THE FOUNDING OF THE LIBRARY
OF BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY

By J. Orin Oliphant

TODAY, the library of Bucknell University, which has on its shelves approximately 180,000 volumes and which is receiving annually more than 7,000 volumes and about 1,400 periodicals and other serial publications, is an important place of study in central Pennsylvania. Also, thanks to its growing collection of Central Pennsylvaniana, it is becoming a place of some importance for historical research. Such importance as it now has, this library has acquired for the most part in recent years; but in order to rise to its present position, it was not necessary for it to break with its past and begin de novo. Its present-day collections rest upon the foundation that was laid more than a hundred years ago. That foundation, like the foundations of the libraries of most early American colleges, consisted not of one but of several small collections of books and other materials.

One such collection was acquired by the collegiate branch of the University, three were acquired by student societies in the college, and two were acquired by branches of the University other than the college—that is, the Academy for boys and the Female Institute for girls. All these collections, regardless of size, were, in the spirit of magnanimity, called libraries. Eventually, the libraries of all the student societies, together with those of the Academy and the Female Institute, were merged with the library of the college to form what is now called the library of the University. Because my space is limited, I must, regretfully, restrict the scope of this paper to the early history of the collegiate library, the principal foundational collection of the present library of Bucknell University. The omission, however, is not serious, for the other founda-

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tional collections were relatively small, and they were not merged with the library of the college until late in the nineteenth century.

Behind the establishment of the collegiate library of Bucknell University lies a story of institutional development which here must be told only in briefest outline. For more than four years after its chartering on February 5, 1846, the University at Lewisburg—the original name of Bucknell University—was in process of achieving full collegiate status. One provision of its charter required that the trustees should obtain for the proposed university subscriptions amounting to $100,000 before they could exercise fully their powers to establish and govern a university.¹ The required sum having been subscribed after nearly three years of effort, the trustees, at a special meeting held in January, 1849, began the work of organizing the collegiate branch of the University. On August 26, 1850, they officially recognized this branch "as in full existence [and] invested with all the rights, powers and privileges, usually pertaining to Col[1]egiate Institutions."²

In the meantime other preparatory work had been done. On October 6, 1845, Stephen W. Taylor, who had served the trustees as agent since December, 1845, had opened a school in the basement of the Baptist Church in Lewsburg. Here, for more than two and a half years, he taught classes which carried at least a few students through the sophomore year of a college curriculum.³ In August, 1848, the trustees named this school the "Academical and Primary Department of the University at Lewisburg," and at the same time appointed Taylor Professor of Mathematics and Natural Science, with "a rank next to [that of] the President." In May, 1849, this school removed to a new building, the construction of which the trustees had authorized as early as February 1, 1848. In this building, presently to be known as the Academy Building, was given for the next three years all the

¹ For the text of the charter of Bucknell University, see Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Passed at the Session of 1846 (Harrisburg, 1846), 32-35.
² Quotations from the Minutes of the Board of Trustees have been taken from the original manuscript books. Because the pages of these books are not numbered, citations can be given only by dates of meetings of the Board; hereafter this record will be cited as Minutes of the Trustees.
³ An Old Resident [Professor George R. Bliss], "Sketch of the History of Our University," The College Herald (May, 1870), I, 1. The College Herald was the first publication of the students of the University at Lewisburg (now Bucknell University).
instruction offered by the University; and here, in 1851, was held the first commencement of Bucknell University. In 1852 a third branch of the University, called the Female Institute, began its work in another building that had been purchased by the trustees, and here for many years the female students in the University were instructed. All other instruction continued to be offered in the Academy Building until the University building called Old Main was completed in 1858. Thereafter the Academy Building was the home of the preparatory school for boys until this branch of the University was discontinued in 1916. It was in this building, as we shall see, that the collegiate library was formally organized.

One of the duties that the charter imposed on the trustees, after the sum of $100,000 had been subscribed for the University, was that of providing a library. Their first official act with respect to this matter was taken in August, 1848, after Professor Taylor had laid before them a comprehensive report on the proposed university. This report, unhappily, has not been preserved, but we do know that on August 29, 1848, the trustees appointed a committee of four, referred to it recommendations respecting a library that Professor Taylor had made, and instructed it to "make arrangements for the collection of a Library as soon as the necessary fund . . . [should] be obtained." One of the members of this committee was Professor Taylor, and another was George W. Anderson. We shall presently hear more of these men.

Nearly five months later, during their meeting for the organization of the college, the trustees on January 19, 1849, received and approved a report of their committee on the library, and forthwith they named as the first librarian of the University the Reverend George R. Bliss, whom they had recently appointed Professor of Greek. How many books had by that time been acquired for the University we do not know, but we do know that at that meeting the trustees officially thanked the donor of forty-two volumes of "rare Books" from the library of the late Dr. William Staughton.4

4 Thirteen of these volumes (Nos. 317-329) can be identified in the first catalogue of the library of the University at Lewisburg. Dr. William Staughton (1770-1829) was a prominent Baptist minister and educator. From 1821 to 1829 he was president of the Columbian College (now George Washington University) in the District of Columbia. See William Cathcart, ed., The Baptist Encyclopaedia (Philadelphia, 1881), 1096, and also S. W. Lynd, Memoir of the Rev. William Staughton, D.D. (Boston, 1834).
These books had been acquired by an agent of the University, the Reverend Eugenio Kincaid, who was requested to keep them until the newly appointed librarian should begin his work in Lewisburg.

