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*Education*

It is not uncommon to see the scholar cloister himself, and spend a life time in the avaricious accumulation of knowledge, of which society never receives the slightest benefit. Though society numbered a thousand such minds, Ignorance would still wield her scepter, and hold her high supremacy. All mental accumulation, all knowledge of whatever kind, should in the beautiful idea of him who addressed you in behalf of our dear association, be labeled for use. The scholar should mingle in the world, in its silence and in its noise, in its high and its low places—should know the principles of its government, and watch with pure zeal and unceasing care its movements; and stand all ready in steel-clad armor, to do battle against all foreign or domestic enemies. Then will the light of mind shine throughout society, beautifying or elevating—then will freedom prevail and its temple arise, vast, all beautiful, all sublime, bearing on its clear sky-arch the name of its mighty architect, the PATRIOT SCHOLAR.

H. J. Grosbeck, *Address*, 1837

One of the goals of organized religion, as we have seen, was to create an enlightened, that is, “Christian” citizenry; it is hardly surprising, therefore, that education in Cincinnati should have been carried on under church auspices or at least under church surveillance. Directors of schools, if not ordained ministers, were godly men. Schoolteachers, theoretically, had to be men and women of irreproachable moral character. To have hired skeptics or atheists as instructors of the young would have been as unthinkable as to have hired drunkards and murderers, and, it might be added, just as dangerous. Intellect without virtue, as the saying went, “makes a splendid villain.”1 Only


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“baptized intelligence” could safeguard the individual “from the inroads of arbitrary rule and false religion.” In one sense, education was a more secular kind of religious training.²

Had this been the only purpose of education, however, it is not likely that the people of Cincinnati, engrossed in everyday realities, would have given it much support. Few people questioned the value of a Christian education. But a great many doubted the value of public schools and bitterly resented the attempts of busybodies and visionaries to impose them on the community. In order to overcome the prejudices of the various opposition groups, spokesmen for education reiterated several assumptions. First, they argued that education was practical. Everlastinglchanting the old cliché “Knowledge is power,” they called up the spirits of Bacon, Newton, and Franklin to support their contentions and sternly repudiated fruitless theorizing. Second, most educators elaborated on the importance of education as a training for democracy. Only an electorate which had studied the nature of American institutions, they said, could be counted upon to safeguard national liberties. Finally, proponents of education emphasized education’s conservative and corrective function, its importance as a check upon demagogues and agrarian. The sound principles emanating from the schoolroom would preserve the social order; rich men, in subsidizing public schools, insured their property.³

The crusaders for common schools in Cincinnati faced the same kind of apathy and hostility which confronted the friends of education all over the country. But here, as elsewhere, they gradually overcame local difficulties, and by 1838 the groundwork had been laid for an effective educational system. It is not my purpose here to trace in detail the development of educational institutions in Cincinnati. The story has been told many times and does not differ materially from the history of education in other American cities of comparable size. Rather, I shall follow Timothy Walker’s advice and see how far the “schemes of popular education” harmonized “with the pre-

2. Since the interests of education and religion were supposedly identical, a good many citizens wanted to use public school buildings on Sunday for religious training. Thus, in 1838, a hot controversy arose between the advocates and opponents of the plan. The school committee, however, refused to open up the public schools on Sunday. Such a policy, they said, would upset the plans and arrangements of the teachers and provoke sectarian strife. CG, Sept. 1, 15, 1838.

3. The same arguments, of course, were used by the education advocates in the East. It is worth noting, however, that the “social order” in Cincinnati, a western city, should already be regarded as something established, understood, and unchangeable.
vailing spirit of the age.” What, in other words, were the educational theo-
ries of Cincinnati pedagogues? To what extent were they determined or
modified by the character of this commercial community? And how suc-
cessfully did Cincinnati’s schools prepare the individual for life?

Before taking up these problems, it will be necessary first to sketch the
progress of education in the Queen City. It is a story of ineptitude, disappoint-
ment, and ignorance, mingled with high intelligence and resourcefulness.

Not content with pronouncing their city the Tyre of the West, Cincinnati
publicists liked to advertise its cultural advantages, which, they maintained,
made the pretensions of Louisville and Lexington appear ridiculous. The
editor of the Cincinnati Chronicle, E. D. Mansfield, reflected this typical
Queen City complacency in 1838 when he noted, a little smugly, that Cincin-
nati had not a few schools and not a few famous men. Three thousand stu-
dents were being educated at public expense. A law school, two medical
schools, three literary colleges, an academy of natural science, and a college
of professional teachers administered to the city’s needs, not to mention, he
concluded “sundry other ‘little fixings’ which have an A. B. C. tendency.” In
support of his claim, editor Mansfield might have added that Cincinnati had
installed the first public school system in the state. He might have pointed
out, too, that Cincinnati educators had helped to provide the leadership in
Ohio’s struggle for a free common school system. He could also have
boasted, with considerable justification, of Cincinnati’s fine academies and
of her brilliant teachers, men of more than statewide reputation.

Mansfield ignored the less-admirable features of the educational system
in his city, but the fact remains that in a period of fifty years Cincinnati had
become the chief center of education in the Ohio Valley. How are we to ac-
count for her preeminence in this field? Historians have explained it as
merely another triumph of New England institutions and glorified the work
of Yankee torchbearers in the benighted hinterlands, but this is not a valid
explanation. Even if we were to emphasize the importance of individual ac-


4. See Walker Papers, II (notes for a lecture Timothy Walker delivered in 1821).
5. Cincinnati Gazette, Aug. 18, 1838.
Perhaps the best explanation of Cincinnati's educational development lay in its geography and economy. Wealth and numbers provided the basis for educational experiments and attracted the men who were to organize and direct her schools. Her central location and accessibility drew students from as far south as Alabama and Mississippi and from as far north as western New York. Nor was it accidental that the Western College of Professional Teachers regularly held its annual meetings in Cincinnati. The 222 members attending the 1836 session represented teachers' organizations in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina.

Primitive and ephemeral private academies had appeared prior to 1815, and the pioneers had projected grandiose plans for a western university, but no educational enterprise of any importance is noteworthy until that year. In 1815 Joshua Wilson realized his three-year-old dream of a Lancastrian seminary, a project launched with Methodist and Presbyterian help and bolstered by loans from the Cincinnati banks. Public-spirited citizens had invested some $12,000 in this monitory school when it opened on April 17, 1815. Four hundred and twenty students had been enrolled, but many Cincinnatians, still considering the venture impractical, withheld their support. Friends of the seminary argued in vain that it provided a safer investment for capital than did merchandising and manufacturing; the mass of people remained unconvinced, and appeals to local pride or republicanism did not open up the guarded purses.

