come Company A of the Twenty-Eighth Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers. Of the nine other companies in this regiment, two were from Lewisburg. The South Ward Company, commanded by Captain Charles C. Shorkley, became Company D, and the North Ward Company, commanded by Captain Forrest, became Company F. That night Orlando Wellington Spratt, a member of Company A, wrote from Camp Curtin to the Star and Chronicle as follows: “Ours is the third regiment organized for this emergency. . . . Gov. Curtin is to be judge when the emergency is over. . . . The boys are enjoying excellent health and spirits, and are prepared to perform whatever duty is required of them.”

Company A was for some days separated from its regiment. As late as July 3, it was guarding the railroad bridge at Marysville, north of Harrisburg. Presently, however, it set out to join its regiment, which was then at Carlisle. But it appears that it was quickly assigned to special duty, for on July 10 the Star and Chronicle reported that Company A, when “last heard from,” was on duty as provost guard at Shippenburg. While it was there, a considerable number of Confederate prisoners were committed to its care, and on July 11 the second lieutenant of the company, Professor Charles S. James, passed through Harrisburg in charge of more than a hundred wounded prisoners who were being sent to a hospital in Philadelphia. On July 14 the Star

“Star and Chronicle, June 26, 1863.

See muster rolls of these companies, see Bates, op. cit, V, 1239-1241, and Star and Chronicle, June 26 and August 4, 1863. Under the heading of “Good for Union County,” the Harrisburg Pennsylvania Daily Telegraph of July 1, 1863, said: ‘Another large company, numbering 140 or 150, composed principally of the business men of Lewisburg, arrived here last night. Union county at present has three companies in the fortifications opposite the city, commanded by Captains Shorkicy, Jones and Forrest. The latter gentleman is the present Postmaster of Lewisburg. Union county has furnished more men than her quota already, and men are still offering their services.”

Star and Chronicle, June 26, 1863. In this letter Spratt said that the members of this company had taken the following oath: “I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully during the existing emergency for service in this Department, against all their enemies and opposers whomsoever: and that I will observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the Officers appointed over me, according to the rules and regulations for the government of the Army of the U. S.”

Star and Chronicle, July 7, 1863.

Ibid., July 14, 1863.

and Chronicle reported that, except for Captain Jones’s company, the Twenty-Eighth Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, “when last heard from,” was in Waynesburg. Eventually, Company A joined its regiment, perhaps in Hagerstown. Soon thereafter this regiment began moving northward.

On July 21 Captain Shorkley, of Company D, writing from a camp near Green Castle, said that his troops had left Hagerstown that morning, and that, on July 22, they expected to march to Chambersburg, from which place, he presumed, they would go by rail to Harrisburg. He supposed that they would be home in about a week. He was approximately right. Between Monday evening and Thursday evening, July 27-30, the three Lewisburg companies reached home. Their health had been so good that only three men had been left behind, two from Jones’s company and one from Forrest’s. Captain Jones’s company had returned in squads, between Monday evening and Wednesday evening. The other two companies arrived at five o’clock in the afternoon of Thursday, July 30.

On the movements of Company A a letter by William L. Nesbit, written nearly six months later, is interesting; and, in general, it may be true. See the Bucknell Alumni Monthly, VII (April, 1923), 2 and 11. A few weeks earlier Nesbit—annoyed by the “fiction” that he had read in a reminiscences article (Bucknell Alumni Monthly, VII, January, 1923, pp. 4 and 11) about Company A by R. A. Townsend, who had been a sergeant in that company, had written a very perceptive letter, saying that, although Company A had not, as Townsend averred, “saved the Capital of Pennsylvania,” it had performed its duty well, apart from its regiment. As to its having “saved Harrisburg,” he remarked scornfully but truthfully: “Neither Company A nor the 28th regiment nor all the forces that were assembled at Harrisburg and on the heights on the west side of the river, saved Harrisburg from capture. . . . The rapid advance of Meade’s army northward, to offer battle, compelled General Lee to recall Ewell from York and Carlisle before he had time to capture Harrisburg. The raw troops assembled at Harrisburg could not have held their ground for one hour against the 25,000 veterans of Ewell’s corps, well supplied with artillery. . . .” Bucknell Alumni Monthly, VII (March, 1923), 2. This statement the reader may wish to compare with the report of General R. E. Rodes, C.S.A., on the Gettysburg campaign. In this report General Rodes says, inter alia: “On our arrival at Carlisle [June 27], Jenkins’ cavalry advanced toward Harrisburg, and had on the 29th made a thorough reconnaissance of the defenses of the place, with a view to our advance upon it, a step which every man in the division contemplated with eagerness, and which was to have been executed on the 30th: but on the 30th, having received orders to move toward the balance of the army, then supposed to be at or near Cashtown, we set out for that place.” The War of the Rebellion, Series I, XXVII. Pt. 2, pp. 551-552. Regrettably, we have to conclude that the Confederates were not “frightened away” from Harrisburg by the emergency troops from Lewisburg.

