



The Old Northwest

VOL. 5, NO. 3

A Journal of Regional Life and Letters

FALL 1979

Published by Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

The Old Northwest

302 Bachelor Hall
Miami University • Oxford, Ohio 45056

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Cover design by Miami University Audio-Visual Service

Second-class postage paid at Oxford, Ohio 45056

U.S. ISSN 0360-5531

THE DOVES OF 1847: THE RELIGIOUS RESPONSE IN OHIO TO THE MEXICAN WAR

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THE annexation of Texas in 1845 made the Mexican War all but inevitable in 1846; but when the War came it was the result of various aggressions, mistakes, and blunders committed by both Mexico and the United States. Sincere desire for peace by either side might have prevented war; but the aggressiveness of American democracy stung Mexican pride to the point that peaceful discussion was impossible, a development which many important and confident American officials did not regret at all.

I. Anti-War and Anti-Slavery Sentiment in Ohio Before the Mexican War

The United States annexed Texas as a slave state, and the free soil advocates of the North had been severely agitated by this development. In 1846, the sectional controversy growing out of the war issue was made more emotional by the successful efforts of Benjamin Lundy through his journal, *The National Inquirer and Constitutional Advocate of Universal Liberty*, established in 1836, to convince many in the North that the annexation of Texas was a conspiracy of the "Slave Power" to extend the institution of slavery.¹ With Texas in the Union, the anti-slavery forces expanded the "Slave Power" theory to include the idea that the slaveholders had instigated the Mexican War so that the institution could be extended to territory conquered from Mexico. Although Lundy's theory had slight foundation in fact, and the existence of a "Slave Power" had minimal substance in reality, this weighed very little with a considerable number of northern evangelical Americans who had formed their opinions during the period of

the agitation of the slavery question in the 1830's. To a people who were convinced that it was America's destiny to convert the world, the possibility that the sin of slavery might become more entrenched in America was intolerable. They saw the Mexican War as a needless conflict in which the two greatest anti-Christian evils, war and slavery, combined for an assault on God's Kingdom.

No area outside of New England was more affected by this sentiment than Ohio. Even before the Mexican War, hostility against the two evils had crystallized because of the annexation of Texas as a slave state. Whig journals had appealed to nonpartisan morality to stop the movement to annex Texas, and after the annexation they expressed the belief that America's name and reputation had been tainted in the Christian world. Because slavery had so distracted the nation, the New School Presbyteries of Cleveland and Trumbull, Ohio, petitioned the Presbyterian General Assembly to separate the church from slavery as soon as it could be done. Other church bodies adopted strong measures against slavery.² In addition there existed a strong anti-war sentiment in Ohio, independent of the slavery question as revealed by the outcry against the anti-Christian nature of war when it was feared early in 1846 that there might be war with England because of the dispute over the Oregon territory. The New School Presbyterian press in Ohio exhorted Christians to act to prevent the evil. *The Watchman of the Valley*, organ of the New School Presbyterian Synod of Cincinnati, declared that war would open a "Pandora's box upon the world," and set at liberty "the elements of disorder which peace and Christianity had imprisoned." The New School *Ohio Observer* of Hudson, Ohio, contrasted the methods of Christianity with those of a military conqueror. Christianity's goal was to win the world through voluntary submission, and its weapons were not worldly.³ Both the Whig and Democratic press expressed opposition to a spirit that might lead to war against England. The Whig *Daily Enquirer* saw the destruction of property and the burdensome debt of war as less destructive than "the brutalizing influences of legal, wholesale murder and pillage, upon *public and private morals*."⁴ After the Mexican War began in May 1846, most of the Democratic press abandoned its stance concerning war,

but denunciation increased in the Whig press. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* charged the Whig editors with efforts to invoke the curse of Heaven upon the government of the United States, and many Whig newspapers reprinted a *New York Tribune* editorial lamenting the failure of the church to speak out in the early months of the struggle on the evils of the war.⁵ A correspondent to the *Cleveland Herald* agreed that if Christianity was to be more than a form, the church would have to "make itself heard and felt" with regard to the war.⁶

After war was declared on Mexico, the New School Presbyterian press was convinced that the conflict was a war of aggression to promote slavery. The *Ohio Observer* charged that the government had descended to intrigues and corruption by pretending to defend the people's liberties while it promoted "the cause of the abettors of the institution of slavery." The *Watchman of the Valley* agreed that the war was waged "for the maintenance and perpetuity . . . of slavery."⁷

II. The Churches' Response to the War Spirit in Ohio

As the organization and preparation for war got under way, the religious press lamented and even severely condemned the enthusiasm and vigor with which the people entered into the military activities. The *Ohio Observer* denounced war as destructive of good morals and deplored the war spirit. "Let this spirit be once fairly aroused in the nation," warned the editor, "and farewell to truth, reason and equity." In answer to those who urged "Our Country Right or Wrong," the editor offered them a "solemn truth: To the nation whose cause is wrong, victory can bring no honor in the sight of God."⁸ The *Religious Telescope* of Circleville, Ohio, the journal of the United Brethren of Ohio, printed an editorial from *The Watchman of the Valley* because it "so nearly" corresponded with the editor's views. The war spirit in Washington had reached such a high pitch that the "anti-Christian proceedings . . . disgusted" the editor of the *Watchman*.⁹

The military spirit did not flourish throughout Ohio. The editor of the *Anti-Slavery Bugle* learned that in the Western Reserve it was so low that in Lake County "not one could be found so degraded as to offer himself to fight for slavery." In Ashtabula the situation was similar; the anti-war sentiment

increased rather than declined by the end of the year. Near the end of October 1846, *The Ohio Observer* denounced the glorification of war in stronger language than the editor had previously used. "The spirit of war is, of necessity, a vain-glorious spirit," the editor charged. "It feeds on pride, ambition and the thirst of power, and drives into banishment the opposite virtues, justice, humility and meekness." The *Oberlin Evangelist*, an independent Congregationalist organ, condemned the war without qualification because it was contrary to the higher law of God.¹⁰

As reports of military victories began to reach Ohio near the end of 1846, they occasioned spirited celebrations which were severely criticized by many religious journals and clergymen. John A. Gurley, a Unitarian minister and editor of the *Cincinnati Star in the West*, was willing to accept the celebration of the people; but he reasoned at the very best a victory achieved by earthly weapons was gained by the destruction of the combatant. Not so with the conquests of Christianity. Its battles made the dead live — a great cause for joy.¹¹ The editor of the *Cincinnati Calvinistic Anti-Papist*, Epaphras Goodman, a New School Presbyterian, wrote in the same vein. He informed his readers that the Prince of Peace needed no Minister of War because the Christian's warfare was "not carnal, but mighty through God." The sword of the Spirit was "the Word of God" which was the only "armor of the soldier of the cross." In the same city, J. A. Dunlap, editor of the Old School Presbyterian journal, the *Presbyterian of the West*, wrote that the joy and pride of the people in the victories were justified. "But let us not forget the sympathy we owe to the bereaved mourners," he urged. Dunlap called on Christian people to put up their "earnest prayers to God that He would by His wise providence, and control, speedily restore peace." In August 1846 the *Evangelical Guardian*, organ of the Associate Reformed Church of the West (Presbyterian), published in Rossville, Ohio, expressed hope that the United States would grant Mexico reasonable peace terms. Although Mexico "deserved some chastisement," it was hoped more was unnecessary. In December the editors, James Prestley and David Mac Dill, reprinted an editorial from the *Presbyterian New York Observer* which urged Christians to pray that the bloody war would end.¹²

The Cincinnati *Western Christian Advocate*, the journal of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ohio, limited its consideration of the Mexican War to reprints from other journals and articles from the American Peace Society. In June 1846 A. M. Lorraine, a well-known Methodist minister of Lebanon, Ohio, published an article entitled "Ultraism" in its pages. The article characterized abolitionism as a fanatical reform movement which clothed itself with some truth from the Bible but which did the Church a great disservice by its extremism and by making itself a "religious humbug." "We see another ultraism approaching," warned the correspondent. If unheeded it would soon "darken the Heavens, and be accompanied with an ecclesiastical earthquake" that would "shake all the churches." The new ultraism was the Peace Society. It was clothed with some of the same truths as other pseudo-benevolent societies. Lorraine asserted that the Peace Society was directing strong addresses to the clergy setting forth what they should preach. The ministers of the gospel "are called by God. . . . He will tell them what to cry," Lorraine explained; "What is this association which is advising the ministry how to preach! Is it the Church?"¹³