During the next few years the Lancastrian seminary made some headway, but in spite of the claims of its supporters it clearly never attained any real success. One year after the school had opened, the seminary building still remained unfinished, the shade trees unplanted, and the interior half-done; the school did not even possess a bell. Until 1819, when it merged with the newly formed Cincinnati College, the school was at best a makeshift affair, justified only by its cheapness. Lancastrian enthusiasts, to be sure, congratulated the town on its "assemblage of schools, in one edifice, where a child may enter in its alphabet, and come out with an education equal to that afforded by many of our colleges," but eyewitness accounts hardly bear them out. Daniel Drake's son, attending the seminary in 1815, paid his eight-

8. Ibid., Nov. 18, 1816.
dollar tuition and learned little. His description of the school reveals the mechanics of the monitorial system in Cincinnati.

The master sat at one end of the long room, on a raised platform, with the whole school before him on an inclined floor, seated at desks running nearly across the room, leaving on either side an aisle of some seven feet between the ends of the desks and the walls. In the aisles, on either side, were marked on the floor semicircles, around which the classes would stand, and be taught by larger boys, (or girls perhaps,) who were called monitors; who had no authority to punish children, but reported delinquents to the master who exercised discipline. For the younger children’s instruction large placards were hung upon the walls over the semicircles, with letters, words of one syllable, and figures, printed on them; and for the same there were, on the tops of the desks, small troughs containing a thin layer of sand, in which the little ones, with their fingers began the formation of letters and figures; and every little while a monitor would pass along, and inspect their work, then wipe it all out by passing a flat piece of wood along over the sand, so as to leave a smooth surface, in which the child-fingers would go to work again.\footnote{Charles D. Drake, “Autobiographical Narrative,” MS, 15–16.}

An Englishman’s view of the school about the same time presented the dismal picture of 150 scholars, “among whom were children of the most respectable persons in town,” being taught by “a poor half starved, civil school master” who had equal difficulty managing his wild scholars and drawing his salary.\footnote{H. B. Fearon, Sketches of America (London, 1818), 229–30.}

The Lancastrian system, its supporters had claimed, exemplified to perfection the principles of a free country. “It is every way calculated to favor superior merit and laudable ambition; and this is the passport to fame and fortune in the republic of America. No hereditary dunce can climb to power in this country, by force of connexions, as in England: by merit and superior abilities alone, can a citizen rise to power in America; and this is the vital principle of the Lancastrian system of education.” In fact, the only thing to be said in its favor was that it suited a community with a surplus of children and a dearth of specie. This mechanical and inadequate system could not be defended on any other grounds. The Lancastrian method may have benefited the poor, “precluded from the discipline of the higher order of schools and colleges” and dependent upon public charity for their education. But it was eventually recognized that a plan which “makes children repeat what others have re-
peated, and say nothing except what others say"\textsuperscript{11} was not the best one for a democracy.

This was in 1828, however, when the city had grown to more than twenty thousand and money was relatively plentiful. Friends of education no longer had to plead so desperately for support, and more ambitious experiments in higher education were being undertaken.

But the first indications that Cincinnati could now afford a more advanced and expensive type of education appeared in 1819, the year of the city's incorporation. The state legislature granted charters at this time to the Cincinnati College and the Medical College of Ohio, and prominent citizens subscribed heavily to the new institutions. Backers of the Cincinnati College were particularly generous. General William Lytle, in addition to a gift of cash, presented the institution with real estate worth $10,000. Judge Jacob Burnet, who had been president of the directors of the Lancastrian Seminary, gave $5,000 and a considerable amount of property. Ethan Stone, William Corry, Oliver M. Spencer, General James Findlay, David E. Wade, John H. Piatt, Andrew Mack, and forty others added another $50,000. This was "an immense sum," as one contemporary noted, "to be contributed by a few men who had immigrated to the West a very few years previous without capital, (or with very little,) to undergo the toils and hardships of a life in the wilderness."\textsuperscript{12} Not only does it testify to the public spirit of the donors; it also conclusively proves that some of the "pioneers" who immigrated to this particular "wilderness" became men of substance more rapidly than the "pioneers" in other "frontier" areas.

Prospects looked promising, according to the full account of the new college in the city directory for 1819:

It must be obvious to every one acquainted with the Western Country that Cincinnati is a very eligible situation for a seat of learning. Its location on the Ohio river renders the communication with distant parts of the country easy and frequent. It is a healthy populous city, and can afford the wealth and talents necessary to endow and foster an institution of this kind. Its funds already amount to about $50,000; and if care be taken in selecting learned and liberal minded professors, and in establishing a proper discipline, this infant institution bids fair, at a period not far distant, to rival the colleges of the East.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{LHCG,} July 24, 1815; Aug. 28, Sept. 18, 1828.
\textsuperscript{12} J. P. Foote, \textit{The Schools of Cincinnati, and Its Vicinity} (Cincinnati, 1855), 6.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Cincinnati Directory} (1819).
But like so many other of the rosy predictions made by overly optimistic Cincinnatians, this dream of a western Harvard never became a reality.

A financial crisis, inadequate direction, and public apathy are probably the chief reasons for the failure of the college. It never seems to have furnished the "able and popular instruction" demanded by Joshua Wilson. "By popularity," Wilson wrote in a candid and delicate letter to the president, Dr. Elijah Slack, "I mean a high reputation abroad, the favor of the people at home, and the love and admiration of the pupils in general." The college was never "popular" in this sense, although a certain amount of local interest is suggested by the enthusiastic reports of commencement ceremonies which appeared in the press. Accounts of its two literary societies, its scientific equipment, mineral collection, and library seemed to bear out one correspondent's contention that the college was maintaining itself, but the collapse came swiftly in 1826.

An attempt to reorganize the college in 1836 under the presidency of William H. McGuffey looked for a while as if it might be successful, but even McGuffey and an excellent faculty could not sustain it for more than several years. In spite of the fine medical school and law school, and in spite of the excellent literary department, the college was not sufficiently endowed to continue.

