

A HISTORY

OF THE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

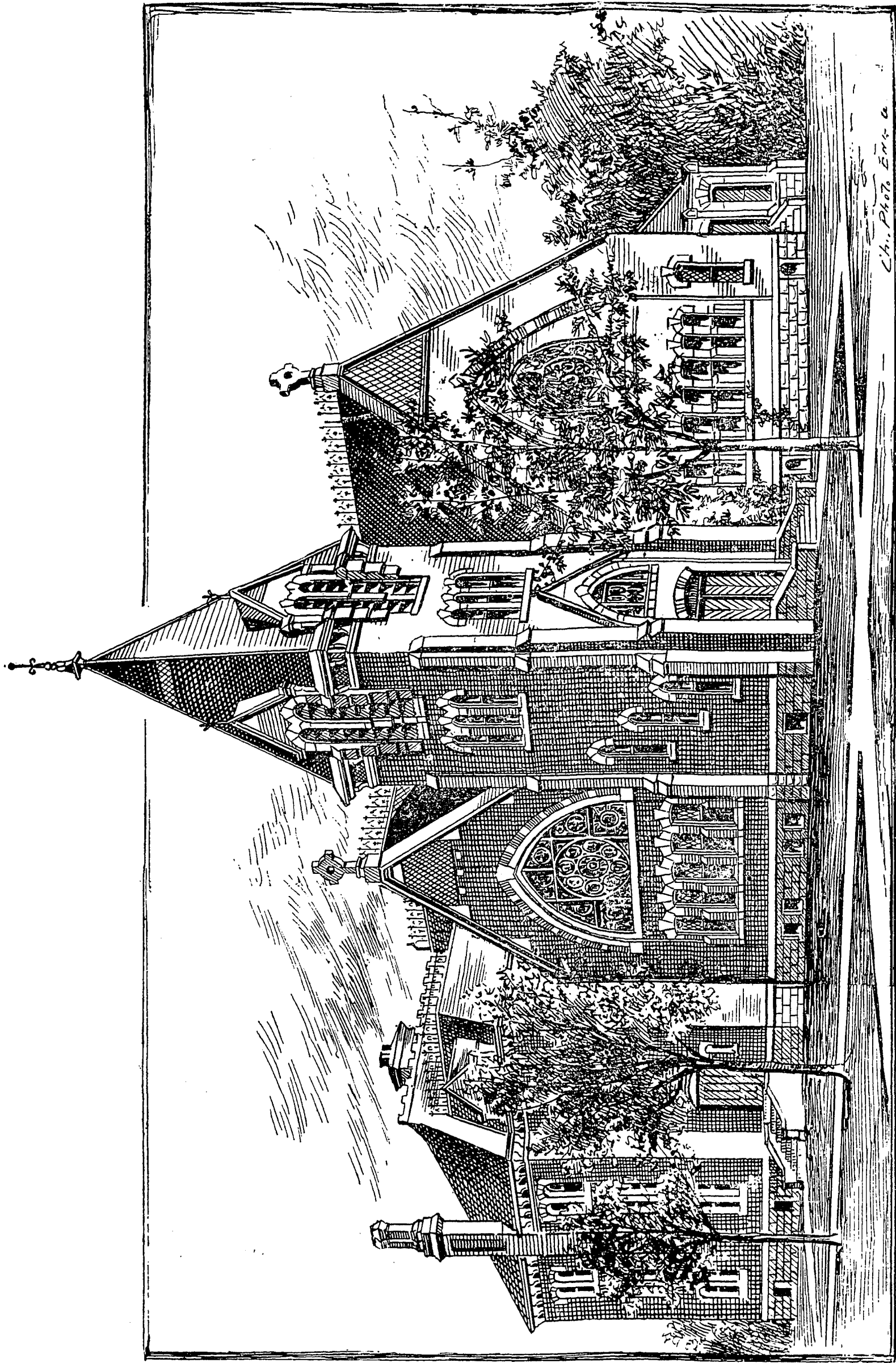
OF

WELLINGTON, OHIO.

BY

W. E. BARTON, PASTOR.

1892.



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HISTORY OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WELLINGTON, OHIO.

THE TOWNSHIP.

THE ten counties and portions of four other counties in the Northeast corner of Ohio, comprising the "Connecticut Western Reserve," with the exception of a tract embracing the present counties of Erie and Huron, which were reserved for Connecticut residents whose homes had been destroyed by fire during the Revolution, and a tract of twenty-five thousand acres in Trumbull county surrounding the salt spring which had been sold previously, were sold in 1795 to forty-eight individuals, who organized the "Connecticut Land Company." The proceeds of the sale of these lands—some \$1,200,000—were set apart by Connecticut as a common school fund. Under the Ordinance of 1787, the National Government, which had never allowed Connecticut's claim to the Reserve, assumed control over the entire Northwest Territory; and it was not till the Spring of 1800 that this and other disputes concerning the Reserve were settled by Connecticut's releasing to the United States all jurisdiction in the territory, the State retaining its title to the soil.¹

The thirty-eighth draft by the members of the Land Company embraced the present township of Wellington, which by subdivision became in 1807 the property of Ephraim Root. In 1818–20 Mr. Root sold the township to Francis Kingsbury, Frederick Hamlin, and others, of Berkshire

¹ "Early Ecclesiastical History of Western Reserve," by Rev. W. E. Barton, Vol. I. pp. 14 *seq.*, Papers of this Society.

county, Massachusetts. The first settlers arrived in March, 1818:² viz., Ephraim Wilcox, Charles Sweet, John Clifford, and Joseph Wilson, of Berkshire county, Massachusetts, and William T. Welling, of Montgomery county, N. Y., who shares with the Iron Duke the honor of the name of the town. The privilege of naming the town was offered to the citizen who would cut the greatest length of road. The winning bidder chose the name of "Charlemont," but the other settlers disliked the name, and cut his road for the privilege of changing the name to Wellington. Several families and the first women followed on July 4th, and the first white child, John W. Wilcox, was born Sept. 25th of the same year.

On the organization of Medina County in January, 1818, Wellington became a part of it, and so remained until the organization of Lorain County, January 21st, 1824. The township was organized in 1821, and held its first regular election October 12th, 1824, polling ten votes. In 1821 there had been thirty-seven inhabitants in the township; by 1829 the number of householders in the central district was twenty-one; and the entire town polled thirty-six votes at the State election in 1830. The village was incorporated August 3d, 1855, since which time it has increased in population from 1,029 to 2,173, and the township from 1,556 to 2,736, including the village. In 1820, Frederick Hamlin opened a store in a log building, and on September 10th, 1821, became the first postmaster of Wellington.

THE CHURCH.

The Church of Wellington was organized April 20th, 1824, by Rev. Messrs. Lot B. Sullivan and Alfred H. Betts.³

² History of Wellington Township, by J. H. Dickson, in "History of Lorain County."

³ Lot B. Sullivan and Alfred H. Betts were both missionaries of the Connecticut Society and members of the Huron Presbytery. For sketch of their lives see appendix to this paper.

The original members were James Kingsbury and his wife Martha, Amos Adams and his wife Huldah, David Webster, Harmon Kingsbury, Mrs. Nancy Hamlin, widow, Sarah Wilcox, Sarah Battle, and Mrs. Lydia T. Sullivan.

At its first meeting, the church adopted the "Congregational method of discipline" and subscribed to the Articles of Faith and covenant recommended by the Presbyteries of Grand River and Portage.⁴

This church was organized under what was known as the "Plan of Union," an arrangement adopted in 1801 by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the Congregational Association of Connecticut. By this arrangement ministers of the two denominations passed freely from one to the other, and churches either Presbyterian or Congregational, or a combination of the two, were under the care of the Presbytery of which their ministers were members. Hiram Kingsbury was elected clerk. For three years there were no deacons, until Justus Battle and Amos Adams were elected May 21st, 1827. For several years also, the church had no regular pastor, receiving the services of the various missionaries of the Connecticut Missionary Society. The two ministers who had organized the church preached here often, and Rev. Lot B. Sullivan, though not mentioned on the church records in a pastoral relation, is elsewhere mentioned as its stated supply for one year.⁵ One year from the date of the organization of the church Daniel Smith, licentiate, was called as its stated supply, and continued from June 26th, 1825, till June 26th, 1826.⁶

⁴ The record of the vote on the polity of the church was not in the original draft of the minutes, but interlined apparently when the minutes were adopted.

