daily, to provide for its wants—to extend its usefulness—to render its unfortunate inmates comfortable and contented, and, in a word, to fulfill in every regard the expectations of the public. And can it be believed for a single moment, that these men are faithful in the performance of all these duties, and yet know nothing of the manner in which the attending physicians discharge their duties? Preposterous!

To what an extent are the revolutionists acquainted with the undersigned? In regard to one, enough has been said upon this point. Another, the treasurer, has been a trustee for several years, was the decided advocate of the undersigned, or at least his professed friend, up almost to the very hour when the faculty was dissolved; and was anxious that the undersigned should endeavor to secure his election, that he might aid in preventing the very revolution, which he afterwards became conspicuous in promoting. Being deputed to manage the end of the noose, after it had been adjusted, it is supposed his kind feelings induced him to draw strongly, so as to terminate as speedily as possible, the sufferings of the victim. And, the undersigned has charity enough for human infirmities to believe, that the treasurer would have remained true to himself and his original purpose, if we could have been the *last* to converse before the vote of condemnation.

With the remainder of the revolutionists, the undersigned has had a speaking acquaintance only. They know nothing personally of his qualifications, and those who were not predetermined from a malicious feeling, were satisfied with statements derived exclusively from “opposition factions.” Is it not apparent, then, that the revolutionists felt themselves under the necessity of resorting to artifice, of departing from the common courtesies of gentlemen, with a view of weakening or discrediting the testimony of the Township Trustees.

Again, the revolutionists accuse the township Trustees of a blind subserviency to the wishes of the undersigned, and of having signed a “laudatory letter” prepared by himself. To those who are acquainted with the Township Trustees, it is not necessary to offer one word in reply, but, to others, it may be proper to say, that the undersigned never saw said letter until after it had become public property, and that in word and in spirit the imputation is false.

To discredit the statements of the Township Trustees still further, the revolutionists allege that they “know as little about the professors



and the Medical College of Ohio, as any other three worthy individuals in community." Is it a truth that these "three worthy individuals," have been with the faculty shoulder to shoulder, for so many years in sustaining the college, and at the same time be ignorant of its government or claims? If they know nothing of the college, after so long an experience in its affairs, what amount of information do the revolutionists possess, who scarcely knew of the existence of the college, until within the last few months?

The question very naturally presents itself, what could have induced the revolutionists thus to jeopardize the interests of the college, by breaking or weakening its connection with the hospital? One or two facts and a little reflection, will decide this point. Some years ago the "Secretary" applied to the Township Trustees, for the appointment of Physician to the poor. The Trustees, ever mindful of their duties to this unfortunate class of our population, very respectfully rejected the application.

Again, the Secretary has been opposed to the continuance of the hospital as a prop to the college. At least, the undersigned was informed by an honorable Senator, that he was bound by a pledge given the said Secretary, to vote for a bill depriving the college of its medical control over the hospital.

Separate these two institutions! Select men as Trustees of the college, who would deprive it of its great source of attraction and power! Accomplish this darling object of the revolutionists, and the college would soon become, indeed, a heap of ruins—the certain trophy of folly and madness.

In their pamphlet, the revolutionists claim that a professor must be a passive instrument in their hands, that they may dispose of his character in any way "satisfactory to themselves." But, your memorialist has yet to learn, that the General Assembly has ever passed an act justifying such an assumption of power. The medical college of Ohio should be made subservient to the wishes and welfare of the public; and that public will surely never sanction the doctrine, that a professor shall have his reputation assailed and his prospects blasted, by the Trustees, for the reason merely that it is "satisfactory to themselves." To a physician, and especially to a medical teacher, reputation is dearer than life, for upon it every thing in life depends. And the idea, that because a few men are clothed with a little brief authori-



ty, they may villify those to whom they are opposed, and to their heart's content, is too monstrous for serious contemplation.

But the attention of your honorable body is called to some of the actual results of this claim of "right." At the close of the last session, and while the arrangements were being made for a revolution, Professor Drake sent his own resignation to the Board, and subsequently that of Professor Bayless, by previous authority. Instead of the resignation of the latter being accepted, the revolutionists removed him from his place. What had Dr. Bayless done to merit this mark of disapprobation? Nothing! And no reason has been assigned by the revolutionists, except that it was satisfactory to themselves.