By permitting an institution of such promise to disintegrate in this fashion, Cincinnati citizens plainly showed that the progress of education was not one of their chief concerns. The city, it is true, did not entirely escape the consequences of the 1837 panic, but the college could have been supported at no great sacrifice. Sheer inertia partly explains why Cincinnatians failed to do so. Perhaps, too, their lack of interest, particularly in the primary and preparatory departments of the college, can be attributed to the presence of numerous private academies patronized by the well-to-do. Finally, popular interest in Woodward College and the energy expended in the campaign for

15. See H. A. Ford and K. B. Ford, History of Cincinnati, Ohio, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches (Cleveland, 1881), 179; and Charles T. Greve, Centennial History of Cincinnati and Representative Citizens (Chicago, 1904), I, 610. The medical school, lasting five years (1835–39), failed for want of endowment. See E. D. Mansfield, Memories of the Life and Services of Daniel Drake (Cincinnati, 1855), 281. The law school was originally founded by Edward King and Timothy Walker; after King's death, J. C. Wright and Joseph Benham were added to the staff. The literary department of the college also possessed a fine staff of teachers (according to Mansfield, 287–91). Even 160 students could not sustain the college with the absence of any endowment.
a common school system may have had something to do with the demise of the college.

The opening of Woodward High School in 1831\(^\text{17}\) boosted the educational reputation of Cincinnati and again showed the city's dependence on private munificence for the support of non-profit-making enterprises. Captain John Kidd, an early settler, had made the first bequest for the education of the poor, and his one-thousand-dollar annual fund helped support Cincinnati College during its first six years.\(^\text{18}\) The city lost the Kidd fund in 1825 by a shady legal technicality,\(^\text{19}\) however, and no other private gifts were forthcoming until the grants of Thomas Hughes and William Woodward.

Hughes, a shy and secretive English shoemaker, left all his property, thirty acres of farmland, for the support and maintenance of schools when he died in 1824. The income from his estate, never very large, paid for the education of indigent students who wished to attend Woodward College. William Woodward, responsible for this new institution, had left his Connecticut home in 1791. When he died in 1833 after forty-two years of farming, trading, and land speculation, he had amassed property amounting to about $250,000. Woodward's generous bequest enabled orphans and poor children between the ages of five and sixteen to get a free education; other children had to pay a moderate tuition. The instruction at Woodward probably equaled that received at most private academies, and the school flourished from the beginning. A succession of highly competent presidents and teachers, men like Thomas Jefferson Matthews,\(^\text{20}\) Benjamin P. Aydelott, Dr. Joseph Ray, and William Holmes McGuffey, made Woodward one of the most distinguished schools of its kind in the West.

For the rich and moderately well off, Cincinnati afforded a number of private schools and academies unrivaled in the West and probably equal to the private schools of the eastern cities. Some of the Queen City educators in the twenties and thirties, men and women of national reputations, used the most progressive and up-to-date educational methods and attracted students from neighboring counties and states. By 1826, classical academies, female

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17. Founded in 1826 as "Woodward Free Grammar School." When the free common schools were established in 1830, it became a high school and, in 1836, a college.

18. \textit{LHCG}, Apr. 8, 1823.


20. "Old Woodward": \textit{A Memorial Relating to Woodward High School, 1831–1836 & Woodward College, 1836–1851, in the City of Cincinnati} (Cincinnati, 1884), 63.
seminaries, evening and technical schools, music and art academies, and other kinds of private educational institutions numbered about fifty. The papers constantly reported accounts of the elaborate ceremonies and graduations attended by the fashionable elements of the city. The private-school teacher needed the testimonials of responsible backers if he were to succeed in Cincinnati and therefore made every effort to satisfy the visiting and examining committees whom he invited to observe his school. That so many able private-school teachers came to Cincinnati after 1819 does not necessarily indicate an educational renaissance, but it does suggest that many Cincinnatians were rich enough to pay for a higher grade of education.

Only a relatively small part of the population, however, could afford to take advantage of these educational opportunities. For a long period the children of the poorer classes, as a general rule, received no schooling. A few private institutions admitted a limited number of indigent students; the Sunday schools and parochial schools reached certain others. But it was not until 1829, when Cincinnati won the right to organize and support her own school system, that educational facilities became available to the poor. Even then, public schools remained vastly inferior to private schools.

Friends of education in Hamilton County had been agitating for a free school system in Ohio for at least a decade, but the opposition of large taxpayers, the jealousy of private-school proprietors, and public lethargy prevented any constructive legislation. In 1823 B. M. Piatt of Cincinnati, at that time chairman of the Senate Committee on Schools, had suggested a state system of public schools based on the New York plan and similar to the one adopted for Ohio fifteen years later. In spite of the encouraging support from the Cincinnati press, his bill failed.

An editorial which appeared in the Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette about this time illustrates a prevailing prejudice of the day toward common schools. Apparently, a large number of working-class people associated "free" schools with "charity" or "poor" schools and refused to support

22. LHCG, Jan. 24, 1823; see also July 29, Nov. 7, 1823.
23. McAlpine, "Origin of Public Education in Ohio," 438. See his refutation of the legend that New Englanders were responsible for the free school system; writers like Foote, Coggeshall, and Greve have given too much credit to the New England elements in Cincinnati and not enough to the settlers from the middle and southern states. For a typical exaggeration, see William T. Coggeshall's "Nathan Guilford," American Journal of Education VIII (1860): 289–94, or his "History of Common Schools in the State of Ohio," AJE VI (1859): 81–103.
them. The author of the editorial, probably J. W. Browne, a Methodist minister of English descent, dispelled this inference by boldly attacking the charity school idea. "No distinctions or preferences," he insisted, "should be given, or ought to be known among the scholars, that the poor are instructed by charity. The school-house and all the privileges enjoyed, should be considered as common property of all who reside in the district;—and thus will be prevented those many dissensions which arise from imaginary superiority attached to wealth." By opening the schools to all and by proceeding on the principle "that youth are the property of the State, and therefore . . . the State ought to exercise proper care in their morals and education," common schools, the editorial declared, created a common interest among the people and provided an efficient and inexpensive form of education. Plans for cutting canals, wrote Browne in 1825, are important and meritorious, but a system of free schools would produce even higher blessings—"the happiness of society, and the perpetuity of our republican institutions."25

In this year, 1825, the state legislature passed a makeshift bill which authorized county officials to levy and collect a school tax, but the tax rate was so low and the act so carelessly administered that the funds collected in Hamilton County proved insufficient for maintenance of common schools. In 1830, however, Cincinnati's new charter permitted the city council to divide the city into ten districts and to provide necessary school land and school buildings at city expense.26 The experiment in public education at last began.