Lorraine was challenged by a Methodist minister from Illinois who accused him of unfairly trying to associate the Peace Society with unpopular causes. War under all circumstances was sinful, he insisted. This doctrine was not humbuggery; it was "clearly taught by revelation." It was articles such as Lorraine's, coming from highly esteemed clergymen and published in official organs of large and highly respected religious denominations which kept the war spirit high.¹⁴ In December 1846 the *Western Christian Advocate* ventured an opinion concerning the war. The editor saw the establishment of the abolitionist *National Era* as evidence of a rising reaction to the "misdeeds" of the pro-slavery forces, who were "grasping for unlimited power," that had "aroused the public mind to a state of unflinching resistance."¹⁵

The clergy as a group questioned the morality of the war and often condemned the conflict in strong language. During 1846, however, many clergy felt that the responsibility for the development of a correct moral sentiment extended only to their congregations; and most of the clergy avoided giving wider publicity to their anti-war sermons. Beyond the

confines of the church the majority of the opponents of the Mexican War were Whig politicians who were at least in part politically motivated. Regardless of motivation, those who were critical of the war were charged with treason. Even the clergy who spoke from their pulpits, in opposition to war in general, without specific reference to the Mexican War, suffered a withering rebuke for meddling in affairs of the state. The *Cincinnati Morning Herald*, however, defended the right of the clergy to speak against the war: "The pulpit is time-serving enough, without being constantly rebuked by the partisan press, whenever it ventures to show some independence," complained the editor. "Had it [the pulpit] been occupied by faithful, clear-sighted and fearless men, generally, the whole land ere this would have trembled under their denunciations of an unjust war."¹⁶

Shortly after Congress declared war on Mexico, more than fifteen hundred people met in Oberlin, Ohio, under the leadership of the Congregationalists and the Oberlin College faculty. The convention charged the government with the crime of engaging in a war to extend slavery. The government had brought the sentiment of the world and the God of Justice against the nation. Those at the meeting pledged to resist the prosecution of the war by all the means that a Christian citizen could use.¹⁷ When the Western Reserve General Association of the Congregational Churches met in July 1846, resolutions were passed denying fellowship with slaveholders. The Association declared that the Mexican War was an "unjust and unnecessary conflict," the result of American aggression which involved the government in unmeasurable guilt.¹⁸

III. The Religious Journals' and Societies' Crystallizing Opinions Concerning the Mexican War

During the Mexican War the Quakers followed their anti-war tradition. In June 1846 the Green Plain Monthly Meeting of Friends of Ohio, an anti-slavery congregational order that seceded from the Ohio Hicksites, testified against the war on Mexico because of the allegiance they owed to the Supreme Being. The United States was involved in mortal combat, declared the meeting, "not for the purpose of carrying out the noble sentiment incorporated in its Declaration of

Independence . . . but for the extension and perpetuation of the most execrable system of oppression which ever disgraced the world." In the last half of 1846 in Columbiana, Stark, Portage, Lake, and Ashtabula counties, the anti-slavery Quakers of Ohio held a series of meetings dealing with slavery and war.¹⁹ The Ohio Hicksite Quakers held their yearly meeting on 31 August 1846 and adopted an address on war. The meeting resolved that if there was "any principle inculcated by the precepts . . . of Jesus Christ" which stood pre-eminently above any other, "it would seem to be that of Peace." It was the intention of the members to use every suitable opportunity to manifest an uncompromising testimony against the horrid affair. A memorial was sent to Congress urging it not to admit any new slave states to the Union.²⁰

Unlike the Baptists south of the Ohio River, the Ohio Baptists were critical of the Mexican War. The Lorain, Ohio, Baptist Association (regular) condemned slavery and resolved that it was the duty of every Christian to promote the cause of peace in every consistent way because the spirit of war worked against the spirit of the gospel.²¹ The editor of the Baptist journal in Ohio did not take the lead in shaping Baptist opinion concerning the war. *The Cross and Journal*, organ of the regular Baptists, gave considerable space to reprints from other religious journals on the evils of war, but it remained editorially silent on the Mexican War in 1846. The Free Will Baptists, like the Quakers, firmly opposed the war. The Ohio and Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of the Free Will Baptists convened in Chester, Ohio, in June 1846, and urged all Free Will Baptists to join in a protest which would be signed by the clergy against servitude because an unholy war was being sustained by the government to "perpetuate and extend slavery." The Protest was drawn up and eventually signed by 616 Free Will Baptist ministers.²²

By the end of 1846, many Americans had become disillusioned over the possibility of early peace; and many churches in Ohio in cooperation with the American Peace Society circulated petitions calling on Congress to find some speedy and efficient means to end the war. After six months of war a strong anti-war sentiment had appeared throughout the state, but the associations in the Western Reserve had taken the lead in all denominations. As the year drew to a close, the

initiative shifted from the religious press to the pulpit, and during the Thanksgiving season the churches echoed condemnation of the war to varying degrees.²³

IV. The Churches' Strengthening Attacks on the Mexican War in 1847

By January 1847 when it was clear the conflict with Mexico would not be ended with an early settlement, the religious press renewed its condemnation of the war. In January, the New School Presbyterian *Watchman of the Valley* avowed that there was no calamity as great as war, which blotted out "every preceptive rule of Heaven." The *Ohio Observer* continued its strong condemnation of the war. In April the editor declared: "We are greatly in the wrong in the whole transaction and exceedingly guilty before God." He did not think, however, that the coarse abuse of the administration and the army was "doing God's service." In response to supporters of the war who declared national honor required that the United States fight and to those who repeated the maxim "Our Country Right or Wrong," *The Watchman of the Valley* responded tersely that "the only honorable course for our nation, relative to this war, is the course which righteousness, justice, and humanity demand. National honor requires us to deal justly and love mercy." The Presbyterian *Anti-Papist*, of Cincinnati, warned its patrons that "national rejoicing at the miseries of others cannot fail to brutalize the feelings of a people, especially when that misery is inflicted by their own hands."²⁴

The most conservative position taken by Calvinistic journals was taken by the *Evangelical Guardian*. In 1847 the *United Presbyterian* and the *Evangelical Guardian* had combined as a single journal published in Cincinnati, with the editors of the *Guardian* taking charge of the operation. In September 1847, with the war appearing to reach a stalemate before the gates of Mexico City, each day seemed more depressing than the one before. The editors of the *Guardian* feared that God was preparing a scourge for the people of the United States in the Mexican War because of the great national sins which they identified as Sabbath-breaking and other wickednesses but which did not include war or slavery.²⁵

The presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church held their meeting in April and May in Ohio, and the subject of the Mexican War came up for informal and formal discussion in the New School Presbyterian presbyteries. The New School Presbytery of Grand River insisted that ministers were "imperiously bound to preach against war." The New School Presbytery of Elyria resolved that it was the duty of the clergy to speak on the subject of peace and instructed its commissioners to bring the question of the Mexican War before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. The ministers responded with sermons against the Mexican war, but they were bitterly attacked by Democratic newspapers supporting the Polk Administration. The *Toledo Blade*, a Whig journal, responded with a declaration that the clergy of the United States were the purest and most actively benevolent body of professional men that could be found. It was the duty of the clergy "to preach against the great political evils" of the nation. "Let the clergy preach the truth as they believe it," advised the editor. "If it touches no body it can do nobody any good."²⁶

In May 1847 both the Old School and the New School Presbyterian General Assemblies requested that on the second Sabbath of July their ministers deliver sermons on the subject of peace. The clergy were free to deliver a sermon dealing with the abstract principle of peace or to apply the principle to the Mexican War. Most of the sermons delivered in response to the General Assemblies went unreported, but the *National Press and Cincinnati Weekly Herald* reported that discourses against the war were delivered from several pulpits in the city of Cincinnati. The New School Presbyterian clergy were more outspoken in condemnation of the war.²⁷

Thornton A. Mills, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, spoke on the subject of American Independence and made allusions to the Mexican War indicating decided opposition to it. The pastor of the New School Presbyterian Church of Elyria, Ohio, D. A. Grosvenor, said that the Mexican War was "the most cruel and oppressive, inexcusable, and nefarious" war that the pages of history recorded and urged the people to raise their voices in condemnation. If supplies were cut off, he observed, the butchery, bloodshed, and rapine would stop. Samuel C. Aiken, of the First Presbyterian Church

of Cleveland, considered offensive wars always iniquitous and unjust. Unless the United States could exhibit a warrant directly from Heaven commanding an invasion of Mexico, the war was an outrage and a wrong. Aiken hinted that the war was being fought to extend slavery. On two consecutive Sundays Cyrus L. Watson of the New School Presbyterian Church of Ohio City delivered sermons against the Mexican War which were published. He entered fully and fearlessly into the question of slavery and war, condemning both in severe terms.²⁸