⁵ By Rev. A. R. Clark, afterward a pastor of this church, in Kennedy's "Plan of Union," p. 92.

⁶ See Biographical Note, appendix.

THE FIRST PASTOR.

The first pastor of the church was Rev. Joel Talcott, called October 14th, 1828, and installed by Huron Presbytery on October 19th of the same year. He continued as pastor until September 4th, 1837.⁷

Under the labors of Mr. Talcott the church increased in numbers, and there is reason to believe that its early members were a people of deep piety and more than ordinary intelligence. A message from the Presbytery to the church January 8th, 1843, full of affectionate entreaty and fear that the church was then going wrong through the teachings of those not well grounded in the faith, says: "We remember the love of your espousals, when in the wilderness you were collected together, a little band of very much more promise than was common, and how even before this you had with such zeal provided yourselves with the preaching of the Gospel. . . . We remember also those precious seasons of refreshing, when your numbers were so increased, when the Lord had given you a beloved Pastor. We remember how you were built up till you were indeed a light amid the surrounding darkness. In all this you were our joy and rejoicing in the Lord."⁸

The original members of the church had been residents of this place and Brighton. July 1st, 1836, the Brighton members to the number of eighteen took letters from this church and organized a church in Brighton.

DISCIPLINE.

The church had from the first a standing committee, whose duties were much the same as those of the session in a Presbyterian church, which still retains the name and some of the functions, though for many years the pastor and deacons have constituted the committee *ex officio*. In the early

⁷ See Biographical Notes, appendix.

⁸ First Book of Records, p. 193.

days of the church, the office of the committee was no sinecure. Besides the general responsibility for the peace and purity of the church, they had that of bringing charges against offenders. The first church trial was begun November 5th, 1834, when a brother was convicted of intoxication, profanity, and neglect of covenant duty. How literally the command of Christ was followed in the steps involved in this case, the records show, not even omitting the statement in connection with his excommunication on January 3d, 1835, that "he hereby is excommunicated from this church, and is henceforth to be regarded by us as a heathen man and a publican."⁹ The next case was in the following August, when a young brother whose name appears often on the records in later years, was called before the church for having entered into a law-suit against the pastor. The church heard the charge patiently, and resolved, that "We do not think it an unwarrantable stretch of charity to believe there has been no intentional wrong on the part of the persons engaged in the transaction."¹⁰ This action was suggested by the standing committee, which usually endeavored to temper justice with mercy. Though the church adopted it with the provision that charges might still be preferred, the case did not come up for further hearing, and a later entry under the same date states: "The matter . . . is amicably settled by concessions of the Parties."¹¹ It deserves to be said that no subsequent pastor of the church, so far as the records show, has been sued by one of his members. Although the church endeavored at this early day to keep a pure membership by means of discipline when necessary, there were few cases involving gross immorality, and the spirit showed in church trials was usually a wholesome one. A large proportion of the cases of discipline resulted in a restoration of the offender. At one time church

⁹ First Book of Records, pp. 41-50.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 56-62.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 63.

trials formed a large part of the business of the church; and a resolution was introduced providing that any member wilfully absenting himself from a church trial should be subject to discipline; but this, after protracted discussion, was rejected.¹²

On October 14th, 1835, the church voted to "have stated meetings for the purpose of discussing the ten commandments, and settling various points of duty."¹³ Just what came of this somewhat grim undertaking—grim as its record appears, sandwiched in between cases of discipline—does not appear, but it may be conjectured that it was merged in the weekly prayer meeting.

REFORMS AND CURRENT DISCUSSIONS.

The various questions which were mooted before the country and the church at large all left their mark on the church records. In 1841, a sister was tried for "antinomian perfection."¹⁴ She signed a confession prepared by the standing committee, but with the confession preferred a request for a dismission to the church in Oberlin, where, as she stated to the church when pressed for her reasons, she hoped to feel more at home. Her request was not granted. Wellington, while believing in Oberlin, has never conceded to her a monopoly of perfection in anything!

But the questions which most affected the church were those of Freemasonry, the liquor traffic, and slavery. First in order of time was

FREEMASONRY.

In 1826, William Morgan of Batavia, New York, having made what purported to be an exposition of Freemasonry, suddenly disappeared, and was believed to have been mur-

¹² Ibid., pp. 66, 70.

¹³ Ibid, p. 60.

¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 137-148.

dered by members of the Masonic order. Intense excitement resulted throughout the country. Hundreds of masons withdrew from the lodge, and in open convention, added to Morgan's exposition of the first three, their own revelation of many succeeding degrees. An eminent Masonic authority¹⁵ states that one thousand five hundred lodges gave up their charters, and that of fifty thousand members of the order, forty-five thousand left it never to return. Political agitation added to the intensity of the feeling, and for some years masons who were candidates for office were impelled to publish the termination of their connection with the lodge.¹⁶ About the time when the discussion was at its height, the church of Wellington passed the following resolution: "Whereas, in the opinion of this church, freemasonry is based on pure selfishness, and is therefore opposed to the benevolence of the gospel, and is in all respects anti-Christian, wherefore resolved that suitable measures be taken to ascertain whether those who shall hereafter offer themselves to join this church are adhering freemasons, and if so, that they shall not be received. Closed with prayer, April 24th, 1833."¹⁷

On Jan. 12th, 1837 the following resolution was offered. "Since Freemasonry has gone very much into disuse, Therefore Resolved that the resolution touching that subject be and it is hereby recalled. Voted on the above resolution in the Negative."¹⁸ In 1843, however, it was rescinded,¹⁹ but another rule hardly less stringent was adopted on Nov. 5th, 1846. This stated that the church "will affectionately and solemnly dissuade all persons from hereafter entering into such

¹⁵ Robert Morris, LL. D., of Louisville.

¹⁶ Among this number was Henry Clay, who renounced his masonry when a candidate for the Presidency. See his *Private Correspondence*, pp. 289, 304.

¹⁷ Book I. of Records, p. 31.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 79.

¹⁹ *Ib.* p. 169.

organizations, and will object to them as members.”²⁰ In 1850 a member of the church was tried for having joined a Masonic lodge, and was pardoned on a promise to withdraw.²¹ On Sept. 30th, 1853, the church rescinded its rules against all secret societies except Masonry,²² and the restriction against this was finally removed on April 11th, 1855.²³ The church maintained an attitude of disapproval toward all secret societies, and many members objected to the repeal of the rules debarring members of these organizations from church membership. It is probable that at this time the rules referred to could not have been repealed but for the fact that from 1843 to 1860 there was a division in the church, the seceding portion being entirely composed of ultra anti-masons.²⁴ The rule, however, has never been renewed.

The next meeting of the church after that which first took action on Masonry adopted a resolution on

TEMPERANCE.

It was not without some discussion that the church passed, in the summer of 1833,²⁵ a resolution on alcohol, requiring of all future members of the church “entire abstinence in the use and traffic of this article,” and added, “And

²⁰ Book II. of Records, p. 5.

²¹ *Ib.* p. 51.

²² *Ib.* p. 101.

²³ *Ib.* pp. 122-3.

²⁴ This is shown by the records of the Independent Church, which was at this time larger than the First Church. See resolution on page seven of its records (1843). Ten years afterward the Free Church rescinded this rule (April 21st, 1853), but a member belonging to the Odd Fellows was not considered in good standing, and was finally excommunicated, Sept. 21st, 1854. His request for a mutual council was denied, but on Jan. 29th, 1860, as the church was closing its accounts before dissolution, it voted that this action had been unjustifiably severe. The Free Church, organized in 1853, had a standing rule refusing admission to Masons, Odd Fellows, and persons approving the system of American slavery. See its records, p. 7.

