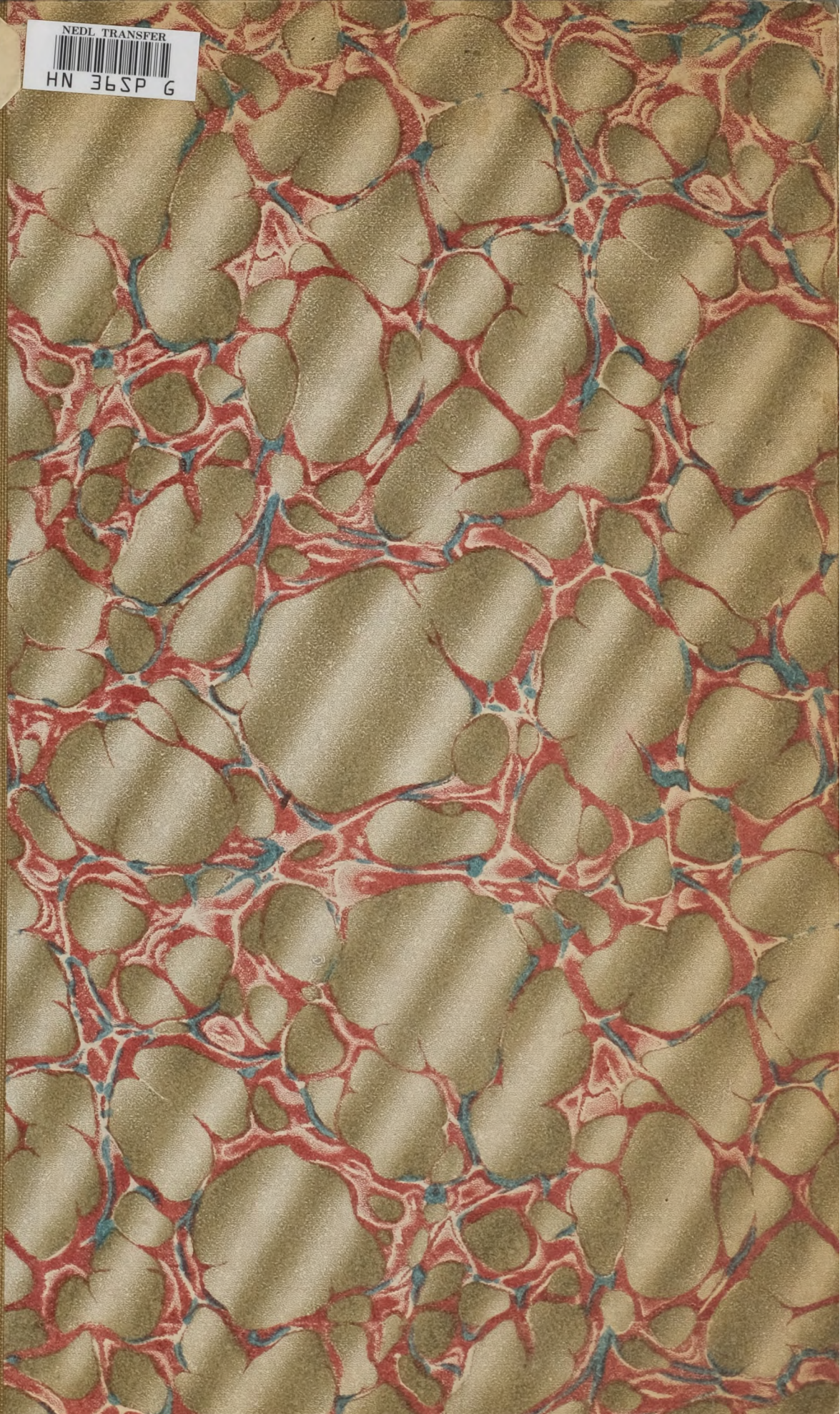


Tuttle - "The Unexpected, Because of God"

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WABASH COLLEGE.

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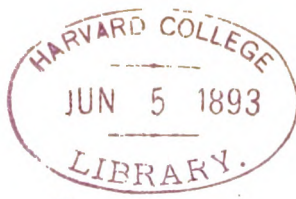
OUIATENON,

CLASS OF '94.

“The Unexpected,  
Because of God.”

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*Joseph Farrand*  
Ex-President Tuttle.

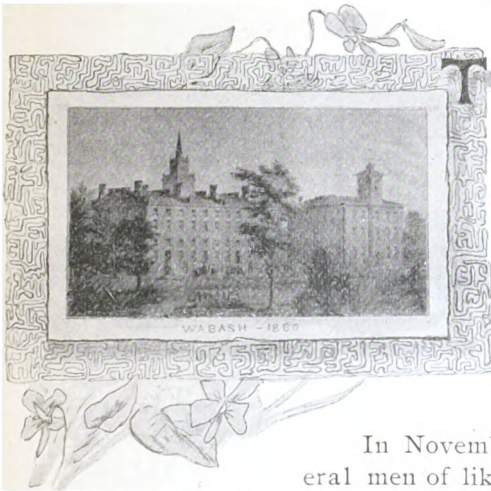


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## “The Unexpected, Because of God.”