Horace Bushnell, pastor of a New School Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, soon to take charge of a Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut, delivered the address at the annual meeting of the American Home Missionary Society in May 1847. In his address, "Barbarism, The First Danger," he delivered a timely warning concerning slavery and the war. If the Mexican War did not have its origin in the desire to expand slavery, Bushnell told his audience, many were determined to make it a war to extend the institution. Slavery was determined, he charged, to expand the "great pasture ground of barbarism." In another address during 1847 entitled "Growth Not Conquest, The True Method of Christian Progress," he warned against conquest and plunder as a means of expanding Christianity; a nation builds by growth and development of its resources, he wrote. When the New School Presbyterian Synod of Cincinnati met in October 1847, Bushnell addressed the clergy and urged them to follow the principles of gospel as the rule of duty instead of the standard of public sentiment on public questions. The Synod then proceeded to adopt resolutions condemning the Mexican War.²⁹

The Synod of Cincinnati unanimously declared all wars, except those which were strictly defensive, to be "the greatest physical and moral evils, totally repugnant to the spirit, principle and precepts of Christianity." Contrary to all the good promised, the Mexican War was an "unrighteous war" that all Christians should pray would "be speedily and righteously brought to a close." *The Watchman of the Valley*, organ of the Synod of Cincinnati, concluded that the clear and decided expression of sentiment by the Synod showed there was at least one body of ministers in the land determined to

speak the truth. The resolutions of the Synod of Cincinnati were criticized by the Democratic press, but the Whig papers were unanimous in their praise. The *Xenia Torch-Light* rejoiced to see clergy taking a stand. They had "too long remained silent." The Lebanon *Western Star* saw the measures as "correct moral sentiments." The *Cincinnati Weekly Atlas* echoed the *Western Star* impression.³⁰

Despite the position that the Synod of Cincinnati took against the Mexican War, it was not able to appease many anti-slavery members of the Synod. The Mexican War served as a catalyst for their anti-slavery sentiments against the extension of the Church to the Gulf states of the South. With the Presbytery of Ripley serving as a nucleus, many anti-slavery members withdrew and formed the Free Synod of Cincinnati. Late in 1847 they issued an address which included a condemnation of the Mexican War. It was "clearly aggressive in its character and avowedly originated," and "prosecuted by the Slave power for the purpose of securing a portion" of Mexico's territory "in order to extend and perpetuate the curse of slavery and domestic slave trade." The ministers of the new church were urged to preach against the "lawless and murderous warfare upon a weak and defenceless nation." The *Ohio Observer* agreed that the slave power was the source of the war. The editor considered the annexation of Texas as the remote cause, and the cause back of that was "the slaveholding interest." The editor asserted that the advance of the United States Army from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande was the immediate cause.³¹

The Old School Presbyterian Church judicatories in Ohio remained silent on the subject of the Mexican War, and most of the clergy apparently spoke in abstract terms if they followed the General Assembly's request to bring the question of peace before their congregations. The anti-slavery ministers of the Old School Synod of the Cincinnati area were an exception in Ohio and the nation. In July 1847 Thomas E. Thomas of the First Presbyterian Church of Hamilton delivered sermons which were published under the title of *Covenant Breaking, and Its Consequences; Or the Present Posture of Our National Affairs in Connection With the Mexican War*. Thomas preached against the war as contrary to the principles of peace, for he was convinced that the "Slave Power" had

designs on the territory which would be secured from Mexico. If territory was obtained from Mexico, he prophesied that a dispute similar to that which took place during the Missouri Controversy would shake the nation. The Democratic *Hamilton Telegraph* was scandalized at Thomas's sermon which was called a political sermon. The Whig *Hamilton Intelligencer* responded by declaring that the *Telegraph* was not offended by the political sermons of Wilson Thompson who justified the Mexican War.³²

When the Old School Presbytery of Miami met for its October 1847 session, W. C. Anderson delivered the session sermon on "The Republic and the Duties of the Citizen." He called on his peers to speak out on "the national mission" of the ministers. Clergymen were urged to reprove and rebuke "the evils in every political party." Anderson spoke in terms of principles and did not mention war or slavery, but it was clear that he was dealing with these subjects when he told his colleagues "we leave the application to you." Later, Erasmus D. McMaster, President of Miami University delivered a Fast Day Sermon in which he asserted that the States had carried on a war "of aggression, of spoliation, of plunder" against Mexico. He denounced those who were "plotting treason because . . . free states and some of the slave states . . . hesitate to enlist in a propogandism of slavery to new territories . . . where its polluting footprint has not yet set."³³

During the Mexican War most of the Congregationalists of Ohio were in churches which belonged to Presbyteries and were identified with the New School Presbyterian Church. Many of the Congregational Churches on the Western Reserve, however, were independent and very outspoken in censuring the government for invading Mexico. As in other denominations the attitude of most Congregational churches concerning the war was reflected by a stand against slavery. The members of the Free Congregational Church of Charleston, Portage County, Ohio, resolved they would not fellowship slaveholders and continued by declaring that the Mexican War was "not only unchristian, but piratical" and that it was "waged for the purpose of extending the power and domination of slavery."³⁴

Before war was declared, non-resistant peace societies had been established in Lorain County, Ohio. Elihu Burritt of

Massachusetts established such a society under the name of the League of Universal Brotherhood which grew extensively in Ohio. Amos Dresser, a Congregational clergyman and former student at Oberlin College, became the Ohio agent of this organization and collected seven hundred pledges for the society in Oberlin alone. Oberlin College was divided on the issue of non-resistance. Professor Amasa Walker, who spent considerable time lecturing on peace, belonged to the League of Universal Brotherhood. Professor Henry Cowles, editor of the *Oberlin Evangelist*, and Asa Mahan, President of Oberlin College, founders of the Oberlin Peace Society, were opposed to Burritt's society. Cowles believed there were circumstances in which evil doers must be punished and Mahan believed Christ expressly sanctioned self-defense.³⁵

Oberlin and Lorain County, Ohio, were made the focal point in the West of the controversy between the advocates of non-resistance and those opposed only to diplomatic aggression and offensive wars. Mahan and Dresser became the leaders of the two movements in Ohio. In his *Science of Moral Philosophy*, Mahan set forth his scriptural interpretation of the Christian position on war. He believed that self-defense was valid and could be defended by the scripture. Dresser refused to acknowledge the validity of war under any circumstance. In his *Bible Against War*, published soon after Mahan's *Moral Philosophy*, Dresser took exception to Mahan's interpretation of the Bible. He insisted that self-defense was prohibited throughout the Bible.³⁶

With all opponents of war agreeing that the Mexican War was an aggressive war on the part of the United States, the differences between the two groups became academic for all practical purposes. In March 1847 the peace advocates in Lorain County met to form a Lorain County Peace Society. At the organizational meeting on 30 March representatives of almost all religious groups in the county attended, but the Calvinistic groups were predominant. Resolutions were reported which included a measure to "discountenance all wars and all preparations for war of whatever name or nature." For this resolution a substitute was offered which specifically opposed war even in case of invasion. This led to a series of adjourned meetings in which the substitute resolution and similar measures were rejected before the

original measure was adopted. Township meetings were held, and township organizations were set up throughout Lorain County. Peace lectures became regular staples in the county during the remainder of the Mexican War, and The Fourth of July became an especially eventful occasion for an attack on the war. On 4 July 1847 Professor John Morgan spoke at the Court House in Elyria. He portrayed, in a most graphic manner, the evils and wickedness of the Mexican War. Thanksgiving brought another massive attack on the moral evils of the Mexican War.³⁷