About this time the Trustees re-elected Dr. William Mount their President, under an implied provision in the charter, and in conformity with usage, for the term of three years. After presiding at several of their meetings, he departed for the east. Whilst in Washington, he received telegraphic dispatches from the revolutionists urging him to send back by telegraph, a proxy vote in favor of the revolutionary scheme. With this request he very properly refused to comply, upon the ground, aside from any other, that such a vote would be given in violation of the charter. The revolutionists became enraged—they experienced all the shame of anticipated defeat, and they proceeded at once to vote him out of office, and to elect one more pliant to their wishes. These proceedings of the revolutionists were doubtless "satisfactory to themselves," but were they courteous? were they legal? were they "right?"

But these promptings of passion have placed the school in a condition from which it may not easily escape. *Two* of the Trustees claim to be President of the Board, and they will each insist upon the right to sign diplomas and confer degrees. Suppose the revolutionists should thrust the legal President aside, will the signature of the other be valid? In this struggle for power and right, what are students to receive as an equivalent for their imperfect diplomas?

Again, for several weeks the undersigned was prohibited, by order of the revolutionists, from entering his own cabinet, to attend to the preservation of his specimens and prepare them for removal. And nothing but a threatened prosecution enabled him to obtain peaceable possession of his property. This the revolutionists feel to be "satis-



factory to themselves," but whence came the authority to hold and use the property of others against their consent. True, it would have been far more honorable and praiseworthy, if they had taken this property and appropriated it to the use of themselves and heirs forever, than to assail reputation, and then dance around its mutilated form with wild and savage exultation.

In a circular recently issued, signed John P. Foote, President, and John L. Vattier, M. D., Secretary, it is stated, that all these transactions were brought about by the "force of public opinion." Public opinion! When? how? where expressed? Do these men construe that which is "satisfactory to themselves," into public opinion? It would certainly be strange legislation, if every seat in your honorable body were to be made vacant, with a view of getting rid of some member obnoxious to somebody. And doubtless, he who would advocate such a measure, would be very glad to sustain his own character for honesty and intelligence, by the "force of public opinion."

Never, until now, have the qualifications of a Professor been measured by his political opinions. And that some have been guided in their opinions by political considerations, is evident from a letter written by a very intelligent and honorable member of the profession, which reads: "Whenever the subject of the base attempts to accomplish your removal were agitated in my hearing, I invariably put the question, What objections, sir, can you bring against Dr. Wright as a man, or as a lecturer? One said, "*he is a whig,*" another, "*he is a democrat,*" a third answered my question by asking another, such as Do you consider Dr. Wright a good lecturer? I replied to all who put such questions, that I had enjoyed the advantage of hearing Professor Rigby, Ramsbotham, Kennedy, Montgomery, Burns, Churchill, Ashwell, and even the veteran Dr. Lee, of London, and that as a lecturer, I would as soon hear Wright, as any one of them. Such objectors generally ask me what means I had of judging? I replied, that I heard lectures delivered in the Ohio Medical College, during the sessions of 1845-'6 and 1846-'7, and that of course I had a fair opportunity of drawing my own conclusions, regarding the quality of all the lectures delivered in the institution, and comparing them with those I have from time to time heard in Europe. Such objectors,



should mention, were either practitioners, or the pupils of those belonging either directly or indirectly to one or other of the different cliques in this city, who were endeavoring either to introduce themselves or some of their friends into the different chairs of the Medical College; but when I replied to those gentlemen as above, no more objections were raised in my hearing."

The Secretary of the Board of Trustees has formed an association, ostensibly to hear lectures and examine students, but in reality, no doubt, to criticise, to find fault and to create prejudices against one or more members of the faculty, so that another opportunity will soon be offered for "young talent to be appreciated." One of the association declared recently in a public speech, that any two members of the society to which he belonged, could prostrate the professional standing of any man who disobeyed their wishes. What Professor can withstand the systematic opposition and detraction alluded to in this speech, and especially, when those having authority over him, not only deny him all right of self-defence, but are impatient to act as his executioners?

It was natural for the revolutionists to suppose, that after they had accomplished their wishes, those who had acted with them would remain quiet, until they themselves had issued the order for a renewed attack. But they announce in their circular, that the college is still "surrounded by unscrupulous empyrics, and violent but unmerited enmities." And they might have added, "by those who attach to themselves credit in proportion only as they may vilify and injure others."

The Medical College of Ohio, should be second to none, in laborious, independent, open efforts to improve, and as far as may be, perfect the science of medicine. The Professor is bound by the most solemn duties to the profession and the public, to promulgate the results of his own observation and experience, no matter with whose opinions they may come in conflict. But dangerous will be the position of any Professor in the Medical College of Ohio, who extends his teachings beyond the limited range of "one of the Board of Trustees," and those who recognize him as their leader. To discharge his duties conscientiously, the Professor must combine with his knowledge an unusual amount of moral courage, for he must speak with the "opposition



factions" staring him in the face. Must he consult his rival or his enemy, before he is safe in the expression of his opinions? Shall the Medical College of Ohio be reduced to so humiliating a position? Better, far better, that she should be abandoned and forgotten!