Even this brief and not altogether successful beginning did much to dispel anti-free school prejudice. Foote tells of one Cincinnati businessman who berated a city representative for supporting the free school law. "You have mortgaged all my property, irredeemably and forever," he charged. A few years later the businessman apologized. "I now consider the value of my property doubled by the school law."27 A less-mercenary tribute was paid by a citizen in 1832:

It would appear, that a vast majority of the people must be favorable to the principle. The man who is poor, must see that this is the only way he can secure education for his children; the man in moderate circumstances in this way will have his children taught for a less sum than he pays at present: The rich man, who will be heavily taxed, must see that this course secures

25. LHCG, Dec. 9, 1823; Jan. 21, 1825.
27. Foote, Schools of Cincinnati, 37–38.
to the rising generation the only means of perpetuating our institutions, and the only guarantee that his children will be protected under a wise government, administered by an enlightened people.28

The year 1833 has been cited by most authorities as the turning point in the fortunes of the Cincinnati public school system. That year, George Graham, a public-spirited citizen, hired an architect to design and build a model schoolhouse and then offered it to the city at cost. After some haggling, the Council accepted it and proceeded to build nine others like it for the sum of $96,000. This was the year, too, of the first parade of school-children. Credit for the idea of organizing these processions to stimulate civic pride has been given to both Graham and Guilford, but all agree that the parades were a great success. The annual children’s march seemed to grow in importance each year. Fewer than two thousand children participated in 1833; three years later, forty-four teachers and twenty-four hundred pupils marched down the street, and the exercises included band music, prize awards, declamations, addresses, and benedictions.29 Various reforms and improvements were achieved during the following years. Yet the public school system still had far to go in the year of Cincinnati’s semi-centennial celebration.

A visitor to one of the public school examinations in 1836 found conditions on the whole unsatisfactory but he detected signs of improvement. Grammar and geography, he decided, were well taught, “though in some instances the ‘Peter Parley’ system of a long talk about a small matter, was suffered to take the place of clear definitions and classical arrangements.”30 Penmanship, astronomy, and political science he considered reasonably well presented, but spelling, arithmetic, and history seemed either to be taught badly or entirely neglected. History, he felt, ought to have been treated as a distinct subject and not as merely a part of the reading lesson.

It became increasingly clear to those most concerned with the development of an effective common school system in Cincinnati that surface reforms alone could not improve standards. All agreed on the necessity of stiffer teacher examinations, compulsory attendance, and changes in the curriculum.31 But these recommendations carried little weight in a community

29. Daily Cincinnati Republican and Commercial Register, Jan. 15, 1836.
30. CG, June 17, 1836.
31. See Transactions of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Western Literary Institute, and College of Professional Teachers. Held in Cincinnati, October, 1835 (Cincinnati, 1836), 161–68; Transactions of the Sixth Annual Meeting, etc. (Cincinnati, 1837), 191–92.
which still regarded education as a cheap commodity and looked coolly on
any proposals requiring heavier school appropriations. Why raise teachers’
salaries? the conservatives asked.

It is a maxim in all mechanical business, and by apology, will apply with
equal truth to the business of education that competition improves the
qualities, as well as reduces the prices, of the products of industry.—When
a few hands have engrossed a large and lucrative business, without any fear
of competition, they have no inducements of a controuling [sic] efficacy to
do that business well or in terms favorable to the community.32

But the teaching profession, as any one knew who took the trouble to investi-
gate, was not a monopoly.

The teacher in Cincinnati, unless he conducted a private school enjoying
sufficient patronage, drudged like the poorest minister and probably ranked
lowest on the scale of professional men. Ambitious young fellows might sup-
port themselves for a few years by teaching school, preparatory to their em-
arking on some worthier enterprise, but they saw nothing attractive about a
profession notoriously underpaid and excessively demanding. In theory,
schoolteachers occupied a dignified and honorable position. That was their
recompense. There was no place in education for the mercenary minded.

Common-school teachers worked under the most difficult conditions.
They held tenure at the pleasure of the board of visitors and trustees who
were more concerned with their moral qualifications than with their learn-
ing. The top salary for a male teacher or “principal” was four hundred dol-
lars; female teachers received considerably less. Common-school teachers,
moreover, assumed enormous loads. In 1835, thirty-three teachers had to
teach twenty-four hundred students. Obviously no first-rate teacher would
slave for a pittance, and so long as a schoolmaster got no more than a day
laborer, Mansfield declared, Cincinnati schools would not improve.33 Cheap
teaching only meant incompetent teaching.

One man in particular took an active part in the campaign against false
economy. This was Samuel Lewis, the first state superintendent of education
in Ohio, the friend and adviser of Woodward, and one of the leading partici-
pants in the College of Teachers. Lewis believed that most of the citizens
recognized the need for increased financial support for education. Public
opinion, he told an audience in 1836, had run ahead of actual accomplish-

32. LHCG, Dec. 8, 1826.
ment. He urged that educational facilities be speedily provided for the forty-three hundred children of school age in Cincinnati still excluded from public instruction.\textsuperscript{34}

As a result of constant agitation, the reformers succeeded in remedying some of the principal defects of the school system. An 1837 law improved the school board (two members were now elected from each ward instead of one), and by 1838, the people had at least grown used to the idea of common schools.

The greatest single influence in shaping Cincinnati’s educational policies and, indeed, the educational policies for the Ohio Valley was the Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers.\textsuperscript{35} This society, organized in 1832, had grown out of the Academic Institute founded by Hamilton County teachers in 1829.\textsuperscript{36} By 1836, it included members in fifteen states. Meeting annually in Cincinnati, famous western teachers, ministers, businessmen, writers, and public officials (those “sons of mind,” to quote Caroline Lee Hentz, the gifted western muse, “rich in all the pageantry of thought”)\textsuperscript{37} debated the merits and weaknesses of various educational experiments.

The College of Teachers gave visible proof of the doctrines reiterated by the Academic Pioneer that the “various useful pursuits in society are sustained and brought to perfection by cooperation.”\textsuperscript{38} Much of the credit for popularizing common schools and for improving educational standards can be given to the College of Teachers; certainly no comparable organization in the America of that day could rival the galaxy of talent which participated in the yearly proceedings. Here Lyman Beecher, Alexander Campbell, Edward D. Mansfield, Samuel Lewis, Thomas J. Grimké, Calvin Stowe, Daniel Drake, William H. McGuffey, Bishop Purcell, Lydia Sigourney, and others held forth before crowded audiences, and here western pedagogues heard the pros and cons of a thousand controversial problems.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 151–66. For an account of Lewis’s educational activities and other aspects of his career in Cincinnati, see W. T. Coggeshall, “Samuel Lewis,” \textit{AJE} V (1858): 727–40; and W. G. W. Lewis, \textit{Biography of Samuel Lewis} (Cincinnati, 1857).