Professor Bliss began his service for the University at the opening of the summer term, in May, 1849, "when," as he later wrote, "the school was transferred to the academy building just finished." On August 25, 1849, in his first report to the trustees he said that 438 volumes for the library had been turned over to him. He did not say when, or from whom, he had received these books. There is not, however, sufficient evidence to warrant our thinking that these books had been brought together as a temporary library in the Baptist Church in Lewisburg. Accordingly, we may conclude, I think, that the collegiate library of the University at Lewisburg had its formal beginning in the Academy Building, which in 1932 was renamed Taylor Hall.

Whether the books that Professor Bliss received in 1849 would be the beginning of a small or of a large library, only the passing years would disclose. There is good reason to believe, however, that some of the founding fathers were as much interested in acquiring an adequate library for the University as they were in procuring for it a "philosophical apparatus" or a "cabinet" for use in teaching the sciences. Of these founders one of the first to make known his desire for such a library was George W. Anderson, a graduate of the Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution (now Colgate University) and, since 1845, editor of a Philadelphia Baptist newspaper called the Christian Chronicle. Mr. Anderson, as we have learned, was a member of the first committee on the library. In January, 1849, he was appointed Professor of Latin in the University at Lewisburg, with the understanding that he would begin his teaching in the autumn of 1849.

6 Professor Bliss's reports as librarian were incorporated into the Minutes of the Trustees. About the time that Bliss was making his first report, a visitor in Lewisburg reported on the library of the University as follows: "Several hundred volumes in the Library—among them many choice and elegant works—give as much and varied reading as the student need desire now. I was glad to learn that the Library is constantly enlarging. . . . Lewisburg Chronicle, September 5, 1849.
7 A published statement of the Board of Trustees, dated February 1, 1849, affirms, inter alia, that a library for the University "is commenced." This affirmation, however, appears to mean that books were being gathered for a library. Lewisburg Chronicle, February 21, 1849.
Accordingly, it is no matter for surprise that presently his interest in the institution in which he would soon be laboring should have manifested itself in a perceptive editorial, entitled "The Library at Lewisburg," which appeared in the Christian Chronicle of April 11, 1849. From this editorial I now quote.

One of the most important deficiencies of the American Colleges is the want of large libraries. In some cases this is a necessary evil. In others it results from an oversight on the part of the friends of such institutions. The importance of such an appendage to a school of learning is not duly estimated, or there would be found many ready to step forward and aid in securing it. . . .

In the erection of an institution, such as the University at Lewisburg—one which is to increase in usefulness with the lapse of years, and to shed its blessings on generations yet unborn—it is desirable to begin aright. The undertaking itself is a great undertaking. If narrow views and niggardly policy are ever to be deprecated, it is when men attempt to rear and manage such an institution. . . .

We commend the subject of the library of the University to those who have shown their zeal and liberality in carrying forward the enterprise thus far. Books are the repositories of the growing intellectual treasures of our race. In every department of human knowledge men are laboriously engaged, and the results of their toils are presented to us in their works. . . . But we need not dwell on this subject for we know that it is only necessary to draw the attention of our readers to the importance of a good library at Lewisburg, in order to awaken their lively interest, and to secure their cordial co-operation. Already some valuable donations of books have been made. Already some have resolved to add to their subscription toward the $100,000, a special subscription for the library fund. Hereafter some, dying, will be found to have mentioned this subject in their wills. We have heard from several sources, cheering accounts of the interest felt in the subject, and we hope that interest will soon become general.

Here, indeed, is a significant plea for a liberal policy with respect to the library of the college of the University at Lewisburg, and, happily, for several years the spirit of liberalism did inform the efforts that were made in behalf of this library. On August 29, 1849, the trustees authorized Professors Bliss, Anderson, and Taylor to expend for books that were urgently needed
whatever money might become available for that purpose, and, furthermore, they requested Professors Bliss and Anderson to act as their agents during the vacation "to procure funds expressly pledged for the purpose of Philosophical apparatus and Books for the Library." Even greater efforts, it appears, were then being planned by the friends of this library, for Professor Bliss before the end of 1849 had sent to Charles C. Jewett, Librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, information which, as summarized by Mr. Jewett, reads as follows: "A subscription of about $10,000 has been made for the increase of the library [of the college at the University at Lewistburg]; and it will become available, by instalments, within the next three years." We must presume that Mr. Jewett misunderstood Professor Bliss, who must have said, or intended to say, that efforts were making to get such a subscription, and that the friends of the University hoped that within three years the sum of $10,000 would become available for the purpose of enlarging the collegiate library. Such optimism would have cost him nothing. However that may be, we have no record of so large a subscription for the library having been either authorized or collected, and we know that, until many years after 1849 had passed by, this library did not have at its disposal as much as $10,000 for the purchase of books.

Besides authorizing Professors Bliss and Anderson to solicit money for the library, the trustees also at their meeting in August, 1849, approved a set of regulations which Professor Bliss had prepared for the use of the library; and before adjourning they requested him not only
to tender to the Hon. James Pollock [.] late member of Congress, the thanks of this Board, for the valuable Books and documents he presented to the Library of the University at Lewistburg; . . . [but also] respectfully [to] request him to continue his donations, and that the Hon. Joseph Casey the successor of Mr. Pollock be respectfully

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9 Minutes of the Trustees, August 29, 1849. These regulations, somewhat revised, were re-adopted on August 21, 1851, and four years later were published as part of a pamphlet entitled Laws of the University at Lewistburg, Pennsylvania. Enacted 1851 (Printed for the University, 1855), 15-17.
requested to procure for the Library such Books and documents as he can, without inconvenience.\textsuperscript{10}

Here was the beginning of an effort that might have, but unfortunately did not, make the library of Bucknell University a depository of documents of the Government of the United States.

