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The Second Lane Debate: Voices from the Wilderness Surge Across the Nation

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The Second Lane Debate: Voices from the Wilderness surge across the nation

by

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A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Program of Study Committee

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Chapter One: Introduction: A Surprising Storm

At Thomson McConnell Cadillac in Cincinnati, Ohio, car shoppers can see a plaque commemorating a powerful yet little-known event in the development of American abolition. The plaque serves as a memorial to the Lane Seminary Debates¹, which took place for eighteen days on that site in February and March of 1834. Demonstrating the power of the event, the plaque reads “The Lane Seminary debates marked the shift in American antislavery efforts from colonization to abolition, and the ‘Lane Rebels’ became ministers, abolitionists and social reformers across the country.”²

While the First Lane Debates took place over an eighteen day period among the students behind closed doors at their quiet campus in Cincinnati, the Second Lane Debates took place over eighteen months on a national scale due to the growing availability of newspapers in American culture. This proliferation of print media on an ever-growing scale provided a previously unknown medium for a debate over a topic such as slavery.³ In the case of the print media debate which I term the Second Lane Debates, the explosive growth of print media served two crucial ends. It provided the students with a pulpit they used to proclaim their views, and it provided a case study that threw gasoline on the growing fire of the abolition debate. For the abolitionist press, the Lane students provided a real-life example of Southern slaveowners converting to immediate emancipation through moral suasion. For non-abolitionists, this also put the debate in more concrete terms. No longer were the two sides discussing immediatism through moral suasion as a possibility. With the conversion of the Southern Lane students, this

¹ From this point, I will refer to this event as the First Lane Debates.

² Randy McNutt, “Lane Seminary Propelled Anti-Slavery Movement,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, September 28, 2003, Bicentennial Notebook.

³ Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4-7. Howe presented a concise and cogent discussion of the explosion of print media during the Communications Revolution.

conversion was a reality, providing substance to abolitionist claims as well as colonizationist concerns. For this reason, the Second Lane Debates intensified the national debate over slavery by taking a real-life example of abolitionist conversion to a national audience.

The Lane Seminary entered into its fourth scholastic year in the fall of 1833 with nearly 100 students. Among these students were several former temperance activists, slaveholders and sons of slaveholders from each slave state and one slave territory, as well as one student who himself had been a slave since childhood. After some difficulties in establishing the institution, the school had attracted a strong faculty featuring Dr. Calvin Stowe and the school's President, Lyman Beecher. With the school's financial backing growing more secure, and the library growing into a large one, the school seemed fully prepared to begin the academic year on solid ground. No one at the Lane Seminary truly realized how noteworthy the academic year would prove to be.

In their spare time, the students took the initiative to discuss several of the important issues of the day, with the idea that theology students should evaluate the issues of the day through the lens of their developing theology, applying their learning to their understanding of the world around them. Understandably, given the time period and the diverse backgrounds of the student body, the subject of slavery inevitably became a topic for these discussions. Ultimately, the issue of slavery became so prevalent in the students' discussions that they made a request of the faculty to hold special meetings in order to discuss it. The faculty recommended that the students withhold from these meetings, but would not forbid them.⁴

In the First Lane Debates, the students held eighteen days of meetings to discuss the issue of slavery and the proper Christian response to the issue. The students divided the meetings into

⁴ (Boston, MA) *Liberator*, June 14, 1834, hereafter referred to as *Liberator*.

two nine-day sessions. The first session discussed the question “Ought the people of the slaveholding States to abolish Slavery immediately?” while the second session asked “Are the doctrines, tendencies, and measures of the American Colonization Society, and the influence of its principal supporters, such as render it worthy of the patronage of the Christian public?”⁵

In answering the first question, the students examined their theology, life experiences, and the documents of the American Colonization Society. The students discussed this subject among themselves without bringing in outside lecturers to influence them. Even more importantly, most of the speakers were Southern students. They either owned slaves themselves or were the sons of slaveholders and had lived a life which slavery itself helped to provide. Those students shared their experiences of slavery, evaluating it theologically, and to a man, condemned the practice. Immediatists of this time believed in a method they referred to as moral suasion. Moral suasion involved a calm, reasonable presentation of slavery from an experiential, logical, and Biblical basis. Proponents of moral suasion argued that this would be enough to convince a slaveowner to renounce the system and free their slaves. Even prior to their conversion, the Lane students adopted this method, providing a picture of moral suasion that seems stunning to a jaded, modern eye. Each of the southerners made independent decisions for immediate abolition. As a result, the students ruled colonization an unacceptable solution to the slavery problem. They created the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society⁶, modeled after the newly-formed American Anti-Slavery Society. They decided at the same time to join that national society.⁷

⁵ *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

⁶ Hereafter referred to as LSASS.

⁷ *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

At the same time, the students went to work among the African-American population of Cincinnati, setting up schools to teach reading to the free blacks of the city and establishing Sunday schools for theological education. Additionally, the young men of the seminary spent social time with those free blacks. At this point, controversy arose in Cincinnati. Citizens complained that the students were not only working with the free blacks, but one spent the night in a “Negro” home. On another occasion, they complained that female students come to the seminary to visit the men on a social call.⁸

As this controversy developed, especially over the summer, the school found itself in a difficult position. The students were clearly committed to their course and attracting much national attention. The Lane Seminary story quickly became a fixture in media outlets around the country, especially those dedicated to either the abolition or colonizationist causes. Also, the Lane students were seemingly everywhere, travelling around the country to share their new convictions, with two students featured at the American Anti-Slavery Meeting of May 1834.⁹ The faculty was away from campus for the summer raising funds for the seminary. The trustees found themselves faced with this controversy, and chose to take action through a special meeting of their Executive Committee on August 29, 1834.¹⁰

This Executive Committee put forth two rules and two orders which the trustees adopted. Responding to the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society, the trustees declared that students were no longer authorized to create associations without explicit faculty approval, and further specified that students could only hold religious meetings among themselves, without exception. Referring specifically to the LSASS, the trustees ordered the students to disband it immediately.

⁸ Ibid; *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

⁹ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

¹⁰ *Liberator*, November 1, 1834; *Liberator*, November 8, 1834; (New York, NY) *New York Evangelist*, November 8, 1834, hereafter referred to as *New York Evangelist*; *New York Evangelist*, November 15, 1834.

The Executive Committee reserved for themselves the authority to dismiss any student.¹¹ This decision caused an uproar among the students, the faculty and in the nation's press. It sparked a media debate about scholastic governance and the proper placement and use of authority. This decision led to a furious public debate about the proper place and extent of authority within a school, whether it belonged with faculty alone, or faculty with some student voice, the board, or some combination of the board and the faculty. Eventually, the authority to expel returned to the hands of the faculty, largely as a result of a vigorous public and private defense of the school by Professor Calvin Stowe, who simultaneously proclaimed the virtue and his affection for the Lane students.¹²

Once this Executive Committee rendered its decision, the faculty could not defuse the situation. Eighty of the school's 100 students withdrew from the institution. Ultimately, most of the students landed at Oberlin College to institute that school's theology department. This infusion of students was instrumental in the growth of Oberlin College, leading to that school's calling of Charles Finney as a professor, where he remained for decades producing abolitionist ministers for the nation.

Historical study of the Lane Debates is sparse. The event most often occurs as a clause in a sentence, or a footnote within a paragraph. Sometimes, the Debates receive three to four pages within a book on abolition history, but are most often overlooked or ignored. When authors write about the Debates, they usually do so from a limited vantage point with a limited goal, moving through the Debates as a brief pit stop on their travel to the real destination of the work. Given their galvanizing power for immediate abolitionists, the Lane Debates provide an important link in our understanding of American abolition, although this link is not seen strongly in the

¹¹ *New York Evangelist*, November 1, 1834.

¹² *Ibid*; *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

literature that does exist. What coverage does exist has dealt with the First Debates, and not the Second Lane Debates.

Several writers have shown an interest in the founding of the Lane Seminary. In a story with surprising amounts of drama, the founding of the seminary foreshadowed the stormy times yet to come. Lawrence Lesick showed that the founders of the school faced a handful of divisive dilemmas, beginning the decision to place the school in Cincinnati. Lesick also wrote that the seminary's founding board revealed divisions within American Presbyterianism resulting from the Great Awakening, controversy over the selection of Congregationalist Lyman Beecher as the school's President, and even that the process of selecting a location managed to divide a family, with brothers suing one another over their donations of land.¹³ Donald Huber also wrote of the theological foundations of the board, although his argument differs from Lesick's in that Huber found the board members largely to be Old School men.¹⁴

Earle Hilgert and Walter Keagy also wrote effectively about the beginnings of the Lane Seminary. Hilgert focused primarily on the development of the school's library, describing it as "apparently the largest academic library in the West."¹⁵ Hilgert also contributed a solid understanding of Professor Calvin Stowe as a key player in the school and his national prominence, as well as establishing the success and struggles of fundraising for the young seminary.

Earle Hilgert examined an entirely different but significant aspect to the school's founding by focusing on the development of the seminary's library. Describing the size of that library, Hilgert shed valuable light both on the scope of the Lane Seminary itself and the

¹³ Lawrence Lesick, "The Founding of the Lane Seminary," *Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin* 37, (Winter 1979): 236-248.

¹⁴ Donald L. Huber, "The Rise and Fall of Lane Seminary," *Timeline* 12, no. 3 (1995):2-19.

¹⁵ Earle Hilgert, "Calvin Ellis Stowe: Pioneer Librarian of the Old West," *The Library Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (1980): 324-351.

importance of the future controversy that found its beginning at the school.¹⁶ Walter Keagy's article established the climate of Lane Seminary, laying its foundations in the Finney revivals of the Second Great Awakening. Keagy especially succeeded in bringing together some of the key players in the Lane drama, such as Theodore Weld and Lyman Beecher, providing a clear understanding of the talents and personalities that later played such an important role in the events that unfolded.¹⁷

In terms of telling the story of the actual Lane Debates, few authors have stepped forth to undertake this challenge. Gilbert Barnes wrote the standard treatment in 1933, providing his account in two chapters of his *Antislavery Impulses, 1830-1844*.¹⁸ Barnes provided the flavor of the events by describing them as "a protracted meeting, a revival in benevolence; it was a debate only in name."¹⁹ Barnes further wrote that "the Lane debate reverberated throughout the nation," but did not develop how the reverberation happened.²⁰

Lawrence Lesick presented the most thorough treatment of the Lane episode in *The Lane Rebels: Evangelicalism and Antislavery in Antebellum America*.²¹ Lesick's stated purpose is to present an evangelical theology of antislavery, meaning that he intended to describe the theology which drove the abolitionist movement. However, his book did not include a lot detailed theological development. Lesick did provide a wealth of personal details and clearly demonstrated the near unanimity that the students achieved. At the same time, Lesick did not develop the players in the drama personally, and they come off as rather wooden characters

¹⁶ Hilgert, 324.

¹⁷ Walter R. Keagy, "The Lane Seminary Rebellion," *Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio* 9, (April 1951), 141-160.

¹⁸ Gilbert Hobbs Barnes, *The Antislavery Impulse, 1830-1844* (1933; Repr., Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1957).

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 66.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 69.

²¹ Lawrence Thomas Lesick. *The Lane Rebels: Evangelicalism and Antislavery in Antebellum America* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1980).

rather than fully-developed people. Still, Lesick provided the most studied effort of the Lane Debates to date.

The most detailed account of the debates themselves does not come from an academic source, but rather from a Presbyterian pastor in Cincinnati. Speaking in 1893, Sydney Strong provided some brief context for the Debates, writing that, prior to the Lane student debates, “Few advocates of immediate abolition had appeared.”²² Strong also provided excellent context of the controversy from the perspective of the faculty and administration at Lane Seminary. Strong was not a historian, and this showed in his lack of documentation throughout his piece.

Other writers have written about the Lane Debates mostly in the context of other events. Writing in 1971, Stuart Henry compared the Lane students to 1960s campus radicals, ultimately conceding that there was little similarity outside of the presence on a school campus.²³ Two historians have written about Lane in relation to the growth of Oberlin College, which occurred as a direct result of the Lane students moving to that school. Barbara Zikmund wrote of the importance that the influx of Lane students played in Oberlin’s fundraising efforts as well as their role in attracting Charles Finney to teach at Oberlin.²⁴ Along the same lines, James Fraser described Oberlin as a struggling venture prior to the arrival of the former Lane students.²⁵ Briefly describing their effect on Oberlin, Stuart wrote that “they simply took over the school.”²⁶ Fraser added that the presence of Charles Finney over his 40 years of teaching at Oberlin sent forth a wave of ministers motivated to demonstrate that a person’s beliefs should shape their

²² Sydney Strong. "The Exodus of Students from Lane Seminary," *Papers of the Ohio Church History Society* 4, (1893): 1-16; p. 11.