EX-PRESIDENT TUTTLE.



THE ROMAN HISTORIAN asserts the pleasure of tracing a river to its source. I desire to trace Wabash College to the fountain from which it flows. When Sir Walter Mildmay said, referring to the origin of Emanuel College, Cambridge, Eng.: “I have set an acorn, which, when it becomes an oak, God alone knows what will be the fruit thereof,” he expressed the Roman's thought by another figure of speech. In one it was a river, in the other an oak, but in each case the result came from a cause.

In November, 1832, the Rev. James Thomson, and several men of like mind, “set an acorn” in the wilderness at Crawfordsville, a young town of a few hundred people. The Indians had recently sold the land, over which wild beasts still roamed. In 1821 its first white family came. In 1822, Rev. Charles C. Beattie preached the first Presbyterian sermon and solemnized the first marriage. In 1824, the first Presbyterian Church was organized, and, in 1827, the Rev. James Thomson became its pastor. He was a graduate of Miami University, in its first class, in 1826. While in the University, he formed the purpose of setting an acorn, of Sir Walter Mildmay's kind, “somewhere in Wabash valley.” This he did November 21, 1832. He and his fellow enthusiasts in the sublime undertaking, were home missionaries who had little money but a large wealth of faith.

In one year from the starting of the work the first college edifice was sufficiently advanced to allow the first school to commence. Prof. Caleb Mills, December 3, 1833, began it with twelve students. In another twelve months the institution had shown enough vitality to get itself deep—hopelessly some thought—in debt.

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The Rev. Edmund O. Hovey, one of the original convention, was sent east in May, 1834, to solicit aid. To further this end he was also sent by his Presbytery as a Commissioner to the General Assembly at Philadelphia. At Cincinnati, Philadelphia, New York and Boston, he found every door and purse closed. More distressing still, he found himself unable to open them. In despair, and with not enough money even to take him home, Mr. Hovey, then in Boston, wrote his resignation. He did not sign or send it, because just *then* the door opened, and his friend, the Rev. John M. Ellis, who had helped "set the acorn," came in with a cheery salutation, which changed the situation radically, and the outcome was a trip to Andover to tell his story to the Theological Faculty, a grand body of men, bent on "taking captive for Christ, not only the West, but the world." It is said Mr. Hovey told the story effectively, and that Dr. Leonard Woods voiced the advice of the Faculty that "the agent go to the country churches of New England, for the hard times had not yet reached them." The advice bore its first fruit the next Sabbath at Amesbury Mills, where Mr. Hovey received the first gift of his mission, sixty dollars and twenty-five cents! It was a great incident. As Dr. Beecher said, it was "as sunlight shining on the bosom of a black cloud fleeing away."

Victor Hugo explains the victory of Waterloo by the famous sentence, "It was the unexpected, because of God!"

*"The unexpected!"* We are not done with it yet.

It is the key of these paragraphs concerning the history of Wabash sixty years. During four months Professor Hovey had been telling to the country churches of Massachusetts the story that had captivated the Andover Faculty, and they gave him in "cold cash" fifteen hundred dollars. It seemed to him and those at home as if the Bank of England was unloading its boundless wealth at the door of the little college "somewhere in the Wabash valley."

But the God whom these men had worshiped that winter morning, November 22, 1832, "in the midst of nature's unbroken loveliness," was not yet through with them. He had opened on their delighted vision one "UNEXPECTED," and now He would give them the sight of another.

It was in November, 1834. Let me introduce it. When Professor Hovey, in June, had sought aid in New York, among those who declined to give was Joshua Leavitt, one of the greatest journalists of his day. He gave no money, but he gave the agent this advice, "to secure a President for his college." And what advice it was in the case! Even Southern Indiana then had a sparse and poor population, scattered through its counties. A large moiety of it was still

wilderness. It had not a single city of considerable size. The northern half was worse off. North of the Wabash, outside of Fort Wayne and Logansport, there were not three hundred white inhabitants. It was one vast wilderness with few settlers. Indianapolis was a small town. The State was in its rudest conditions. Houses, farms, roads and the adjuncts of advancing, but pioneer, population were rude and primitive.

And this great New York editor advised Mr. Hovey as an absolute necessity of success to secure a President for the infant college in such surroundings as have been described. It must have seemed to the agent, when he heard it, a cruel joke, or, at best, an empty pleasantry. But it was not. Joshua Leavitt was not that sort of a man. He was in "dead earnest" in this as in other things.