Cincinnati was becoming another center of Congregationalism independent of Presbyterian judicatories. Charles B. Boynton, pastor of the Sixth Street Congregational Church of Cincinnati, formerly a Presbyterian Church, delivered a lecture in January 1847 before the Library Association of Cincinnati on "Our Country, the Herald of a New Era." He believed that it was the destiny and mission of the United States to extend its territorial boundaries at least to Panama, but he warned that "institutions propagated by the sword, by the sword also perish." On 5 July 1847 Boynton delivered an address before the Native Americans of Cincinnati. Instead of dwelling on Protestant-Catholic relations, Boynton delivered an anti-war oration. He asserted that there were two classes of Americans who were deprived of their rights as citizens: those who wore a black skin and those who wore a black coat. He urged the clergy to speak the gospel truth but to "sweep the whole field of human action." The Mexican War, as Boynton saw it, was the result of a plan of the South to seize new territory for Slavery from Mexico. He condemned the war as "clearly an act of aggression, wanton and uncalled for. . . . It is a War of Conquest, of sheer robbery as clearly as any on history's pages—conquest too, for the worst purpose that can be set before a nation, being a war against freedom, against human progress, against the rights of man." He beseeched Christians to arouse themselves to create a public sentiment that would "end the war, and the power of slavery forever." In November 1847 Boynton renewed his attack on slavery and the war in a Thanksgiving sermon. He insisted that it was an error to "shut off religion from those relations of civil and social life" where its purifying influence was needed. "The non-interfering policy may answer the purpose of man, but not God," he contended.³⁸

Epaphras Goodman, a minister of Congregational training, edited the nativist *Anti-Papist* which changed its name to the *Cincinnati Protestant and True Catholic* in 1847. Goodman, who was a New School Presbyterian without charge, emphasized anti-slavery and anti-war sentiments rather than nativism in the journal. The "atrocious war," as he called the action against Mexico, would permanently establish the war spirit in the United States. "It is the defeat of peace. The peace pulpit is vanquished and dare not speak openly. The Christian press is conquered, and must not express its sentiments. Christian statesmen are taken captive, and look on in silence," he lamented. But there was moral power enough to rebuke the "bloodthirsty spirit" if those who opposed the war would but speak. A month later Goodman was still trying to stir his readers to action. "All things considered the darkest spot on the moral scenery of the world . . . is found in Mexico," he gloomily reported. "We cannot refrain from weeping over scenes like the one before us." Goodman felt that all disciples of the Prince of Peace must be moved to utter their testimony against the war. By the end of the year the *Cincinnati Protestant* was abandoned, and Goodman directed his benevolence to the service of the anti-slavery American Missionary Association.³⁹

Before and during the period of the Mexican War, the nativist movement declined significantly. The efforts of some Democratic organs to rally the support of the Protestant Churches to the administration by suggestions that the Mexican Church property be seized met with condemnation by the religious press in the United States. The churches emphasized that war was being made on a weak sister republic. Protestant churches and religious journals were preoccupied with raising funds for relief of Ireland in 1847 instead of conducting a religious crusade against Mexico. The editor of *The Watchman of the Valley* lamented that the millions spent "to butcher the Mexicans" were not spent "to feed the starving masses of Europe." The spirit was taken out of the nativist movement in Cincinnati by the stance of the *Catholic Telegraph* of Cincinnati. The *Catholic Telegraph* asserted that every citizen should regret that two republican nations were making war on each other. Although it was hard to determine responsibility, since the die was cast "every man

must enter with all his heart into the conflict, with unflinching determination to carry the flag of the Union through the storm of war." Until peace was restored, the editor advised, "Our great object must be to defend by every means in our power, the national cause." As the war progressed, the editor of the *Telegraph* declared in October 1847 that "the result of the war disappointed no one" because Mexico had dissipated her heritage. Mexico's faith would be strengthened by the realization coming from defeat. "God can bring good out of evil," concluded the editor.⁴⁰

The *Baptist Cross and Journal* changed its name to *The Western Christian Journal* in 1847. Although the new editor continued to refrain from taking an editorial position on the war, he opened his editorial page to correspondents. Some correspondents took an aggressive stand against slavery and war. In April 1847 a correspondent despaired of being able to get rid of the evil which would follow a war started "by the lust for territorial aggrandisement to extend slavery." In May the *Western Christian Journal* contained an article entitled "The Mexican War" in which the correspondent examined the duty of Christians concerning the war. In defensive wars all citizens were bound to aid in repelling invasion. Since the Mexican War was an offensive war, he questioned the president's statement that it was not only politically wrong to criticize involvement once war was being waged but even treasonable because it gave aid and comfort to the enemy. The correspondent concluded that in relation to all aggressive wars, the Constitution of the United States considered every citizen a free and moral agent "at liberty to approve and aid, or disapprove and oppose such wars." In America men were treated as "free moral and accountable beings, and not as the slaves of ambitious rulers." When offensive wars were waged by constitutional authorities, every one engaged in the war did so voluntarily, and therefore adopted the war as his own and was "responsible for its justice as if he himself had declared it." "Neither Congress nor the President can modify or repeal the law against murder," he concluded, "and Christians should fearlessly speak their Minds" concerning the Mexican War.⁴¹

When the regular Baptists met in 1847, the opposition to the war had increased considerably. Some Baptist associations reacted with strong measures against slavery while others

directed their hostility against the war. Other associations condemned both war and slavery. The Geauga Baptist Association set aside a day in October for fasting, humiliation, and prayer, and agreed to deny fellowship to slaveholders and their defenders. The Miami (Ohio) Baptist Association regarded it as a duty for Christians to use their influence to suppress war and other vices; and the Caesar's Creek Association in Clinton County, Ohio, urged that the Church and her members should stand before the world as "opponents of war, and as friends of freedom."⁴²

As the annual Thanksgiving season approached, several governors, including the Governor of Ohio, issued proclamations for a day of Thanksgiving. *The Clarion of Freedom of Ohio* called these Governors "wicked God dishonoring" men because they had engaged "in raising volunteers to murder Mexicans, for the purpose of abolishing Liberty" and "establishing Slavery" in their states. The editor denounced them as being "guilty of the sacrilege of appointing a day on which ministers" would "return thanks to almighty God . . . that they have been suffered to enslave 3,000,000 of his poor children." Many clergy used the Thanksgiving service to condemn the Mexican War as contrary to the Christian doctrine. D. B. Cheney, pastor of the regular Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio, preached a Thanksgiving sermon in which he denounced the Mexican War as a great national sin. A correspondent to the *Democratic Statesman*, Columbus, Ohio, did not hesitate to call the sermon a political speech. The minister should hide his face in shame, added the correspondent, not because war was not an evil, but because when war was being fought, every good man should "thank God" that our country was "preferred to all others." The correspondent accused Cheney of casting a fire-brand in his congregation. The *Statesman* bitterly denounced Cheney's sermon. "It is of more importance" admonished the editor, "that the pulpit should be kept clean from the turmoils and strife of party politics than that the ermine should be unstained with it; yet what would be said of the Judge who should so far forget what was due to his office as to suffer political considerations to influence his decisions." The *Ohio State Journal*, the Whig organ of Columbus, concluded that the *Statesman* appeared to be trying not only to take over the reins

of civil government but "to extend their jurisdiction over the preacher of the gospel" by "muzzling the pulpit."⁴³

The *Daily True Democrat* of Cleveland lamented that "many ministers had been intimidated from opening their mouths upon a question that struck at the very foundation of Christian morality for fear of offending certain misguided sinners." The editor was gratified that he had heard at least one minister who had vindicated his right by declaring: "My pulpit will not be silent on moral questions . . . as long as I have the faculty of moral discrimination. I speak against the war today because I set to myself the task of pleading the cause of the poor who have got to bear the burden ultimately." Earlier in 1847 the Reverend McReynolds sent two anti-war sermons to the Democratic Cleveland *Plain Dealer* which it declined to publish. The editor responded: "There are tory papers enough in the country to serve those who cry 'peace, peace, when there is no peace,' without troubling us with such stuff." A correspondent to the *Daily True Democrat* replied that despite the *Plain Dealer's* delight in human butchery, "who can but admire the moral courage of that minister, who . . . fearlessly" declares "that war could neither be begun nor carried on, without a wholesale disregard of the principles of love and forgiveness, as taught and enforced by Christ."⁴⁴

The Free Will Baptists of Ohio were not inclined to submit to intimidation. The Ohio Northern Yearly Meeting of the Free Will Baptists convened in 1847 and pledged themselves to "labor unceasingly for the entire overthrow of American Slavery." The spirit of war, they resolved, was "the spirit of murder" and the United States government was charged with the crime of murder by making war on Mexico. The meeting asserted that the wrath of God would be visited on ministers who sustained the war from the pulpit. The Geauga Quarterly Meeting of Free Will Baptists (Ohio) devoted its Quarterly Sermon to the duty of the Church to take the lead in reforming popular sentiment concerning war and slavery. The Ohio River Yearly Meeting (Gallia County), influenced by the events of 1847, saw slavery as a great political and moral evil which Christians were duty bound to mobilize all proper means to suppress. The Ohio and Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Free Will Baptists, frankly faced the political implications of the Mexican War. War was also considered incompatible with Christianity.⁴⁵