There is perhaps, no city in the Union, where there is so little cordiality of feeling and co-operation among medical men for the general good, as in Cincinnati. And it is with the deepest heartfelt regret, that the undersigned is compelled to say, that this deplorable state of things is rapidly on the increase. If there is nothing to be heard among medical men, but disagreement and abuse, upon whom are the people to rely? What advantage can medical men acquire for themselves, while they condemn the source of their own knowledge, and trample under foot the mantle of charity, liberality and good will, that should cover them all alike, and as one man? And if it be true, that the profession has been divided into "factions," in consequence of the numerous and conflicting claims upon the college, has it not become the imperative duty of your honorable body to give to it a more independent existence, a more enduring foundation—to so change its character that it will be no longer considered the "legitimate bone of contention."

The entire transfer of the college, or its retention by the State, with such a change in its charter as would require the trustees to be selected from various parts of the State; are not new questions. The latter has been opposed upon the ground, that a sufficient number of the board could not readily be brought together for the transaction of business. But the occurrences of the past, as well as former seasons, have proven the fallacy of this argument. The trustees of the Delaware University, as an example, reside in different and distant portions of the State, and notwithstanding the unhealthfulness of the past season, they met in July, their regular time for meeting, and promptly attended to all the business before them. The trustees of the medical college of Ohio, on the other hand, who reside in and adjacent to Cincinnati, could not be assembled from the third day of May until the fifteenth of October. At the former period, the chairs were vacated, and although the circular of the revolutionists was issued in July, announcing falsely the completion of the faculty, the board did not meet and elect Dr. Bell, Baxley and Edwards, until the October



course was half advanced. While, therefore, the location of trustees near the college, has resulted in great injury, it has not been attended by any conceivable good.

Nor would the organization of a more permanent board, if composed of residents of Cincinnati remedy the evil. The "opposition factions" so pointedly alluded to by Professor Lawson, would still exist, and their associations with, and control over individual members of the board would continue the same. What they failed to secure for themselves by merit, would be accomplished, as it has been, by detraction, or by a ceaseless annoyance of those trustees, who look only to the general good, until they would be forced to resign. A board selected from different parts of the State, could not be induced to take the ground that "opposition factions" "must be consulted and their wishes gratified," but they would bring to their meetings the wishes and opinions of the profession from all parts of the State, and thus, by a concentration of feeling be enabled to act for the great body of the people. They would not admit the correctness of the doctrine that "*country doctors* are too ignorant to know any thing of the true policy of medical colleges, and *country students* to judge of the merits of a professor." They would turn a deaf ear to language so grossly insulting, and accord to all men a due share of judgment wherever they may reside.

The trustees have repeatedly, and for a number of years, represented to the legislature the dilapidated and falling condition of the college building. When the present board came into power, it was pronounced by them almost unfit for use, and a committee was appointed to obtain a loan, sufficient to make extensive improvements. But while applications were pending for this loan, the college was revolutionized, and its credit being again destroyed, the applications failed.

In these movements, we see the inconsistency or insincerity of the revolutionists. Would they endeavor to borrow money for their own private use, without tendering security, and at the same time announce that they had no certain means of payment—that every thing in this regard depended upon contingencies? If they are sincere in their professions of good will to the college, and in their management of it, why do they not advance the sum required in her behalf? Is it for want of pecuniary ability? Assuredly not. Some of them could,



individually, advance the necessary amount, and not know their purses were any the lighter. Indeed, they were elected by the board, according to the statement of the Treasurer, exclusively, on account of their wealth and monied influence. If they have no confidence in the ability of the college to meet its engagements, in what way are they to inspire confidence in others? It has been fully demonstrated, that if the institution were placed upon a substantial foundation, and governed by trustees who thought and acted for the general good, its receipts would be sufficient, not only to defray current expenses, but, to justify an outlay, in the erection of a building, to any reasonable amount. But, the thought of constructing a building, and paying the necessary expenses out of the income of the school, while there is nothing in prospect but annual bankruptsy, is ridiculous in the extreme.