“Charles C. Shorkley to Elisha Shorkley, July 21, 1863. This letter is owned by Mrs. Ruth Bliss, Carpinteria, Calif.
and found, “in addition to ‘Commencement’ and the Circus people, a large crowd to welcome them home.”

These companies which, as the *Star and Chronicle* affirmed in its issue of August 4, 1863, rushed to the rescue of our State from a Rebel foe, . . . performed their part well; and were released, as the Governor had assured them and others they would be, when that danger was over. Our Companies were sworn in, subsisted, armed, and clothed, by the U. S.; and while standing guard, on the weary march, picket duty, and in line of battle—under fire in Carlisle—have more than earned their money. They were gone six weeks and one day, and in that time endured more hardships and labors than the majority of soldiers meet on the average. They marched as far as Hagerstown; and sometimes the Commissary failed to furnish them rations, which caused invasions of purses for private supplies, and brought down most of the men to good fighting weight . . . They have had a safe, useful, pleasant, honorable trip, which they will remember with almost unalloyed pleasure till their latest day.

Meanwhile in Lewisburg, as the last week of July drew nearer, there was considerable speculation about the holding of Commencement for the graduates of the College. Commencement exercises were scheduled to begin on Sunday night, July 26, with a sermon before the Society for Inquiry, and to end on Thursday, July 30, with the graduation of the Class of 1863. Sometime between July 16 and July 23, President Loomis wrote to the editor of the Philadelphia *Christian Chronicle* as follows:

> Please make the statement in your next paper [July 23] that a part of the Commencement exercises at Lewisburg, from the 26th to the 30th inst., will necessarily be omitted. The Students are all in the army, and there is no present prospect of an immediate discharge. The degrees will however be conferred upon the graduating class. The exercises of the Female Institute will take place, and such other exercises as are not immediately dependent upon the presence of the college classes.

A story incorporating this undated note was set in type for the issue of July 23, but, just as the paper was going to press, the editor received from Dr. Loomis a telegram saying that the boys would “be allowed to come home,” and that Commencement would be held as usual. Accordingly, the above-mentioned story, although printed, was countermanded by a paragraph conveying the substance of Loomis’s telegram and expressing the hope that “a large and enthusiastic gathering [would] greet the Faculty and Students of our noble University.”

How early it was known in Lewisburg that the graduating class would be home for Commencement, we cannot tell precisely. In its issue for July 18, the Harrisburg *Telegraph* affirmed that preparations were “being actively made to muster out of the service all the three months’ and emergency troops now in the field.” This statement was reprinted in the *Star and Chronicle* of July 21, and was accompanied by this editorial remark: “We may then expect the Lewisburg Companies home within a week.”

A day or two thereafter President Loomis knew that the seniors would be home for graduation, but this news was not quickly disseminated in Lewisburg. In its issue of July 24 the *Star and Chronicle* remarked vaguely that, whereas some college commencements in southern Pennsylvania had been “marred by the late invasions,” it was “expected that our College Company” would return soon, and that “respectable classes” would be graduated “(next week from the University at Lewisburg.” As late as July 25, John B. Linn, a lawyer of Lewisburg, wrote to his brother, Captain J. Merrill Linn, saying: “I don’t know exactly what the College will do for a Commencement as the Students company cannot possibly be back.” But events were moving faster than he knew, for three days later, in another letter to his brother, he could say: “Those of the graduating class of the College company got home . . . last night [July 27].” But thus far, he remarked, the Commencement had been a “fizzle,” for “no orators” had shown up.