In 1845 John Swanel Inskip was assigned by the Ohio Methodist Conference to the Ninth Street Methodist Church in Cincinnati. While there he preached a sermon against the Mexican War without any public notice being registered of the fact. In 1847 he was transferred to Dayton where he repeated the sermon on the morning of 21 November under the title of the "Signs of the Times" and spoke that evening on the "Evils of War." Inskip, who was constitutionally and religiously opposed to war, pronounced it an evil utterly at variance with the principles of the Christian religion. The sermons produced tremendous excitement during the following week. A correspondent to the *Western Empire* of Dayton reported that Inskip had exhibited himself to be "one of the most rabid, unfair, and dishonest partisans of the day" by his desecration of the Sabbath. The editor of the *Empire* denounced the sermons, and other newspapers editorialized on "Toryism in the Pulpit." The *Journal and Advertiser* was available to Inskip for a reply, and he denied that he had said that all who were slain on the battle fields of Mexico were doomed to hell. After the full sermon on war was printed in the *Journal and Advertiser*, the editor of the *Empire* accused Inskip of suppressing the obnoxious passages, a charge which the minister denied in a letter to the *Journal*.⁴⁶

The reception given to the Thanksgiving sermon of Granville Moody, minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Lancaster, Ohio, by the Democratic press was a contrast to that rendered Inskip. The *Ohio Eagle* of Lancaster reported that the sermon was "elevated in style and thought and . . . refined in its American sentiments, as to challenge the admiration" both of the speaker and subject. "It must be gratifying to every lover of his country," added the *Daily Ohio Statesman*, "to find one minister of the gospel that dares defend the right, and that loves the country that protects his religious and political privileges."⁴⁷

However, the clergymen who pleased the Democratic supporters of the Administration were few in number. John Newland Maffit, a Methodist minister who had recently been suspended by the Conference of New York, was one of these. Maffit came to Cincinnati and preached on the Mexican War as he had elsewhere. He endeavored to show that conquest of Mexico was the design of Providence for reforming religion

and the morals of the country. For this he was severely denounced by the Methodists of southwestern Ohio.⁴⁸

The Methodist *Western Christian Advocate* had maintained editorial silence during 1846; but the editor broke it in January 1847 with an editorial entitled "Moral Wrong" which left no doubt where he stood. The editor, Charles Elliot, attributed the war, at least in part, to slavery. Referring first to the annexation of Texas, he said: "We fear there has been at work the principle of moral wrong. The extension or permanency of slavery seems to be one element, without which annexation would not have taken place. . . . The further extension of the control of slavery, a grievous moral wrong, seems to have had much to do in the war with Mexico. And that this was an aggressive war of mere conquest, there are very few doubts, indeed, in the minds of sober men of every political school."⁴⁹

The Reverend C. D. Elliott, son of Arthur Elliott, a retired Methodist minister of some renown in Ohio, was a Methodist minister of Democratic inclinations who led a church in Nashville, Tennessee. In November 1847 he addressed in Nashville a regiment of volunteers who were departing for Mexico. He ended a very patriotic address, which the *New York Tribune* called "Cut-Throat Piety," with the assurance that "no nation obeying the commands of God can fail of glorious success in the end." The *Ohio Eagle* quoted from the address to show the contrast between "the sentiments of a patriotic Christian" and the "tory diatribes" which emanated from the pulpits throughout Ohio. The *Hamilton Telegraph* used the event to try to identify Arthur Elliott with the political sentiments and views of his son concerning the war.⁵⁰

Arthur Elliott felt compelled to make his own sentiments known in December by addressing a letter, which was later printed in the *Hamilton Intelligencer*, to the editor of the *Hamilton Telegraph*. So that his true position could be known, Elliott expressed the opinion that the moral sentiment of the country was against "this war of invasion and conquest." He urged the Christian ministers and Christian churches to "lift up their voices in denunciation of the war and its objects." Elliott added: "I think it is the duty of every minister of the Gospel of 'peace on Earth and good will to men,' to raise his voice and bear his strong testimony against the spirit of slavery and violence, aggression and bloodshed, in which this

war originated and by which it is sustained." The *Eaton Register* printed the letter and advised its readers that the author was a teacher the public could not but listen to "with interest and profit." The *Hamilton Telegraph* asserted that Elliott's letter was "remarkable for nothing but its gross perversion of facts, its malignity and intolerance, and its canting tone."⁵¹

Throughout the Mexican War, Samuel Lewis, the first superintendent of Ohio schools, was the most steadfast Methodist clergyman in keeping the evils of the Mexican War before the public. William Lewis later recalled how his father had thrilled many audiences with eloquent and withering denunciations of "the treachery" of the Government in dealing with Mexico. Samuel Lewis fervently appealed to the consciences of his listeners in favor of justice and freedom. He warned the people of the ultimate results of their silence and cooperation with slaveholders.⁵²

V. Conservative Religious Views on the War

In January 1848 the *United Presbyterian and Evangelical Guardian* devoted three articles to various questions relating to the Mexican War. Christians were urged to pray for their rulers, ministers advised to teach their congregations to exercise their political privileges in the fear of God, but not to tell them how to vote, and people were asked not to find fault with ministers who refrained from speaking on the Mexican War during the Thanksgiving season. The editor of the *Hamilton Telegraph* was delighted with the January issue of the *Guardian* because it dealt with principles and left the specific applications to the readers. The editor of the *Hamilton Intelligencer* replied that if the *Guardian's* advice of voting in the fear of God were followed, it would mean "death to Locofocism."⁵³

The conservative stance was not limited to the *Guardian*. When the Associate Reformed Synod of the West met in 1848, an overture was presented from the Martinsburgh, Ohio, church asking the Synod to express an opinion on the moral character of the Mexican War. The Synod refused to express an opinion because it did not have adequate information on the causes and circumstances. The *Lutheran Standard* of

Columbus also took a neutral position on the Mexican War. The editor published war news but refrained from critical comment. The Old School *Presbyterian of the West* was silent on the war during the last months; and the *Western Episcopalian* of Gambier, Ohio, completely ignored the subject of war. However, the convention of the Diocese of Ohio adopted a resolution in 1847 requesting Bishop Charles M'Ilvaine to set aside a day of prayer and to prepare a suitable prayer for use by the parishes on account of the national sins. In the convention of 1848 the Bishop reported that he questioned the expediency of the task assigned him and requested the Standing Committee to review the request. They agreed that the state of things in the country "rendered the measure inexpedient." Episcopal laymen, however, were active in condemning the Mexican War.⁵⁴

In December 1847, *The Gospel Proclamation*, edited by Alexander Wilford Hall at St. Clairsville, Ohio, contained an "Essay on War and Christianity." Hall, a minister of the Disciples of Christ, was opposed to peace societies and other moral and reform societies; but he was committed to using his influence against war. The essay on war was written by a correspondent and continued through five installments. The writer concluded that war was incompatible with Christianity, but non-resistance was opposed to the system of civil government instituted by God. No religious group enthusiastically supported the war, and the most sympathetic simply refrained from criticizing the Government. The radical abolitionists condemned the church for failing to throw its complete influence against the Government's involvement in the war. Years later the radical abolitionist Parker Pillsbury recalled that "The clergy actually clamored for chaplaincies in the atrocious Mexican war, knowing well its origin and objects."⁵⁵

VI. The Assessment of the War by Religious Groups in Ohio

With the end of the Mexican War only a matter of time and a determination of the amount of compensation to the United States, the regular Baptists of Ohio vented their condemnation against slavery instead of war. The Rocky River Baptist Association of Medina County, Ohio, in June decided to use all

lawful means for the entire removal of slavery. Other associations took similar action.⁵⁶ The Miami Baptist Association considered it a duty of all Christians to direct their influence to the suppression of war. Since the Association considered slavery as contrary to Christianity and national prosperity, it was resolved to use all "lawful and prudent measures" to "effectively and speedily" remove it.⁵⁷

After the war had ended, the Free Will Baptists of Ohio turned their attack on slavery which they considered to be the cause of the war. The Free Will Baptists of Stark County, Ohio, had their names attached to the list of protestors against slavery which the Ohio and Pennsylvania Free Will Yearly Meeting had proposed in 1846. The Lake County, Ohio, Quarterly Meeting was determined to use its political as well as moral influence to redeem the slave from oppression.⁵⁸