The great advantage derived by the college from the hospital, has been fully set forth by the faculty in all their annual circulars. And a considerable number of students, who had lost all confidence in the stability and prosperity of the college, were induced to connect themselves with it on account of hospital facilities. Aside from these facilities they would have preferred an institution that offered some guarantee of permanence. The trustees then, should protect the interests of the hospital out of regard to the college. But the hospital itself contains too many lives, trembling between time and eternity, to be ruthlessly assailed. Every mutation of the college affects more or less the interests of the hospital. In 1849, by the dissolution of the faculty, the hospital was deprived, for about three months, of its legal medical attendants, and as the township trustees had no power to appoint successors, the undersigned and a portion of his former colleagues, volunteered their services in behalf of the sick, until a new faculty were elected.

But the revolutionists cannot say that whatever injury they have inflicted upon the hospital, have been incidental to their efforts in promoting the good of the college. Their direct attack upon the guardians of the hospital was intentional and unprovoked, and is sufficient evidence of their desire to throw the hospital and the college upon their individual resources, and to make the former, as well as the latter, an object of professional scramble and the arena for "opposition fac-



tions." In the name of suffering humanity we protest against such acts of injustice and cruelty. If the connection between the college and hospital is to be continued, may we not hope that the former will not be allowed to drag the latter into a position by which its usefulness will be impaired if not destroyed ?

The revolutionists claim, boastingly, that the size of the present class is to be esteemed a triumph under "the circumstances." Doubtless, the class is much larger than any one had reason to expect. All the classes have been large in view of "the circumstances." But it is "the circumstances" which your memorialist, as well as others, have long and uniformly condemned, which have retarded the prosperity of the school, and prostrated it over and over again. If there is cause for congratulation under "the circumstances," what may not the friends of the institution anticipate when all the great obstacles are removed ?

The greatly reduced rates of tuition, and the abandonment of the Lexington School, not to mention other causes, have contributed to the size of the present class. If, however, the price of tickets is to be reduced after every revolution, the school will soon take its place upon the free list.

But the prosperity of the college, at any period, is not to be viewed as representing its prospects in the future. While the faculty have been laboring to improve its condition, paradoxical as it may seem, they have felt a dread in anticipation of any considerable increase in the size of their classes. For, it is a fact, that when the school has been most prosperous, opposition has been most violent and destructive. The class was unusually large during the session of 1844-'45, numbering 227 students, and as a consequence, the flames of jealousy were seen to rise on every hand. The faculty were charged with grave, not to say criminal offences—letters of censure were addressed to members of the Legislature—an investigation was requested and granted—new members of the board of trustees were led astray by the falsehoods of "opposition factions—and, finally, when vindictiveness could go no further, a resolution was offered in the House of Representatives, calling for the sale of the college, and a distribution of the proceeds among the other institutions of the State.



Such is the position of one of the old and prominent seats of learning—such are the malign influences by which it is surrounded—such is the unprecedented disregard of professional character—such is the doubtful and dangerous hold of the professors upon their several chairs—such is the inability of the college to accomplish the great purposes of its creation.

With the facts set forth in this memorial, and others which will be given hereafter, your memorialist is induced to hope, that your honorable body will so modify the charter of the Medical College of Ohio, as to enable it to perform its duty to the profession and the public, and to feel that all its interests are permanently secured.

As in duty bound, your memorialist will ever pray, &c.

M. B. WRIGHT.

P. S. In addition it may be stated, that in 1832 a board of commissioners were appointed by the Legislature to examine into the affairs of the college, and especially in regard to the best means of promoting its interests. In their report, drawn up by the chairman, the Hon. John W. Willey, it is recommended as a leading measure, that the trustees be removed from Cincinnati and its influences.

Letters have been received by a gentleman residing in Columbus, from physicians in different parts of the State, urging the propriety of distributing the trustees over the State.

The present secretary of the board set forth in a memorial to the Legislature of last winter, the importance of changing the board from Cincinnati to places remote from local influences, as I have been assured by a gentleman in whose hands the memorial was placed.

The acts of the trustees, the motives governing, and influences surrounding them, were strongly deprecated by Doctor, now Professor Edwards. He looked upon the entrance of any man into the school, as the acceptance of his *professional death warrant*. He esteemed the establishment of a new school as necessary, to reflect the true character of our profession, and to meet the demands of the public, and he heartily rendered his aid in the organization of a new school. This was done at a time, and under circumstances, which precluded all idea of insincerity.



Lastly — the trustees have given evidence of guilt, and of their intention to commit further wrong, by the nature of their annual report. The first statement nearly, in that report, is at variance with their statements formerly published, and is, in itself, a falsehood.

M. B. W.