\textsuperscript{36} See Caleb Atwater, \textit{The Writings of Caleb Atwater} (Columbus, 1833), 178; \textit{CCLG}, July 2, 1831; Jan. 26, 1833.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Transactions} (1838), 257.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Academic Pioneer} I (1832).
Most of the questions raised for discussion at the conventions had practical implications. Is oral instruction important? Should girls receive physical education? Ought the love of distinction be appealed to as a motive in education? Should the Hebrew language form a regular part of college curricula? What should be the order of studies taken up in primary schools? Should girls have corporal punishment? To what extent should manual labor be used to lessen college expenses? Is the study of music suitable for common schools? Has emulation a good or bad effect? Should the classics be taught in the colleges? Should study of the Bible be made compulsory in the public schools? These matters occupied a great deal of the College’s time. After all, many of the men attending the Cincinnati sessions were pioneer educators concerned, at the moment, only with the fundamental problems. It should be noted, nevertheless, that many teachers did not neglect the more theoretical aspects of their profession.

A great deal of energy went into the discussions of systems, reforms, and methods practiced in America and abroad. There were men in Cincinnati like Calvin Stowe who had observed European schools at firsthand. Even before the establishment of the College of Teachers, progressives and diehards in Cincinnati had conducted newspaper wars over the theories of Lancaster, Pestalozzi, and John Locke. Fantastic experiments, shortcuts to learning, crackpot notions, all products, according to the anti-reformers, “of iniquity or perverted reason,”39 shocked conservative teachers. While they rejoiced in the educational rebirth, the “walking of the schoolmaster abroad,” as Brougham phrased it, they preferred to conduct their schools on the “sound philosophy” of Bacon and Locke and deplored “the rubbish of Peter Parley, and that host of ‘simplifiers,’ that profess to make minds strong without exercise, and scholars without study.”40

This struggle between conservatives and reformers in Cincinnati is analogous to the current controversies between the friends and enemies of progressive education. Pestalozzi, upon whose teachings Cincinnati educators like Dr. John Locke based their programs, had taught that education need not be a painful process. His scheme, said one of his Cincinnati supporters, was “nothing more than the application of common sense and experience to nature.” Dull memory drills, continued the advocate, only bored and angered the students. Pestalozzi, in directing the attention of children to “Ex-

40. *CCLG*, July 19, 1834.
ternal Material Things,” in “presenting as little to their minds at once as is possible, and that in regular order, proceeding from the known to the unknown,” merely followed in the footsteps of Bacon and Locke.

Many of the best teachers effectively employed the “new methods”; it was the quacks, “almost as common as mosquitoes in Cincinnati in Autumn,” who particularly antagonized conservative teachers. Parents who wanted to educate their children cheaply and quickly, who speculated in education, it was said, in the same way they speculated in land, were the main supporters of these “pretenders” and their “butterfly establishments.” While much of the objection to painless teaching merely reflected the stubbornness of the old-fashioned and failed to separate the gold from the dross, the old guard’s insistence that there was no royal road to knowledge, their emphasis on fundamentals, served to correct the superficial tendencies in western education. “An acquaintance with facts,” they argued, “is rather to be coveted than with words or sounds; and valuable ideas, even in homely language, are surely more estimable than the most glittering and gorgeous style, which is often affected by those who have nothing new or useful to communicate.”

System-makers, in their rage for innovation, produce a flat, pretentious product, declared one “Philo-Tully” in 1829. Youth today learn

**Latin and Greek by translations; they study French and Spanish, merely to say they have studied them; they read history in abridgment, and biography in novels; they learn arithmetic by means of slips of paper, or little stories and counting their fingers; they carry to school large volumes of mineralogy, botany, or conchology; they learn composition by copying other’s thoughts and language.**

Even though the teachings of Pestalozzi, Lancaster, and all the “system-makers” had been abused and misunderstood, Philo-Tully struck at the essential weakness in the western education of his day.

Further complaints of superficial mechanistic education came from a less-numerous and less-influential wing of the teachers’ body, the classicists. When educational radicals like T. S. Grimké summarily discarded the ancient languages as un-American and impractical, the defenders of the

42. *CG*, May 1, 1829; *Cincinnati Mirror, and Chronicle; Devoted to Literature and Science* IV (1834), 18.
44. *CG*, June 12, 1829.
classics attempted to show the utility of Latin and Greek. Alexander Kinmont, a Scotsman who conducted a famous academy in Cincinnati, denounced the vogue of “servile” or “practical” education and defended his own “liberal” or “classic” system. The former stopped short at secondhand technical rules, he believed, while the latter sought to arrive at the principles and reasons underlying phenomena.\(^47\) Despite Kinmont’s eloquence before the College of Teachers and the argument of the moderates that “the footsteps of our fathers” be not forsaken “merely because they trudged them before us,”\(^48\) the trend pointed away from the “senseless labor of pouring over ancient languages”\(^49\) to programs of stark utility.

From the early days of the Cincinnati College, curricula in the city schools had been strongly functional. Students attending college lectures in the first years of the 1820s, while spitting tobacco juice around the room,\(^50\) were introduced to algebra, geometry, practical mathematics, surveying, navigation, conic sections, spheres, mineralogy, chemistry, mechanics, composition, astronomy, speaking, languages, and belles-lettres. As a proud citizen remarked at the time, collegiate institutions were “interwoven” with “domestic and social prosperity.”\(^51\) Academics in and around Cincinnati placed special emphasis on common arithmetic, surveying, navigation, and geography, courses designed for “that numerous class of our citizens to which the study of dead languages would be idle mummery.” Milo G. Williams, a pioneer in Ohio education, awarded prizes in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, geography, bookkeeping, composition, English grammar, English and American history, mechanical and mental arithmetic, and orthography.\(^52\)

Mathematics and bookkeeping understandably received special emphasis in any mercantile community, for, as E. D. Mansfield reminded the College of Teachers, they provided a powerful moral and intellectual discipline and served the needs of businessmen in the western country.\(^53\) To further these practical objectives, a Woodward College mathematics teacher, Dr. Joseph Ray, produced his *Eclectic Arithmetic*, designed to be of particular use to

51. *LHCG*, Nov. 5, 1824.
52. *CCLG*, June 25, 1831.
53. *Transactions* (1835), 158.
“those engaged in the business pursuits of life.” Ray’s arithmetic, which had a national sale, included problems in discounting Louisiana notes in Cincinnati banks; problems in import duties and taxation; and special problems for plasterers, painters, and bricklayers. Martin Ruter likewise took up the kinds of information most valuable to the future merchant, broker, or mechanic. He filled his pages with hogsheads, gallons, cubic weights, and merchandising jargon: tare, tret, neat, subtlety. Insurance, commission, and brokerage problems involving interest, compound interest, equations, discount, loss and gain, and all the rest of the trader’s lingo were supplemented by simple bookkeeping systems for farmers and mechanics.