²³ Stuart C. Henry. "The Lane Rebels: A Twentieth Century Look," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 49, no. 1 (1971): 1-14.

²⁴ Barbara Brown Zikmund. "The Legacy of This Place: Oberlin, Ohio," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 42, no. 4 (2007): 499-510.

²⁵ James W. Fraser. "Abolitionism, Activism, and New Models for Ministry," *American Presbyterians* 66, no. 2 (1988): 89-103.

²⁶ Fraser, p. 98.

actions, both public and private, essentially creating an army of millenarian warriors going forth into the nation.²⁷

One of the real joys of studying history is to wander unexpectedly into something significant yet thoroughly uncovered. The Lane Seminary Debates and their aftermath constitute just such a treasure. This gathering of students offers us the opportunity to examine the power of slavery and the effect of moral suasion upon a diverse group of students. Representing most of the United States, and every slave state (plus the Arkansas Territory), the Lane students, with only a couple of exceptions, became fervent immediate abolitionists. For skeptics who question whether moral suasion provided a realistic strategy for abolitionists, an abolitionist needed simply to point to the debates at Lane. In the aftermath, they did just that.

At the same time, the Lane Seminary Debates demonstrated the incredible power of the slavery issue to bring up conflicts among people who would be expected to agree. The students and faculty came to this controversy with similar backgrounds. They shared the same theological beliefs and foundations. Faculty and students also shared the same experiences in Cincinnati on the same campus. Faculty and students agreed that slavery itself needed to end. According to each group, relations between faculty and students were excellent and affectionate, enviable from our present day. When the students adopted immediate emancipation and moral suasion, slavery and this particular solution demonstrated their power to divide the indivisible. A school that was booming collapsed on itself. It would recover and survive, but this school that so many invested so much in nearly collapsed out of the blue from the appearance of the slavery issue.

The slavery issue revealed its power in the frenzied print media coverage of the event. Issues that had not been issues became the source of debate. No one at Lane had argued over

²⁷ Ibid.

freedom of speech before. In the Second Lane Debate, it was an argument held in the public arena. No one had argued over faculty authority and the governance of the school. In the Second Lane Debate, it became another argument held in the public arena, commanding a month of attention in November of 1834. Due to this public media debate, the vast majority of sources in this work are antebellum newspapers, some publishing pieces in favor of the abolitionists, and some publishing articles counter to the abolitionist position. For simple categorization, I will refer to them as the non-abolitionist papers and the abolitionist papers. In terms of historical writing, Ford Risley wrote the first work providing a synthesis which told the story of the abolitionist media as well as examining that media.²⁸ Where Risley focused on the efforts of the abolitionist press to pursue the abolitionist cause, this thesis will point out that the press needed the Lane students who needed the press as their public pulpit, thus providing the abolitionist press with a vigorous new voice for the cause.

The title “non-abolitionist papers” may be perceived as unnecessarily or unfairly loaded in meaning. I do not intend it to mean that these papers had no sympathy with the suffering of the slave or that their publishers had no desire to see slavery end. Some of these papers simply have a different focus, reporting news rather than attempting to persuade public opinion or advocate for a cause. Sometimes, editorial rivalries seem to influence a paper’s position, such as the Congregationalist *Boston Observer’s* running rivalry with Joshua Leavitt’s *New York Evangelist*. The *African Repository and Colonial Journal* was published by the American Colonization Society in order to promote colonization and the Society.²⁹

²⁸ Ford Risley, *Abolition and the Press: The Moral Struggle Against Slavery* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008).

²⁹ African Repository and Colonial Journal No. 1 March 1825, “The Eighty Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States. With an Appendix,” *The North American Review*, Vol. 21, No. 48 (Jul. 1825), 230-232.

Newspapers of various denominational backgrounds took part in publishing this debate from the non-abolitionist perspective, sometimes creating seemingly unlikely alliances. The *Christian Advocate and Journal*³⁰, a Methodist paper, published from this perspective, as did several Presbyterian papers, such as the *New York Observer*³¹, and the *Ohio Observer*. The latter paper took a distinct interest in publicizing the Lane Seminary as it established and grew in the western state, and it is not surprising that it would take a great interest during this controversy. The *Western Christian Advocate* provided both a Cincinnati perspective as well as the Methodist-Episcopal perspective³², while the *Religious Intelligencer* approached issues from an ecumenical perspective, preferring to see a separation between religious and political issues.³³

Several of these non-abolitionist papers approached their publications with a stricter sense of reporting the news rather than pursuing a predetermined stance. Among these papers were two Washington, D.C. papers, the *Daily National Intelligencer*, a Whig paper, and the *United States Telegraph*, which typically focused entirely on Congressional news, but stepped away from that focus to include issues of national interest.³⁴ Other papers of this ilk included the *Vermont Chronicle*, the *New Bedford Mercury*, and the *Portsmouth Journal*.³⁵

For the most part, the title “abolitionist papers” does indicate the purpose of those newspapers. Each of these papers was either geared in an evangelical direction or was very open to evangelical contributions. These evangelical contributions crossed denominational boundaries

³⁰ Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States through 250 Years, 1690-1940* (1941; Repr., New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 2000): 206.

³¹ Mott, 206.

³² National Endowment for the Humanities and Library of Congress, “Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers,” Library of Congress. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lcon/sn89075028 (accessed March 1, 2012).

³³ Johns Hopkins University Libraries, “Catalyst,” Johns Hopkins University Libraries. https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_1827951 (accessed March 1, 2012).

³⁴ Mott, 179, 198.

³⁵ National Endowment for the Humanities and Library of Congress, “Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers,” Library of Congress. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83020324 (accessed March 1, 2012).

in stunning ways, consisting of Baptist, Presbyterian, and Unitarian contributors and publishers. In the modern theological environment, this would be an eye-opening combination, but strikingly normal for antebellum reform movements, and especially in the fight for abolition. These better-known papers carried very descriptive titles which left no real doubt about their position on the burgeoning slavery issue. Two of these newspapers were organs of the American Anti-Slavery Society, the fledgling agency established in December 1833 and dedicated to emancipation through moral suasion. These two papers were the *American Anti-Slavery Reporter* and the *Anti-Slavery Record*. Two different Baptist papers took part in publishing on the abolitionist side of this controversy, the *Christian Secretary*³⁶, hailing from New Haven, Connecticut, and the *Christian Watchman*³⁷, published from Boston. Continuing the trend of unusual evangelical bedfellows, the Unitarian *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* lined up alongside Joshua Leavitt's *New York Evangelist*. Aside from those newspapers, the other abolitionist papers cited in this paper carried names that left no doubt about their position. New York City's *The Emancipator, and Record of Public Morals* was clear with its title, although not as clear as Benjamin Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. While each of these played a large role in the media firestorm around the Lane event, neither could match the largest contributor, with the largest and most famous name in abolitionist print media, William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator*, which devoted large amounts of space over the span of 1834 and 1835 to submissions and editorials about the Lane happenings. Frequently, Garrison devoted well over a page of his four-page publication to coverage of the Lane Seminary.

³⁶ Online Computer Library Center, www.worldcat.org/title/christian-secretary/oclc/639956809 (accessed March 1, 2012).

³⁷ National Endowment for the Humanities and Library of Congress, "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers," Library of Congress. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lcom/sf89090890 (accessed March 1, 2012).

Thus, the purpose of this work. This project will argue that the Lane Seminary Debates demonstrated that moral suasion could be more than a theory, since the Lane students came to this discussion largely unconvinced on the matter of slavery, and walked out almost unanimously convinced of the need to emancipate the slaves immediately. This occurred whether the students came from Northern areas largely unexposed to slavery by this time, or from families that owned slaves, or even owning slaves themselves. In this case, these students were convinced simply by examining the evidence for themselves, which was the foundation of moral suasion.

The Lane Debates became a major reason for the prevalence of moral suasion by abolitionists and reformers in the 1830s, and the aftermath gives us a picture of the power of that method. This is the key to understanding the Lane Debates. Prior to the meeting of these students from the North and every slave state (and the Arkansas Territory), abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison proclaimed moral suasion as the approach to achieve emancipation. Abolitionists adopted moral suasion at the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society in December 1833. Prior to the Lane Debates, though, immediate emancipationists could not point to instances where moral suasion had been used to successfully convert slaveowners into abolitionists. Following the Lane Debates, where this conversion did happen, moral suasion became a strategy with a successful track record that supporters could demonstrate, with the Lane students as the evidence. For this reason, the Lane Debates demonstrated that moral suasion had the power to be effective, and made its possibilities much more real. As such, the Lane Debates then energized supporters and opponents of immediate emancipation through moral suasion, since it could no longer be ignored as an ideal. Moral suasion had occurred, and was now very real.

Chapter one will discuss the Second Lane Debate in the abolitionist press. The main topics of that chapter will be the abolitionist presentation of slavery and the need for African-American equality, the governance of a seminary, and the importance of free speech. Chapter two will look at the colonizationist and anti-abolitionist response to the abolitionists. The main topics of chapter two will be the non-abolitionists view of slavery and African-American equality, the proper place of seminary authority, and a proper relationship to authority in general. These two chapters will show two opposing viewpoints presented by people who did not seem to be opponents. Importantly, the two sides showed significant agreement on the key issues and respectful affection for one another. Chapter three will present the distinction which made further cooperation impossible, as each side of this debate sought to apply their principles to the slavery problem. Chapter three is a more in-depth discussion of the colonizationist and the abolitionist positions, and demonstrates that each position clearly aligned itself against the other, regardless of the holders' feelings for those they differed with.

Eighteen days of debate shook the foundations of a successful young Midwestern seminary. As exciting as those events were, they would have remained an isolated local event if the students had not raced their story to the press. Once those students took their private discussion onto the national scene, a new force to shape the abolition argument was born. The result, the Second Lane Debates would reshape the abolition argument in the United States with a zealous new group of converts at the forefront.

Chapter Two: The Lane Awakening

Flushed with enthusiasm from the First Debates, several Lane students raced to prepare summaries of the event and submitted them to abolitionist newspapers. Framing their argument for immediatism, the new abolitionists placed a heavy emphasis on black equality and the issue of slavery. In terms of the students' relationship to the school, the students and their supporters included an emphasis on freedom of speech rather than seminary governance. They included a significant discussion about proper seminary authority in terms of its place with the faculty or students. As people newly converted to a cause, this reflected their place in the drama of change. These students and their supporters argued passionately for a radical societal change. As adherents to a strategy of moral suasion, they needed the ability to discuss the issues of slavery and immediatism.

As the story developed in the abolitionist press, two clear approaches to the Second Lane Debates came into view. Given the radical position that immediatists were taking, it might be natural to assume that they came to their task vehemently, using words as a flamethrower, often with an effect whose power was simultaneously illuminating and destructive. In this case, the writings show that this did and did not happen, and this dichotomy illustrated the different roles in the burgeoning movement that the students and their supporters played at that moment.

For their part, the students offered more illumination than devastation with their words. As new converts, they were uncompromising in their newfound beliefs. While staunch, the students refused to use the opportunity to their newfound pulpit to attack their opponents. Instead of appearing as revolutionaries throwing grenades, they armed themselves with words, believing that they were on the right side of this issue, and that time would bear this out. Rather than

attacking individuals, or even slaveholders themselves, the Lane students used their pulpit to share their personal conversion testimonies, and especially to share how the evidence about slavery and colonization weighed upon them to become immediate abolitionists. In their writings, the students exemplified the approach of moral suasion. Foreseeing the arguments that opponents, or even those who were nervous about massive societal change, the Lane students made clear that they did not seek to use the force of arms or the government to change the nation. Instead, they sought to use the power of conscience to convert individual slaveholders, thus bringing about the great emancipation through the voluntary choices of individual slaveowners rather than through the compulsion of government power. In order for moral suasion to be effective, it required the opportunity for presentation, which the students found in the abolitionist press.