²⁵ This resolution is not dated.

we who vote for this resolution pledge ourselves to abide by the same rule which we prescribe for others.”²⁶ Only male members voted in the church meetings of those days, and eight was a majority: accordingly we find eight legible signatures in the church record under the resolution. But it made trouble. On July 4th, 1840, one patriotic member of the church drank publicly, and when confronted with the rule, replied, “It is a rule of man, and I am not bound by it.”²⁷ But the Standing Committee which had prepared the charges against him, prepared also a written confession, which the erring brother signed, and it is believed remained thenceforth as temperate as he was patriotic.²⁸ Some question arose concerning the interpretation of the rule. It was voted on Sep. 23d, 1841, that the rule required total abstinence. A motion to allow the use of liquor as medicine was voted down,²⁹ but this was afterward considered severe, and was expunged from the records; and on August 30th, 1842, the church added to the temperance resolution, the words “as a drink.”³⁰ Thus it remains to this day.

SLAVERY.

Next came the slavery question. Not till 1836 do we find anything about it in the records of the Church. To understand how it arose, we must supplement the minutes of the church meetings with a *résumé* of the general situation. It was on Feb. 9th, 1835, that Oberlin decided by the casting vote of John Keep to admit colored students. Then came the students from Lane Seminary. Then came Mahan and Finney, and soon came Theodore D. Weld, who delivered twenty lectures on slavery. It is impossible to write

²⁶ Ibid. p. 32.

²⁷ Ib. p. 139.

²⁸ Ib. p. 143.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 148. A member protested against the expunging, but was not heard. Presbytery revoked the ruling of the church regarding his protest, and it was entered upon the minutes. Vide pp. 151, 153, 165.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 293.

the history of Wellington without writing the history of Oberlin, just as it is impossible to write the history of Oberlin without bringing Wellington in for a share in Oberlin's most lawless, most daring, most picturesque, and most decisive act for the freedom of the slave. In the winter vacation following Weld's lectures, twenty or more Oberlin students went out as lecturers under the American Anti-slavery Society.³¹ They lectured throughout Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. No one of them is mentioned on the records of the Wellington church, but it is certain that some of them came to Wellington, which became soon afterward what the old farmers of the congregation called "a calf pasture for Oberlin theologues."³²

The good pastor of the Wellington church leaned toward Oberlin, and was sustained by a majority of the church. This sympathy led to the introduction of more Oberlin heresy of various sorts. Before the church had taken any action on the slavery question, Mr. Talcott requested and was granted permission, March 11th, 1836, to serve as agent for Oberlin Collegiate Institute for a few weeks at his discretion, the faculty supplying the pulpit.³³ From this time, though no record was kept of these pulpit supplies, we find the names of the Fairchilds, Henry Cowles, John Morgan, Henry Peck, and others mentioned incidentally as supplying the pulpit and presiding at business meetings of the church. Mr. Talcott having resigned (Sep. 4th, 1837), the church called Rev. H. W. Fairfield. He accepted; but April 1st, 1839, a letter was read from him asking to be released that he might accept a call from Ohio City (West Side, Cleveland).³⁴ The church declined to release him, but

³¹ "Oberlin: the Colony and the College." By Pres. Jas. H. Fairchild, pp. 50-95.

³² More than one Oberlin professor preached, while a student, his first sermon at Wellington. Among them was Prof. J. M. Ellis.

³³ Book I, p. 71.

³⁴ *Ib.* pp. 108, 116-7.

he remained in Wellington for a short time only. Dec. 14th, 1841, the church voted to call Horace C. Taylor as its pastor. He did not, however, become pastor of the church, to the church's subsequent relief.³⁵ For a little time in 1842, Rev. Hiram Kellogg was stated supply,³⁶ but during most of the time from 1836, when Mr. Talcott left to secure money for Oberlin, till 1843, when Rev. D. W. Lathrop,³⁷ of Elyria, became pastor of the church, the church heard little else than Oberlin professors and spouting theologues with New School Theology, Graham dietetics, pronounced anti-slavery views, and all manner of kindred heresies. These influences bore their inevitable results in resolutions introduced into the church Dec. 15th, 1836:

1st. Resolved, that slavery as it exists in the United States, is a heinous sin against God, and ought immediately to be abolished.

2nd. Resolved that inasmuch as the church is deeply involved in the sin and guilt of slavery, it becomes the duty of all who love the Christian name publicly to bear testimony against this heinous sin and to use all scriptural means to eradicate it from the church.

3rd. Resolved that this church deems it inconsistent with their duty as Christians to receive to their communion or to hold fellowship with those who hold their fellow-men in bondage or justify the practice in others.³⁸

The first and second of these resolutions were passed. The third was postponed indefinitely on a yea and nay vote of 14 to 11. The reason for the willingness of the church to pass the first two, and for the divided vote on the third resolution, involves a consideration of the whole relation of the church to Presbytery under the "Plan of Union." In a word it may be said, that in the crisis which the church was approaching, the third resolution would have resulted logically in a severing of the church's relations with Presbytery, though this was not probably intended at the time.

³⁵ Cf. "The Colony and the College," p. 294, Wright's Life of Finney, p. 286.

³⁶ Book I., p. 163, 167.

³⁷ See Biog. Notes, appendix.

³⁸ Book I. of Records, p. 76.

"THE PLAN OF UNION."³⁹

It is necessary to repeat that the Wellington church has always been Congregational. There is a popular opinion that it was originally Presbyterian, and it was sometimes even called so on the records of the church.⁴⁰ But the vote at the first meeting settled its polity and it has remained unchanged. The name Congregational was not added till August 19th, 1842,⁴¹ when denominational lines had been closely drawn. For the Plan of Union it deserves to be said that it was devised in the most liberal and Christian spirit on both sides, and possibly under more favorable circumstances would have been a success, but as matters turned, the result was that numbers of Congregational churches became Presbyterian, and others were temporarily divided. The causes were not the inability of the brethren to dwell together in unity; the situation was complicated by the organization of new educational institutions⁴² with overlapping spheres of influence, and missionary societies⁴³ with undefined areas of activity and various plans of operation, and more than all else by the agitation of the question, "What ought to be the attitude of the Church toward the acknowledged wrong of slavery?" These influences rent more than one great denomination asunder. The Presbyterian Church itself was divided⁴⁴ by the question. It could hardly have been ex-

³⁹ The text of the Plan of Union will be found in Appendix II. to the author's article in Volume I. of the Papers of this Society.

⁴⁰ Bk. I., p. 131.

⁴¹ Bk. I., p. 163.

⁴² Concerning the relations of Oberlin and Hudson see Kennedy, pp. 194, 202, 234-251. Also Pres. C. W. Cutler's "History of Western Reserve College" (1876).

⁴³ Concerning the relations of the A. M. A. to the A. B. C. F. M., see address, Oberlin and the Am. Miss. Assn., by M. E. Strieby, D. D., p. 3.

For the relations of the A. H. M. S. to Pres. Board of Missions, see Gillett II. 448-450. Baird's Hist. of New School, 310 seq. Punchard, Vol. V. passim. Home Missionary, Vols. I.-III. The writer hopes at some future time to present a paper on this topic.

⁴⁴ From 1837 till 1869.

pected that two different denominations could hold together when a single denomination could not hold itself intact. Some important heresy cases—notably those of Lyman Beecher and Albert Barnes—added to the confusion, and the Congregational churches in connection with Presbytery were regarded by the “Old School” Presbyterians as holding to the “New School.” This increased the embarrassment of the situation, and added to the desire of the Congregational churches to be by themselves, especially when some local Presbyteries refused ordination to graduates⁴⁵ of Oberlin Seminary. The Presbyteries were naturally reluctant to dissolve a bond that, so far as the relation of local churches to each other, and the internal harmony of these churches were concerned, had seemed productive of good. Naturally, though erroneously, they ruled that the basis of the Plan of Union was a fundamental part of these churches’ organization, and that in case of division of one of the churches, that portion remaining with the Presbytery, however small, would be recognized as the Congregational church.⁴⁶

Thus a Congregational church in connection with Presbytery felt the suspicion against Congregational churches which were supposed to have introduced the leaven of heresy, and also felt the intimations of the Western Reserve Presbyterians, who were largely New School, that they were suffering vicariously for the sins of the Congregationalists.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Prof. Henry Cowles in his reply to Kennedy (p. 8), states that Huron Presbytery asked a candidate for the ministry “Do you believe in the way they do things at Oberlin? Do you believe on the whole that Oberlin is a blessing or a curse to the world, and ought to be annihilated?”