The popularity and importance of oratorical instruction in Cincinnati schools can also be attributed to its practical value. Even if western audiences enjoyed swelling rhetoric for its own sake, the lawyer, the minister, and the statesman knew that the gift of eloquence was more than simply a polite accomplishment. The people flocked to hear the pulpit oratory of a Finney or a Bascom or a Campbell. Henry Clay could charm any western jury. Although stump-speaking in Hamilton County was less common than in Kentucky, open-air political battles occurred frequently enough to give the articulate candidate an advantage over a less-fluent opponent. Indeed, the numbers of meetings, conventions, and social gatherings continually being held in Cincinnati gave the art of self-expression a special value. Hence, oratorical displays figured significantly in commencement programs. Every year the town heard schoolboys declaiming on such themes as “The Wrongs of Ireland,” “Ingratitude,” “The Spanish Inquisition,” “Ambition,” “Lafayette,” “North American Indians,” and “The Character of Commodore Decatur.” Harriet Martineau, listening to ranting schoolboys in 1835, doubted “the value and influence of popular oratory,” yet if not as useful as it was popularly credited to be, the citizens flocked to public lectures on elocution and subscribed to special editions of “Quintilian’s Institutes of Eloquence.”

In all subjects, it can be said finally, whether scientific or literary, “liberal” or “servile,” the practical motive remained uppermost. Even the critics of the crudely utilitarian systems tried to demonstrate the connection between the-

ory and practice and drew their examples from everyday life. By experiment and observation, by the application of theory to the useful arts, the student would learn how to meet new situations. The anti-utilitarians taught that a subject should not be banned merely because its practical applications were not immediately discerned. Insistence upon mechanical training alone, they believed, prevented harmonious development. But for them, as well as the utilitarians, the final test of any education had to be a pragmatic one. In the words of the second president of Woodward College, "there ought always to be communicated that knowledge which will fit the learner for his part in the intercourse and pursuits of ordinary life.”

Harriet Martineau regarded the desire of the American educator to make his charge "a useful and respectable member of society” a narrow and petty one. True heroes, she said, have always been considered “pestilent fellows.” But Cincinnati already had too many pestilent fellows for the tastes of the influential people. They wanted the schools to turn out good practical citizens who tempered their acquisitive zeal with respect for public opinion. They wanted to produce good Americans.

T. S. Grimké, one of the more prominent and gifted of the laymen who attended the sessions of the College of Teachers, and a man greatly esteemed in Cincinnati, repeatedly complained of the un-American character of education in the United States. American education, he said, now suited equally well other ages, countries, forms of government, and states of society; it ought to be designed for the peculiar needs of this country. His proposals for reform were particularly distressing to Alexander Kinmont. Kinmont, it will be remembered, had clashed with Grimké on the issue of the classics, and on the "American" question he also spoke against Grimké's enlightened chauvinism. American education, said Kinmont, could not be exclusively nationalistic. "Wherever there is a practical acknowledgement of the rights of man,” he declared, “there is Americanism.”

But while all agreed with these inspired sentiments, it was generally believed that the nature of democratic society required a special type of instruction. We need an education, said the president of Woodward College,

58. B. P. Aydelott, American Education, or the Education We Need (Cincinnati, 1837), 14.
60. Transactions (1835).
"which will best prepare us for our peculiar duties as citizens of a free country."\textsuperscript{62}

Universal suffrage

acknowledges the sovereignty of the individual; it secures to every man that political consideration which belongs to him as a rational being, and which the God who made him designed him to possess. He is a responsible agent, invested with the right of self government; he is such in the eye of Heaven, he ought to be such in the regard to his countrymen.\textsuperscript{63}

Yet without knowledge, universal suffrage would destroy rather than preserve democracy. The condition of human nature determined the health of the republic. America would become the rational and civilized state only if her citizens lived within the intent and spirit of the Constitution. In support of this credo, Mansfield wrote: "An institution of American education, to be great and useful, must teach more of what is peculiarly American in history and laws, than is usually taught, and must cultivate more of the democratic spirit than is usually thought necessary."\textsuperscript{64}

Constitutional law and elementary principles of government had been taught in the colleges, but apparently the lower schools in Cincinnati had neglected this branch of study.\textsuperscript{65} Mansfield, whose \textit{Political Grammar} was to become a textbook in some of the Cincinnati schools, spoke feelingly of this neglect before the College of Teachers. "If, then, there is any glory in our system," he said, "or anything valuable in its principles, we must study, and love, and venerate the great monument of the American people—the American Constitution."\textsuperscript{66} Experiments in teaching political and constitutional law in Milo G. Williams's school led one Cincinnati paper to urge that such courses be universally introduced.

Were this, by legislative enactment, strictly introduced into our schools throughout the state, and taught for twenty years, the experiment, unlike some others which our political alchemists are trying, would produce such civil order and domestic prosperity as would make the sincere lover of this country almost shout for joy. Our public officers would then be men of virtue and intelligence, and the race of party demagogues now crawling about and infesting the country would be extinct.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{62} Aydelott, \textit{American Education}, 16.
\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Transactions} (1836), 4.
\textsuperscript{64} \textit{CC}, Sept. 1, 1836.
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{CCLG}, Sept. 21, 1833.
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Transactions} (1838), 141.
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{CCLG}, Mar. 8, 29, 1834.
Underneath much of the talk about a peculiarly “American education” lay the fear of agrarianism. Hence, the constant emphasis on an education reaching all classes, democratizing the rich and enlightening the envious poor. Education was expected to cement all classes and to do away with artificial distinctions.68 In the opinion of E. D. Mansfield, the West was the logical section in which to conduct the great experiment in democratic education, and Cincinnati was the most obvious city in which to establish a great college. Mansfield, who had visited Harvard College in the spring of 1838, contrasted the East with the western country, as yet unspoiled by excessive riches and poverty. The West, he predicted, would perpetuate American institutions. “Soon the American, who is the true type of his country, in habits, manners, and feelings must be sought in the West.”69 On the Atlantic coast, Mansfield found one man in ten going to Europe and, on his return, aping European manners. Such conduct, declared Mansfield, provoked “a loco-foco spirit” among the lower orders and increased the ever-growing class hatred.