On the other hand, the supporters of the students responded with the expected fire, producing some light, but scorching much of the earth around them. Obviously, when one of those allies is William Lloyd Garrison, we might expect minimal restraint, but Garrison was not alone in his firestorm. Still, Garrison's main role was not to provide his own fire to the situation. The pre-Lane immediatists were already proclaiming the methodology of moral suasion. This was the foundation of the American Anti-Slavery Society, founded only two months before the Lane Debates. While the pre-Lane immediatists had a belief in this methodology, in practical terms, they only had this method as a theory. They could not point to a demonstration of the ability of moral suasion to convert slaveowners and their families until it happened at Lane Seminary. Those conversions provided substance to the immediatist claims for moral suasion. At that moment, the abolitionist press saw an opportunity, and granted these students the pulpit they needed to proclaim their views and their conversions. Therefore, Garrison and his supporters

played a role of providing the students with a pulpit for their newfound abolitionist fire. Simultaneously, the students provided the publishers with the evidence they required of the power of moral suasion. As the next year and a half passed by, scarcely an issue of the *Liberator* passed without a major contribution from the Lane students. This contribution often filled half of the four pages of a given week's issue, and very frequently filled at least the entire front page. The Lane students and their conversion to immediatism played a major role in advancing the abolitionist argument in 1834 and 1835.

The issues of slavery and black equality³⁸ took a place of paramount importance in the abolitionists' writings. On this topic, as expected, the abolitionists were prolific writers. The newspapers that were devoted purely to the abolitionist cause, such as the *Liberator* and the *Genius of Universal Emancipation* did not disappoint, and published their own reactions as well as several writings from the Lane students themselves. Several other papers contributed to the abolitionist publicity as well. Overall, the Lane Debates were responsible for a barrage of writing in the abolitionist press.

The abolitionists set the stage with a discussion of the nature of slavery. In this discussion, the students were clear in their consideration of slavery as a moral evil. Coming late to the controversy, in May 1835, abolitionist pastor John Rankin of Ripley, Ohio responded with fiery, powerful language in his denunciation of slavery. Describing the students' anti-slavery society as one that kept with the best of Protestant traditions, Rankin described slavery as "one of the blackest sins that ever stained human character."³⁹ With a colorful flair for language, Rankin wrote that opposition to slavery came from "the call of degraded, weeping, bleeding, tortured

³⁸ In this thesis, I often use the language of the antebellum era in referring to African-Americans. I do not do this with a desire to offend people or sensibilities, only to reflect the antebellum era and the authors of the time.

³⁹ *Liberator*, May 2, 1835.

and perishing humanity.”⁴⁰ This, Rankin wrote, is a call that no human heart could truly resist. The students stood up against a “rising tide of oppression, red with the blood of the bodies and souls of men,” driven to stand up against the “enormity in cruelty and crime.”⁴¹ As people committed to loving other people, the students could do no less, Rankin argued, and challenged whether readers could truly fail to love others.

Reflecting the energizing developments at the Lane Seminary, the American Anti-Slavery Society invited Lane student James Thome to speak at their First Annual Meeting in May 1834, at which he proclaimed that slaveholding and slave trading were equally evil.⁴² Sharing his eyewitness testimony as a man who grew up in Kentucky an heir to a slave inheritance, Thome denounced the institution. Thome described the spoiling effect that slavery had upon him as an individual. Slavery was, he argued, a force that took away the compassion of his heart and turning cruelty into something common. Using Kentucky as an example, Thome also described the effects of slavery on society, writing that the masters in even the smallest and most peaceful towns slept with guns at their bed, just in case of slave uprisings in the night. Thome described a system that destroyed the moral fiber of the slaves while throwing them into a lifetime of suffering. Even in Kentucky, where he said the institution was milder than anywhere else, Thome wrote of slavery, “Cruelty is the rule, kindness the exception.”⁴³

Several writers used the occasion to question how slavery could be justified from Biblical beliefs. In the *New York Evangelist*, Joshua Leavitt published an article from a mysterious “RICORDO” in which the otherwise unnamed author wrote of his fear that the *Boston Recorder* lacked compassion for the enslaved. Challenging the *Evangelist*’s rival, RICORDO wrote, “But

⁴⁰ *Liberator*, May 2, 1835.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

from what law of God or man, which does not violate the Divine law, does the Recorder derive the right of the master to whip the slave?"⁴⁴ RICORDO then related the ethical question to common principles in the emerging republic, wondering if a foreman in a free labor factory might have the same right to whip a disobedient or slacking employee. Pushing the claim further, RICORDO compared the lack of due process under which the slaves received judgment to a mob lynching of gamblers in Mississippi.⁴⁵ RICORDO challenged whether the *Boston Recorder* fully understood things as well or as maturely as the students at the Lane Seminary, by referring to the "majority" age of those students.⁴⁶ To close out his writing, RICORDO placed the blame for slavery and its continued existence squarely upon the Christian churches of the United States, declaring that slavery would continue unless religious periodicals took a more active stand in its abolition.

In a dramatic article detailing the arrest and punishment of Lane student Amos Dresser in Nashville, Tennessee, the *Anti-Slavery Record* questioned the nature of slavery in a society with guarantees of free speech. Citing that Dresser was arrested and convicted for being a member of an Anti-Slavery Society (which he was) and openly distributing anti-slavery materials (which he did), the *Record* asked, "What sort of institution is that which cannot bear to be spoken of in the language of truth?"⁴⁷ In a nation that guaranteed individual freedoms, the *Record* questioned the existence of an institution that denied those rights both to the slaves and to the free people who would speak on it. Given the nature of the institution and its need to stifle free speech, the *Record* concluded that slavery was dangerous to this country and indeed to all of humanity.

⁴⁴ *New York Evangelist*, September 12, 1835.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ (New York/Boston) *The Anti-Slavery Record*, November 1835, hereafter *The Anti-Slavery Record*.

Another Lane student, (whose name is not included on his letter), argued that no one could fully understand the character of slavery unless they lived around it. With their separation from the slave owning areas of the South, this writer claimed, Northerners could not see what actually happens to the slaves, and could not appreciate the real character of slavery.⁴⁸ They never could fully understand by touring the South. To comprehend slavery, a person would have to live near a plantation where they could hear the “sighs and groans of the oppressed,” and see slavery in action. This author did show one concrete way that a Northerner could witness the oppressing power of slavery in their own cities to demonstrate that slavery could place shackles on the free blacks as well as the enslaved. The author included that it was a normal occurrence for free blacks to be abducted from Northern cities and sold into Southern slavery. Concurrently, the author demonstrated the capricious nature of slavery, sharing the tale of a free black woman in Cincinnati, who worked and saved in order to buy her son out of bondage, only to arrive at her old master’s residence moments too late. Just before her arrival, her former master sold her son to a New Orleans slaver. Immediately, she knew that tracking him down from there would be nearly impossible. Slavery, by its very nature, had a captive hold on free and enslaved blacks alike. This early apologetic argument lent credence to the background of the Southern Lane students, as well as the Northern ones who heard their testimony during the meetings while simultaneously striking at the basis for colonialist arguments by pointing to the life experience of the Lane students.

The abolitionists were also concerned about the suffering of the slave. To this end, they brought a prolific use of vivid, emotion-stirring language. The abolitionists frequently returned to Biblical themes in order to illustrate their point, or simply to tap into the readers’ emotions, in

⁴⁸ *Liberator*, April 26, 1834.

order to render it impossible to fail to identify with the slave in his agony. In keeping with their belief in moral suasion, the abolitionists used this convincingly to demonstrate the humanity of the slave in order to develop sympathy in their readers.

Writing in the *New York Evangelist* to respond to criticisms from the *Boston Recorder*, RICORDO noted that the slaves lived in a country based on the “consent of the governed,” and yet had never offered any such consent. Citing this consent as a principle espoused in the Declaration of Independence, RICORDO noted that “This consent may be and must be implied from his acts.”⁴⁹ From this point, RICORDO moved on to specific examples, writing that a foreigner became subject to American law the moment he stepped foot on our shores, and that coming to our country voluntarily provided the necessary evidence of that man’s consent. A person born in America, RICORDO writes, shows his consent by remaining here after reaching adulthood. At the same time, the phrase “pursuit of happiness” in the Declaration gives that man the right to go elsewhere should that better fulfill his pursuit, and this applied to free blacks as well.⁵⁰ The shocking part of RICORDO’s article occurred when he ascribed the same right of passage to slaves as well, referring to this right as an unalienable one, a right that supersedes manmade authority. Implying without specifying, RICORDO’s readers could easily ascertain that no slave was brought willingly to this county, thus removing any voluntary consent to be governed. If the readers saw the pursuit of happiness as an unalienable right, then a slave had the same right to better their life by leaving slavery behind. By including these two conditions for consent, RICORDO showed that slaves had never consented to the conditions of their bondage.

⁴⁹ *New York Evangelist*, September 12, 1835.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

RICORDO also offered an expose of the supposed parental nature of slavery that Southerners portrayed. With much bluntness, he opened his expose by saying, “This is a sentiment truly abominable, and the absurdity of it has been fully demonstrated over and over again.”⁵¹ RICORDO asked what sort of parent would willfully prevent their child from reaching maturity, and challenged Southerners to show what Biblical source material they could muster for such a view of parenthood. Reminding them that every true parent/child relationship confers responsibility upon the parent, RICORDO wrote that even children had protection of the law, yet slaves had no such protection. For example, children could serve as witnesses for a prosecution against their father, but what slave could be that sort of witness? If slaves were brought under protection of the law, with the concordant benefits that would bestow, then it might become possible, argued RICORDO, for slavery to resemble a valid parent/child relationship.

At the American Anti-Slavery Society meeting of May 1834, Lane student James Thome spoke frankly on the suffering of the slave.⁵² Thome vividly portrayed a suffering that encompassed the totality of a person, wounding them physically, spiritually, and mentally. Thome included a mind degraded by slavery, the prevalent sexual assault on female slaves, the destruction of the slaves’ personal character, physical mangling from both the work and torture, and the constant danger of the slaves’ lives. Writing that Southerners were insulated from reading of this in the press by erstwhile patriots who stifled any writing about slavery, Thome wrote determinedly that the story of Southern slavery would be told. To further show the inhumanity of the institution, Thome wrote insistently, “negroes are *human beings*.”⁵³ As human beings, they deserved better treatment. Answering critics that feared that chaos would result

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

⁵³ Ibid.

from the abolition of slavery, Thome insisted that those critics had things backwards: that the potential horrors of abolition paled in comparison to the actual horrors of slavery.⁵⁴

Thome reflected the view the Lane students adopted, that a low view of colored people should not exist. After describing his admission into Lane Seminary, former slave James Bradley testified that he always received the same kindness as his fellow students, every one of whom was white. Bradley also wrote that no one treated him as a lesser student, even though he had far less formal education than every one of his classmates, most of whom had attended at least some college. Succinctly, Bradley wrote, “Thanks to the Lord, prejudice against color does not exist at Lane Seminary.”⁵⁵

In addition to their concerns over the nature of slavery, the abolitionists focused on the effects of slavery. They worried about both the slaves themselves and the nation as a whole. Overall, the abolitionists plainly presented slavery as a dangerous institution that could have nothing but destructive effects on anything it touched. According to the abolitionists, slavery destroyed families, destroyed people, and would eventually destroy the nation, resulting in a bloody civil war between North and South. Although the abolitionists and colonizationist shared many of the same concerns, abolitionists argued that slavery’s only effect was division.

Regarding the effects on the slaves, the abolitionists were plain and blunt-spoken. Lane student Marius Robinson, a Tennessee native, toured four Southern states shortly after the First Lane Debates in order to see the effects of slavery and the slave trade upon the slave. Robinson observed that the effect of slavery was to reduce the slave to an animal, not in actuality but in

⁵⁴ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

⁵⁵ *New York Evangelist*, November 1, 1834.

whites' perception of him, and destroyed the slaves' ability to better their position in the world.⁵⁶ Providing an example of this perception, Robinson compared the purchases of slaves and cattle, arguing, "Men purchase *both* for the same purpose."⁵⁷ Since the slave laws of the South preserved the system of slavery, these men would not have the opportunity to experience freedom or prove to be anything more than chattel. Like cattle in the field, slavery deprived the slaves of the opportunity to experience family life, since destruction of the family took place routinely at the slave market. Robinson noted that destroying the slave family was often the most profitable route for the seller. Writing that the institution of slavery and slave trading often resulted in women being sold in Southern cities for the sole purpose of working in prostitution, Robinson shined light on the dispiriting effects of slavery. Finally, Robinson summed up his presentation in one sentence, "Degradation is the legitimate offspring of slavery."⁵⁸

At the May 1834 meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Lane student James Thome delivered a speech in which he declared that slavery resulted purely in oppression and cruelty.⁵⁹ Replete with religious terminology and imagery, Thome brought the notion as a theologian that slavery stood contrary to the nature of God and Christian teachings found in the Bible. Convinced that slavery produced sexual depravity in the slave quarters, Thome powerfully uttered, "The slave states are Sodoms, and well nigh every village is a brothel."⁶⁰ Thome attributed this licentiousness to two sources: the failure of owners to bother teaching morality to their slaves, and also the constant sexual intermingling of whites and slaves within Southern villages. Thome powerfully argued that this form of objectification resulted directly from the institution of slavery, and this came both from passive neglect and an active practice on the part

⁵⁶ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *New York Evangelist*, May 17, 1834.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

of Southern whites. Thome traced the continuation of slavery to ignorance of it, as people all over the North were kept ignorant of it. If only the North truly knew of slavery, Thome reasoned, then all of the North would oppose it as the abolitionists did.