The statement will illustrate the mission of Professor Hovey to New York in November, 1834. His attention had already been directed to the Rev. Elisha Whittlesy Baldwin, of New York, as the right man for the place. He was a native of Greene county, New York, a devout and wide-awake Christian, a ready scholar, an alumnus of Yale 1812, and Andover 1817, a successful teacher and 1820-32 the honored pastor of a large Presbyterian church "in a populous but extremely destitute and immoral portion of New York." This church was chiefly the result of his own labors through large and constant accessions—one hundred and seventy-five in one year. The reputation thus gained was further intensified by his heroic conduct during one season of yellow fever epidemic and another of cholera. In each case he remained at his post to cheer and assist the sick and the dying. He was not only a brave and sweet Christian minister, but he was a ready and attractive preacher, greatly honored in the large congregations of New York and New Jersey.

He also had a charming family, consisting of a wife, son and two daughters, who greatly relished the privileges of city life. This was the man who, by the advice of the best men in the metropolis, was to be visited by Prof. Hovey, to invite him to accept the Presidency of the Wabash College. Let the intelligent reader reproduce the elements which make up the picture of "the Indiana," "the Crawfordsville," and "the Wabash College" of November, 1834, and then imagine the agent at the door of the the city pastor's home in East Broadway! Could it have been otherwise than that Professor Hovey must have felt his heart sink as he placed in the minister's hands an invitation to leave his position in New York to take one in Indiana, the hard and narrow circumstances of which he himself had had such thorough experience? How little reason had he to

expect a favorable consideration! It is true that in this new country were noble men and women—"the salt of the earth"—a fact which greatly softened the hardships without entirely correcting them.

Imagine the city pastor's surprise as he received this call, and the almost amused excitement with which he repeated to his wife the contents of the agent's communication?

Who could have anticipated it? And yet the city pastor consented to go to the Wabash Valley, and the College had found a President! This was a remarkable incident, and with it is to be associated another—that within a few months the agent and the President-elect collected in New York and its vicinity twenty-four thousand dollars—relatively the greatest cash-gift the institution has ever received. And again we resort to Victor Hugo's philosophy of Waterloo: "*The unexpected, because of God.*"

In the surprises of life, especially in dark periods, is found peculiar joy. In this respect Wabash has had a singularly happy experience. Professor Hovey, the Treasurer, relates the fact that in more cases than one the College notes had been saved from protest by unlooked-for interpositions. In one instance a large note unexpectedly was paid by a new friend, whose kindness did not stop there. In another case the presentation of the wants of the College in a New Jersey church arrested the interest of a stranger casually present. It resulted in large and timely gifts. Quite similar have been the interpositions in several dangerous crises. It might seem invidious to name a few without naming all. Nor is it necessary. These noble friends poured out hundreds of thousands to help the institution. Their gifts have ranged, as appear on the books of the College Treasurer, from the smallest one of ten cents to the largest one of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The sum total is large, and the results in equipments and endowments large.

And once more I venture to introduce Victor Hugo's philosophy of the fate at Waterloo, "*The unexpected, because of God.*" Dr. Baldwin's influence in the college was in all respects great and benign, but his death, October 15, 1840, after five years' service, was regarded as a calamity. But in methods very extraordinary the Rev. Charles White, D. D., of Owego, New York, was induced to accept the vacant Presidency. As in the former case, it was a matter of surprise that he should leave his beautiful home in the valley of the Susquehanna. The correspondence shows that he did it under the constraint of duty. In his case, as in that of Dr. Baldwin, we still wonder at the choice. The balance of motives to eyes unannointed by faith seemed against it. And it

was so until faith and duty placed their heavy weights in the scales. In Dartmouth College a first-honor man; among the highest at Andover; at Thetford and Owego, and on great occasions, as when he preached the annual sermon before the American Board, pleading for a lost world; and especially when, as under Beecher's church, he plead the cause of Wabash College; and most especially when in the twenty baccalaureates of his presidency he plead for the highest and best education of young men for the sake of country and the world; President White was a great preacher. He was heard with intense admiration in the churches of the East and the West. Robust in thought, Ciceronian in style, and profoundly emotional, he was regarded with peculiar partiality.

Dr. White was amply worthy of the fine words with which his friend and associate, Prof. John L. Campbell, summed up his character, "Dr. White was of the highest style a Christian scholar." These words state the blessings with which Wabash College was enriched until the translation of President White occurred. Between two golden mile-posts—the consecrating prayer in the forest, November 22, 1832, and the translation of Dr. White, October 29, 1861—the space is occupied with grateful surprises, blessed repetitions of "*The unexpected, because of God.*" And it is certain the last for the College has not yet been reached.





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