⁴⁶ This marvelous decision which would make adherence to Presbytery a test of Congregationalism had a parallel in the case of the Litchfield church. The question of withdrawing from Medina Presbytery was before the church. Rev. Mr. Fowler who was in the chair ruled that those who voted affirmatively were no longer members of the church, and were debarred from further action. This decision was sustained by the Medina Presbytery. Oberlin Evangelist, viii., pp. 22, 78.

⁴⁷ Kennedy’s Plan of Union, p. 222 *inter alia*.

Besides these two unpleasant facts without, it was conscious of three different but united demands from within: (a) that fellowship with slave-holding churches through the General Assembly should cease; (b) that the doctrine of the church should be less hyper-calvinistic; and (c) that the government of the church should be more in the hands of the church itself. These three demands found expression in resolutions in the latter part of 1842.⁴⁸ On August 30th, 1842, the church voted to waive assent to the articles on Infant Baptism, Decrees, and Sovereignty on the part of candidates for admission to the church. On December 14th, following, it was voted to elect all officers of the church except deacons by vote of the church at an annual meeting. At the same meeting the following resolution was adopted, eighteen male members entering their protest: "Whereas we are a Congregational Church and believe in true Congregational Principles, Resolved, therefore, that we take the first opportunity to ask leave of Presbytery to withdraw and unite with Lorain Association, and that we appoint delegates for that purpose."⁴⁹

All these resolutions were reversed by Elyria Presbytery at its meeting at Amherst, January 3d to 5th, 1843, at which meeting Rev. James Eells was moderator, and F. H. Brown clerk. The alleged reason was that these acts were contrary to the fundamental principles of the church. On the following Sunday, January 8th, 1843, Rev. D. W. Lathrop, who had been sent by Presbytery for that purpose, communicated the decision of Presbytery to the church, and read a pastoral letter⁵⁰ full of Christian spirit and kindly entreaty, reminding the church of its past pleasant relations with Presbytery, recalling the fellowship of its past struggles in

⁴⁸ Bk. I., p. 168-185 passim.

⁴⁹ *Ib.* pp. 174-5.

⁵⁰ Internal evidence seems to point to Mr. Lathrop as the author of this able, interesting, and in spirit and arrangement, admirable document.

common with the other churches of the Presbytery, lamenting the waywardness of the church in choosing false teachers, and warning them of the danger of their course. It assured the church of the affection of Presbytery, and urged upon it a return to a cordial acceptance of its ecclesiastical relations. It referred repeatedly to the high standard of intelligence and familiarity with doctrine of the members of the Wellington church, reminded them that they must answer to God in proportion to their gifts, and feared that "before the second generation has passed, Wellington, so lately our pride, should be given up to false doctrine," and "that beautiful house which you raised so readily on the ashes of the first, neglected, forsaken, dilapidated, should soon become the nest of bats and owls, or what is worse, be used for teaching by those more blind than they."⁵¹ With all this the intimation does not fail that if a division of the church shall ensue, that portion remaining with Presbytery, however small, shall be recognized as the First Congregational Church of Wellington.

Mr. Lathrop, having delivered the pastoral letter, remained with the church. His presence became undesirable to the radical element, but the clerk, who was a conservative, soon began to call him "our minister" on the records, and the society extended him a call, which he accepted. The church having appointed a committee to reply to the protest of the minority, and having, by a majority of twenty-three to eighteen, adopted its report, which was also virtually a reply to Presbytery, proceeded to resolve that this church is and ever has been Congregational, and does not recognize the authority of Presbytery except as an advisory body, and to reaffirm the articles which had been reversed, "any action of Presbytery to the contrary notwithstanding."⁵² Some

⁵¹ Bk. I., pp. 199, 200. As the time predicted has just about arrived, this prophecy concerning himself is of no little interest to the present pastor.

⁵² Bk. I., 215, 6.

members who had been received under the recent action waiving assent to the articles of the creed aforementioned, found the opposition to them on the part of the minority so strong that they withdrew, leaving the vote by yeas and nays on this and subsequent test votes, twenty-one to seventeen, those voting being men, and generally heads of families. Mr. Lathrop still stood his ground, and closed each meeting with prayer, but on March 19th a resolution was handed him calling for a meeting to consider the conduct of the clerk as to his method of keeping the records, "and also to consult together and devise some method whereby this church may have a voice in the supply of preaching."⁵³ One of the conservative brethren made a motion which the clerk promptly seconded, that there is no occasion for any such meeting. Thirteen members rose, and only two opposed, the majority apparently being taken by surprise at the sudden turn. Mr. Lathrop announced that no such meeting would be held. A week later, however, as Mr. Lathrop ascended the pulpit, a similar resolution was placed in his hand. He refused to put it to vote, and at the close of the service one of the deacons called for a vote, and announced that the motion for a meeting was carried. Against this action, Bro. Lathrop protests over his own signature on the church records.⁵⁴

The radical element held its meeting, according to the resolution, suspended the clerk from the church, and sent a letter to Mr. Lathrop. The conservatives held a meeting protesting against the misrepresentations of the letter, first and most prominent of which was the statement that the letter had been adopted at a meeting of the church, whereas there had been no such meeting. From this time the factions met separately, each calling itself "The First Congregational Church of Wellington." It is not necessary to

⁵³ Bk. I., p. 217.

⁵⁴ Bk. I., p. 220.

decide which was indeed the church, as the matter settled itself. Such a dispute must, if protracted, have resulted in an appeal to Presbytery, and the decision of Presbytery was already announced. The majority soon ceased to call itself "The First Church," and while maintaining its right to the name and property of the First Church, voted that "for Christ's sake we will yield to them the name we have adopted, and consider and esteem them a regular church of Christ, and that we on our part will adopt the name of the 'Independent Congregational Church of Wellington.'" The First Church, too, took second thought, and instead of excommunicating the seceders, voted to "part with them in a less painful manner," and later recognized them as a church.

THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH.

The Independent Church was organized March 27th, 1843, with forty members. Rev. Lucius Smith⁵⁵ came from North Walton, N. Y., to accept a call as its stated supply, while the First Church retained Mr. Lathrop. Mr. Smith remained with the Free Church till 1846, and then the church called Rev. J. A. Thome, who supplied the pulpit until his call to

⁵⁵ Lucius Smith was born in Keene, N. H., December 3d, 1811, and removed at the age of seven with his father's family to Coventry, N. Y. His father, who was a mason, wished his son to follow him in his trade, but his mother designed him for the ministry. At the age of fifteen he signed the pledge which the minister had brought to the house for his parents' signatures, and became a life-long advocate of the temperance cause. In 1834 he adopted anti-slavery views under the preaching of Pres. Beriah Green and Theodore Weld. He graduated from Oneida Institute, N. Y., in 1837, and from Oberlin Seminary in 1841, and was ordained with eleven others of his class, including the Presidents Fairchild and Dr. M. E. Strieby. His pastorates have been—North Walton, N. Y., 1842; Wellington and Huntington, 1844-6; Middleburg, O., 1846-53; North Fairfield, 1854-5; New Philadelphia, O., 1856-60; Dover, O., 1860-66; Strongsville, where he was pastor six years and still resides.

the First Church in Cleveland in 1848, after which the pulpit was supplied by various ministers from Oberlin.⁵⁶

It very soon became evident to both churches that there was one church too many. The Independent Church had no resident pastor after the departure of Mr. Smith, and the pastor of the First Church declined after the division, to move his family from Elyria, though a house had been purchased for him. The First Church, in December, 1844, instructed Mr. Lathrop to secure temporarily the service of Rev. A. R. Clark, who, on the dismissal of Mr. Lathrop October 7th, 1825, nearly a year after he seems to have departed, became the pastor of the church. Mr. Clark continued with the First Church from 1845 until 1858.⁵⁷ Toward his support the First Church received aid from the Home Missionary Society, which seems never to have assisted the other church, though the Free Church received two hundred dollars' assistance in building its house. From the beginning of 1849, efforts for a re-union, which may be said to have been made during the whole time of the division, were more earnestly prosecuted, and arrangements for arbitration with a view of consolidation began, almost succeeded, and failed repeatedly. The Independent Church professed to be willing to submit its case to any one, the First Church

⁵⁶ James A. Thome was born in Augusta, Ky., in 1813, his father being a slave-holder. He entered Lane Seminary and was one of the first class to come to Oberlin in 1835. The next year he was commissioned by the Anti-Slavery Society to visit the West India Islands and report the results of emancipation there, which he did in a valuable book published in 1838. In this year he was elected Professor of Rhetoric in Oberlin and continued ten years. For twenty-three years from 1848 to 1871 he was pastor of the First Church in Cleveland. Two years later he died (March, 1873), prosecuting a new church enterprise in Chattanooga, Tenn. "He was a man eloquent in speech, pleasing and impressive in personal appearance, fearless as a soldier in duty, gentle and sensitive as a woman in his respect for the feelings of others—a true Christian man."—Pres. J. H. Fairchild, *Coll. and Col.*, pp. 290-91.