The members of the graduating class were, as we have seen, the first ones of the University Guards to get home. The other
students in this company came home, at different times, in groups, one group arriving during the evening of July 29, while the anniversary of the Literary Societies was being observed. Their arrival was described by an observer in these words:

During the delivery of the oration, ten or twelve of the students, who had by mistake been left behind at Sunbury, in the afternoon, having footed the intervening distance (nine miles,) entered the Hall with a soldierly tread, and of course the orator was obliged to give way to the applause which greeted their coming.61

Apparently pressure of some sort had been exerted, perhaps by Colonel Eli Slifer, a Curator of the University and the Secretary of the Commonwealth, to get the graduating class home in time for Commencement. We presume that special consideration had been given to these students, because President Loomis, in his annual report to the Trustees, on July 27, after remarking that all collegiate exercises had been suspended when the students left, affirmed that it was “only by very great efforts that they . . . [were] temporarily brought back to fill their places during this anniversary.” He hoped, however, that their services would soon be dispensed with.62

Even so, not every member of the Class of 1863 was present to receive a diploma on July 30. George Bowman, who was ill, was left in a hospital in Harrisburg, and another student, Harrison B. Garner, a sophomore, remained with him.63 More intriguing, if less important, is the fact that, for this class, patriotism had paid a big dividend. Not only was the entire class excused from the customary senior examination, but one of them, Harry Flavel Grier, was, for some unspecified reason, excused from giving his Commencement oration. As to the others, a sympathetic reporter wrote that, because of “the lateness of the arrival of the class from the army, some had not their orations perfect, but such were excused by every hearer.”64 Somewhat startling, however, is the fact that one of the persons graduated in the class of 1863, Joseph Phillips Tustin, had not been in the army, and, according to the Catalogue of the University for 1862-63, was not enrolled in the University. Consequently, his appearance at Commencement to receive his diploma is to us a minor mystery, but this mystery need not now detain us.65

Those who attended this Commencement were less numerous than usual,” but, in the opinion of more than one interested observer, there was ample compensation for a relatively small attendance. As one of them wrote: “If the attendance this year has been comparatively small, and the students have been broken from their accustomed amount of preparation, yet this Commencement will ever be regarded as one of the very noblest in the history of the Institution on account of the cause of these things.”66

Because of numerous questionable statements that have been made about the so-called “Students’ Company” of 1863, as well as the effects upon the University of the war-time crisis of that year, it seems appropriate for us not only to inquire into the composition of this company, but also to ascertain what effect its organization had upon the University. At its full strength, according to a muster roll belonging to Captain Thomas R. Jones, this company consisted of seventy-seven men—three commissioned officers, thirteen non-commissioned officers, two musicians, and fifty-nine privates.67 Of these, thirty-six (according to the Catalogue of the University for 1862-63) were then students in the University, and twelve others either had been, or presently would become, students therein. Consequently, the term “Students’ Company,” when used to designate this company, is misleading, for fewer than half of its members were then in the University, and twenty-seven of its members had never been, and would never become, students in the University. There was, however, some justification for calling it the University Guards. a name applied,

61 Correspondence, by a “Friend,” in the Philadelphia Christian Chronicle, August 6, 1863.
62 Minutes of the Trustees, July 28, 1863.
63 Star and Chronicle, August 4, 1863.
64 Ibid.
65 See the story on the Commencement exercises, ibid.
66 Philadelphia Christian Chronicle, August 6, 1863.
67 The muster roll of Company A is printed in O. W. Spratt, ed., Historical Sketch of the University at Lewisburg, and Report of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Commencement, Lewisburg, Pa., June 23-28, 1876. Published by the Society of Alumni (Philadelphia, 1877), 25. Unhappily, the students in this company are not distinguished from the other members. Accordingly, since Company A is here called “The Students’ Company,” the impression given by this muster roll is that that company was exclusively a company of students.
as we have seen, to a student organization as early as May, 1861.
Moreover, from the standpoint of leadership, no less than from
the standpoint of numbers, it was predominantly of the Uni-
versity. Its captain, Thomas Rockafellow Jones, and its first
lieutenant, David Montgomery Nesbit, were of the Class of 1862.
Its second lieutenant, a veteran of the twelve-day campaign of
1862, was Professor Charles S. James. Four of its five sergeants,
five of its eight corporals, and both of its musicians were then
students in the University. Finally, twenty-five of its privates
were then students in the University, and twelve others (one of
whom was the principal of the Academy) either had been, or soon
would be, students therein. Thus we perceive that nearly two-
thirds of this company were either of the University or in the
way of becoming so.