The editor of the *Ohio Observer* believed it was the duty of a Christian editor to watch the ever-varying current of influence which shaped the course of society and to endeavor, just at the right time, to give it direction. The timing of an editorial could give it "wonderful power," he believed.⁵⁹ Early in 1848, *The Belmont Chronicle* of St. Clairsville, Ohio, was appalled by the lack of open opposition to the Mexican War by many professing Christians. As a Christian journalist, the editor believed that communities and nations were collectively as much amenable to the moral precepts of Christianity as individuals were accountable to God. In May Asa Mahan wrote an article on his views on the subject in *The Oberlin Quarterly*, entitled "Idea of Retribution." He concluded, "We cannot but conceive that God ought . . . to hold ready rewards and punishments for those who have fulfilled or broken the law." Nations like individuals were accountable for wrong doing.⁶⁰ Later in 1848 William Wilson, a Reformed Presbyterian minister of Cincinnati, published a pamphlet entitled *The Great American Question, Democracy vs. Doulocracy* in which he condemned the Mexican War. Wilson warned that nations as well as individuals were "accountable to God," and His law had been trampled into the dust by slavery. Since nations did not exist as such in a future state, the crisis of the times had to be vindicated or general retribution would be visited on guilty nations.⁶¹

During the last months of the war, the religious journals

were preoccupied with the subject of extending the work of the benevolent societies to Mexico. The *Ohio Observer* took the lead in the discussion of these religious programs, and the editor softened his criticism of the war. The *Ohio-Observer*, however, did not publish an anti-war editorial after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was signed; and very few religious journals gave any notice of the end of the war. Following the signing of the treaty, the United Brethren of Ohio, which sustained the *Telescope*, held their General Conference in Germantown, Ohio, and resolved that the spirit of war which led people to engage voluntarily in national warfare was "unholy and anti-Christian" and "should not be tolerated."⁶²

In the first weeks of the Mexican War, there was little criticism of the war from the clergy and the churches, but as the war continued the criticism increased to the point that by the autumn of 1847 it almost became a crusade against the war. The anti-war sentiment was strongest in the Western Reserve and the region around Cincinnati where New England influence was strongest. Many who had strong anti-war convictions entered the ranks of the anti-slavery movement because they were now convinced that the aggressive tendencies of slavery knew no bounds. Anti-slavery men who had no deep-seated feelings concerning war, because of their strong commitment to manifest destiny and because of their belief in the manifest destiny of the Christian republic, condemned the war as a plot of the Slave Power. The Mexican War broadened the support of the anti-slavery movement considerably by convincing many moderates of the aggressive nature of slavery, but the war made the political opposition to slavery more moderate by creating the issue of free soil which was a defensive political stance instead of an offensive posture which was often characteristic of the Liberty party. With the opposition of the churches reaching a pinnacle and the war a stalemate because Mexico, though defeated, refused to sign a treaty, the churches were able to put considerable pressure on the Polk Administration, which became desperate to settle the conflict.

The nativist movement which had reached its peak in 1844 was dissipated in Ohio by the Mexican War. The annexation of Texas and the Mexican War established slavery as an "unnatural monster and beast" that threatened a free society

and religion. The Mexican War checked the Protestant minority that would have welcomed a religious crusade and dealt nativism a blow from which it never fully recovered in Ohio.⁶³ Ohio was preoccupied with opposition to war and the extension of slavery to the territories. The Quakers and Free Will Baptists in Ohio took the strongest position against the Mexican War and the extension of slavery. Although the Unitarians took the lead against the war in New England, they were relatively unimportant in Ohio. The war contributed to the tensions and sectionalism which led to the end of the cooperation of the Baptist Associations of Ohio and Kentucky in the operation of the Western Baptist Theological Seminary at Covington, Kentucky.⁶⁴ The western territory was to be the great battle ground between slavery and freedom. The Mexican War accelerated the growth of anti-slavery influence in the domestic missionary organizations of all denominations and firmly established among the northern churches the concept of the "Slave Power" which molded anti-slavery sentiment in the North into a more general and pervasive anti-Southern feeling.

In his article on "The American Churches and the Mexican War," Clayton Ellsworth wrote that "Proximity to the scene of the war was a cogent factor in determining popular support."⁶⁵ This was not true of Ohio, which with Massachusetts took the lead in opposition to the war. The strong position of Ohio can be accounted for by the extensive publication in the state of religious journals that effectively molded public opinion and by the strong New England influence in parts of the state. Although many churches in Ohio still needed aid from domestic missionary organizations, the church associations of Ohio had reached a point that they contributed a surplus for home missions. These organizations were looking for new missionary fields outside of the state. They took a very hostile attitude toward any movement which might extend the corrupting influence of slavery to any newly acquired territory which was considered a missionary field. Since religious people were convinced that slavery was the cause of the war and that the institution was likely to profit considerably by the war, the clergy and churches entered the political arena as never before to prevent the extension of slavery to the territory acquired from Mexico.

NOTES

¹Merton L. Dillon, *Benjamin Lundy and the Struggle for Negro Freedom* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1966), pp. 235-236; Henry Harrison Simms, *Emotion at High Tide: Abolition as a Controversial Factor, 1830-1845* (Baltimore: Moore and Company, 1960), pp. 180-182.

²See: *Cincinnati Tri-Weekly Gazette*, 12 December 1844; *Cleveland Herald*, 7 March 1845; Gretchen Ake Fluke, "Reactions of Ohioans to the Texas Question," Thesis Ohio State University, pp. 45-52; Minutes of the Presbytery of Cleveland, 1830-1849 (New School), 5 May 1846, p. 348; Records of the Presbytery of Trumbull, 1827-1847 (New School), 15 April 1846, p. 604; Manuscript Records, Presbyterian Historical Society.

³*The Watchman of the Valley* (Cincinnati, Ohio), 12 March 1846; *The Ohio Observer* (Hudson, Ohio), 1 April 1846; The Presbyterian Church divided in 1837 into the New School Presbyterian Church and the Old School Presbyterian Church. See C. Bruce Staiger, "Abolitionism and the Presbyterian Church Schism, 1837-1838," *Journal of American History*, 36 (December 1949), 391-414 and Elwyn A. Smith, "The Role of the South in Presbyterian Schism of 1837-1838," *Church History* (March 1960) pp. 44-61; Victor B. Howard, "The Anti-Slavery Movement in the Presbyterian Church, 1835-1861," Diss. Ohio State University 1961.

⁴*Circleville Watchman*, as cited by *The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, 14 February 1846; *The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, 18 April 1846.

⁵*The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 22 May 1846; See for example: *Clinton Republican* (Wilmington, Ohio), 13 June 1846; *The Ashtabula Sentinel*, 15 June 1846.

⁶*Cleveland Herald* as cited by *The Ashtabula Sentinel*, 15 June 1846.

⁷*The Ohio Observer*, 13 May 1846; *The Watchman of the Valley*, 28 May 1846.

⁸*The Ohio Observer*, 10 June 1846.

⁹*Religious Telescope* (Circleville, Ohio), 2 May 1846, citing *The Watchman of the Valley*. The editor of the *Religious Telescope* also condemned the war spirit because it destroyed the revival enterprise in the church. He urged his brethren to see that their hands were clean in the matter. The *Telescope* was in harmony with the sentiments of the Miami (Ohio) Conference of the United Brethren. With developments pointing toward the possibility of a war with Mexico, in March 1846 the Conference resolved that it was the duty of its ministers to use their influence "to check the progress, spirit and principles of pro-slavery." See: *Religious Telescope*, 25 March, 1 July 1846.

¹⁰*Anti-Slavery Bugle* (Salem, Ohio), 26 June 1846; *The Ohio Observer*, 28 October 1846; *Oberlin Evangelist*, 27 May, 24 June 1846.

¹¹*Star in the West* (Cincinnati, Ohio), 24 October 1846.

¹²*The Anti-Papist*, 31 October 1846; *Presbyterian of the West*, 5 November 1846; *Evangelical Guardian* (Rossville, Ohio), 4, no. 3 (August 1846), 142; No. 7 (December 1846), 323-324.

¹³*Western Christian Advocate* (Cincinnati, Ohio), 26 June 1846.

¹⁴*Western Christian Advocate*, 24 July, 4 September 1846.

¹⁵*Western Christian Advocate*, 11 December 1846.