Another Lane student, whose name does not appear in the article, wrote specifically about slavery in Mississippi, describing the rampant cruelty of slavery in that state. Using the eyewitness account of an overseer who previously filled that role in Jamaica, this student made the remarkable comment that “the slaves in Jamaica were decidedly better treated than they are in Mississippi.”⁶¹ Of course, this would shock any readers accustomed to hearing that slavery in the West Indies was worse for slaves than Southern slavery was. This same student showed his concern for slave families as he wrote about the anguish of seeing families forcibly separated. Even worse, according to this student, was the knowledge that Christians were involved in this trade and the resultant separation.⁶²

Abolitionists were also concerned with the effect of slavery upon the nation. These effects included the growth of the slave trade and the emotions that the topic stirred up as well as the general consideration of slavery as an evil in the nation. Crucially, the abolitionists forecasted at this early date that the continuation of slavery would one day result in a bloody civil war for the United States.

Publishing Lane student Marius Robinson’s letter, the *Liberator* showed a concern with the growing slave trade in the United States. Offering his analysis of the growing slave trade, Robinson reasoned that the slave trade was increasing at a record pace due to demand. Robinson traced this uptick in demand to three sources. High cotton prices encouraged heavier speculation

⁶¹ (New York City, NY) *Emancipator*, April 14, 1835, hereafter *Emancipator*.

⁶² *Ibid.*

and cotton cultivation. A cholera epidemic had killed thousands of slaves, thus reducing the labor supply for many cotton planters. In addition, obtaining lands from the Choctaw Indians opened up new lands to cultivate, which directly resulted in a greater need for new labor to work the new land.⁶³

Specifically citing the First Lane Debates, the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* noted the quick rise of excitement and emotion when the topic of slavery arose. Slavery, the *Advocate* argued, created such excitement among people that none remained neutral and few retained the ability to look at slavery in a detached and philosophical way.⁶⁴ Slavery debates created such emotional strife that the *Advocate* noted, “The nation seems to be in commotion.”⁶⁵ This included the sectional rivalry of North versus South, but also an ideological rivalry of colonization vs. abolition, with each of these fighting against slavery while simultaneously fighting against each other.⁶⁶ Tracing this development through the North, the *Advocate* brought note to the conflict that slavery stirred up in Cincinnati, briefly referencing the three-sided conflict between students, trustees, and the faculty.

In an intriguing development, the *Advocate*'s next paragraph displayed the excitement slavery created for the paper's editor. Writing frankly, the *Advocate* referred to slavery as “an evil, a great evil, and a real curse as well as reproach to the nation...”⁶⁷ Slavery, according to the *Advocate*, was opposed to Christian principles, the natural rights of humanity, and the foundations of American government in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Since slavery was opposed to all of these things, all people, whether they lived in the North or

⁶³ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

⁶⁴ (Utica, NY) *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834, hereafter *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Chapter Three will develop this divisive rivalry in detail.

⁶⁷ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

South, must necessarily conclude that slavery was the great evil that the *Advocate* saw. At the same time, the *Advocate* did not see immediate emancipation as a viable solution, since they saw slavery as an institution firmly entrenched by this time in the Southern culture.

Ominously, there were already warnings that disputes over slavery would result in dissolution and civil war. The *Liberator* reprinted a piece from the *New York Courier and Enquirer* that was remarkably staunch in opposition to the abolitionists.⁶⁸ In an article that specifically quoted and cited the Lane students and their Anti-Slavery Society multiple times, the *Courier* referred to abolitionist beliefs as not merely “Anti-Slavery,” but “Anti-Union.” Pointing to the vital interests the South held in slavery, the *Courier* remarked that the abolitionist course would inevitably lead to separation. Slavery was too important and too much a part of Southern society and economy to be tampered with by abolitionists. The *Courier* named one speaker specifically, a Mr. Gurley, who insisted that the North must follow the South on the slavery issue. Otherwise, the very union of the United States would be in danger.⁶⁹

The abolitionists’ beliefs in the humanity and ability of the slaves were at the heart of their opposition to slavery. The abolitionists believed that the slaves did in fact have the ability to handle themselves as freed people. Further, according to the abolitionists’ theology, slaves deserved their freedom. They based this decision upon their belief that all men, white or black, were made in the image of God. If whites were divinely intended to be free, than blacks were as well. Finally, the abolitionists showed the extent of their belief in Negro equality with the belief that blacks should have all of the same rights as whites, and that this must be protected by the laws of the country. This included the right to worship as their conscience dictated, the right to

⁶⁸ *Liberator*, May 31, 1834.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

learn and obtain secular and religious knowledge, and to be employed as fairly-compensated fair labor.⁷⁰

Skeptics questioned whether the slaves were in fact prepared for freedom in the United States. In an article that uniquely criticized abolitionists and colonizationists alike, the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* contended that no one had done the necessary work to prepare slaves for life as free citizens.⁷¹ On this ground, the *Advocate* referred to immediate emancipation as “indiscriminate,” and compared its eventual effects to the Goths and Vandals as they surged across Europe leaving chaos and suffering in their wake.⁷² For that reason, the *Advocate* preferred a gradual plan that prepared slaves for freedom in the United States, placing the *Advocate* at odds with the Lane students.

The abolitionists’ belief that slaves were fully human beings made in the image of God formed the foundation for their abolitionist ideals. Through a compilation of myriad testimonies, which included one submitted by Lane students Henry Stanton and Andrew Benton, the *American Anti-Slavery Reporter* published a heartrending article detailing many stories in which slaves and free blacks showed their preference to death over a life of slavery.⁷³ Writing to show that slaves and free blacks were making volitional choices and feeling legitimate human emotions, the *Reporter* told stories of free blacks and slaves alike who committed suicide, either upon their recapture or, in the case of one barber, being promised freedom and then informed of his sale to a new owner. With no shortage of heartbreaking tales, the *Reporter* painted a powerful picture of this aspect of a black person’s life.

⁷⁰ *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

⁷¹ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ (New York City, NY) *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, July 1834, hereafter *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*.

Tying into the idea that slaves were fully human, former slave and Lane Seminary student James Bradley related the longing for freedom he held during his days in slavery.⁷⁴ Bradley wrote that he could not remember a time when he did not yearn for his freedom, and that he prayed for it constantly. Bradley further shared his full awareness of his sufferings, showing the full ability to analyze his situation and explain it intelligently, noting that he never lacked food but did lack clothing, and was fully aware of the extent of the beatings he received. Painfully, Bradley recounted that his master and master's family placed little value on his life, even to the point that the master's children threatened him with knives and axes on his sickbed. Noting that his master also neglected his religious education, Bradley argued that a slave could overcome the intrinsic prejudice of his enslavement by his own actions. Setting his goal as freedom, Bradley made a freewill decision to work towards it, and learned his own craft and market in his spare time, earning his own money for freedom. Additionally, Bradley taught himself to read and write, preparing himself for life after slavery, even after his master abruptly stopped his lessons.

Andrew Benton, a Lane student hailing from Missouri, told an emotional story of a slave woman that clearly exhibited the intellect, emotion and will of that person.⁷⁵ An owner sold one of his male slaves, whom he trained exceptionally well, for an extravagant price. This slave man was married and unwilling to leave his spouse behind. This man pled with his purchaser multiple times to buy his wife, but to no avail. Finally, out of desperation, this slave man promised that he would never be useful to that owner without his wife. Upon the owner's refusal, the man stepped back, took out his knife, and slashed his own throat wide open, dying on the spot. After telling

⁷⁴ *New York Evangelist*, November 1, 1834.

⁷⁵ *Liberator*, June 7, 1834.

that story, Benton asked one simple question, “Can slaves feel?”⁷⁶ This story furnished another opportunity for the abolitionists to share their belief that the slave was fully human.

The abolitionists were convinced of the need for “Negro” equality. Persuaded that blacks were human beings, abolitionists believed that it was not enough simply for slaves to be free. In a radical view for their age, the abolitionists pressed their claim that the slaves, once freed, needed to become full equals with the white citizens of the United States, with the same rights and privileges being protected by the governments at the state and national levels.

In the *Liberator*, Garrison devoted space to show the Lane students interacting with Cincinnati’s free black population.⁷⁷ Garrison wrote that the students believed “strenuously” in this idea, but that they did not stop at belief. Putting their beliefs into action, the students spent their time putting together schools for free blacks. One student, Augustus Wattles, had even gone so far as to spend the night in a black family’s home. Although their actions generated much controversy in Cincinnati and resulted in a faculty meeting in which they were gently admonished to relax their efforts at association, the Lane students continued to act on their belief that the Negro should be treated as an equal of the white man.

Responding to criticisms over their associations with Cincinnati’s free black population, the Lane students released a statement of their views. Referring to their associations with blacks as “the great stone of stumbling,”⁷⁸ the students acknowledged their awareness and understanding of the criticism without consenting to it as a valid one. Even while distancing their Anti-Slavery Society a little from Wattles’ actions, the students still affirmed the necessity of

⁷⁶ *Liberator*, June 7, 1834.

⁷⁷ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

their interactions, writing that “the objection is unintelligent and founded in prejudice.”⁷⁹ In addition, they argued that the instructors based their appeal to public opinion on faulty data, claiming that public opinion was divided on the matter of their interactions. Overall, the Lane students demonstrated their belief in Negro equality through their interactions and educational efforts.

The Lane students were not content with merely talking about abolition and the elevation of free blacks to full equality with whites. Accordingly, they went to work on behalf of black people in Cincinnati and around the nation. They established of an Anti-Slavery Society. The students wrote voluminously to promote abolition. Finally, the students went to work personally with the black population of Cincinnati and in national anti-slavery efforts.

The Lane students defined their goals as immediate abolitionists very carefully. This included a clear statement of their goals in the Constitution of the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society.⁸⁰ Leaving no doubt about their goals, the students described them in plain language, writing that “Our goal is the immediate emancipation of the whole colored race in the United States.”⁸¹ The students added further that their goals were not just emancipation from slavery but the emancipation from inequality between black and white in the United States, seeking equality for blacks in every conceivable way.

The abolitionists took great care to explain what sort of action they deemed to be worthy of their goal. Believing that abolition was inevitable, John Rankin responded to a key statement from the Lane Seminary faculty by explaining his view that two possible endings existed for slavery. One was peaceful and the other involved the massive shedding of blood in a North vs.

⁷⁹ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

⁸⁰ *Liberator*, May 31, 1834; reprinted from *New York Courier and Enquirer*.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

South civil war. In so doing, Rankin showed the importance of a peaceful solution, and argued that immediate abolition was the only way to save the country from “revolution and ruin.”

Rankin thus presented the abolitionists as the South’s true friends. Immediate emancipation would lead to slave education and preparation for life in the free society, neither of which would ever happen under gradual emancipation, Rankin argued. Overall, only immediate emancipation could spare the nation from all of the troubles of either forced emancipation or gradual emancipation.⁸²

The abolitionists spent considerable effort writing to overcome objections to abolition. This writing took various forms. Some pointed to prejudice as a cause, some pointed to the Declaration of Independence in terms of making abolition a real necessity, and some simply pointed back to the humanity of the slaves. Whatever the approach, the abolitionists in this media war were strikingly consistent in their writings.

Using language characteristic of the *Liberator*, the Lane students argued plainly that opponents of abolition based their opposition solely on prejudice against blacks. Writing that public opinion was divided regarding their associations with Cincinnati’s black population, the Lane students argued that associating with blacks was their only proper course. Referring to their actions as obedient to the “law of love,” the Lane students directly related their time with blacks to Jesus’ time spent with “publicans and sinners.”⁸³ Seeing it as their duty to imitate Christ, they could do nothing else but associate with the black population. Rooting this in deeper theology, the Lane students argued that Christ spent time with corrupted sinful people, and asked

⁸² *Liberator*, May 2, 1835.