If national institutions were to be preserved “from the inroads of wickedness and licentious ignorance,” there had to be “a sound moral and enlightened education of the heart and mind.”70 As a preserver of “sound” institutions, the teacher therefore occupied a very responsible, if unrenumerative, position in the community. Since the Jacksonian revolution the people had become increasingly conscious of their power, and in the ballot box they had a dangerous weapon. “Religion, politics, education,” Aydelott recognized, “all must come under the popular scrutiny, and only that which commends itself to the people can stand among us.” He found the moral teacher superior to the noisy politician, for the teacher could dispel the hate and envy of the poor and prevent infidel and anti-Christian notions from poisoning youthful minds. Aydelott handled the problem of class conflict in a rather gingerly way but spoke explicitly of his fear of the “less enlightened”:

We say “the less enlightened,” &c., because we would avoid the phrase “working classes,” as not at all applicable to any particular portion of our people. And yet it is from our overlooking this fact, that the popular phrase, “working classes,” or “working men,” imported from aristocratic Europe, in connection with anti-Christian and disorganizing schemes, has done so much mischief here. We are, in truth, all working men, and working wom-

68. Transactions (1836), 5.
69. CG, Sept. 1, 1838.
70. CG, Apr. 7, 1836.
en too, and we have but one great interest—the peace and prosperity of the whole.

The teacher, then, guarded the "less informed" who crowded American workshops from the "apostles of destruction" who sought to diffuse "the leaven of their wickedness."

Educators had little to fear from Cincinnati's relatively few radical workingmen, but the mass of immigrants pouring into the Queen City during the 1830s constituted, in their eyes, a serious threat to American institutions. "The most disastrous consequence," a report to the College of Teachers declared, "would result from the ignorance and misrule of a foreign immigration, if the guardians of education, and the teachers of science and morals do not act in concert."

Calvin Stowe, the chief Cincinnati authority on foreign populations, discussed the problem sympathetically and realistically before the College of Teachers. In his opinion Cincinnati's first job was to educate the Germans. Scotch and Welsh families—moral, industrious, and Protestant—fitted easily into community life and created no difficulty. But the ten thousand Germans (seven thousand to eight thousand of whom were Catholics) endangered the community. Only a quarter of them could speak English, said Stowe. The twelve hundred to fifteen hundred German children of school age were either too poor or too embarrassed to attend public school. After praising the work of a few charitable associations which had offered some instruction to German children, Stowe told his audience that the newcomers had to be educated not simply out of kindness but out of necessity.

Once educated, he held, the Germans would make admirable citizens, for they were industrious, thrifty, and ambitious. "There is in the German mind," he said, "when well developed and refined by education, a deep and quiet enthusiasm, a speculative tendency, a romance, which would mingle with and modify to great advantage our too strong earthliness of disposition, and our too eager pursuit of immediate physical utility." Properly trained in republican schools, they would not be disposed to "set at defiance or undervalue existing institutions, or engage in popular commotions." They might very well correct American "impatience, irreverence, proneness to popular excitements."

73. Ibid., 73, 74.
In warmly seconding the recommendations of his friend Stowe, Dr. Daniel Drake evoked the symbol of the melting pot. Progress in Cincinnati had resulted, he said, from the “collision of minds, assembled from all nations.” To consolidate this mass, to achieve uniformity, the community had to be subjected to “the crucible of amalgamation” in the schoolhouse. Pennsylvania’s large German elements, though contributing much of value, were nevertheless clannish, aloof from the spirit of social and political improvement. Here in Cincinnati, he said, this clannishness, this sense of caste, must give way before the spirit of “Buckeyeism,” the spirit of the community. The love of property, already evident in the newcomers, ought not to be acquired at the expense of intellectual attainments. Americanized by “means of social and political acclamation,” they would not threaten the city’s welfare.74

Joshua Wilson, Edward Mansfield, and Alexander Kinmont all concurred in the above sentiments. Mansfield at first wanted to exclude the Germans from the polls, but he later agreed with Drake’s policy of breaking down the distinction between native and foreigner. Immigrant schools helped to attain the ultimate amalgamation, but not until 1840, when German popular strength was first manifested, did the Cincinnati schools offer classes taught in German.75

The large number of German Catholics in Cincinnati partly explains the considerable amount of time devoted by the College of Teachers to the subject of Bible instruction in the schools. The position of the Catholics on this question has already been discussed, but it should be noted here that the pro-Bible element overwhelmingly predominated in the College of Teachers. Men like Grimké, Aydelott, and Wilson strongly urged the use of the Bible in the schools. Aydelott in his characteristic way pointed out its instructive political morality. The Bible, he said, while it favors free institutions (as Beecher had emphasized), gives no sanction “to civil broils, or resistance to lawful authority, but commands all men to follow peace, and to obey magistrates and those set over them, whatever the form of government may be.”76 If this were true, the Bible would be indispensable in showing young Germans, “extensively infected with Infidelity and Rationalism,” that a “land of liberty is not a place to indulge in irreligion and license.”77

74. Ibid., 80–81, 83.
75. Ford and Ford, History of Cincinnati, 190. For early agitation of this movement, see MC IV (1835): 275.
76. Transactions (1837), 200.
77. CC, Nov. 14, 1837.
To supplement the Bible in its work of moral instruction, the guardians of the mind in Cincinnati relied upon the social ideology implicit in the textbooks and children's periodicals. Albert Picket's *Juvenile Reader* contained character studies of the rich boy and the poor boy. The rich boy treats everyone politely. He know "that God gives a great deal of money to some persons, in order that they may assist those who are poor."78 The poor boy who works all day is content with his fare and does not envy the rich. "I have often been told," he tells himself, "and I have read, that it is God who makes some to be poor, and some rich; that the rich have many troubles, which we know nothing of; and that the poor, if they are but good, may be very happy." Similar edifying selections from the pens of western textbook writers inculcated conservative principles.79 Students of college age absorbed the sound doctrines of Scottish common sense realism expounded from the lecture platform.