¹⁶*Cincinnati Morning Herald*, 9 July 1846; *The Democratic American Union* of Steubenville, Ohio, charged those who opposed the war because of moral considerations with being hypocrites. To secure political advantages, they

were willing to prostitute "the law of morality itself." To the *Religious Telescope* the danger was not hypocrisy but the brutalization of humanity. "O, when will intelligent beings cease to imitate brutes and devils in destroying each others lives?" the editor lamented. "War is evil, only evil, and that continually." See: *American Union* (Steubenville, Ohio), 5 November 1846 and the *Religious Telescope*, 28 October 1846.

¹⁷*Oberlin Evangelist*, 10 June 1846; *True Democrat*, cited by *The Liberator* (Boston, Massachusetts), 3 July 1846; Robert Samuel Fletcher, *A History of Oberlin College* (Oberlin, Ohio: Oberlin College, 1943), I, 278.

¹⁸*Oberlin Evangelist*, 8 July 1846; *The Ashtabula Sentinel*, 27 July 1846.

¹⁹*Anti-Slavery Bugle* (Salem, Ohio), 10 July, 21 August, 11 September 1846.

²⁰*The Republic*, cited by *Cincinnati Morning Herald*, 5 August 1846; Yearly Meeting Minute Book of Ohio Quakers (Hicksites), 1828-1871, (Manuscript, Friends Library, Swarthmore College), pp. 169, 171, 177. *Friends' Weekly Intelligencer* (Philadelphia), 19 December 1846.

²¹*The Cross and Journal* (Columbus, Ohio), 9, 30 January, 8 May, 3 10, 17 July 1846; Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Lorain Baptist Association (Oberlin, Ohio: James M. Fitch, 1846), p. 6.

²²*The Morning Star* (Dover, New Hampshire), 22 July 1846; *Western Christian Journal* (Columbus, Ohio), 17 March 1848.

²³*Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, 4 December 1846.

²⁴*The Watchman of the Valley*, 14 January, 4 March 1847; *The Ohio Observer*, 21 April 1847; John A. Gurley, editor of the *Star in the West* of the Unitarians, sarcastically accused the orthodox *Watchman of the Valley* of inconsistency because it exalted the endless war waged by Heaven against sin but was "horrified at a little fighting which lasted a few hours" against Mexico. The horror of war, according to the editor of *The Ohio Observer*, was revealed by the murder of five hundred women and children at Vera Cruz. The Mexican General would not permit the women and children to leave the city, as requested by General Winfield Scott; and he threatened to fire on the women and children if they attempted to leave the city. Once the battle was under way, Scott would not permit them to withdraw from Vera Cruz as requested by the consuls of the different nations in Mexico. "This is the glorious victory which the press is vaunting forth . . . O thou God of Peace, have mercy upon the United States and Mexico," the editor beseeched. See: *Star in the West*, 1 May 1847 and *The Ohio Observer*, 28 April 1847; *The Anti-Papist*, 6 February 1847.

²⁵*The United Presbyterian and Evangelical Guardian* (Cincinnati), I, No. 5 (September 1847), 233-234.

²⁶Records of the Presbytery of Grand River, Ohio, 1836-1848 (New School) MS., (Presbyterian Historical Society), 3 April 1847, pp. 281-282; Records of the Presbytery of Elyria, 1843-1863 (New School) MS., (Western Reserve Historical Society), 5 April 1847, 119; *Toledo Blade*, 26 April 1847.

²⁷*Minutes of the General Assembly* (1847) (Old School) (Philadelphia: General Assembly, 1847), p. 403; *Minutes of the General Assembly* (1847) (New School) (New York: William Osborn, 1847), p. 145; *National Press and Cincinnati Weekly Herald*, 14 July 1847; John R. Bodo, *The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues: 1812-1848* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 219-220.

²⁸*National Press and Cincinnati Weekly Herald*, 14 July 1847; *The Ohio Observer*, 29 September 1847; *Cleveland Herald*, 7 July 1847; *The Elyria*

Courier, 3 August 1847; *Cleveland Daily Plain Dealer*, 9 July 1847; *The Daily True Democrat*, 7 August 1847.

²⁹*The Ohio Observer*, 27 October 1847; Horace Bushnell, "Barbarism the First Danger," *The American National Preacher*, 21, No. 9 (September 1847), 210; *The Daily True Democrat*, 22 December 1847; *Cincinnati Weekly Atlas*, 28 October 1847.

³⁰*The Watchman of the Valley*, 28 October 1847; *Daily Cincinnati Chronicle*, 3 November 1847; *Xenia Torch-Light*, 11 November 1847; *The Western Star*, 5 November 1847; *Cincinnati Weekly Atlas*, 4 November 1847; *The Cincinnati Enquirer* doubted that the Synod's lack of patriotism was calculated to spread Christianity, especially when the members were determined to preach a crusade against the government. "A ranker demonstration of Toryism, than this, we have not lately seen," the editor of the *Enquirer* concluded as he returned with a second editorial attack on the resolutions of the Synod of Cincinnati. The *Whig Belmont Chronicle* on the eastern border of the state rejoiced to see religious societies utter "their condemnation" of the aggressive war. See: *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, cited by the *Cincinnati Weekly Atlas*, 11 November 1847; *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 2, 6 November 1847; *The Belmont Chronicle* (St. Clairsville, Ohio), 5 November 1847.

³¹*The Ohio Observer*, 27 October 1847.

³²Thomas Ebenezer Thomas, *Covenant Breaking, and Its Consequences; Or the Present Posture of Our National Affairs, in Connection with the Mexican War . . . Two Discourses Preached at Hamilton, Ohio, on July 4th and 11th, 1847* (Rossville, Ohio: J. M. Christy, 1847), p. 72; *Hamilton Intelligencer*, 22 July, 21 October 1847.

³³W. C. Anderson, *The Republic and the Duties of the Citizen, A Sermon Delivered By Order of the Presbytery of Miami at Their Sessions in October, 1847* (Dayton, Ohio: R. N. and W. F. Comly, 1847), pp. 16-17; E. D. McMaster, *Impending Judgments Averted by Repentance: A Sermon at Oxford, Ohio, August 3, 1849* (Cincinnati: John D. Thorpe, 1849), pp. 27-28, 32.

³⁴*Advocate of Peace* (Boston, Massachusetts), (October 1846), p. 243.

³⁵*Oberlin Evangelist*, 10 May 1843; 13 May, 19 August 1846; 9 June, 21 July 1847; *The Daily True Democrat* (Cleveland), 21 August 1847; Carleton Mabee, *Black Freedom: The Non-Violent Abolitionists From 1830 Through the Civil War* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1970), pp. 253-258; Fletcher, *A History of Oberlin College*, pp. 276-277; *Elyria Courier*, 6 April 1847.

³⁶Barbara Brown Zikmund, "Asa Mahan and Oberlin Perfectionism," Diss., Duke University, 1969, pp. 305-306, 307; Amos Dresser, *Bible Against War* (Oberlin, Ohio: James Fitch, 1849), pp. 194-196; Amasa Walker, *Memoir of the Reverend Amos Dresser* (n.p., n.d., n. pag.).

³⁷*The Elyria Courier*, 16 March, 6, 27 April 1847; *The Daily True Democrat*, 9 April 1847. Frederick B. Barnes to "Baino Riverro," Oberlin, Ohio, 4 July 1847 (MS, 223-16/5 Box 18, Autograph File, Folder Ba Oberlin College Archives).

³⁸Charles B. Boynton, *Our Country, The Herald of a New Era: A Lecture Delivered Before the Young Men's Mercantile Library Association of Cincinnati, January 19, 1847* (Cincinnati: E. Shepard, 1847), p. 5; *Daily Times Cincinnati*, 20 January 1847; *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, 12 February 1847; Charles B. Boynton, *Oration Delivered on the Fifth of July, 1847 Before the Native Americans of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati: Tagart and Gardner, 1847), pp. 5, 6; *Daily Times*, 7 July 1847; *Cincinnati Weekly Atlas*, 8 July 1847; *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, 24 July 1847; *National Press and Cincinnati Herald*, 14 July 1847; *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 20 August 1847; *The Examiner* (Louisville, Kentucky), 10 July 1847; *Cincinnati Protestant and True Catholic*, 17 July, 4 December 1847.

³⁹*Cincinnati Protestant and True Catholic*, 3 July, 9 October, 13 November 1847.

⁴⁰Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1938), p. 238; *The Watchman of the Valley*, 4 March 1847; *Catholic Telegraph*, cited by *Semi-Weekly Indiana State Sentinel*, 6 June 1846; *The Catholic Telegraph (Cincinnati)*, 28 October 1847.

⁴¹*Western Christian Journal* (Columbus, Ohio), cited by *Christian Contributor* (Utica, New York), 2 June 1847; *Western Christian Journal*, 30 April 1847.