Before the end of the next academic year, Professor Taylor had proved himself, if such proof were needed, to be a generous friend of the library, for, despite his great interest in promoting the teaching of science, he expressed the belief in a report submitted to the trustees in April, 1850, that

the interests of the Institution would be promoted, by deferring the purchase of Astronomical apparatus for an observatory, and likewise a complete chemical apparatus until after very considerable additions shall have been made to the Library—The Chemical apparatus and chemicals already procured [he said] will suffice for the next two years.\textsuperscript{11}

Perhaps because of this recommendation, the trustees at their meeting in August, 1850, not only authorized the committee on the library to expend during the next year the sum of $300 for the purchase of books, but also requested their agents "to solicit contributions in the form of Books, to be placed in the Library, when it may be expedient for them to do so." Also at this meeting they agreed that any profit which might be obtained from the graduation fee of $5.00 should be paid into the library fund. By this time, as Professor Bliss reported, there were 698 books in the library.\textsuperscript{12}

During the next year the work of procuring books for the library proceeded so satisfactorily that on August 21, 1851, Professor Bliss could report to the trustees that within the year 379 volumes had been acquired, most of them by purchase, and that the library then contained 1,125 volumes. He should, however,

\textsuperscript{10} Biographical sketches of James Pollock and Joseph Casey may be found in \textit{A Biographical Congressional Directory . . . 1774-1911} (Washington, 1913), 534 and 929.

\textsuperscript{11} Minutes of the Trustees, April 17, 1850.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, August 24, 1850. See also a summarized history of the University from 1845 to 1850 in a report to the Board of Curators by its committee on publication. This report, dated August 26, 1850, was printed in the \textit{Lewisbury Chronicle}, September 11, 1850.
have said 1,077 volumes. Who was responsible for this mistake we need not try to determine. The error is annoying rather than important. More to the point is the fact that in this report Professor Bliss announced gifts to the library of some valuable books, among which were publications of the Smithsonian Institution; and equally pertinent is the fact that also in this report he expressed the hope “that gradual appropriations . . . [might] be made for the constant augmentation of the Library, as the means of the Board . . . [would] allow.” By pursuing a policy of constant enlargement, the friends of the Library, he continued, might

hope eventually to see here a collection of Books which shall not only meet the wants of students and instructors, but of the denomination; so that any writer among us shall find the important and rare authorities requisite for any work in which he may be engaged—

Thus he expressed two worthwhile aims for the library, neither of which has as yet been achieved. Wisely or unwisely, the University at Lewisburg did not profit by the opportunity it once had to make the library of its college the principal depository in Pennsylvania for Baptist records. Moreover, members of the faculty of Bucknell University, more than a century after Professor Bliss expressed his hope for a library adequate for scholarship in Lewisburg, cannot escape the need to go elsewhere to get much of the material they need for scholarly writing. We should always remember, however, that the conception of adequacy in a collegiate library more than a hundred years ago would be greatly different from the conception of such adequacy in our time.

Nevertheless, regardless of regrets today about what was not done, the University at Lewisburg, even in its infancy, made at least one decision that greatly benefited its library. That decision was to appoint as its first president the Reverend Howard Malcom, who was inaugurated in August, 1851.13 Besides being a competent scholar, Dr. Malcom was a gifted administrator who overlooked none of the needs of the University. For several months he devoted much of his time, much of his thought, and some of his means to hastening the acquisition of a cabinet that would be

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13 Lewisburg, Pa., Union County Whig, August 28, 1850.
adequate for the teaching of geology, physiology, botany, and zoology. He also busied himself with the founding of the University Female Institute and with the establishment of a Department of Theology. In addition, the evidence seems clearly to indicate that during the early years of his presidency one of his foremost concerns was that of improving the collegiate library. Thanks to this interest, the growth of the library between 1851 and 1854 was remarkable, despite the fact that the University spent nothing for books during those years.

During most of the decade of the 1840's, Dr. Malcom had been president of the Baptist college in Georgetown, Kentucky. Here early in 1841 he found himself in charge of an educational institution which, though lacking many things, did have "a tolerable library of the most important works." To make this "tolerable" library a good library he spared no effort, and judged by the standards of his day he accomplished his purpose within a few years. Whereas, as late as February, 1844, this library contained only 2,000 volumes, in June, 1848, Dr. Malcom could proudly say to his trustees that the library of Georgetown College, besides having a printed catalogue of more than 5,000 volumes, had become "a library which would do honor to any college," and which, with his own 1,700 volumes and 500 volumes belonging to the student societies, would give a student in that college access to more than 7,000 volumes.¹⁴

What President Malcom had done for the library of Georgetown College, he seemed determined to do also for the library here, and so great and so successful were his efforts that he deserves to be called the foremost of the early friends of the library of Bucknell University. What he did for this library compares favorably with what President Thomas Clap did for the library of Yale College in the middle years of the eighteenth century and with what President James Manning did for the library of the College of Rhode Island (now Brown University) in the later years of that century.¹⁵ It would appear that the attics of none of Malcom's

¹¹ Louisville Baptist Banner and Western Pioneer, April 8 and 15, 1841; Philadelphia Baptist Record, February 18 and July 17, 1844; Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Georgetown College, Kentucky, 1846-17 (Georgetown, 1847), 10; Louisville Baptist Banner, July 12, 1848.
friends escaped his notice, and we may be fairly certain that his heavy correspondence, of which he once complained, was for some years largely occasioned by his eager solicitation of books. We may also be reasonably certain that he deserves credit for the spirit (but, let us hope, not for the English) of a resolution adopted by the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention in October, 1851—a resolution which, despite its incoherence, makes reasonably clear the fact that this convention was urging all the Baptist churches in Pennsylvania to take a special collection for the benefit of the library of the college of the University at Lewisburg. What came of this urging we do not know.