⁵⁷ A sketch of the life of Rev. Ansel R. Clark will be found in *Biographical Notes*, appendix.

being equally willing and sure of a decision in its favor, provided none of the arbitrators were Oberlin men. The reunion was finally brought about without arbitration, the First Church accepting (against the protest of nine members) an overture from the Independent Church proposing union on three conditions: (a) each church to expunge from its records all reference to the unhappy division,⁵⁸ (b) the First Church to withdraw from Presbytery, and (c) the reunited church to remain for two years connected with neither Presbytery nor Association. This was accepted, and on February 28th, 1851, a number of members of the Independent Church united with the First Church. Others followed, making a total of nineteen during the year. Again a delegate was sent to Elyria Presbytery asking for dismissal; but the Presbytery in session at Rochester on April 2d, 1851, declined to sever the relation.⁵⁹ Nearly a year passed. More than two-thirds of the fifty-three members of the Independent Church had refrained from uniting with the First Church under pretext of waiting till the First Church had withdrawn from Presbytery. A minority of the First Church still desired to adhere to Presbytery, and there was danger if the matter were pressed, that Presbytery would recognize this minority of the minority as the church, and that the ecclesiastical situation would be analogous to that of a planet representing the minority adhering to Presbytery, with the Independent Church for a satellite, and with two nebulous rings representing the newly received Independent members, and the portion of the First Church which sympathized with them. The situation was complicated. The First Church decided to strengthen the things that remained by voting that while the church as a church should

⁵⁸ Such a record was made at length, and adopted by the church. Fortunately the other was also preserved, and has been used throughout this history, in which it is referred to as Book II.

⁵⁹ Book II. of Records, p. 72.

conduct its business according to Congregational usages, and those members who desired should be free morally and pecuniarily from Presbytery; that the portion desiring representation in Presbytery might continue their relation to it.⁶⁰ This the members of the church who had left the Independent Church regarded as a violation of the conditions of union, and on January 23d, 1852, twelve members withdrew to organize another church. Four others followed a week later, and in a month ten others. Thus the First Church lost by the temporary union seven more members than it had gained. The division was more hopeless than ever, and the breach was widened by immediate efforts on the part of the proposed organization to build a house.

THE FREE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WELLINGTON.

On February 17th, 1852, fourteen members of the First Church, and one from the Independent Church, with seven others, met in the Methodist Church, and were organized by Rev. J. A. Thome, then of Cleveland, into the Free Congregational Church of Wellington. Eleven others followed, giving the new organization a charter membership of 33. Steps were taken to secure a pastor, and a committee was appointed to secure a site for a building.⁶¹ The First Church at once sent a committee with an earnest remonstrance, declaring that it would withdraw from Presbytery with or without consent, would concede all that the Independent Church had desired, and would enter a union, both sets of officers to resign and new ones to be elected by the whole body, and the united church to set about securing a successor to Mr. Clark, who, it was understood, wished to resign.⁶² A protest was entered, however, against this action, by one of the members of the First Church, who spoke

⁶⁰ Book II., p. 53. This was January 9th, 1851.

⁶¹ Records of Free Ch., pp. 1-5.

⁶² Bk. II. pp. 85-6.

for himself and others, so that while the Free Church voted that the terms named in the proposition were satisfactory, it answered that it could not accept them because the First Church had not been unanimous in their adoption. The Free Church called Rev. Alonzo Sanderson as pastor.⁶³ Mr. Sanderson came in 1852, and remained until 1856. After this time the church was supplied from Oberlin.

THE OBERLIN-WELLINGTON RESCUE.

On Monday, Sep. 13th, 1858, occurred the famous Oberlin-Wellington Rescue. As this is political, and not church, history, little needs to be said about it. But it had some influence upon matters we are now discussing. Both the churches were supplied from Oberlin at this time. Prof. Jas. H. Fairchild was preaching at the First Church, and Prof. H. E. Peck in the Free Church. If there has been some tendency on the part of Oberlin to take the lion's share of the glory of the rescue of the young man who had been stolen in Oberlin and brought to Wellington, let it now be remembered that Wellington's part in the affair was not a small one, and that among those who went to jail—half as many of whom were from Wellington as from Oberlin—were prominent members of both the First and the Free Churches, one of them being a member of the Free Church building committee and one of the most radical of the radical, another being the clerk of the First Church, and with him still another church member of the same stripe, who were among the most conservative of the conservative minority. What effect their incarceration had upon these brethren is not recorded in the minutes, but it is the historian's opinion that while the Oberlin brethren were printing their paper and receiving their delegations and covering themselves with

⁶³ Alonzo Sanderson came to Wellington from Tolland, Mass. He had been ordained in 1839. His writing in the church records indicates less educational attainment than most of the pastors. He was a man of deep piety. In 1867 he was in Goodrich, Mich.

glory, the Wellington brethren, long divided, whose present experience demonstrated that they could live together if compelled to do so, were discussing a basis of union.⁶⁴

THE REUNION.

On March 4th, 1858, Profs. J. H. Fairchild of the First Church, and H. E. Peck, of the Free Church, the two acting pastors at that time, drew up a basis of union which was submitted to the churches independently. Although this failed of formal adoption, the two churches met for union worship, communion, and prayer-meeting from about this time, and in 1860, both sought Mr. Bartlett of Oberlin as pastor. Mr. Bartlett⁶⁵ (who is never called by any other name on the records) came to the First Church, and more determined efforts were made for a union of the churches. On March 10th, 1860, the First Church voted to withdraw from Presbytery, and on April 7th, 61 members of the Free Church, and later five others were received into membership. Soon after this the war settled the slavery question, and the doctrinal differences adjusted themselves with larger liberty of interpretation and, it is hoped, no sacrifice of truth. The history of the Church from the reunion to the present date has been harmonious throughout.⁶⁶

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

The first meeting house was a log school-house standing on the corner where J. S. Mallory & Co's store is now located. Here the church worshiped until 1830, when a brick building was erected with an auditorium above, and two school rooms below. The auditorium was also the town hall, the building being erected and owned jointly by

⁶⁴ See History of the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue, by J. R. Shipherd, p. 4.

⁶⁵ Alexander Bartlett. See Biog. Notes, appendix.

⁶⁶ A few elderly members, however, still elected delegates to attend Presbytery, and maintained that they constituted the real First Church of Wellington. A little charity and mutual concession soon quieted the disturbing forces.

the town and church. About 1839 this was taken down on account of the weakness of the foundation, and a building was erected for school and town hall purposes, remaining until removed to make room for the present town hall in 1885. The new church edifice was a frame building standing beside the hall, and was erected in 1839, but was burned to the ground in the winter of the same year.⁶⁷ In the next year a new house was erected on the site of the old. It was known as "the White Church," and now painted red is used by the Granville Flooring Co. The Independent Church had no house of worship, but met in the town hall, which even before the division had often been used by the First Church for social meetings. The Free Church built the large structure which is now used by Christie & Bennett as a wagon shop. It stood just north of our present church site. Our present beautiful edifice was erected in 1878-9, Rev. Thos. K. Beecher preaching the dedication sermon April 3rd, 1879. It is the finest and best arranged church edifice in the county, and outside the large cities, one of the very best in the state, and is admirably suited to our needs. It has an excellent auditorium, semi-circular seats and radiating aisles, seating 500 on the floor and 300 in the gallery. Two hundred additional can be seated easily within range of the pulpit by opening the Sunday School room. The acoustic properties are perfect. The pipe organ is of proper dimensions and compass for the best effect in a room of this size. The Sunday School room is separated from the auditorium by windows that may be lowered into the basement, and has at either end two tiers of class-rooms opening into it. The church parlors above are well equipped with piano and all

⁶⁷ Rev. Mr. Ingersoll, father of Robert G. Ingersoll, was preaching in a revival service in the church at the time the fire was discovered. He endeavored to dissuade the people from leaving the burning room, calling to the congregation not to fear the fire that water would quench, as they were in danger of hell fire, which was hotter. The congregation hastily vacated the house, however, and engaged in unavailing effort to save the church.

needed furniture, including folding tables which are easily set up by means of sockets in the walls as in parlor cars, and which when not in use are packed into small compass. The kitchen contains range, crockery and silver for church socials, has water tank and all necessary appointments complete. The ladies' parlor contains sewing machine and conveniences for quilting and all similar labor. The house is carpeted and cushioned throughout, and is thus well equipped for work. Its value is about \$30,000. For it the church is largely indebted to the Rev. J. A. Daley,⁶⁸ pastor at the time.