⁸³ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

specifically how they could do less when the only difference involved not sin but the color of someone's skin.

At the American Anti-Slavery Society meeting of May 1834, Lane student Henry Stanton argued that Colonization did not recognize the equality of blacks. Alleging that this was rooted in prejudice, Stanton railed against the sin of prejudice, but also took time to argue that, like any other sin, a person could repent of prejudice. Through repentance, a person and society could overcome prejudice. Arguing that this prejudice left things in a hopeless state, Stanton proclaimed that not only could a person overcome prejudice, but also a blacks and whites could become brothers in both Christianity and in American society, each enjoying full equality in both spheres.⁸⁴

In the Preamble to the Constitution of the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society, the students published multiple reasons to oppose slavery. First of all, the students argued that slavery robbed a man of his opportunity to live life as a moral agent made in the image of God, and subjected that man to a degrading life that stymied their growth in every way. Writing of the feelings associated with slavery, the students argued that the institution created hostility towards the enslavers while transforming otherwise reasonable men into tyrants in their dealings with slaves. Referring to slavery as a crippling agent, the students wrote that it crippled the moral decisions of the slave, leading to a life of licentiousness that drained the nation of energy while creating much division. Sensing that slavery was opposed to the foundations of freedom espoused in the nation's founding documents, the students further argued that it was an impassable barrier for world evangelism that brought the United States under the judgment of

⁸⁴ *New York Evangelist*, May 17, 1834.

God.⁸⁵ Flush with reasons to oppose slavery, the students pressed their desire to see the immediate and full emancipation of slaves and free blacks alike.

The abolitionists remained consistently firm in their belief that blacks were human beings that needed to be free. With characteristic frankness, John Rankin stated in his response to the Lane faculty, “Freedom is the right of the slave.”⁸⁶ Rankin denounced this concept, noting with a special fire that some ministers in the South held onto their slaves for years, seeking not to free them here but to send them to Africa. On the contrary, Rankin argued, nobody should place any conditions on the slave when he is freed. The freed slave had the right to decide whether to remain in America as a free man or go to Liberia as a free man.

The nature of slavery and the need for equality were not the only subjects the abolitionists tackled. The abolitionists, including the Lane students themselves, also engaged in a discussion about the proper place and use of authority within a seminary. Much of this discussion took place in November 1834 as a reaction to the mass student exodus from Lane Seminary, in which approximately 80 of the school’s 100 students left the institution. While several sources weighed in on this discussion, Joshua Leavitt of the *New York Evangelist* took special interest in the subject, devoting space in every issue of the *Evangelist* in November 1834 to the topic. The abolitionists were concerned with proper authority within a seminary, and alarmed with a perceived abuse of authority at Lane Seminary. Finally, they took time to defend the students and their actions throughout the crisis.

To counter the notion that they were undercutting traditional authority structures, the abolitionists spent considerable time explaining their view of proper seminary authority. Their

⁸⁵ *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

⁸⁶ *Liberator*, May 2, 1835.

notions of proper seminary authority were strikingly similar to the non-abolitionists and the traditional religious papers, which helped to portray the striking power that the slavery issue already held.

Spelling out his views of seminary governance, Joshua Leavitt appealed both to his experiences at Yale and the age of the students at Lane, where only one was under 19 years old, and several had left careers to attend the school. Leavitt argued that students should not be governed like inmates in a prison, but rather in a paternal sort of rule. Pressing the claim, Leavitt argued that only this system could produce trained free men. Leavitt specified that only the faculty were fit for this sort of paternal government, due to their proximity and involvement with the students. At the same time, for the faculty to wield the authority necessary, they needed to have power. The school must vest all power in their hands, Leavitt argued. Trustees were never to interfere with faculty authority.⁸⁷

Responding to Professor Calvin Stowe, Leavitt wrote about two important topics related to seminary authority. Referring to his experience as a student at Yale, where he apparently took much interest in school government, Leavitt challenged Stowe's notion that the trustees never intended to supersede the faculty's authority. Noting that the faculty would have returned in a week or two, Leavitt challenged the idea that the actions were so urgent as to require drastic trustee intervention. Likening the modification of the trustee rules made by the trustees upon the faculty's return to a fifth wheel on a carriage, Leavitt argued that this would never have happened at Yale. At Yale, he wrote, the faculty would never consent to trustee involvement in a faculty matter, and reserved all powers of dismissal for themselves. Concerning the extent of the authority to expel a student, Leavitt argued that the students and school alike had made it clear

⁸⁷ *New York Evangelist*, November 1, 1834.

that the students broke no rules during their time at Lane and therefore should not be punished. Students should only be punished for actual wrongdoing, not for a perception of necessary action.⁸⁸

John Rankin agreed that the faculty should be the authority in a seminary. Rankin felt that students should absolutely yield to faculty authority, even though faculty could err. Rankin disputed the role played by the trustees in the matter, describing their actions as heavy-handed ones that crippled the institution, causing the enrollment to drop from 100 to 19 after their actions. In response to the school's claim that public opinion in Cincinnati made their actions necessary, Rankin questioned whether public opinion could really justify the trustees' drastic action.⁸⁹ This argument remained consistent with the abolitionist position that the opinion of the majority did not equate to correctness of opinion or action, and should be expected from an outspoken abolitionist.

Another facet of authority within the seminary involved the relationship between the faculty and trustees of a school. The abolitionists and colonizationists were in full agreement that the faculty should have the sole authority in running the school, interpreting laws, and handling student issues. They differed in their interpretation of the trustees' involvement at Lane Seminary in making rules and orders in response to the First Lane Debates.

Showing both the agreement and disagreement between the parties, the *New York Evangelist* published a letter from Professor Calvin Stowe explaining his view of the trustee actions and their relation to faculty authority. Leavitt published his own responses to Stowe. In his letter, Stowe wrote that the trustees' disavowed any notion of governing in place of the

⁸⁸ *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

⁸⁹ *Liberator*, May 2, 1835.

faculty, and demonstrated this in their willing revision of the rules upon the faculty's return. Challenging the role of both trustees and students in the governing of the school, Stowe argued that the laws at Lane clearly placed all authority for the interpretation of rules with the faculty. In his response, Leavitt wrote that the trustees had still placed themselves into an uncommon place of authority. Citing his Yale experience, Leavitt argued that the faculty at Yale and other schools did not recommend students to the trustees for dismissal. Rather, the faculty performed the dismissal themselves.⁹⁰

In another issue of the *Evangelist*, Leavitt delineated the roles of faculty and trustees. In a brief piece, Leavitt stated that his concern lay with which entity should actually govern the seminary. Leavitt argued that the trustees' role was to make rules, and the faculty role was to administer them. Under no circumstance should trustees violate this relationship, no matter the urgency, emotion, or perceived importance of any pressing issue. Faculty should oppose any move by trustees to interfere in this proper order to the point of resignation should trustees push beyond this given limit. Stating this as a universal principle for all schools, and specifically challenging those in New England, Leavitt minced no words in arguing that motives and desires were irrelevant to this principle, which must stand inviolate.⁹¹

After establishing their view of the place of authority, the Lane abolitionists established their view of the absolute yet limited role of seminary authority. In a statement explaining their decision to leave the Lane Seminary, the students argued for the necessity of authority and accountability. Applying these ideas to their own situation, they wrote, "Let just retribution overtake the wrongdoer; but let the guiltless pass unharmed."⁹² Accepting that people would

⁹⁰ *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

⁹¹ *New York Evangelist*, November 15, 1834.

⁹² *Liberator*, January 10, 1835.

break rules and deserve punishment, the students argued that the possibility of wrongdoing by others should not limit the freedom of those who are not doing wrong. Arguing that it is better for 1,000 guilty men to go free than for one innocent man to be punished by law, the students argued that the faculty had well exceeded the acceptable bounds of their authority by punishing students who had done no wrong.

An anonymous yet colorful letter to the *Liberator* equated the trustees' actions with tyranny. Writing with much admiration for the students, this anonymous Boston author claimed that it was "absolutely astonishing that such illiberal, tyrannical, and abominable 'orders'" could take place at that time in the 19th Century.⁹³ Comparing the trustees to "the darkest age of the Catholic Church," this writer felt that supporters of the school should cut it off from all support until it disavowed this inquisitional abuse of authority. As a supporter, this author vowed to do exactly that, believing that the entire culture of the Seminary corrupted by the trustee actions.

Joshua Leavitt wrote to spell out the extent of faculty authority. After repeating several times that he fully believed solely in faculty authority, Leavitt wrote that there was a limit on that authority. The faculty had the authority to compel obedience to the rules of the school, but could never compel obedience to their opinions, nor to any other person's opinions. Placing this in the context of the Lane Seminary, Leavitt wrote that the students would have obeyed had the faculty banned the meetings. Since the faculty had only advised them not to have the meetings, but had also insisted that they would allow it, the students had never disobeyed the faculty by discussing the slavery issue. Leavitt argued that the faculty could argue that the students did not follow their

⁹³ *Liberator*, November 8, 1834.

advice, but nobody at the school could claim that the students had rebelled against their authority, because the faculty never exercised that authority.⁹⁴

In the case of Lane Seminary, the abolitionists argued that the school's abuse of authority created all of the problems. Painting the trustees' actions as hasty and harsh, and pointing to their results, the abolitionists heavily criticized the trustees' steps. The abolitionists felt that the trustees' actions were far too hasty. Admitting that the trustees' focus had been to refocus the students on their theological education, the *Christian Secretary* described the trustee actions as decisive ones taken in the faculty's absence. The *Secretary* recognized that many students had withdrawn from the institution, but left unanswered the question of why the trustees would act when they did.⁹⁵

Leavitt questioned why the trustees would hurry if they did not want to rule the seminary. Disputing the idea from Stowe that the trustees showed their unwillingness to rule by submitting upon the faculty's return, Leavitt asked why they would need then to act in the first place, arguing that the words of the trustee laws clearly demonstrated their intention to rule in place of the faculty. Leavitt clearly saw this as a case of saying one thing and doing the other. Using the colorful example of the French monarchy during the French Revolution, Leavitt argued that the rulers claimed the authority to send people to the guillotine when public safety demanded it, but "history does not speak well of those customs."⁹⁶ Referring to the Lane students, Leavitt pointed out that they were free of any disobedience, and that the trustees' laws could remove obedient students without any form of due process. Concluding the article, Leavitt attributed the school's precipitous decline squarely to the trustees' abuse of authority.

⁹⁴ *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

⁹⁵ (New Haven, CT) *Christian Secretary*, November 22, 1834, hereafter *Christian Secretary*.

⁹⁶ *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

The abolitionists particularly pointed to the harshness of the trustees' actions. For his part, Joshua Leavitt described the rules as "extremely uncommon," adding that the faculty never sought these rules.⁹⁷ Leaving no doubt about his feelings, Leavitt described the rules as "oppressive" and "rigid beyond all example in this country."⁹⁸ Seeing the rules as ones that could easily repress all student discussion, Leavitt offered the possibility that a handful of students conversing after a class period could lead to disciplinary action or dismissal. He argued from there that this would not happen at any other school in the nation. Protesting specifically the rule that forbade student associations, Leavitt argued that this was one of the most common things that students would do at any college. In Leavitt's eyes, this ran counter to two important notions: the ideals of pursuing a liberal education, and the rights of any American to free discussion.

Garrison thundered his opposition to the trustee rules. Calling the power of expulsion a "new and extraordinary power" for the trustees, Garrison noted that they had brought Theodore Weld up for dismissal simply for introducing abolition to the seminary. Seeing a vestige of the oft-purported Slave Power conspiracy even in this, since one member of the Executive Committee spent considerable time living in Georgia, Garrison wrote that a vocal minority of trustees managed to have the action suspended. Garrison made certain to point out that Weld had not broken any rules at the school, nor had the executive committee accused him of doing so. The trustees would have expelled Weld simply for being an abolitionist. Although the action to expel him failed, Garrison wrote, Weld eventually felt compelled by the high-handed trustee actions to request his own dismissal.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ *New York Evangelist*, November 1, 1834.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Liberator*, November 1, 1834.