⁴²*Minutes of the Thirteenth Anniversary of the Geauga Baptist Association*, Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio, June 9, 10, 1847. (Painsville, Ohio: Telegraph Office, 1847), pp. 6-8; *Minutes of the Forty-Ninth Anniversary of the Miami Association of Regular Baptists*, September 10, 11, 1847 (Dayton, Ohio: Journal Office, 1847), p. 7; *Minutes of the First Anniversary of the Caesar's Creek Regular Baptist Association, Held at Port William, Clinton County, Ohio* (n.p., Association Printing, 1847), p. 5.

⁴³*Clarion of Freedom*, cited by *The Emancipator* (New York), 1 December 1847; *The Daily Ohio Statesman* (Columbus), 26 November 1847; *Daily Ohio State Journal*, 27 November 1847.

⁴⁴*The Daily True Democrat* (Cleveland), 10 December, 28 July 1847; *Plain Dealer* (Cleveland), 22 July 1847.

⁴⁵*Anti-Slavery Bugle*, 30 July 1847; *The Morning Star*, 16 June, 28 July 1847.

⁴⁶*Dictionary of American Biography*, V, 490-491; John Searles and William McDonald, *The Life of Reverend John S. Inskip* (Boston: McDonald and Gill, 1885), pp. 75-76, 136; *Daily Cincinnati Times*, 13 March 1847; *Dayton Journal and Advertiser*, 30 November, 6 December 1847; *The Daily Ohio Statesman* (Columbus, Ohio), 4 December 1847.

⁴⁷*Ohio Eagle* (Lancaster, Ohio), 2 December 1847; *The Daily Ohio Statesman*, 4 December 1847; *Democratic Standard* (Delaware, Ohio), 9 December 1847.

⁴⁸*The Ashtabula Sentinel*, 3 May 1847; *Daily Ohio State Journal*, 4 December 1847; *National Era*, 18 November 1847; *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), 8 November 1847; *Cincinnati Daily Times*, cited by the *Democratic Banner* (Mount Vernon, Ohio), 9 November 1847; *Cincinnati Morning Herald*, 8 May 1847.

⁴⁹*Western Christian Advocate* (Cincinnati), 22 January 1847; L. Wesley Norton, "The Religious Press and the Compromise of 1850: A Study of the Relationship of the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian Press to the Slavery Controversy, 1846-1851," Diss., University of Illinois (1959), p. 127.

⁵⁰*New York Daily Tribune*, 6 November 1847; *Ohio Eagle*, 11 November 1847; *Hamilton Intelligencer*, 6 January 1847.

⁵¹*Hamilton Intelligencer*, 6, 20 January 1848; *Columbus Journal*, cited by *Dayton Journal and Advertiser*, 18 January 1848; *The Eaton Register*, 20 January 1847.

⁵²William G. W. Lewis, *Biography of Samuel Lewis* (Cincinnati: The Methodist Book Concern, 1857), pp. 370-371; The Methodist Episcopal Church Annual Conferences in Ohio did not consider measures on the Mexican War, but the North Ohio Conference adopted strong measures on slavery, probably as a result of the general sentiment in Ohio that slavery was the cause of the war. See: "Journal of North Ohio Conference, 1840-1846," (MS.: Ohio Wesleyan University), p. 184.

⁵³The *United Presbyterian and Evangelical Guardian*, 1, No. 9 (January 1848), 418, 421, 424; *The Hamilton Telegraph*, 27 January 1848, cited by *Hamilton Intelligencer*, 3 February 1848.

⁵⁴The *United Presbyterian and Evangelical Guardian*, 1, No. 3 (September 1848), 118; *Lutheran Standard* (Columbus), 27 May, 10 June 1846; *Protestant Churchman* (New York), 28 October 1848.

⁵⁵The *Gospel Proclamation*, I, No. 5 (December 1847), 211-216; No. 8 (March 1848), 352; No. 9 (April 1848), 393. Henry K. Shaw, *Buckeye Disciples: A History of the Disciples of Christ in Ohio* (St. Louis: Board of Publication Disciples of Christ Church, 1902), p. 77. Bodo, *The Protestant Clergy*, p. 228 n. Parker Pillsbury, *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles*, (Boston: Cupples, Upham, and Co., 1884), p. 381.

⁵⁶Minutes of the Seventeenth Anniversary of the Rocky River Baptist Association, Medina, Ohio, 21, 22 June 1848 (Cleveland: Smead and Cowles, 1848), p. 7; The Geauga Baptist Association decided to withdraw support from all benevolent societies connected with slaveholders; and the Baptist Church of Lafayette, Ohio, voted not to fellowship slaveholders or those who upheld them. See: *Minutes of the Fourteenth Anniversary of the Geauga Baptist Association*, June 14, 15, 1848. (Painesville, Ohio: Telegraph Office), p. 8; For action of the Lafayette Baptist Church, see: *Western Christian Journal*, 7 April 1848.

⁵⁷Minutes of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Miami Association, Dayton, Ohio, September 8-9, 1848 (Dayton, Ohio: Daily Journal Office, 1848), p. 8.

⁵⁸*The Morning Star*, 19 July, 27 September 1848; The Grand River Quarterly Meeting of the Free Will Baptists, voted to exclude from the Yearly Meeting all churches that received members who opposed removing slavery. See: *The Morning Star*, 2 August 1848.

⁵⁹*The Ohio Observer*, 12 January 1848, as cited in *New York Daily Tribune*, 22 January 1848.

⁶⁰*The Belmont Chronicle*, (St. Clairsville, Ohio), 28 January 1848; Asa Mahan, "Idea of Retribution," *The Oberlin Quarterly*, May 1848, pp. 489-499.

⁶¹William Wilson, *The Great American Question, Democracy vs. Doulocracy: or Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men and Free Speech, Against the Extension of the Slaveholding Interest* (Cincinnati: E. Shepard, 1848), pp. 5, 18-20; *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Ohio of the Nineteenth Century* (Cincinnati: Galaxy Publishing Company, 1876), p. 555.

⁶²*The Ohio Observer*, 10 May, 12 July, 2 August, 13 September 1848; The *Oberlin Evangelist* simply stated that humiliation and sack cloth were more in order than celebration because it had been a damnable deed; the *Religious Telescope* noticed the end of the war with an editorial entitled "Beauty of Peace" in which the editor depicted the return of serenity and solitude. *Oberlin Evangelist*, 22 June 1848. *Religious Telescope*, 6 September 1848, 6 June 1849.

⁶³John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 67-68; Ted C. Hinckly, "American Anti-Catholicism During the Mexican War," *Pacific Historical Review*, 31, No. 2 (May 1962), 136-137; Victor B. Howard, "The 1856 Election in Ohio: Moral Issues in Politics," *Ohio History*, 80, No. 1 (Winter 1971), 24-44. The Free Soil movement that originated during the Mexican War was called forth by the moral revolt against slavery. The origins of the Republican party can best be understood in the context of this movement. The Republican party in Ohio had no foundation in nativism or ethnical politics as set forth by Michael F. Holt,

Forging A Majority: The Formation of the Republican Party in Pittsburgh, 1848-1860 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969) and Ronald P. Formisano, *The Birth of Mass Political Parties: Michigan, 1827-1861* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971). For studies on the moral attack on slavery as the central core of the Republican party, see: Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). Don E. Fehrenbacher, *Prelude to Greatness: Lincoln in the 1850's* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962). Harry V. Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided: An Interpretation of the Issues in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973). Clayton Sumner Ellsworth, "The American Churches and the Mexican War," *American Historical Review*, 45 (January 1940), 322, states that the Old School Presbyterians "found a new vent in this war against Catholic Mexico." An examination of the Old School General Assembly Minutes of the decade before the Mexican War does not reveal any acceleration of anti-Catholic sentiment during the Mexican War.

⁶⁴The Baptists divided in 1845 into Northern and Southern Churches as a result of a dispute concerning slavery and missions. The Kentucky Baptists attended both the Northern and Southern Conventions in 1847 when the Northern Convention met in Ohio. See: Mary Burnham Putnam, *The Baptists and Slavery, 1840-1845* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: George Wahr, 1913). For a study of the Baptists and the Mexican War, see: Victor B. Howard, "The Baptist and Peace Sentiment During the Mexican War," *The Baptist Quarterly Review* (April 1978), 68-84.

⁶⁵Clayton Sumner Ellsworth, "The American Churches and the Mexican War," p. 318.