PARSONAGES.

Mr. Talcott was the first minister to need a house. After preaching here a year he returned East and brought back a young wife in November, 1859. He bought one hundred acres of land east of town, and owned a house standing where A. G. Couch's house now stands. The first parsonage was bought about 1843 for Mr. Lathrop, but he continued to reside in Elyria. As his successor, Mr. Clark, owned a house in Huntington and lived there, the parsonage became by purchase the property of E. S. Tripp, who has lived there till the present time. Mr. Shipherd lived where Mrs. Austin now resides. Mr. Sanderson lived where the present church stands. The present parsonage stood originally on Benedict's corner, and was moved to its present location in 1873, purchased by the Society, and refitted as a parsonage about three years later.

ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS.

At first the church was connected with Huron Presbytery. The minutes do not show the exact time of the change to Elyria Presbytery, which was probably accomplished by partition of territory and not by vote of the church. It was done sometime between September 12th, 1841, when the church sent a delegate to Presbytery at Sandusky, and Jan-

⁶⁸ See Biog. Notes, appendix.

uary 6th, 1843, when the record on the minutes indicates Elyria Presbytery.⁶⁹ Presbyteries seem then to have been in a state of flux. In 1836 our minutes were approved by "Cleveland Presbytery" at Brecksville, and in 1837 by "Lorain Presbytery" at Brownhelm.⁷⁰ After its transfer (if it was a transfer) to Elyria Presbytery, it remained until the reunion in 1860.

On the dismissal of the First Church from Elyria Presbytery, it united with the Lorain Association of Congregational Churches. On the organization of local conferences it united (July 2d, 1868,) with Cleveland Conference, and in 1889 withdrew to unite with Medina Conference, which is its present home.

SEATS.

The church is supported by the renting of its seats. Many good seats are left free, however, and the resolution below, adopted January 12th, 1871, shows the spirit of the church.

Resolved, That although the seats of the church are annually rented to provide for current expenses, yet they are not made thereby in any sense exclusive. This house is held in charge as the house of the Lord, to which all are most cordially invited and welcomed who feel it a privilege to meet with those who worship here.

We cordially invite to our service all who desire to come, and to our fellowship and communion all who love our Lord and give evidence of Christian character.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

The business interests of the church are cared for by a society which was organized under charter of February 18th, 1831, and reorganized January 7th, 1878. Its relations to the church have always been pleasant and harmonious. Its powers and limitations are set forth in the following extracts from its constitution:—

⁶⁹ Book I., pp. 147, 185.

⁷⁰ Book I., pp. 73, 81.

ART. XIII. This Society shall never divert its property from the uses for which it has been organized, viz.: the maintenance and support of public worship in connection with the First Congregational Church of Wellington, Ohio.

ART. XIV. This Society shall always hold its property for the free use of the First Congregational church of Wellington, Ohio, for Congregational church purposes.

ART. XV. Every action of this Society making contracts for the preaching of the Gospel may be rescinded by a majority of the members of the First Congregational Church of Wellington, Ohio, convened at any meeting regularly called for that purpose.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

The morning offering on the second Sabbath of each month is voted by the church to the Society. The remainder, after deducting the special collections indicated below, and a few local expenses otherwise unprovided for, is distributed by the standing committee among our several benevolent and missionary organizations. In addition to this the Children's Day offering is devoted to the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, and a morning offering once in two months is set apart for one of the six other Congregational Societies. These special collections are taken on the fourth Sabbath of the months, and for the objects specified below:—

January—College and Education Society.

March—American Board (Foreign Missions).

April—New West Education Commission.

September—American Missionary Association.

November—American Home Missionary Society.

December—American Congregational Union.

VIEWS OF DOCTRINE.

At its first meeting the Church adopted the Confession and Covenant of Grand River and Portage Presbyteries, including the article of practice, which provided for Congregational government. On September 13th, 1832, it adopted the Summary Confession of Faith and Covenant recommended by the Presbytery of Cleveland⁷¹ which embodied

⁷¹ Book I., p. 24. This Confession may be found in "Plan of Union," pp. 172-5.

essentially the doctrines of the Grand River Confession, but was if anything more rigid in its statement of the doctrines of depravity, decrees, etc., though seemingly less so in its doctrine of the atonement. Most of the articles, however, are identical. The article of practice, however, which was Presbyterian, was never adopted by the church. In September, 1842, the church voted to waive assent to the articles on Divine Sovereignty, Decrees, and Infant Baptism. The first body of standing rules was adopted November 11th, 1835,⁷² and was modified from time to time until the adoption of the present rules, January 16th, 1873.⁷³

In January, 1873, retaining, for substance of doctrine, the "Summary Confession," which had by this time been slightly modified, the church adopted the Ohio Manual's creed for use in the admission of members.⁷⁴

At the annual meeting held January 24th, 1892, the church unanimously adopted the creed and covenant recommended by the National Council in 1883. Assent to the creed is expected, but not required; the conditions of church membership being Christian character and assent to the covenant. To this extended creed the pastor and teachers in the Sunday school are required to conform in their public teaching. It is believed that this creed expresses also the views of the body of members of the church. The church holds, however, that all converted persons "are entitled to the communion of saints; that no church or churches can rightly exclude from membership, by doctrinal or other tests, any one whom the Lord accepts as his; and that, therefore, the terms of admission should be made to correspond as nearly as possible, with the scriptural admittance into the kingdom of heaven." The creed to which members are asked to assent on admission to the church, is the Apostles'

⁷² Ibid. p. 63.

⁷³ Beginning of Book III. of Records.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Creed, containing only those doctrines which the church as a whole recognizes as fundamental, and linking our faith to that of the ancient church. It is believed that no church is in a safer position than this. We are able thus to receive all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, even those who are weak in the faith, while contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Under this policy the church is united on fundamentals, allows the widest liberty of conscience, controls its preaching in a spirit of conservative progressiveness, and is free from heresies or dissensions.

MISSIONARY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

The Sunday school of the First Church is nearly if not quite as old as the church itself. Its records have not been preserved, and it existed before the oldest living inhabitant can remember. As late as 1845 the school was a union school, and disbanded during the winter. For several years it has flourished under the leadership of Wm. H. Fisher, its energetic Superintendent.

The prayer-meeting began early: it is now impossible to learn just how early, but probably before 1834.

In the latter part of 1845 there was organized a Woman's Missionary Society, embracing members of all the churches of the place. This continued to exist until about 1868 when the churches organized separate societies. It made its first annual report (which is still in existence) January 15th, 1847, having held during the year seventeen meetings, with an average attendance of twenty-two. The meeting to organize was held at the home of Mrs. F. M. Hamlin: the first President was Mrs. Lydia Boise, and the first Secretary Mrs. Diantha B. Case. With this there co-operated "The Little Girls' Missionary Society of District No. 2 of Wellington and Brighton," which was organized January 10th, 1849, but does not seem to have lasted long,



J. E. Barton
Pastor First Congregational Church
Wellington, Ohio.

though at least one prim and pretty little report to the mother society is still preserved.