We are now brought to this crucial question: in how many of
its branches was the work of the University disrupted, or
abandoned, because of the enrollment of its students as emergency
troops in 1863? Nearly all the answers that have been given to
this question—answers generally given without fear, without
imagination, and without much investigation—are disturbingly
erroneous. Let us look at the record. According to the Catalogue
of the University for 1862-63, there were, during that academic
year, forty-three enrolled in both the College and the Theological
Department and forty in the Academy. Of the first-named group,
three of forty students enlisted in the companies of emergency forces (thirty-
two in Company A and one in Company D). Of the forty in the
Academy, only four enlisted (two of them as musicians). By
classes the enlistment was as follows: in the Theological Depar-
tment, all four in the second year and two of the four in the first
year; in the College, all ten seniors, six of the nine juniors, three
of the five sophomores, and eight of the eleven freshmen. Thus
in the Theological Department and in the College there were ten
who did not enlist. One of these, a junior in the College, was a
Burmese student named Shaw Loo. In the Academy, only one
in the senior class and three in the junior class enlisted.

From the foregoing figures the situation seems so clear that
one might wonder that anyone could misinterpret it. Yet, to give
but one of many erroneous or misleading statements about this
matter, we read in a contemporaneous document—the Report of
the Publication Committee of the Board of Curators for the year
ending August 1, 1863—an assertion implying that, since (as
the Report says) a “large portion of the students, in the Col-
legiate, Theological, and Academic departments, . . . had enlisted
in the military service of the United States during the recent in-
avasion of Pennsylvania,”68 these three branches of the University
had been closed. Actually, the Theological Department and the
College were closed. But the work of the Academy could not con-
cievably have been broken up by the enlistment of its principal
and four of its forty students. The assistant principal, who did
not enlist, and the thirty-six students who stayed behind could
have carried on; and there is no reason to think that the work
of the Academy was not carried on. We may presume that Presi-
dent Loomis explained this matter fully and accurately when,
in his report to the Trustees on July 27, 1863, he said that from
the time of the enlistment of the students “all college exercises”
had been suspended.69 Because he said nothing about the sus-
pension of work in the Academy, we may presume that there
was no suspension of such work. He no doubt had in mind both
the Theological Department and the College when he said “all
college exercises,” for both the faculties and the programs of these
two branches of the University overlapped. Accordingly, we con-
clude that the Theological Department and the College were
temporarily closed because of Lee’s invasion of Pennsylvania
in 1863, but that neither the Academy nor the Female Institute
was then closed, although the work of both may have been
adversely affected because some students sought safety in their
own homes.69

Precisely one year after the exciting Commencement of 1863,
a Confederate force commanded by General Jubal A. Early pushed

"Star and Chronicle, August 28, 1863.
Minutes of the Trustees, July 28, 1863.
68 We know that the work of the Female Institute was somewhat dis-
turbed, because, by the end of June, 1863, twenty-five of its fifty-nine stu-
dents had gone home "on account of the war excitement." By July 10 the
faculty of the Institute had quit making weekly reports because of "the
rapid decrease of the school consequent upon the war excitement and the
irregularity of classes." University at Lewisburg, Minutes of the Teachers’
Meetings of the Female Institute, June 30 and July 10, 1863. There is no
indication, however, that the work of the Institute was discontinued. It is
conceivable, also, that some of the students in the Academy went home
"on account of the war excitement," although we have no record of their
doing so.
into Pennsylvania, burned the town of Chambersburg, and thus once again spread alarm through the Susquehanna Valley. Pennsylvania editors, in denouncing this act, mingled their humiliation with their fears. "Every Pennsylvanian," declared the editors of the Star and Chronicle (August 5, 1864), "feels the full measure of the humiliation we have experienced." But for the time being the sense of humiliation was perhaps overshadowed by the sense of fear. "There seems to be a general impression," these editors continued, "that a large Rebel force is on or near our southern line, determined upon one more desperate effort to reach our Capital, our coal region, and by horrid destruction seek to withdraw Grant from Richmond. Pennsylvanians have thus before them the probability of other Chambersburgs."