Malcolm's importunities reached even to his relatives. In an intimate letter, written on October 23, 1854, to his "dear & only Aunt," he did not forget to mention the need of his university for books. This university, he told her,

seems to prosper in every way [.] Library & Cabinet are growing & endowment increasing [.] I believe the Epis. Church has a Society for printing & distributing the common prayer & other standard vols. of practical piety. Would it not make a donation of one of each of its publications for our Library where they would be permanently useful to many . . . ?

It would be interesting to know what his adored aunt, who appears to have been an Episcopalian, thought about this none-too-subtle hint by her devoted nephew.

President Malcolm's persistent begging brought quick and abundant returns. In his first annual report, submitted in August, 1852, he could say:

The steady increase of the Library is an object of constant solicitude, and I have obtained during the year 827 volumes, which nearly double our number of books, many of them are the most important we could have, and all will be constantly useful.

10 Pennsylvania Baptist Convention for Missionary Purposes, Minutes of the Fifteenth Anniversary, Held with the Jersey Shore Baptist Church, Lycoming Co., Pa., October 24 & 25, 1851 (Philadelphia, 1851), 6-7.
In this same report, moreover, he recommended that all monies accruing from students for the use of the Library should be set apart, for the benefit of the Library itself. . . . We have many hundreds of valuable pamphlets to be bound, and many volumes needing repair. Such a designation of this branch of our income would not only keep up the bindings; but enable us to purchase books greatly needed by the Professors in their several Departments.

This recommendation the trustees approved, but the evidence appears to be conclusive that in the years immediately after 1852 the University at Lewisburg spent no money for books.18

Of the books acquired during the academic year 1852-53, one collection of twenty-nine volumes appears to have been peculiarly important. These books, bought in Europe by Professor George W. Anderson, who was sent there late in the summer of 1852 primarily for the purpose of buying specimens for the cabinet of the University, were intended for the use of the professors who taught botany, mineralogy, zoology, and physiology. They were paid for by Thomas Wattson of Philadelphia, who was then the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University at Lewisburg. Unhappily, these books cannot be identified in the early catalogue of the library. It may be that they were consigned to the care of the departments concerned, and thus never became a part of the collection of the collegiate library. Stranger things than that happened in American colleges a hundred or more years ago. In any case it appears that of the 401 books acquired by the University between August, 1852, and August, 1853, these were the ones on which President Malcom lavished praise in his report for that academic year. Some of them, he declared, were "very costly & filled with engravings illustrating the subjects of natural science." The number of books in the library at that time, Professor Bliss reported, was "upwards of 2400."19

18 Minutes of the Trustees, August 17, 1852. The librarian's report, as summarized in the Minutes of the Trustees for August 17, 1852, makes it appear that 1,000 volumes had been added to the library during the preceding year, and that the number of volumes in the library on August 17, 1852, was 2,007.

19 Lewisburg Chronicle, December 24, 1852, quoting the Philadelphia Christian Chronicle; Minutes of the Trustees, August 16, 1853.
By August, 1854, President Malcom's efforts to build up a library with nothing had worn his patience thin. At that time his sense of frustration cropped out in sharp words in a report to the Board.

Our library is of the utmost consequence to the Institution and though I have more than doubled it both in number of volumes and value, it is yet wholly unworthy of use—Not a book has been purchased since my connection with the Institution, while nearly $400 has been received for it from the assessment of students for its use—I presume it is your intention to appropriate these fees to the support of the Library, and they will not amount to a sum sufficient to cover losses, make repairs and bind pamphlets. . . . Of the latter I have collected enough to make a large number of volumes, which if bound would perhaps be more used than any other book[s] in the Library. . . . I respectfully suggest that $150, be appropriated to binding pamphlets, repairing books, and the subscription for one or two of the most important periodicals.

The trustees, taking this rebuke in stride, appropriated $150 for the purpose that Malcom had designated, but they did not establish a fund for the purchase of books—perhaps for the good reason that they then urgently needed for other purposes every dollar that they could lay their hands on.

About the time that President Malcom was speaking bluntly to the trustees on the condition of the library, Professor Bliss was reporting, on August 15, 1854, that an addition of "about 160 volumes" to the library during the preceding year had brought the total to 2,560 volumes. Among these, all of which were donations, was "an old folio Martyrology of the Baptists," which had been printed in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, more than a century before.