"The Ladies' Benevolent Society," composed entirely of the Congregational Church, was organized May 6th, 1868, with twenty-two members, which the next meeting increased to thirty-eight. Its first officers were, Mrs. L. B. Lane, President; Mrs. Milton Adams, Vice-President; Mrs. S. J. Rust, Secretary; and Mrs. James Griffith, Treasurer. It still flourishes, and devotes itself to local and home missionary work. Mrs. F. W. Bennett is President.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized March 15th, 1875. Its first officers were Mrs. L. H. Hand, President; Mrs. Horace Wadsworth, Vice-President; Mrs. R. Austin, Treasurer; and Miss Anna Adams, Secretary. Mrs. G. H. Palmer has been its President for several years.

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor was organized April 15th, 1884. It was reorganized in 1888 under the national C. E. Constitution, and continues with growing interest and efficiency.

The King's Daughters, composed of young ladies of the several churches, was organized in 1891.

The Crocus Club, a branch of the Pansy Society, was organized in 1891 by Mrs. T. F. Rodhouse. Its members are girls from seven to thirteen years, and its work is for missionary objects.

PASTORS.

Following is the list of those who have served the church since its organization as pastors or stated supplies. Vacancies have usually been supplied by Oberlin professors, of whom the names of a goodly number appear on the records, but most of them (having been invited by the supply committee) without vote or other record of call or length of supply. Names of pastors are in Roman type, stated supplies in Italics.

Lot B. Sullivan, April 20th, 1824, to Mar. 1st, 1825.

David Smith, June 26th, 1825, to June 26th, 1826.

Joel Talcott, Nov. 29th, 1828, to Sept. 4th, 1837 (installed).

H. W. Fairfield, Oct. 5th, 1838, to 1839.

Hiram Kellogg, 1842.

D. W. Lathrop, 1843, to Oct. 4th, 1845 (installed).

Ansel R. Clark, 1845 to 1858.

Prof. H. E. Peck, Jan. to July, 1858.

Prof. John Morgan, July to Dec., 1858.

Prof. Jas. H. Fairchild, Jan. to Sept., 1859.

Prof. Henry Cowles, Sept. to Dec., 1859.

Alexander Bartlett (ordained here), Jan. 1860, to 1862.

Fayette Shipherd, May, 1862, to 1864.

L. B. Lane, 1865 to April, 1877.

J. A. Daley, Mar. 31st, 1874, to Sept. 30th, 1883.

S. D. Gammell, Feb. 21st, 1884, to Dec. 1st, 1889.

Prof. A. H. Currier, Dec., 1889, to Mar., 1890.

W. E. Barton, April 1st, 1890, (installed Jan. 21st, 1891).

The Independent Church (organized Mar. 27th, 1843, disbanded Feb. 28th, 1851), had two stated supplies, Rev. Lucius Smith and Prof. J. A. Thome. The Free Church (organized February 17th, 1852, disbanded April 7th, 1861,) had one pastor, Rev. Alonzo Sanderson, called March 8th, 1852, installed March 1st, 1854, resigned April 3rd, 1856. Both churches had other supplies, mostly from Oberlin.

APPENDIX—BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Lot Bumpas Sullivan was born in Wareham, Mass., June 27th, 1790, the son of Lot Bumpas, assuming the name of Sullivan on attaining his majority. He was married to Lydia Stetson of Scituate. He was graduated from Brown, 1814, and studied theology with Rev. Otis Thompson. He was ordained over the church at Lyme, Huron Co., O., June 14th, 1820, and remained in the employ of the Connecticut Missionary Society from 1820 till 1826. He was stated supply for Wellington and Medina, 1824-5; Canfield, 1825-6. He next preached in Durhamville, N. Y., for fourteen years. His health failing, he returned to Massachusetts, where he preached in various places till his death, which occurred at Fall River, March 1st, 1861.

Alfred H. Betts was born in Norwalk, Conn., in 1788. He studied medicine and practiced for several years, coming to what is now Huron, Erie Co., in 1816, as a physician. From the beginning of the settlement he led in public worship, reading sermons until he had used all in the possession of the Huron pioneers. Then he wrote a sermon and submitted it to a passing minister, on whose commendation he ventured to preach it. Later he studied theology with Rev. Wm. Handford of Hudson, and was ordained at Brownhelm in 1821. Entering the employ of the Connecticut Missionary Society, he served for 32 years from 1821 to 1853. It might almost be said

that there was no Presbyterian or Congregational church formed on the Reserve between 1821 and 1850 into whose history his work did not enter.

David Smith was born in Peterboro, N. H., in 1800; studied in Dartmouth, but left during his senior year; studied theology with Rev. Messrs. Lawton of Hillsborough, Whiton of Antrim, and Kingsbury of Mt. Vernon, N. H.; was licensed by the Hollis Association January, 1825; and preached one year in Wellington and Penfield. Leaving Ohio in June, 1826, he returned to New England and was ordained as an evangelist in September following. About 1850 he returned to Ohio, preaching in Maumee and other places.

Joel Talcott was born in Vernon, Conn., in 1799, graduated from Yale 1835, and afterward from Auburn Theological Seminary. The Wellington church was his first pastoral charge. Here he brought his bride in the autumn of 1829. In the back part of the old cemetery under the apple-tree are two stones which tell their own story: "Lois T. Talcott died March 16th, 1836, aged 34." "Philander, son of J. T. and L. T. T., died Sept. 27th, 1836, aged 6 months." This was the only child of the first marriage. Mr. Talcott re-married and held several pastorates on the Reserve. He died in Wakeman, January 3d, 1871.

Holland Wicks Fairfield was born in Pittsfield, Vt., March 30th, 1811; graduated from Oberlin Seminary 1838; married Mary A. Bentley, Aug. 31st, 1834; died in Pittsburg, Pa., Oct. 15th, 1842. Was pastor in Wellington one year beginning Oct. 5th, 1838, and is remembered as one of the ablest men who ever filled this pulpit.

Daniel Whiting Lathrop, son of Dea. Charles and Joanna (Leffingwell) Lathrop, was born in Norwich, Conn., June 17th, 1798. He united with the First Congregational Church in Norwich in 1814, and soon became a student and teacher of theology in New Jersey. He was ordained by the Presbytery of New Jersey at Bloomfield in 1823, and entered the service of the Connecticut Missionary Society. He married in Brooklyn, N. Y., June 8th, 1824, Abby Wolsey, daughter of Nathaniel and Elizabeth (Coit) Howland, who was born at Norwich, Conn., Nov. 14th, 1799, and died in New Haven, Feb. 25th, 1872. He assisted in the organization of the Presbyterian (now Congregational) Church in Elyria, Nov. 25th, 1824, and was there installed pastor June 29th, 1825, continuing until a failure in his voice necessitated his resignation and the dissolution of his pastoral relation by Presbytery, Aug. 18th, 1830. He was engaged in literary pursuits until his installation at Wellington in 1843, but resided in Elyria, in all about twenty-three years.⁷⁵ For several years he was agent of the American Home Missionary Society. In 1848 he removed to New Haven, Conn., where he resided for twenty-four years, supplying the pulpit of the Temple Street Congregational Church for

⁷⁵ Pres. J. H. Fairchild when a student in the Elyria High School added to his income by caring for Mr. Lathrop's cow.

some time from October, 1870. His last years were spent at the home of his son, George H. Lathrop, in Jackson, Mich., where he died March 27th, 1883. (Lathrop Family Genealogy, pp. 153-4. Manual of First Congl. Church of Elyria, by Heman Ely, pp. 7-9).