John Rankin expressed amazement that the trustees could expel a student for speaking on abolition. Calling this “rare and unprecedented,” Rankin saw this as a ruling that would not occur anywhere else in the Protestant world.¹⁰⁰ Describing this as a “short method of doing business,” Rankin expressed his outrage at the complete lack of due process for students, especially for students never before accused of wrongdoing.¹⁰¹ In Rankin’s eyes, these actions were very plainly a great and convenient way for the seminary to purge itself of abolitionists and the controversy their issue brought.

The abolitionists punctuated their writing on authority by presenting the results of the trustee actions. With his characteristic bluntness, Garrison flatly placed all blame for the seminary’s troubles at the feet of the faculty and trustees. In a short article written to discuss the Lane students’ piece explaining their reasons for leaving the seminary, Garrison drew a firm distinction between the school and its students. Writing that his reading of the students’ letter left his eyes filled with tears, Garrison declared the students worthy to “preach the truth as it is in Jesus.”¹⁰² Raving at the writing talent shown by the student writers, Garrison lifted up the students as paramount examples of the power of language well-used. In marked contrast, Garrison invoked the imagery of the French Revolution in describing the faculty and trustee actions, writing that the “Lane Seminary is now to be regarded strictly as a Bastille of Oppression—a Spiritual Inquisition.”¹⁰³ Specifically naming Dr. Lyman Beecher, Garrison ruled the school’s actions as “disgraceful,” remarking that they were not worthy of the President’s character. With his powerful use of language, Garrison managed both to commend and condemn Beecher’s character. Overall, Garrison’s use of language reflected the intensity of the conflict as

¹⁰⁰ *Liberator*, May 2, 1835.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Liberator*, January 3, 1835.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

it developed around the Lane students while showing none of the restraint that the students themselves exhibited.

The students and their supporters in the abolitionist press wrote enthusiastically and prolifically. They left no doubt that they considered the slaves to be actual human beings who deserved to enjoy freedom as white people did. They demonstrated the horror of the slave's condition. The Lane abolitionists made it clear that they stood for the immediate emancipation of the slaves. To this point ideologically, though, there was no reason for division from the school and their professors. The students agreed that the faculty should govern the school. The next chapter will show that the Lane abolitionists and the non-abolitionists shared substantive agreement on the issues of slavery, African-American equality, and seminary governance.

Chapter Three: Conserve or Convert? The Colonizationists' Struggle

After the students raced to the press, the non-abolitionists found themselves dismayed both by the energy the students displayed as well as the attacks they received from abolitionists.¹⁰⁴ This surge of new abolitionist writing initially caught them by surprise, which left them slow to respond. Even so, the non-abolitionists did join the Second Lane Debate by publishing their responses to the new crusaders. This response included their focus on the issues of slavery and African-American equality and a strong reliance on the proper place and role of authority within a seminary. The non-abolitionists concluded by relating seminary authority directly to the discussion of slavery.

The Lane Seminary representatives in this public discussion were normally the faculty members, especially Dr. Calvin Stowe. These men had devoted their lives to building this school in order to train up pastors and missionaries for the West. They watched their work blossom through the growth of the library, the increasingly stable financial situation, and the attraction of this large and gifted student body. Just as the seminary seemed to be thriving, along came this controversy threatening both the work of the school and possibly its very existence.

While the first debates themselves did not seem to shake the seminary's foundation by themselves, the second debate certainly did. By the time Lane representatives responded in the press, they have watched that very purpose be shaken to the core. As the controversy developed, they watched as their beloved, abolitionists attacked and criticized their blessed school from all sides. Abolitionists criticized their caution. Cincinnati citizens criticized their boldness in

¹⁰⁴ My intention with the term 'non-abolitionist' is not to portray these writers as sympathizers with slavery. Some of these writers embraced colonization and some offered no opinion on the slavery issue. This grouping reflects that they did not support the immediate emancipation of the slaves. The term is not intended to indicate that these writers embraced slavery or held any affection for the system.

allowing the students' relationships with the town's free black population. The board was growing restless with the trouble. As this phase of the controversy reached its denouement, the faculty watched this long-awaited class depart the school entirely, leaving it barely able to function and survive.

Several print media outlets joined the faculty in their response. These included some explicitly colonizationist newspapers as well as some newspapers that were not aligned with the abolitionist mission. Some of these papers participated by publishing documents from the Lane faculty. Some seemed simply to engage in editorial rivalries. The most notable example of this was the *Boston Recorder's* continuing battle with the *New York Evangelist*. Others seized the opportunity to publicize the colonizationist cause, often through their direct response to the Lane students.

In the midst of that development, we might expect the faculty and Lane representatives to fire back through the press, attacking those who were destroying their seminary and discrediting their work. On the contrary, and true to their theological confession, the faculty members continued to care for their students. Their affection for their students did not waver. The faculty exhibited a willingness to state clearly where they agreed with the students and here they differed, but they continually did so with a reformatory purpose, not a retributive one. The faculty and their colleagues continually demonstrated a desire to see the seminary rebuilt and restored, with that student body in place. They offered a steady response, responding later than the students and not nearly as prolifically. At all times, they showed a remarkably restrained approach to the debate.

The non-abolitionists outside of Lane, however, responded with fire and intensity. Having no particular interest in restoring the seminary to her former state of growth, they wrote much more radically and vehemently. While the Lane respondents wrote mostly with a local picture in mind, purposing to maintain the old status quo on their local scale, their “partners” in the press were writing to keep the purpose of the American Colonization Society alive. These “partners” maintained their more pessimistic outlook regarding abolition and the ability of blacks and whites to live together peacefully, which made it necessary to keep the idea of colonization at the forefront. This convergence of conservative interests is at the heart of the non-abolitionist response to the Lane students.

Non-abolitionist papers included discussion about slavery and black equality. The Lane faculty or trustees wrote most of the colonizationist pieces in this phase of the public debate. In these pieces, the faculty and trustees agreed with the students that slavery was a horrible evil existing in the United States, and an affront to a holy God. In keeping with their position as authority figures, the faculty and trustees focused most of their attention on the issues of authority within a school and the proper role of a seminary. Their writings reflected the dominant roles that they played in the institution as well as the enormous challenge they faced in the disagreement with the students and the public attention that their students received.

The non-abolitionist papers published strong opinions on the matter of slavery. These papers approached the subject much differently than did the abolitionist papers. While the abolitionists urged the immediate emancipation of the slaves, the non-abolitionist papers urged caution on the sensitive matter. The *Western Luminary* printed a letter from Professor Biggs of Lane Seminary in which he expressed his regret that Christians ever entered into the

“controversial and belligerent” controversy over slavery.¹⁰⁵ Even in this brief writing, it was clear that the abolitionist criticisms of colonization hurt Biggs deeply, especially the idea that Colonization Societies had to be rendered extinct in order for abolition to press forward. Writing as a colonizationalist, Biggs wrote, “The abolition of slavery was one of the elementary principles upon which the Colonization Society was founded.”¹⁰⁶

Other colonizationists also insisted that they opposed slavery as well as division among Christians. Writing that the Lane Seminary Colonization Society ultimately sought the same objectives as the abolitionist, a member of that Society wrote, “we earnestly desire to see slavery brought to a speedy termination,” and that the members intended to devote their efforts in the Society to hastening the coming of that day.¹⁰⁷ The LSCS reiterated their common belief with the abolitionists that the slave was very much a man, a human being, and as such, deserved the same freedom that white people enjoyed. Additionally, they committed themselves to moral suasion as the strategy by which to see slavery end. At the same time, the Colonization Society believed that colonizationist had done well in bringing former slaves to freedom and establishing new homes in Liberia and did not wish to see that work destroyed. As they colorfully put it, “Nor do we wish to see Liberia ‘sunk to the hollows of the sea.’”¹⁰⁸ The Lane Seminary Colonization Society wanted to see the forward push of ending slavery without destroying the work that had previously been done. In particular, they felt that the abolitionists would have done much better and helped humanity to advance more quickly had they not introduced their opposition to the American Colonization Society, which created feelings of bitterness among Christians.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ (Lexington, KY) *Western Luminary*, August 13, 1834.

¹⁰⁶ *Western Luminary*, August 13, 1834.

¹⁰⁷ (New York City, NY) *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834, hereafter *New York Observer*.

¹⁰⁸ *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

¹⁰⁹ *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

The fateful committee appointed by the Executive Committee of the Trustees of Lane Seminary in August 1834 saw slavery and abolition as vitally important topics for discussion. Due to the importance of these topics, the committee urged caution in their consideration, especially as a matter that had “thwarted the wisdom of the ablest and best men in the country.”¹¹⁰ Feeling that paying too much attention to the divisive issues would bring discredit to the school and an enormous distraction to the lives of the students, this committee urged that the students and faculty keep the subject of slavery out of Lane Seminary.¹¹¹

Still, in response to the First Debates, the non-abolitionist papers had much to say about slavery and the equality of black people in the United States. With a strong interest in the Lane Seminary dating back to its founding, the *Ohio Observer* quickly became involved. In reporting frankly about the brutality of slavery, the *Ohio Observer* printed a widely circulated letter from Lane Seminary student and ex-slave James Bradley. Following a description of his life from the onset of his captivity in Africa to his sale in South Carolina, Bradley described his life in slavery, Bradley described his master as a “wonderfully kind master” who treated him well, sparing him from the whip, although he “tormented with kicks and knocks more than I can tell.”¹¹² Bradley continued, explaining that even though he never lacked for food, he often lacked proper clothing, and had at least once been beaten badly enough that his master thought he had died.¹¹³ From James Bradley, the readers of a non-abolitionist paper such as the *Ohio Observer* could gain a first-hand personal account of the reality of slavery. At the same time, it showed an area of agreement between the student Bradley, an abolitionist, and the colonizationists at Lane Seminary.

¹¹⁰ *New York Observer*, September 20, 1834.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² (Hudson, OH) *Ohio Observer*, November 20, 1834, hereafter *Ohio Observer*.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

The Lane Seminary Colonization Society, viewing slavery as a sin and “curse of curses,” and fully aware of the testimony of their student James Bradley, still showed that they could they could hate slavery, teach a former slave, and yet carry on with the goal of colonization. Believing that blacks’ reaching full equality with whites in America was ideal but highly unlikely, the Lane Seminary Colonization Society set forth the benefits of colonization in pursuing that course as a goal. Colonization, they wrote, would bring the Gospel to Africa and eventually effect the same reformations there that had occurred in America.¹¹⁴ Essentially, colonization would bring about an African Great Awakening.

Overall, non-abolitionist papers took varying views about equality for American blacks. While many non-abolitionist papers argued that blacks deserved equality, this was not a universally held view. In particular, the *Religious Intelligencer* presented a statement from the Lane faculty that Negro equality was not a common belief even in Cincinnati.¹¹⁵ As word of the student meetings spread through the city and the students took action on their new beliefs, three incidents in particular brought attention to the racial division of Cincinnati. In one instance, one of the Lane students who was engaged in teaching in a school for blacks boarded overnight in a black home. The student believed that this helped to demonstrate the equality of the two races while giving him a chance to minister to that family. In another instance, several black females came to campus in a carriage to visit some of the male students. Finally, Lane student Augustus Wattles was seen walking with one of his black female students, although each claimed that their meeting was purely accidental. By combining the division of the sexes in antebellum schools

¹¹⁴ *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

¹¹⁵ (New Haven, CT) *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835, hereafter *Religious Intelligencer*.

with the racial element, this became a particular source of exaggerations and rumors, creating much excitement in the community.¹¹⁶

Illustrating the ideological divide in Cincinnati, the Lane Seminary Colonization Society published their constitution in the *New York Observer*. Again, the Society made clear their belief that the “colored man *is a man*, and capable of enjoying all the immunities of self-government.”¹¹⁷ Of course, they did have questions as to whether equality between the races was possible in the United States. It seems likely that the divided opinions within their own city played a role in their unease over that subject. Perhaps partially based on their experiences at home, the Lane Seminary Colonization Society insisted that colonization needed to be the mandatory condition for the emancipation of slaves in America.¹¹⁸

While Cincinnati was divided about racial equality, and the Lane Seminary itself was divided between colonizationist and abolitionists, former slave James Bradley wrote that blacks were treated as equals at Lane Seminary.¹¹⁹ In his testimony, Bradley noted that his Bible knowledge and his overall educational background were less than one would expect for that level of education, but that the school admitted him anyway. In his own words, “But in all respects I am treated just as kindly, and as much like a brother by the students, as if my skin were as white, and my education as good as their own. Thanks to the Lord, prejudice against color does not exist at Lane Seminary.”¹²⁰ This treatment did not change due to anyone’s position on slavery.