The next academic year appears to have been a year of decision

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20 Minutes of the Trustees, August 15, 1854.
21 This book, bearing in the handwriting of Professor George R. Bliss a statement that it was donated by Dr. C. Seiler, is now in the rare-book collection of the library of Bucknell University. The author, the title, and the place and the date of its publication are as follows: T. J. V. Braght, Der Blutige Schau-Platz, oder Martyrer Spiegel der Tauff-Gesinnten oder Wehrlesen-Christen, . . . Drucks and Verlags der Bruderschaft. Ephrata in Pennsvylvanien, Anno MDCCXLVIII.
in the early history of the collegiate library, for then it was that the 
"liberal policy" began to give way to a "narrow policy." Although 
between August, 1854, and August, 1855, an addition of 282 vol-
umes had brought the number of books in the library to 2,818, there 
appeared in the catalogue of the University for that academic year a 
hint of a diminishing effort in behalf of the library. Before the year 
1854-55, the catalogue had said nothing about the growth of the li-
brary. As early as the year 1851-52, it had mentioned a library 
fee of $2.00 per annum, and a year later it had affirmed that the 
University had "a Library Room," which, as we learn from the 
catalogue for 1853-54, was forty feet square. The catalogue for 
1854-55, however, not only calls attention to the recent growth 
of the library, but intimates what the sequel would clearly show 
—namely, that thenceforth the appeal for books for the library 
would be made in the catalogue rather than in letters from the 
president. Why this change was made, we cannot now determine. 
Perhaps President Malcom had become tired; perhaps he was 
disillusioned; perhaps he was both tired and disillusioned. It is 
not likely that he suddenly became satisfied with a library which, 
only a little while before, he had called inadequate. Whatever the 
reason, he consented to the insertion in the catalogue for 1854-55 
of a statement reading as follows:

This branch of the means of instruction afforded by 
the University [i.e., the collegiate library] has been en-
larged during the past three years, by the addition of 
above 2000 volumes, and is continually increasing. This 
increase has been made by the donations of books from a 
few individuals, the Institution having, as yet, no fund 
provided for this purpose. The donation of books is 
earnestly solicited. They may be forwarded either to the 
President, or to Rev. B. R. Loxly, 118 Arch Street, 
Philadelphia.

Soon thereafter the library entered a time of lean years, during 
which it bought no books and received few gifts. Moreover, neglect 
begat indifference. For seven long years each issue of the catalogue 
repeated monotonously the statement that the library contained 
"about 3,000 volumes, and . . . [was] continually increasing by 
the donations of friends of the University." This statement was 
as misleading as the editing that allowed its repetition was
slovenly. If there had been continual increase for several years, the total number of books could hardly have remained the same; actually the additions dwindled almost to nothing. President Mal-com had reported on March 25, 1856, that since the summer of 1855 the library, in addition to "52 vol's from Government," had acquired by donations 176 volumes, the most valuable of which were the volumes of the eighth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that were already published. No further notice of accessions to the library appears in the Minutes of the Trustees until July 28, 1857. Under that date is an entry in which Professor Bliss affirmed that the nineteen volumes acquired during the preceding year had brought the number of volumes then in the library (including those belonging to the Department of Theology) to 3,067. The library at that time was valued at $3,000.

Apparently no report on the library was made for the year 1857-58—an omission explained no doubt by the fact that during that year Professor Bliss, in addition to performing his usual duties, served as temporary president. Presumably during that year and the next one a few more volumes were given to the library, for on July 25, 1859, he could say that the eighty volumes received since his latest report had brought the number to 3,147. Among these acquisitions there were, besides documents of the Federal Government and documents of the state of Pennsylvania, "the accruing volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, from the generous donors, before mentioned."

By this time the library had been removed from the Academy building to the room provided for it on the second floor of the central part of Old Main, the University building which, as we have learned, was completed in 1858. Of this transfer, a significant event in the early history of this library, Professor Bliss, on July 25, 1859, wrote as follows:

The removal of the library from its previous quarters to the new room (after being long delayed in the hope of first supplying the appropriate cases for permanent use) has at last been effected, with such temporary shelves as we had, for the imperfect accommodation of the books. I would invite the attention of the Board, during their

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Minutes of the Trustees, March 25, 1856. These volumes were presented by J. C. Davis, J. D. Reed, Samuel A. Crozer, and Lewis Crozer.
stay, to the new library apartment, which is a very pleasant one, and offers accommodations for such a collection of books as now remains the most pressing desideratum perhaps of the University.\(^{23}\)

The collegiate library of the University at Lewisburg was now at the end of the first period of its history. Its foundation, such as it was, had been laid, and the room to which the books had been removed would continue to be its home until the completion of the Carnegie building in 1905.

Whatever its limitations, this library had no reason to apologize for the size of its holdings. Comparatively speaking, the University at Lewisburg, ten years after the formal beginning of its collegiate library, had a collection of books that many older American colleges would not have despised. A report on American libraries\(^{24}\) made in the middle of the nineteenth century by Charles C. Jewett, Librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, shows that, Harvard and Yale excepted, the libraries of most American colleges were then very small. For example, as late as 1849, according to this report, Williams College had a library of 5,993 volumes, and Amherst College,\(^ {25}\) founded in 1821, had a library of 5,700. Columbia had 12,740 volumes, Hamilton had about 3,500 volumes, and Union had 7,776 volumes. Even the libraries of the University of Pennsylvania and of Dickinson College contained, respectively, only 5,000 volumes and 5,500 volumes. The libraries of southern colleges, with the exception of those of the University of Virginia, South Carolina College, and Georgetown College in the District of Columbia, were of little consequence. Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) had a library of only 1,397. Nor was the situation more promising in the West. At this time the library of Georgetown College, in Kentucky, with its 6,500 volumes, held a place of distinction among the libraries of western colleges, for Kenyon College then had a library of about 4,550 volumes, Illinois College had a library of 4,000 volumes, Marietta College had a library of 4,300 volumes, and Granville College

\(^{23}\) Minutes of the Trustees, July 27, 1869.