In order that there might not be "other Chambersburgs," Governor Curtin had already taken spirited action. As early as August 1 he had called the General Assembly to meet in extraordinary session on August 9, and on August 5, affirming that the advance of the Confederate army had crossed the Potomac, he called for thirty thousand volunteers to defend the state during the emergency;²⁶ and a day earlier General Couch, in a terse announcement, had warned Pennsylvanians that a raid by the enemy into Pennsylvania was "not improbable at any time during the summer and early fall."²⁷

By the efforts now being made to protect Pennsylvania the University was only slightly affected. Because it was not then in session, and perhaps also because the threat was soon dispelled, no effort was made, as in 1863, to enlist as a group the students in the University. Nevertheless, on the muster roll of an independent company called into being by this emergency—Captain Bruce Lambert’s Cavalry Company—we find the names of five veterans of the University Guards of 1863, as well as the names of four other young men whose names also appear in one or more issues of the Catalogue of the University between 1864 and 1868.²⁸ Also, we find that a former student of the University, a member of the Class of 1857, enlisted in Lambert’s company.²⁹ The enlistment of these men, however, did not disrupt the work of the University, although among the students who did enlist were four of the eight members of the senior class. Of the other five, one was a junior, one was a sophomore, two were freshmen, and one was a senior in the Academy. After the mustering out of this company on November 25, 1864, most of these "men of the University" returned to their studies. Four of them were graduated in 1865, one was graduated in 1866, and two were graduated in 1868.³⁰ The other two did not complete their courses in the University at Lewisburg.

Having learned what the University did for the military effort of the North during the Civil War, we shall now try to find out what that war did to the University between 1861 and 1865. Some of its effects upon the University were, as we shall see, highly significant.

Perhaps the most obvious consequence of student participation in the war was the bringing to our campus of the Kappa Chapter of the Sigma Chi fraternity, the second such organization to arise in the University. Sigma Chi had been preceded on our campus by Phi Kappa Psi, the Pennsylvania Gamma Chapter of which had been established here in 1855. This chapter, because it tried to monopolize offices and honors, produced such much resentment that, in 1861, seven students, one of whom was Theodore A. K. Gessler, formed a secret society, called Iota, to oppose it. While the University Guards were in camp near Harrisburg, Gessler met Niles Shearer, a member of the Omicron Chapter of Sigma Chi in Dickinson College, and was deeply impressed by the badge that Shearer was wearing and, no doubt, by what Shearer told him about Sigma Chi. This chance contact led to significant action. At a meeting in camp between members of the Omicron Chapter and members of the Iota Society, it was decided that sixteen members of Iota should petition for a chapter of Sigma Chi. They did so, a charter was granted to them on March 1,
1864, and several days later the new chapter was installed in Lewisburg with a membership of thirty.78

This new acquisition was not a gift of pure gold to the University, for now the opposition to Phi Kappa Psi had become rivalry withPhi Kappa Psi. So disturbing was this rivalry that President Loomis, on April 10, 1866, sought the advice of the Trustees as to the proper way to deal with it. The Trustees did not sidestep the issue. They forthwith empowered the faculty to exact of each applicant for admission to the University a twofold pledge: first, to renounce any connection that he might have with any secret society associated with the University, and, secondly, to promise not to hold membership in any such society “during his academic life.”79 The enactment, and attempted enforcement, of rules made pursuant to this grant of authority would make plenty of trouble for President Loomis in subsequent years.

The aggravation of its problem of fraternities was, however, one of the lesser evils that the Civil War brought to the University. During those years the Trustees were bedeviled by problems that were as serious as they were provoking. Some of them, no doubt, sprang from emotional disturbances; others were the consequence of an adverse pecuniary situation. Some of these problems can be recognized more easily than they can be explained. It is not easy, for instance, to determine how much “the excitement of the times” (to use a favored but silly euphemism of those years) contributed to the discontent manifested by students in the Academy, to the neglect of duty by the principal of the Academy, to the desire of some of the collegiate students in 1862 to transfer to other institutions, or to the resignation of William Bucknell from the Board of Trustees in March, 1863. All this discontent might have arisen if there had been no war. We do not know precisely what caused it. Accordingly, we turn to problems of another sort—problems rooted in a pecuniary situation that had become troublesome before the outbreak of the war and that was aggravated by the war. As far back as August, 1860, the most optimistic statement that could be made about the pecuniary condition of the University was that “the income of the current year ... [had] about met the expenses.”77 The situation did not improve during the next year. On July 30, 1861, President Loomis, in his annual report to the Trustees, said that the Academy and the Female Institute were barely paying their way, but that the College was not paying its way, and, moreover, could not reduce its expenditures. Nor did President Loomis look forward to improvement. “Loss of students,” he said, “may result from the great deflection of attention in another direction, as well as from the diminished means on the part of parents to support their sons at an Institution of learning.” Indeed, he concluded, “the pecuniary condition of the University, if not threatening, is at least embarrassing.”78