In both lower school and college the faculty psychology of the Scottish common-sense philosophers, carried to the West by the Presbyterians and reflected in the popular texts of Dugald Stewart, Thomas Reid, George Campbell, and Francis Wayland, held sway. These men maintained that "the intellect is not homogeneous, but consists of a variety of faculties and powers";80 they divided the human understanding into three categories: perceptive (the sensing of physical objects), expressive (the ability to communicate), and reflective (the capacity to grasp abstract thoughts). According to this philosophy, especially in the explanation of Thomas Reid,81 the mind at once perceives not only matter but also moral truths. Scotch realism, says one authority, bolstered religious faith in its insistence upon the reality of intuitive conviction and the authority of conscience;82 in the West particularly it met the needs of the educators who were looking for a safe, practical, foolproof system.83

Besides appealing to common sense, Scotch realism harmonized with western needs; it was easily taught, optimistic, and conservative. Arriving at his conclusions inductively and scientifically, rather than by sweeping theo-

79. Rusk, I, 265.
logical assumptions, the natural realist followed the prevailing Baconian tradition. Like Transcendentalism (not unknown but hardly influential in the West),\textsuperscript{84} it placed chief emphasis upon the intuitive faculties of the individual, yet stayed clear of mysticism. Not the “inner light” but sound practical education would bring out natural faculties; the Scottish philosophy of common sense provided no philosophical justification for visionary schemes. Sensational materialistic philosophies, the “feculent stream of infidelity” as Wilson described them, besides removing the checks of morality, reduced the importance of the individual and made him dependent upon physical forces. German philosophy, on the other hand, equally inimical to the western spirit, assumed a priori truths and denied matter entirely. Scottish realism safely sailed between Scylla and Charybdis, placing chief responsibility on the individual and recognizing intuitive faculties, yet at the same time maintaining the external world, the empirical world of science.

Common-sense realism, in some respects, followed in the Puritan tradition. In its distrust of “enthusiasm” and untested appeals to conscience, in its reliance upon learning, in its attempt to avoid the dangers of pantheism which continually threatened the idealist’s position,\textsuperscript{85} it suggested seventeenth-century Puritan doctrines. However, it contained none of the paralyzing determinism of Calvinism and offered a conservative and rational program for human improvement. Because of its popularity among denominational colleges throughout the country, and particularly in the Presbyterian-dominated schools of the West, Scottish realism enjoyed a tremendous vogue. It provided a spiritual leaven for utilitarianism, checked free thought and skepticism, and offered a practical work-a-day philosophy with no bothersome problems. It reconciled Francis Bacon and Jesus Christ. Alexander Everett’s tribute to Dugald Stewart in the \textit{North American Review} best explains the influence of the Scotch school in America.

He adopts and defends all the liberal and philanthropic notions that have ever been advanced by the lovers of mankind, while he avoids at the same time the excesses by which injudicious partisans have so often brought,

\textsuperscript{84} Transcendental ideas had come in via the \textit{Western Messenger} which had published articles on German philosophy, Coleridge, and Carlyle, but most western intellectuals who did read these Idealistic writings dismissed them as “transcendental cant.” See “To Coleridge, After Reading Some of His Darker Writings,” \textit{Western Monthly Magazine} I (1833): 214; Rusk, II, 26; Clarence Gohdes, \textit{The Periodicals of American Transcendentalism} (Durham, N.C., 1931), 17–35.

and are still bringing, the best of causes into contempt and ridicule. He is pious without fanaticism,—cheerful, and benevolent without an approach to licentiousness. He is devotedly attached to liberty without deeming it necessary to renounce his respect for social order and good government. He believes in the practicability of improvement without indulging in the idle dream of the earthly millennium.\textsuperscript{86}

Everett's eulogy of Stewart reflects, by implication, the educational ideals of the day. The educated American, in other words, becomes the prudent rational man, liberal and generous, and yet not likely to be carried away by the vagaries of dreamers. He keeps to the middle of the road, prefers the practical to the theoretical, and remains, in general, a well-balanced normal individual. Such a man might well have served as the archetype for Cincinnati educators, the perfect citizen for a democracy.

This distinctly middle-class conception of the educated man harmonized especially with the aims and interests of a commercial and "pecuniary" culture. Education in Cincinnati, as well as in other American cities, was a discipline which inculcated the recognized assumptions of the status quo, or rather the assumptions of the mercantile and land-owning classes. Had education been merely a disinterested investigation of "life facts," it is hardly likely that Cincinnati taxpayers would have supported public schools.

As a check against "visionary ideas" and "popular ignorance," the value of educational training was quickly recognized, not withstanding the doubts of the skeptics. "\textit{Whose} ignorance is it?" asked Harriet Martineau, "and ignorance \textit{of what}? If the professors of colleges have book-knowledge, which the owner of the log-house has not; the owner of the log-house has very often, as I can testify, a knowledge of natural law, political rights, and economical fact, which the college professor has not." The ignorance of the common man, she said, may result in his being deceived by the office seeker and a venal press, but "the professor's want of knowledge of actual affairs of the many, and his educational biases, are just as likely to cause him to vote contrary to the public interest."\textsuperscript{87} The College of Teachers would have replied to Harriet Martineau that the owner of a log house very frequently did not understand the "public interest," that he was, in fact, likely to be motivated by an unenlightened self-interest. Even if he were naturally intelligent, moral instruction was necessary to make him virtuous.

\textsuperscript{86} North American Review XXXI (1830): 216–17.
\textsuperscript{87} Martineau, \textit{Society in America}, 1, 17–18.
The negative and repressive features of the educational system in Cincinnati have thus far been emphasized. Yet however smug and conservative western educators may appear today, much can be said for the educational methods of the 1820s and 1830s. Members of the Western College of Teachers were at least attempting to break away from the old rote memory practices and produce individuals rather than stereotypes. Cincinnati graduates emerged from their schools perhaps superficially trained but certainly with no feeling of coming out of a world of ideality and myth into a world of fact. The school world, with all its religious overtones and mechanical philosophies, corresponded to the world of the "Western Emporium" where "public truths" differed little from "private truths." By emulation and ambition, by employing all the success virtues hammered into him at the academy, the common school, and the college, a Cincinnati youth might very well achieve the promised and expected goal. Whether he attributed it to his religious faith, the capitalist system, or democratic institutions, his material success was no less real. Education enabled the citizen to enjoy and participate in community life, if not always to understand it. His glorification of the functional, his distaste for "the avaricious accumulation of knowledge," while often crass, ridiculous, and harmful, nevertheless broke down the barriers between the study hall and the marketplace.

As one reads descriptions of the school-day parades in which the entire town participated, of children marching down the streets and carrying banners bearing the talismanic slogan "Knowledge is Power," the words of one Cincinnati observer come to mind: "To such science the patriot can turn without fear, and the good man may look without regret."