James Bradley’s letter also served as a strong answer to any who questioned whether slaves would prefer freedom or continued life in slavery. Not content to write of the desire for

¹¹⁶ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835.

¹¹⁷ *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ohio Observer*, November 20, 1834.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

freedom as one that only he held, Bradley wrote that he “did not believe there ever was a slave who did not long for liberty.”¹²¹ Noting that the slaves will not mention that desire within earshot of their masters, knowing the fate that would come upon them for so doing, Bradley wrote that freedom was the sole topic of conversation when slaves were alone. Freedom, he wrote, “is the great thought and feeling that fills the mind full all the time.”¹²²

Although Bradley wrote of the slaves’ desire for freedom, there were some in the United States who questioned whether a slave had the ability to work for their freedom. Answering this objection, Bradley shared the path that he took to secure his own freedom. Writing of his work after his master’s death, Bradley shared that his master’s wife kept him on, and that he eventually rose to managing all of her affairs. After his appointed work hours, Bradley worked in manufacturing small things in his own small home and selling them, usually sleeping three to four hours each night. Bradley kept up this pace until he had earned enough money to purchase his freedom, and then went quickly to the first free state he could, which was Ohio.¹²³

In the process of earning his way towards freedom, Bradley strove to overcome one of the other main obstacles that kept slaves tied into servitude. Bradley spent time learning to write, even though his owner, who was concerned that his writing would lead him to write a pass to get away from the plantation, abruptly canceled his lessons.¹²⁴ Not willing to surrender his desire, Bradley took what he had learned and taught himself to write on his own time. Thus, Bradley was able to demonstrate that a slave could not only desire freedom, but could identify the measures necessary to get it, and work his way to freedom despite every obstacle placed in his

¹²¹ *Ohio Observer*, November 20, 1834.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

way. Again, Bradley's experience demonstrated basic areas of agreement between the abolitionists and colonizationists.

As the controversy around the Lane Seminary continued, the non-abolitionist papers placed considerable attention on the role of authority in a seminary. The student discussions and their fallout had brought several questions into the national arena concerning the role of authority within a seminary and to whom it would belong: students, trustees, or the faculty. This discussion has led at least one historian to treat the Debates as a sort of coming-of-age for a younger generation seeking its voice in opposition to the generation in power.¹²⁵ The newspaper articles discussing the issue lent some credibility to that idea, as they largely revealed that those seated in authoritative positions such as faculty, editors, or society heads tended to take a different view than did the Lane students. At this point in the Second Debate, non-abolitionists attempted to argue that the student based their actions in a rebellion against authority rather than an ideological drive to eliminate slavery.

Specifically, the non-abolitionists emphasized the authority of a school's faculty. Explaining their delayed entry into the Lane controversy, the *Religious Intelligencer* wrote that they had no doubts of the importance of faculty authority, and saw no need to spend much time inquiring into the controversy in the first place, seeing that the seminary was "in the hands of wise, judicious men."¹²⁶ In an exceptionally strong statement of the importance of faculty authority, the *Intelligencer* claimed that it would be "better, far better, (to) dismiss every student, and raze the buildings to the ground, than to give up the government into the hands of those who

¹²⁵ Gale L. Kenny, *Contentious Liberties: American Abolitionists in Post-Emancipation Jamaica* (Athens, GA and London: University of Georgia Press, 2010): 30-36.

¹²⁶ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835.

are not willing to be governed by wholesome laws.”¹²⁷ While obviously referencing the unwilling as the students at the seminary, the *Intelligencer* indicated a general distrust of abolitionists, referring to them as “misguided,” with “mistaken zeal” that would “set the world on fire” if it were not controlled by a proper authority.¹²⁸

Non-abolitionists stayed united in their belief that the proper place of authority in a school was with the faculty. In a widely circulated letter, Professor Calvin Stowe of the Lane Seminary defended the role of faculty authority in a seminary. Responding to the notion that the trustees had assumed control of the school from the faculty, Stowe referred to the laws in the school’s book of statutes, which stated clearly that the faculty members were the “sole interpreters of the laws of the institution; and the *execution of these laws.....shall rest entirely with them.*”¹²⁹ Stowe continued by describing this rule as “a fundamental and unalterable principle” for the governing of the seminary.¹³⁰ Stowe indicated a clear and strong agreement by both faculty and trustees on this issue, writing also that the trustees willingly subordinated themselves to the authority of the faculty upon their return from fund-raising trips to the East.

In a combined statement by the Lane faculty published in the *Liberator*, the faculty presented a united front in declaring the faculty’s rule in the seminary. Recounting the students’ request for the meetings of the preceding February, the faculty presented their reasons for advising postponement of such meetings, feeling that the subject was too controversial and too likely to create divisions among the students.¹³¹ Never admonishing the students, though disagreeing with their decision to hold the meetings, the combined faculty acknowledged the

¹²⁷ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 3, 1835.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

legitimate role of the trustees to create the rules and orders set in place in August 1834. At the same time, the faculty members made it clear that the execution of the rules was only to be decided and supervised by the faculty and no one else.¹³²

Noting the attention garnered by the events at Lane Seminary, the *Vermont Chronicle* expressed its hope, now dashed, that the theological seminaries could have helped to spare the United States from an explosion of this issue into public debate. The *Vermont Chronicle* wrote that pupils have historically been under the authority of their teachers, who assumed an *in loco parentis* role for adult students enrolled in a college or seminary. In the case of the Lane Debates, the *Vermont Chronicle* wrote that students had clearly proven that they were not yet fit for governance of a seminary, and such influence on their part was destructive to the purpose and continuance of the seminary.¹³³ Taking time to describe the parental role of the faculty, the *Chronicle* noted that the faculty was bound to make rules and to exercise authority, an extension of the authority contained in their divinely sanctioned position.¹³⁴

In the specific case of the Lane Seminary, Dr. Stowe reported that the “government of the seminary is entirely in the hands of the faculty,” disavowing any effort on the part of the trustees to usurp the faculty’s authority.¹³⁵ Stowe continued with confidence, stating that the trustees had willingly amended their rules concerning the expulsion of students to read that the trustees could expel students only upon the recommendation of the faculty, making it clear that the faculty were the decision makers. Acknowledging that the Debates and their fallout brought about a massive

¹³² *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

¹³³ *Vermont Chronicle*, November 14, 1834.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 3, 1835.

departure from Lane Seminary, with roughly 80 percent of the student body accepting dismissals from the school, Stowe wrote that it could have been much worse overall.¹³⁶

Non-abolitionists argued that faculty rule was a normal condition for schools. The *Boston Recorder*, a frequent foe of the *New York Evangelist*, wrote plainly that faculty rule was the norm for schools all over. Challenging the *Evangelist*, the *Recorder* claimed to be unable to think of a single school where the students disobeyed as blatantly as had the Lane students in carrying on the debates. The *Recorder* especially saw this disobedience in the formation of an Anti-Slavery Society against the wishes of their faculty. Without exception, the *Recorder* considered faculty authority to be the normal condition of schools.¹³⁷

Even in the *Liberator*, no friend to non-abolitionists, described faculty rule as customary. In a declaration from the combined faculty members of Lane Seminary, the faculty argued that there was nothing in the situation, or especially in the trustees' rules, that was not common to any well-regulated college.¹³⁸ Recognizing the duty inherent in their position, the faculty members expressed their desire to govern the seminary well and wisely. Making specific reference to the debate over free speech in the institution, the faculty wrote that they heartily approved of free speech and discussion in the seminary, but that their rules in the matter were designed to provide focus to that free speech.¹³⁹ In this case, to do this required the faculty to suspend discussion on slavery and abolition in order to focus the students on their immediate studies.

¹³⁶ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 3, 1835.

¹³⁷ (Boston, MA) *Boston Recorder*, November 7, 1834, hereafter *Boston Recorder*.

¹³⁸ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

The non-abolitionists saw no restrictions on faculty authority. In regards to the controversial order that originally established the authority of removal in the trustees, the *Boston Recorder* wrote that there was no such law at that time.¹⁴⁰ With the clarifications that the trustees had made upon the return of the faculty, authority resided entirely within the faculty, who would make recommendations regarding the expulsion of students to the trustees. On a linguistic technicality, the *Recorder* argued that the laws never considered *expulsion*, which entailed disgrace for the expelled student, but a simple *dismissal*, which did not necessarily imply disgrace or punishment. Whatever the description, though, the *Recorder* clearly sided with the power of the faculty to remove students when necessary.

Non-abolitionists stressed that faculty needed to be competent in order to exercise such power. In a widely published letter, Professor Stowe set forth again the need for faculty authority while stressing the need for student restraint and obedience. Stowe argued that students were just as incompetent as trustees to govern the seminary. With two of the three possibilities eliminated, Stowe continued to discuss the importance of faculty competence. Placing this competence largely in the context of the ability to resist student pressure, Stowe wrote plainly “if a faculty is not fit to be entrusted with so much authority, they ought to be removed.”¹⁴¹

Given the context of the Lane events and the attention that they brought to the concept of authority, it was natural for the non-abolitionists to relate faculty authority to student authority. To bring clarity to their actions, the faculty members gave several reasons for their actions in this case. Interestingly, none of these were uncomplimentary towards the students or referred to them as acting in a rebellious manner. The faculty members were careful to state that their

¹⁴⁰ *Boston Recorder*, November 14, 1834.

¹⁴¹ *Vermont Chronicle*, December 5, 1834.

recommendation to postpone the debates was never based in quarrels between the faculty and the students. Their recommendation was not due to the potential for distraction from the students' studies, writing that they had never dealt with a group of students with more "power of mind" or ability to acquire knowledge. Nor was this recommendation based on the students' character, for the faculty wrote that they "acted under the influence of piety and conscience."¹⁴² The faculty wrote that they did not have either hostility towards abolition or a fear of opposition within the racially divided city of Cincinnati. Rather, the faculty did not wish to introduce such a divisive subject into the seminary, or especially to subject the seminary itself to taking a stand on such a divisive issue.¹⁴³

The *Religious Intelligencer* was direct with their belief that all of the problems in Cincinnati were direct results of the students' disobedience. This included the initial debates themselves and included all of the disturbances in Cincinnati related to the students' relationships with the cities' Negro residents. All of this, the *Intelligencer* reported, was due to the reckless enthusiasm shown by these students in their haste to take action on their new beliefs. The *Intelligencer* cautioned against misguided zeal that sought to set the world on.¹⁴⁴ Essentially, the paper painted a picture in which the city was not facing any racial unrest or controversy prior to these students acting out in opposition to the faculty's advice.

The *Boston Recorder* took an especially strong view of the subversive nature of student influence and authority. Continuing its perpetual media disagreement with Joshua Leavitt's *New York Evangelist*, the *Recorder* wrote sarcastically of the responsibility that Leavitt gave to the students to keep the faculty in check. With tongue in cheek, the *Recorder* noted Leavitt's

¹⁴² *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835.

arguments for the need for student involvement in school decisions, writing that surely it was necessary, since it was a normal and inevitable condition at every school for the faculty to take a despotic turn to total control over all student discussions. In response to Leavitt's claim that the faculty can err, the *Recorder* asked whether the students, being less experienced and learned, could err even more.¹⁴⁵

In particular, the *Recorder* also called into question the abolitionists as a whole, questioning the validity of their recruiting practices. Calling Leavitt and his co-workers into question, the *Recorder* criticized his practice of recruiting young men during their seminary studies to the abolitionist cause. Arguing that such a practice might legitimately be done in accordance with their teachers, the *Recorder* wrote that Leavitt purposely circumvented the faculty of the schools from which he recruited, encouraging students to establish anti-slavery societies and to take anti-slavery actions without consulting their faculties.¹⁴⁶ Referring to the Lane Seminary, the *Recorder* wrote that the government of the school had been "suddenly wrenched from the hands of the Faculty" and placed into the hands of abolitionists, especially Joshua Leavitt and his New York co-workers.¹⁴⁷

The non-abolitionist papers then ran several articles to explain how faculty authority was executed in the school and seminary setting. The discussion began with a thorough treatment of the trustee actions of August 29, 1834. The *New York Observer* published a report from the Executive Committee of the Trustees of the Lane Seminary, originally printed in the *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, in which the trustees argued flatly that their actions were necessary, because the students would not let the subject go voluntarily, despite all the advice of the faculty to focus on

¹⁴⁵ *Boston Recorder*, November 7, 1834.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

their studies instead.¹⁴⁸ Believing that allowing the students to continue down this path would bring division to the school while damaging its very reputation, the trustees deemed it necessary to disband the anti-slavery society that the students had established. In addition, they felt it necessary to forbid discussions about slavery for the purpose of focusing the young men on their education.