President Loomis’s understatements are as delightful to us as they were misleading to the unwary in his time. The truth of the matter is that the University, besides spending more than it was earning, was then plagued by a debt of $10,800 for which no provision had been made. Moreover, so hard pressed were the Trustees that, at their meeting in July, 1861, they approved the payment from the endowment fund of $1,200 owed to the chairman of the Board. Before adjourning, however, they revealed their incorrigible optimism by instructing their General Agent to solicit funds toward the endowment of a professorship of English Literature in connection with his raising of money to liquidate the debts of the University.79

A year later it was quite obvious that the fat was slipping into the fire. On July 29, 1862, the Treasurer reported that the average annual operating loss for the three immediately preceding years had been $1,666.67, and that for the coming year a loss of $2,000 was anticipated. The debt of the University then stood at $16,377.60, all of which was bearing interest. Of this debt the sum of $6,240.43 was owed to the teachers in the University.80 The

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76 Bucknell University, L’Agenda, Published by the Junior Class ... for the Year 1888, p. 40; Joseph Cookman Nate, The History of the Sigma Chi Fraternity, 1855-1925 (Published by the Fraternity [1927?]), 11, 189-203. Of the sixteen charter members, the following had served in the University Guards in 1863: John W. Custis, Theodore A. K. Gessler, Harrison B. Garner, John S. Hutton, John B. Hutton, John Ritner, Thomas M. Shanafelt, and Robert A. Townsend.

77 Minutes of the Trustees, April 10, 1866.

78 Ibid., July 29, 1862.
enrollment had fallen from a total of 211 in 1860-61 to a total of 185 in 1861-62. There had been a loss of students in each branch of the University.\footnote{Memorials of Bucknell University, 1846-1896 (Published by the University, Lewisburg, Pa., 1896), 25.}

As if floating debts and dwindling enrollment were not enough to bedevil them, the Trustees were now confronted by internal discontent and internal discord, much of which could not be allayed without the expenditure of money. The discontent affected the students, some members of the Faculty, the Board of Curators, and the Alumni Association. The students who talked of transferring to other institutions insisted that their principal grievance was their lack of instruction in elocution. In an effort to allay this discontent, the Board approved for the coming year the employment of an instructor in elocution. Moreover, so great was the pressure from the Board of Curators and from the Alumni Association to fill adequately the chair of Belles Lettres that the Trustees, perhaps almost in desperation, approved the appointment from their membership of a committee to nominate a person for this position. The major discord, in this year, centered in the Female Institute, the principal of which and the pastor of the Lewisburg Baptist Church were having a “personal difficulty” that was “prejudicial in its influence to the religious interests of the school.” The long-suffering Board asked one of its members, the Rev. A. K. Bell, to endeavor to settle this difficulty. Incidentally, his efforts in this affair availed little, and in 1863 the Principal, Miss Amanda Taylor, resigned her position. Before adjourning, the Board approved the appointment of a committee of its own members to confer with the General Agent “in regard to raising funds for the University.”\footnote{Minutes of the Trustees, July 29-30, 1862, passim.}

During the next year, 1862-63, the enrollment in the University fell to a total of 142, the lowest that would be reached during the war.\footnote{Memorials of Bucknell University, 1846-1896, p. 25.} The problems confronting the Trustees were now becoming even more difficult. At a special meeting on March 31, 1863, after ordering that their chairman be paid from the endowment fund an additional sum of $3,045.54, the Trustees voted, before adjourning, that their chairman should appoint a committee “to devise and report a Plan to the next meeting of the Board of an Agency for the procurement of funds for the endowment of the University.” The next meeting was held on May 5, 1863, at which time the General Agent, after being “added” to the foregoing committee, presented the report of this committee. He began on a cheerful note, saying that the present pecuniary condition of the University, although “not very alarming,” was “far from satisfactory.” He then descended from the clouds and began to enumerate facts, some of which were as follows: “Our expenses are in excess of our income, and consequently the condition of our indebtedness is daily increasing. We see no plan for retrenchment. We cannot reduce salaries. . . . We cannot lessen the number of our professors and teachers, for they are already too few. We should have at least two additional professors, and unless these can be furnished your committee think it vain to expect an increase of patronage.” Could, he asked, the present endowment fund of a little more than $58,000, which was earning six percent, be increased to $100,000? The committee thought that it could, and it was now offering, perhaps with some misgivings, a plan to raise the necessary sum by the sale of scholarships providing for the holders thereof free tuition. Some of these scholarships would be permanent and others temporary. Even though the number of the temporary scholarships was to be limited, the Board was unwilling to accept this proposal without mature reflection upon it.\footnote{The Trustees had reason to be wary of such a plan. They knew about the unfortunate experience of Jefferson College in selling four-year scholarships for $25 each, and they may have apprehended, what numerous colleges had learned by bitter experience during the preceding twenty-five years, that the sale of “permanent” scholarships could be damaging. See, on this subject, Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University: A History (New York, 1962), 190-192.} Accordingly, it referred the matter to a committee and instructed it to report at the next meeting of the Board, which would be held in July, 1863.