Ansel R. Clark was born on a farm of 130 acres bounded by what is known as the "Upper Ox Bow" in the Connecticut River, at Lunenburg, Vermont, June 27th, 1800, and was the youngest of twelve children. He graduated from Dartmouth about 1824, and from Andover about 1829. From 1830 till 1835 (excepting for the year 1831, when the Society had no agent on this territory) he was agent of the American Education Society, and he traversed the greater portion of Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, Wisconsin, and Michigan on horseback, seeking men to enter the ministry. In 1836 he became editor of the *Ohio Observer*, published first at Hudson and later at Cleveland. On the failure of his paper, he retired to Huntington, Ohio, where after a year of enforced idleness owing to an affection of the eyes, he assumed the pastorate of the Huntington Church. From 1845 till 1858 he was pastor at Wellington, still residing in Huntington, on a farm a mile from the center of the latter township and four miles from the village of Wellington. These were his only pastorates, and his affections were strongly localized. He did an important work for education, serving for years on the school board, and visiting twice a year every school in Huntington township, for the sole purpose of bringing the schools to a higher state of efficiency. He kept in the most careful way all the local statistics, and presented them annually in a New Year's sermon. Eighteen of these sermons are preserved and have been kindly tendered to the author by Mr. Clark's sole surviving descendant, his daughter, Miss Mary A. O. Clark of East Cleveland, Ohio, together with the use of other valuable MSS. of Mr. Clark. In 1870, having lived to man's allotted time, he retired to Collamer, where on July 29th, 1887, he entered into rest. He was twice married. First to Miss Mary Ann Odiorn, of Malden, Mass., July 12th, 1832, who died in 1835. Two years later he was married to Miss Electa P. Clark, of Worthington, Mass. She died in 1883. Six of his seven children died in infancy.

Mr. Clark was over six feet in height, reserved, and with the dignity of the New England ministry of the old school. He was a zealous Presbyterian, and his sympathies were against the new theology and the innovations of which notice has been taken. To those who knew him intimately, he had a most kindly heart and a life most consistent and loveable. He deserves to be held in grateful remembrance for doing what no other minister in Ohio seems to have done in the way of preserving local data and statistics in form suited for historical use. His notes in Kennedy's "Plan of Union" must have cost him months of toil, but they are invaluable. He was the original Ohio Church History Society. He deserves this special mention because the work which remains was accomplished by no unusual conjunction of events, but might have been done, and may still be done, by almost any pastor in his

own field, and was done as faithfully as though it had been likely to become prominent.

It is not necessary to give sketches of the lives of the Oberlin professors who preached here from time to time. An incident connected with the preaching of President James H. Fairchild deserves to be recorded. On the last Sunday in February, 1862, he preached in Huntington for Rev. A. R. Clark, who that day preached in Wellington. Returning next morning, (February 24th) he found Black River swollen and frozen over. A flood had come down the river on Sunday, and it had turned suddenly cold on Sunday night, so that when he arrived at the bridge two and one-half miles north of Wellington, the river was covered with a coat of ice two inches thick, embracing large cakes of thick ice which had floated down from above. Thus all the valley from the bridge to the foot of the hill on the north, was flooded, the water in some places reaching the top of the fence. Deceived by wagon tracks which seemed to indicate that other teams had crossed, but which he learned afterward had been made by a buggy attempting to cross but failing in the attempt and returning, he entered the water and proceeded until the horse encountered the heavy cakes of ice and could go no further. Mr. Fairchild then got out into the water which was waist-deep, breaking the ice and pushing it away, until the ice clogged the buggy-wheels, when he unhitched the horse and led him ahead, breaking the ice as before. This proved slow work, and he soon found himself so chilled that if he continued, he would soon be unable to get out. He therefore left the horse and proceeded alone, calling for help. Emerging from the water unable to stand, he crawled to the foot of the hill. Blind, and scarcely able to move, he struggled on, till two men came at the call of a boy who heard his cries for help, and assisted him to the house at the top of the hill on the west side of the road. The men rescued his horse and brought medical aid. Prof. Fairchild drove to Oberlin that evening, but was unable to leave the house for two weeks. It was thus that the preaching of the gospel in Wellington very nearly deprived Oberlin of her future president.

Alexander Bartlett was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, February 5th, 1826, and came with his parents to Johnsonville, Ohio, in 1833. He graduated from Oberlin College in 1853, and from the Seminary in 1859, and was ordained in Wellington about the first of February, 1862, the First and Free churches calling a joint council to ordain him as an evangelist. The exact date of the ordination was not recorded, but it was between the 1st and 4th of February. Rev. J. A. Thome of West Cleveland preached the sermon, Prof. John Morgan offered the ordaining prayer, Rev. A. R. Clark gave the pastor his charge, and "Mr. Clark of Cleveland, agent of the A. B. C. F. M., being a corresponding member," gave the right hand of fellowship. Mr. Bartlett was afterward a professor of Latin at Maryville, Tenn., and died there November 19th, 1883.

Fayette Shipherd was the brother of John J. Shipherd, the founder of

Oberlin. He was born in Granville, N. Y., August 18th, 1797, and entered Middlebury College in 1819, but remained only one year on account of his health. He studied theology with the Rev. Wm Chester, D. D., of Saratoga, and was ordained at Pawlett, N. Y., Dec. 5th, 1826, as colleague of Rev. John Griswold, where he remained until October 27th, 1830. After a year of missionary work in New York and Vermont, and a year as associate with Dr. Beman at Troy, N. Y., he accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Bethel Church in Troy, where he remained two years. He preached at Walton, N. Y., for three years beginning with his installation April 29th, 1835, after which he returned for three years to the Bethel Church in Troy. He organized the Free Church in that city February 16th, 1842, and remained its pastor till 1849. He preached at Stephentown in 1850, and in Nassau 1851-3, and in various places in New York till 1858, when he removed to Oberlin. He preached successively in Oberlin, Wellington, and Pittsfield, residing in Oberlin till 1873, when he removed to Walton, N. Y., and in 1877 to Sydney Plains, N. Y., where he died August 14th, 1878. (McClintock & Strong's Cyclopædia.) He was a very able man, and one of the most eloquent preachers in the State.

Larmon Blakelee Lane, M. D., was the son of Jotham and Mary Blakelee and the adopted son of John Lane, and was born in Tallmadge, Ohio, June 21st, 1821. He studied at Twinsburgh Seminary, and read medicine with Dr. Amos Wright, pursuing later medical studies at Cleveland Medical College, and Hahnemann College, Chicago. He studied theology in Oberlin Seminary, graduating in 1847, and receiving the degree of A. M. in 1865. He was ordained at Oberlin May 3d, 1849, and had preached at Canfield during his seminary course. He was a missionary of the A. M. A. to Siam 1849-56. He married Bessie Darien, daughter of Samuel and Freeloove (Flowers) Hutchins, who was also a graduate of Oberlin, and who died January 14th, 1885. He married again December 22, 1887, Emma L., daughter of Bryant and Jerusha (Shurtleff) Durant of St. Charles, Ill. He preached at Middleburg, Ohio, 1856-8; Lisbon, Ill., 1858-62; Geneva, Ill., 1862-5; Wellington, 1865-77. He was without charge at Geneva, Ill., 1877-84, and St. Charles, 1884, till his death from consumption September 15th, 1889. His later years were spent in the practice of medicine.

James A. Daley graduated from the College of California (now University of California) in 1864, and from Andover Seminary in 1867. After a year abroad he preached in Stockton, Cal., Williamsport, Pa., Painesville, O., and to the Lafayette Street Presbyterian Church in Buffalo, N. Y. He was pastor in Wellington from March 31st, 1874, till September 30th, 1883, since which time he has resided, without charge, in Rochester, N. Y.

Sereno Dwight Gammell was born in Charlestown, Mass., in 1842, and graduated from Amherst College and Andover Seminary. He was settled at Boxford, Mass., for twelve years, in Lynn, Mass., for three and one-half years, and was pastor in Wellington from February 21st, 1884, till December 1st, 1889. Since that time he has been pastor of the church in Tallmadge, O.

William Eleazar Barton, eldest son of Jacob B. and Helen (Methven) Barton, was born in Subtlette, Ill., June 28th, 1861. At the age of fourteen he united with the First Congregational Church of his native town. He was graduated from Berea College in Kentucky June 24th, 1885, and from Oberlin Seminary, June 6th, 1890. He was ordained in Berea, Ky., June 6th, 1885, and spent two years as missionary of the A. M. A. in the Tennessee Mountains, residing at Robbins. Tenn., acting as pastor of the churches at that place and Helenwood, and organizing the Congregational Church at Slick Rock. During his theological course he acted as pastor of the Congregational church at Litchfield, O. He was married at Johnsonville, O., on July 23d, 1885, to Esther T., daughter of Lewis and Elizabeth A. (Treat) Bushnell. He became pastor at Wellington, April 1st, 1890, and was installed January 21st, 1891.

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