\(^{24}\) Jewett, op cit., passim.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 17. One historian of Amherst has remarked that the collegiate library of Amherst resembled, as late as the 1860's, a "literary mausoleum." Claude M. Fuess, Amherst: The Story of a New England College (Boston, 1935), 184.
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(now Denison University) had a library of only 1,000 volumes.26 Obviously, in respect to the number of volumes it had acquired, the University at Lewisburg had no reason in 1859 to think that its collegiate library was inferior to those of similar institutions.

Nor did this institution need to apologize for the means that it had employed to get most of the books that were then in its collegiate library. Few American collegiate libraries at that time had endowments; most were still depending principally upon gifts of books. Consequently, many of these libraries were putting on their shelves books that they would never have thought of buying. On this subject Charles C. Jewett, in the report mentioned above, made a pertinent observation. "Our colleges," he affirmed, "are mostly eleemosynary institutions. Their libraries are frequently the chance aggregations of the gifts of charity; too many of them discarded as well nigh worthless, from the shelves of the donors. This is not true of all our college libraries: for among them are some very important collections, chosen with care and competent learning." In this reference to important collections, Jewett may well have been thinking of the library of the University of Virginia,27 which had enjoyed the patronage of Jefferson and of Madison, and most certainly he was thinking of the library of the University of Vermont and of that of South Carolina College. Upon the two last-named libraries he lavished praise. Of the library of the University of Vermont, he wrote: "This is one of the few libraries in the United States selected with competent bibliographical knowledge and good judgment, and purchased with economy. The college had the wisdom to send a learned, zealous, and active agent to Europe to buy books, instead of trusting their funds to the cupidity of bibliopoles." Equally great was his enthusiasm for the library of South Carolina College. This library, he affirmed, "is one of the best selected in the country. The learned aid of Professor [Francis] Lieber has been bestowed upon it. The collection is far more valuable than many of twice its size."28

Nor in respect to its other practices was this library at Lewisburg peculiar. Here, as in most American colleges during the

26 Jewett, op. cit., passim.
27 Jewett, op. cit., 120. See also Henry Clemens, The University of Virginia Library, 1825-1950: The Story of a Jeffersonian Foundation (Charlottesville, 1954).
28 Jewett, op. cit., 16-155, passim.
middle of the nineteenth century, students paid a fee for the use of books. The annual fee charged by the University at Lewisburg was two dollars until 1858, when it was reduced to a dollar and a half. A few years before this time students in Madison University were paying twenty-five cents a term for library privileges, students in Waterville College and in Georgetown College, in Kentucky, were paying a dollar a year, and students in Brown University a dollar a term. Among the older New England colleges, both Harvard and Yale charged library fees, and among the younger colleges of the Old Northwest Marietta, Miami, and Wabash charged such fees. The fee varied somewhat from college to college, but the practice of charging a fee was widespread.29

Equally widespread was the practice of keeping collegiate libraries closed most of the time. Students in the University at Lewisburg, who were permitted to borrow books at least twice a week, were as well provided for as the students in most other colleges of that era. At that time the library of Bowdoin College was open for one hour three times a week, and that of Princeton College “twice a week—one hour each time.” Many colleges opened their libraries twice a week; a considerable number once a week; and a few, of which the University of Missouri was one, opened theirs “one hour every two weeks.” Institutions such as Yale, Brown, South Carolina, and the University of Virginia, each of which opened its library daily (Sundays and holidays excepted) were in this matter exceptional.30 Speaking generally, a college library was a hallmark of academic respectability; but even so it was valued more as a depository for books than as a place for studying or loafing. Many more years would pass before it would serve, as in our day, the additional and humane purpose of providing a convenient and comfortable place for dating.

The question to which we are now brought is: how nearly adequate was the collegiate library of the University at Lewisburg in 1859, the year which I have called the end of the first period

29 University at Lewisburg, Catalogue, 1851-52, 17; Minutes of the Trustees, July 27, 1858; Jewett, op. cit., passim.
30 Jewett, op. cit., 8, 59, 71, 106, 143, 155, 181; Laos of the University at Lewisburg . . . 1851, 15. In 1853 the University of Rochester kept its library open from ten to twelve on Saturdays “for taking out and returning books.” On “every other secular day” it was kept open “for consultation” from two to three in the afternoon. J. L. Rosenberger, Rochester: The Making of a University (Rochester, 1927), 60.
of its history? We can answer fairly well by examining the first catalogue of this library, a manuscript book entitled Catalogue of Books Belonging to the University at Lewisburgh [sic]. This compilation, in use as late as 1885, bears the heavy impress of amateurishness. Happily, its entries are numbered, but many are incomplete and some are scarcely comprehensible. As we examine this book, we encounter some titles that are much abbreviated and others that are unaccompanied by the names of authors; and, equally bad, with few exceptions the entries omit the dates of publication. Nevertheless, despite such defects, this catalogue is precise enough to enable us to identify most of the important works in the principal foundational collection of the present library.

The first group of entries (Nos. 1-143) consists of a collection of Latin classics entitled Bibliotheca Classica Latina; sive, Collectio Auctorum Classicorum Latinorum cum Notis et Indicibus, a work that was published in Paris by Lemaire between 1819 and 1832. The next group of entries (Nos. 144-157) consists of a set of the first edition of the Encyclopaedia Americana, a compilation of peculiar value to students of American culture because, unlike many other important American publications of that era, it derives from a German rather than a British source. Planned and edited by Francis Lieber, a talented German-American scholar whose name we have earlier encountered, this work was published in Philadelphia in thirteen volumes between 1830 and 1833, and was enlarged in 1847 by a supplementary volume edited by Henry Vethake. Immediately following the entry numbers of this work are other entries (Nos. 158-160) which record the first three volumes of George Bancroft’s History of the United States. With these three sets the collegiate library of Bucknell University had its formal beginning—a beginning of which any American college even in the middle of the nineteenth century might well have been proud.