The University was now well along in the time of its troubles; within a year it would be deep in the harsh winter of its war-time discontent. War-time inflation was doing its work well. Prices had risen, but for most of those who served the University salaries and wages had not risen. Something had to be done—and done quickly. Accordingly, at the stated meeting in July, 1863, the Board accepted the plan proposed by the above-men-
tioned committee, with these limitations: The sum to be raised by the sale of scholarships would be $45,000. The number of temporary scholarships would be limited to one hundred for those running for eight years, and to fifty for those running for twenty-four years. The perpetual scholarships would not be limited in number. According to this plan, a guarantee of free tuition for one person for eight years would cost $100; a guarantee of free tuition for one person for twenty-four years would cost $250; and a guarantee of free tuition for one person in perpetuity would cost $500. As subsequently explained to the public by a committee of the Board of Curators, these scholarships would be available in any department of the University, and they would be transferable. A perpetual scholarship would be available when the sum of $500 was paid, but no temporary scholarship would be available until the whole sum of $45,000 had been collected.86

A spirited campaign to sell scholarships was set on foot, and, at a special meeting on September 22, 1863, the Board divided the territory to be canvassed—Pennsylvania and New Jersey—into four districts, in each of which agents were to be set to work soliciting subscriptions and contributions. By the time of the meeting of the Board on April 5, 1864, scholarships amounting to $17,000 had been sold. Yet little money had come into the treasury, for most of the sales represented subscriptions rather than cash. The prospect was not bright. Although there had been a substantial increase in the number of students enrolled—noticeably so in the Academy and in the Female Institute—only the Academy during the preceding term had paid its current expenses. Moreover, the old debts reported at this meeting amounted to $15,860.93, nearly a third of which represented unpaid salaries of members of the faculty. Yet no additional measure to relieve the pecuniary distress of the University was adopted. The Board continued and strengthened the committee appointed informally in February 4, 1864, to obtain, if possible, from the legislature of Pennsylvania, a share of the 780,000 acres of land granted to Pennsylvania pursuant to the Morrill Act of 1862. The Board of Curators, in its annual public report on the University for 1863-64, affirmed that the University at Lewisburg was “entitled to

a share” of this grant “for the promotion of the more practical sciences,” and urged the patrons and the friends of the University to use their influence with the “next-chosen” members of the legislature to achieve this end.88 Happily, as the sequel would show, Pennsylvania did not scatter this significant grant among its existing institutions.

When it reassembled on July 26, the Board discovered that, although scholarships to the amount of $21,900 had been disposed of, the pecuniary condition of the University had not improved. The reasons therefor were as obvious as they were real. The increase in the number of students had required the employment of additional teachers in the Institute, and indispensable repairs of buildings had taken money that was much needed for other things. Some members of the faculty were now petitioning the Trustees for higher salaries, and, to add to the embarrassment of the Trustees, the Presbyterian and the Methodist ministers of Lewisburg appeared before them and presented “an appeal from the pastors and churches of Lewisburg to raise the salaries of the Professors.” Thus pressed, the Trustees made a few increases in the lower salaries, and they raised the pay of each janitor $2.50 a month. More significantly, six of the Trustees advanced a loan of $5,000 “to pay the pressing needs of the Faculty and teachers.” Furthermore, “in view of the greatly increased expenses of living,” the Board voted that a donation of $100 to each member of the Faculty and to the General Agent should be provided by the Trustees from their private means. These measures, of course, were palliatives. As a remedy for the existing distress, the Board was still committing itself firmly to the plan of selling scholarships. Accordingly, it not only provided for an additional agent to solicit money, but invited the president and the professors “to engage in scholarship agency during vacation, the Board paying the necessary travelling expenses.”