All the volumes of the above-mentioned sets, most of them in their original bindings, are still shelved here. Naturally they have all been re-catalogued, but they can easily be identified by the numbered bookplate of the University at Lewisburg pasted on

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31 On Francis Lieber see especially Frank Freidel, Francis Lieber, Nineteenth Century Liberal (Baton Rouge, c. 1947), chap. iv, “Francis Lieber: Encyclopedist.”
the inner side of the front cover of each of them. They are by no means the only books of the principal foundational collection of this library, but they stand apart because no comparable run of successive entry numbers could be assembled from the other surviving books.

As we continue to turn the pages of this catalogue, we come again and again upon titles of works which once were highly regarded, and among those of the highest quality are some which we easily recognize as friends of long standing. Let us consider, first of all, the holdings of historical writings. Here the ancient historians are represented by Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Justin, and Josephus, but, oddly enough, not Eusebius. More numerous are the names of later historians, many of whom are famous. British historians are represented by Burnet, Gibbon, Robertson, Hume, Milman, Mitford, Macaulay, Hallam, and Alison; continental European historians by Thiers, Guizot, Lamartine, Michelet, Rollin, Ranke, Heeren, Mosheim, Simone de Sismondi, and D'Aubigné; and American historians by Prescott, Hildreth, Irving, Sparks, Philip Schaff, Isaac Backus, and David Benedict, the two last named being early historians of the Baptist denomination. To this list could be added the names of lesser writers whose works are now seldom if ever consulted.

Among writings broadly classed as works on travel and exploration, we find inter alia, Captain James Cook's *Voyages*, Sir Edward Parry's *Three Voyages for the Discovery of the North-west Passage*, Robert Moffatt's *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa*, Humboldt's *Travels*, Elisha Kent Kane's *Arctic Explorations*, J. C. Fremont's *Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains*, Lewis and Clark's *Travels*, R. M. Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, Volney's *View of the Climate and Soil of the United States*, Marco Polo's *Travels*, Alexander Mackenzie's *Voyages*, F. R. J. de Pons's *Voyage*, Commodore Perry's *Expedition to Japan*, Sir John Leslie's *Narrative of Discovery and Adventure in the Polar Seas*, and a book on the life and travels of Mungo Park. Unhappily, we find no titles of books that were written about the United States by European travelers who visited this country in great numbers during the first half of the nineteenth century. Specifically, we find no entry for Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, nor for
Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*, nor for Charles Dickens's *American Notes*, and—*mirabile dictu*—none for Mrs. Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans*.

In ancient literature we find numerous entries, but the recorded holdings in Greek are less impressive than those in Latin that are assembled in the Lemaire collection. As to modern literature, there are entries of writings by some distinguished authors, but none of works of others equally distinguished. Shakespeare, we find (in both English and German), but not Cervantes. Milton, Bunyan, Bacon, Dryden, and Fénelon we also find, but not Molière, Boileau, Corneille, and La Bruyère. So much for the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The eighteenth century is somewhat better represented. Entries for that century include Addison, Thomson, Johnson, Pope, Franklin, Cowper, Goldsmith, Boswell, and Burke, but no writings of Fielding, Sterne, Sheridan, Swift, Burns, Blake, Rousseau, Voltaire, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, and Herder. The nineteenth century, strangely enough, is less well represented than the eighteenth. Byron, Scott, Irving, Channing, Moore, and Dickens are here, but we look in vain for Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Thackeray, Cooper, Emerson, and many other prominent British and American writers. William Cullen Bryant appears as editor of an anthology entitled *Selections from the American Poets* (1848), a volume in *Harper's Family Library*, of which this library had a full set. On the lighter side we encounter the name of Lydia Sigourney, but not the name of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

In political theory, economics, government, and law, we find recorded in this catalogue some works that are valuable, but in general the coverage of this area leaves much to be desired. Writers of classical antiquity in this category are not adequately represented. We find, for example, the political writings of Plato and Cicero, but neither the *Politics* nor the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle. Of medieval writings on political thought, there is nothing. Modern writings on subjects within this category, however, are not without representation. We find, for example, entries on Locke, Montesquieu, Henry Hallam, John Austin, and Fisher Ames, but no entries on Bodin, Hobbes, Harrington, or Jeremy Bentham. Other entries mention Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, and Henry Clay, but not John C. Calhoun. We come upon Thomas Hart Benton's
Thirty Years' View, a set of John Marshall's Life of Washington, a copy of J. H. Eaton's Life of Jackson, and a set of Jared Sparks's American Biographies. Other materials—more or less important for the study of government, politics, and political and constitutional history—are the Annals of Congress, several volumes of the Congressional Globe, Jonathan Elliot's Debates . . . on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, the Debates of the Constitutional Convention of California, the Debates of the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention of 1837, Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New-York, several volumes of the Pennsylvania Colonial Records and of the Pennsylvania Archives, and numerous documents of the Federal Government. Apart from William Alexander Duer's Lectures on the Constitutional Jurisprudence of the United States and Francis Hilliard's The Elements of Law, we find little or nothing on the subject of law—even Sir William Blackstone's Commentaries, James Kent's Commentaries, and the writings of Joseph Story are wanting. As to political economy, the situation is not altogether desperate, for here we find J. S. Mills's Principles of Political Economy, Adam Ferguson's Essay on the History of Civil Society, Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, Jean Baptiste Say's Treatise on Political Economy, and Francis Lieber's Essays on Labour and Property.