Such being the case, we are taken aback to learn that, when the Board held its next meeting, on April 4, 1865, President Loomis reported that he had obtained $79,050 on the $100,000 fund. Since he said nothing about scholarships, we are aware that something had happened that was well known to the Trustees


“Annual Report of the Committee on Publication of the Board of Curators, Star and Chronicle, August 30, 1864.
but had not been entered in their official record. What had happened? The answer to this question we find in an address that President Loomis made to the students of the University at a meeting held on June 9, 1865, to celebrate the completion of the endowment fund. Briefly, what he told them was that, because the “better class of business men” had seriously doubted the expediency of the plan to sell scholarships, this plan, during the preceding fall, had been abandoned, “or at least put in abeyance till a further endowment could be obtained.” Instead of selling scholarships to obtain $45,000, it was now decided to enter upon a campaign to increase, by solicitation for money, the endowment of the University by $100,000.87

Since January 1, 1865, President Loomis had given most of his time to soliciting money for the new endowment fund, and his report of his success, made on April 4, impressed the Trustees so favorably that they not only empowered him to continue, but released him from the duties of the presidency during the next term and instructed him, after the needed $20,000 had been subscribed, to “proceed with the collection of the $100,000.”88

The remaining part of the campaign was speedily and successfully concluded, thanks in part to generous contributions from the people of Lewisburg and to equally generous subscriptions made by students in the University. On July 25, 1865, President Loomis could report to the Trustees that, since their meeting in April, “when there was great doubt whether the endowment could be raised, the requisite sum . . . [had] been subscribed.” Moreover, he continued, “a large proportion of the subscription has been either paid in money or has been put into the form of interest-bearing obligations.”89

This was a time of triumph for President Loomis. The Civil War was now ended, and the University was about to rid itself of the trials and tribulations that that war had imposed upon it. Both the nation and the University, President Loomis could now believe, would have “a new birth of freedom.” His conception of the new era was that of a time of affluence such as the University had never before known. Now the old debts could be paid, and henceforth no new debts need be incurred. Now the salaries of those who had served the University well could be increased. Now the chair of Belles Lettres could be adequately filled, a new professorship of Modern Languages could be established, and the Department of Theology could be fully manned. All these things he recommended to the Trustees. Moreover, in this new era that was dawning, the University, he believed, should expect, “in a larger sense than heretofore,” to become the central point of Baptist denominational interest in Pennsylvania. It should not only provide the Baptist churches of Pennsylvania with educated ministers, teachers, and writers, but it should also do its part to provide professional leadership for the state and to help elevate the public mind thereof pursuant to the views of those of the Baptist persuasion. “If,” he admonished the Trustees, “you have men here who can do this work, it is well. If you have not, then there should be no hesitation in removing them and filling their places with men who can. The best talent should be found and should be used here.”90

What may have been his purpose in thus challenging the Trustees, we do not know. Perhaps he was only asking for a vote of confidence. Except perhaps by implication, that he did not receive. The Trustees showed no disposition to remove any of the professors or to disregard any of President Loomis’s recommendations, but they gave the administration no formal vote of Confidence. They did, however, proffer “their heartfelt thanks to the President of the University for his self-sacrificing and persevering labor” in making successful the latest effort to endow the University.91 Perhaps they thought that that was

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87 Justin R. Loomis, An Address Delivered on June 9, 1865, in Commencement Hall, of the University at Lewisburg, Pa., Before the Students of the Several Departments, on the Occasion of Their Celebration of the Completion of the Endowment Fund (Lewisburg, Pa., 1865), 12. The Trustees did not discontinue their efforts to sell certificates of scholarships, for in July, 1865, they “Resolved, That the General Agent in connection with the Committee on Scholarships be instructed to continue the sale of scholarships until the original limits be reached—that all monies arising therefrom be added to the Endowment—and those having paid and hereafter paying being entitled to use their certificates forthwith.” Minutes of the Trustees, July 25, 1865.

88 Minutes of the Trustees, April 4, 1865. In his address before the students on June 9, 1865, President Loomis said, apropos of the decision to raise $100,000 for endowment: “The work was begun in January last, and was prosecuted with more of prayer than faith.” Loomis, op. cit., 12. While Loomis was engaged in this work, Professor Bliss, once again, served as acting president of the University.

89 Minutes of the Trustees. July 25, 1865.

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.
enough to start the University into a new era equipped, as President Loomis had somewhat naively told the students on June 9, 1865, with an endowment that would, if properly administered, preclude the fear of pecuniary embarrassment for the University in the years that lay ahead. President Loomis would live to experience plenty of difficulty because of the subsequent pecuniary embarrassment of the University; but that is a story for another time.

*Loomis, *op. cit., 13.*