The number of works recorded in this catalogue that deal with theology and religious literature generally is considerable. Some of these are profound, others are mediocre, and more than a few are trivial. Our examination leads us from commentaries on the Bible that were once standard to classical treatises such as John Calvin's Institutes, Jonathan Edwards's Redemption (but not his Freedom of Will), William Paley's Natural Theology and his Evidences of Christianity, and Thomas à Kempis's Imitation of Christ; thence to works on religious history, such as Melville Horne's Letters on Missions, William Gammell's History of American Baptist Missions, Henry Hart Milman's History of Latin Christianity, Leopold von Ranke's History of the Popes, Philip Schaff's History of the Apostolic Church, and Andrew Steinmetz's History of the Jesuits; thence to numerous evangelical tracts and other popular religious writings, such as those of Hannah More and Thomas Dick; thence to collections of sermons and sets of complete works of famous preachers, such as George Whitefield,
Robert Hall, and Andrew Fuller; thence to various and sundry anti-Catholic tracts, including Kirwan's [i.e., Nicholas Murray's] *Letters to the Honorable Roger B. Taney*, Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, John Dowling's *History of Romanism*, and *Secret Instructions* of the Jesuits, but not, oddly enough, Samuel F. B. Morse's pseudonymous work entitled *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States*; thence to reports of Bible, tract, missionary, and Sunday School societies (both British and American); and, finally, to beginnings of numerous sets of religious magazines and of religious newspapers. We expect to find (and we do find) three Protestant tracts on piety that were much read in this country during the first half of the nineteenth century—Richard Baxter's *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, Richard Alleine's *Alarm to Unconverted Sinners*, and Philip Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. Moreover, we find also the most renowned of all books of this genre, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. On the other hand, St. Augustine is not present in this collection, either in his *Confessions* or in *The City of God*.

There are few titles of treatises illustrating the many-faceted movement of Christian benevolence in Great Britain and the United States in the nineteenth century. On the subject of slavery we find two famous essays, by Clarkson and by Channing; and on the peace movement we find works of William Ladd and Jonathan Dymond. There is, however, nothing from the pen of the "learned blacksmith," Elihu Burritt. In general, the best material on the subject of Christian benevolence is in fugitive pamphlets (among which are two valuable tracts on Indian reform by Isaac McCoy), in periodical publications, and in reports of Christian benevolent societies. Material of this sort is rather plentiful.32

In other spheres of intellectual endeavor the holdings of this library in 1859 were meager. In philosophy, except for Dugald Stewart's *Works*, Schlegel's *Philosophy of History*, and J. D. Morell's *An Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, there was little or nothing. As to works dealing with scientific subjects, the number was very small. There was a copy of Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, and there were copies of Agassiz's *Lake Superior*, Strabo's *Geogr-

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32 For numerous volumes of miscellaneous tracts that are now in its library, Bucknell University is indebted to its first president, Dr. Howard Malcom.
raphy, Cuvier's *Animal Kingdom*, Asa Gray's *Genera of Plants*, Malte-Brun's *System of Geography*, John Lindley's *The Vegetable Kingdom*, Guyot's *Earth and Man*, James Dwight Dana's *Mineralogy*, and one of Jedidiah Morse's geographical compilations; and there were a few volumes of Silliman's *Journal*. There was no copy of Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, but there was a copy of a life of Newton by David Brewster. There were in this collection, however, two books of scientific character that deserve particular mention. The first was *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*—brought out anonymously in London in 1844 by Robert Chambers, a Scottish publisher and man of letters. This book, a daring one for that era, made a loud noise in the Anglo-American world. Before 1859 it had passed through numerous British and several American editions. Undoubtedly it helped prepare the Anglo-American mind for the coming of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859. The other was *Footprints of the Creator*—a reply to *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*. It was brought out in 1847 by Hugh Miller, a Scottish geologist. A contribution to Christian apologetics as well as to paleontology, this work attracted the attention of a scientist as famous as Louis Agassiz, who prepared a memoir concerning Miller as an introduction to an American edition of this book.

Finally, we find in the catalogue the title of a book, long since relegated to the limbo of science, that deserves at least passing mention. Entitled *The Constitution of Man in Relation to External Affairs*, this book was brought out in 1828 by George Combe, a Scottish phrenologist. It passed through numerous editions, in England and America, and it was also published in several foreign languages. Between 1838 and 1840 Combe had traveled in the United States and Canada, lecturing and winning the friendship of men as famous as Horace Mann and William Ellery Channing, and he subsequently published a book on his travels. Because Combe and his work were well known, we can understand why a copy of this book found a place here at an early date. Popular books were likely to become gift books.

We are now reasonably well prepared, I think, to form a judgment respecting the collegiate library of the University at Lewisburg in 1859. Lacking a patron of the intellectual stature of Thomas Jefferson, an adviser of the learning of Francis Lieber,
or an astute and learned agent with sufficient money in hand to buy in Europe magnificent collections of books, this library had acquired no claim to distinction. Indeed, it left more than a little to be desired. But it was not a bibliothetic necropolis, either, for it possessed many works of at least temporary importance and a few of enduring value. Considering the fact that most of the books which it had acquired had come to it as gifts, we may well wonder that it was not worse. Withal it served a useful purpose, for, as we learn from early "loan books," some students in the University at Lewisburg were making considerable use of it during the 1850's. So far as their library was concerned, there is no reason to think that these students were less fortunate than students in most other American colleges of that era.