While the trustees expressed their desire to wait on implementing these new rules, they showed a sense of urgency for a problem they felt needed to be resolved. With the faculty out of town during the summer, the trustees saw no choice but to take action at that time, even though they intended to wait for the faculty's arrival before executing the rules.¹⁴⁹ Of course, that made communication much slower and less possible with the urgency the trustees felt, so they took action.

Responding to criticisms, the trustees stated their intentions in taking their actions. Publishing the same widely circulated statement just seen from the *New York Observer*, the *Religious Intelligencer* took up the trustees' cause. Still recognizing the real authority of the faculty, the trustees wrote that their purpose with these actions was to "sufficiently indicate to the students, the course which the trustees are determined to pursue."¹⁵⁰ Therefore, they were postponing formal enactment of the rules, but the students could be certain that these rules were forthcoming.

Professor Stowe responded to that same criticism in a letter to the *New York Evangelist*. Upon seeing a criticism of his school in the *Evangelist*, Stowe felt compelled to answer it, challenging the *Evangelist* to publish his reply. In that reply, Stowe wrote that "the trustees have

¹⁴⁸ *New York Observer*, September 20, 1834.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Religious Intelligencer*, October 4, 1834.

uniformly disclaimed all intention of interfering with the internal concerns of the seminary, and of ‘acting over the heads of the faculty’ in any respect.”¹⁵¹ According to Stowe, the trustees were fully aware and in agreement with standard limitations on their office, and fully recognized the faculty’s authority in the seminary. Defending the honor of the trustees’ position, Stowe wrote that they immediately and willingly accepted his and Dr. Beecher’s authority upon their return from the East. The trustees showed this especially in the modification of the second order, in which the faculty inserted that the trustees could dismiss students after a recommendation for dismissal by the faculty.¹⁵² Overall, the cumulative effect of the trustee actions, Stowe argued was to regulate control of the slavery discussion to the complete discretion of the faculty and no one else.

The non-abolitionists continued by explaining their view of student relations in the seminary. They began by describing their reasons for this authority and the process for their decisions. With actions described by the *Religious Intelligencer* as having “all the kindness and affection of parents,” the faculty had set out to counsel the students through discussion, not punishment, about the nature of their course following the discussions.¹⁵³ Following the establishment of the Abolition Society, the faculty gathered the students for a discussion about this action. They advised that the education of free blacks could continue without issue, but that the Cincinnati community would not endure certain things, such as Augustus Wattles’ boarding with a black family. Continuing this action would damage the seminary’s standing in the community, the faculty stated. After other incidents, such as walking with a Negro woman and the Negro women who visited the students at the seminary, the faculty met with the students. In a

¹⁵¹ *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834; see also *Vermont Chronicle*, December 5, 1834; *Religious Intelligencer*, January 3, 1835.

¹⁵² *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

¹⁵³ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835.

very parental tone, they pressed upon the students the purpose for the theological seminary and the need to stay faithful to that purpose, and to honor those who contributed to making the seminary possible. The faculty then reminded the students that, irrespective of their ages upon entering the school, they had voluntarily chosen to submit themselves to the authority of this institution. As such, they needed to review their actions to see if they truly aligned with the seminary's mission.¹⁵⁴

The *Vermont Chronicle* offered a theological basis for their view of faculty authority. Tracing the problem of rebellion all the way back to the Fall of Man, the *Chronicle* proclaimed that things had been going correctly prior to the meetings and their aftermath, and that the students' refusal to obey proper faculty authority was the root of all of the subsequent problems.¹⁵⁵ Seeing teachers in a divinely appointed authority role, the *Chronicle* quickly considered it right that the students would obey their professors, writing that they required no long deliberation or complicated reasoning to do so. God had decreed a certain authoritative structure and students were to submit to it properly.¹⁵⁶ In their view, the students agreed to this voluntarily when they entered the Lane Seminary.

For his part, Professor Stowe personally questioned the validity of students having a role in seminary governance. Building his argument on the need for faculty authority over trustee authority, Stowe wrote, "students are quite as incompetent as trustees, to say the least of it, to intermeddle in the government of literary institutions."¹⁵⁷ It was imperative, Stowe wrote, for students to yield their opinions to those of the faculty, and not vice versa. Further, this was essential for schools to function properly. In his letter, Stowe showed a very authoritative view

¹⁵⁴ *Religious Intelligencer*, January 17, 1835.

¹⁵⁵ *Vermont Chronicle*, November 14, 1834.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *New York Evangelist*, November 29, 1834.

of the relationship between students and faculty, which really could be expected from an authority figure present on the scene of the events.

Returning to the students' request for the meetings, the faculty published their reasons for recommending a postponement of the student meetings.¹⁵⁸ The faculty began their list of reasons with a mention of the controversial nature of slavery itself, and the subject's uncanny ability to distract a person's attention from other important matters, such as their studies. Additionally, the faculty appealed to the divisive nature of the slavery issue, both in terms of its potential to create division among the student body and its ability to place the seminary in an uncomfortable position of taking sides on the controversial issue. Hinting at the example of the Oneida Institute, which had undergone some upheavals after such meetings, the faculty noted that there was already an example in front of them of the potential destructive power of these meetings for a school. Therefore, it was not necessary at that present time to have an unnecessary discussion with the strong likelihood of major problems as a result, and no evils would come from a postponement.¹⁵⁹

In terms of the relative authority of opinions, the non-abolitionist papers were unified in their desire to hear the opinions of the instructors over those of the students. The *New York Observer* referenced the trip from Stanton and Thome to speak at the American Anti-Slavery Society meeting in New York City, and especially the idea that the two students would enlighten unconvinced people from their ignorance. The *Observer* wrote plainly, "If the opinion of these boys are of so much consequence, perhaps the public will deem it of some interest to know what their instructors think on the same subject."¹⁶⁰ Adding to the discussion, the *Vermont Chronicle*

¹⁵⁸ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *New York Observer*, June 28, 1834. Reprinted in the *Episcopal Recorder* (Philadelphia, PA), July 5, 1834.

based its opinion also in the objectivity the instructors could bring to light, as they attended Colonization meetings as well as the meetings held by the students. Based on this potential objectivity as well as a reference to the common experience of anyone who has met college students, the *Chronicle* argued that it was plain whose opinion should carry the most weight.¹⁶¹

The same papers also weighed in on the public nature of this controversy. The *Vermont Chronicle* expressed its wish that this conflict could have been settled behind closed doors rather than in the public arena, and hoped that this could yet be possible.¹⁶² In fact, the *Chronicle* saw this as part of a greater trouble that had been threatening to burst forth around the country and now was exploding due to the Lane Seminary students. As the controversy progressed, the event garnered more and more attention, which simply and surely kept the fires of the story burning.

The faculty addressed the public nature of the conflict, writing that this was the first time a student dispute had been fueled by outsiders, and certainly viewed this as an unwelcome precedent. The faculty listed numerous outside sources that continued to fuel this controversy in its most public fashion, including “religious newspapers, and religious men, and Christian ministers, upon partial information.”¹⁶³ Decidedly unhappy with the results and the public intrusions into seminary matters, the faculty expressed their hope that this example would rein in the abolitionists somewhat whenever and wherever their next controversy might erupt.

In their reporting on the slavery issue and the Lane controversy, the non-abolitionist papers further focused on whether slavery and abolition were proper topics for discussion at a seminary. Several papers launched into a discussion over the proper role of a seminary. The *Boston Recorder* warned of serious trouble for theological education in the United States due to

¹⁶¹ *Vermont Chronicle*, July 4, 1834.

¹⁶² *Vermont Chronicle*, November 14, 1834.

¹⁶³ *Liberator*, January 17, 1835.

violation of a very simple principle. Students were to spend their time in their learning, not in relating their learning to the world around them or spending valuable study time engaged in ministry tasks.¹⁶⁴ The *Recorder* expressed its confidence that the most practical of the ministers to emerge from theological schools were those who spent their time in their studies, spending valuable time to concentrate and fully grasp what they were learning.

Professor Biggs of Lane Seminary questioned whether a seminary was the proper venue for this discussion, while acknowledging the importance of the subject. In a brief statement, Biggs took pains to show his concern over the issue of slavery, calling it a “deep and vital interest” that needed to be addressed and would be addressed by the ablest minds of the nation.¹⁶⁵ While the students obviously answered that question with a resounding “Yes,” Biggs urged much more caution for the seminary. Seeing slavery and abolition as themes with the potential to be all-absorbing, Biggs urged that these topics not become the driving force of discussion within the seminary. After all, the students had come to prepare for ministry, and this topic did threaten to distract them from that powerful goal.

The *Portsmouth Journal* disapproved of the meetings due to their ruinous effects. Calling the subject “exciting” in terms of the emotional reaction that it created, and calling the meetings “extremely injudicious” in terms of the students’ judgment, the *Journal* wrote briefly of the effects of the meetings.¹⁶⁶ The *Journal* chiefly concerned itself with the effects on relationships between students and between students and the school. Writing of the divisive power of slavery discussions, the *Journal* wrote that the meetings and their aftermath were giving birth to dissension among Christian brothers, and separating the closest of friends. Relating the troubles

¹⁶⁴ *Boston Recorder*, September 18, 1834.

¹⁶⁵ *Western Luminary*, August 13, 1834.

¹⁶⁶ (Portsmouth, NH) *Portsmouth Journal*, November 8, 1834, hereafter *Portsmouth Journal*.

to the school, the paper mentioned the staggering rates of withdrawal among the students. The *Journal* paid special attention to the theological department, which boasted 40 students at the beginning of the 1833-34 school year, and was entering the next with two.

As a newspaper very much committed to Christian evangelism, and in a column placed next to an evangelistic tract, the *Vermont Chronicle* complained of the students' efforts to "turn the world upside down," language used in the Bible to describe the missionary work of the Apostle Paul in Thessalonica.¹⁶⁷ Harkening to their position on students and authority, the *Chronicle* argued clearly that the students were not fit to run the school. Rather, the students were there to submit to the authority of the school. Since the faculty had advised not to proceed with the slavery discussion, the students should not have proceeded.

In the eyes of the Executive Committee, a topic as divisive as slavery simply had no place within a seminary. With no desire to take a partisan stand on a divisive issue, the Executive Committee stated their concern that such a stand would cause the school to lose its influence and in fact "bring discredit upon the cause of education and religion."¹⁶⁸ Looking forward to the products of the seminary, the committee expressed great concern that they would send forth contentious partisans rather than instruments of God's kindness and grace, people looking more for conflict than a ministry of reconciliation. This would be the outcome, they argued, because the slavery issue would prove itself too consuming for the students and occupy too much of their time and attention.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ *Vermont Chronicle*, November 14, 1834; Acts 17:6.

¹⁶⁸ *New York Observer*, September 20, 1834.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Along with writing about the proper role of the seminary, the non-abolitionist papers published pieces about the proper purpose of a seminary, as well as the proper execution of that purpose. In his 1833 speech to the College of Professional Teachers, published by the *United States Telegraph*, Professor Stowe taught that the purpose of education was to gain disciplined control over ones' mind in order to influence others later. To gain this discipline, a student must learn to concentrate their attention on their subject, to sift through all of the possible information to find that which is most relevant, and then to contextualize the facts in relation to one another.¹⁷⁰ Stowe argued that learning mathematics and languages was crucial to this task since both disciplines required the utmost discipline and concentration of their students. With Stowe's stated belief that the undisciplined were inferior in almost every way to the disciplined, these subjects fit with Stowe's goal as an educator to elevate his students to a better life. In Stowe's eyes, it was best during the time of schooling to put together a foundation of knowledge and learn over time to apply that knowledge to the students' world with growing discernment.

To facilitate this concentration, the Lane Seminary designed an exhausting curriculum that demanded the students' full time and attention. In the words of the Executive Committee, "The plan of instruction is so arranged, as to occupy as much of the time of the students as a due regard to their health and other proper considerations will admit."¹⁷¹ With this rigorous program combined with the manual labor program at the school and the normal attendance and service in local churches, the students simply should not have had time to attend to a topic such as slavery, which the school saw as something outside of their program. While they understood that some students would have the ability to handle the extra demands, the trustees urged caution, fearing that for every student who succeeded with such distractions, there would be hundreds who would

¹⁷⁰ (Washington, D.C.) *United States Telegraph*, November 4, 1833, hereafter *United States Telegraph*.

¹⁷¹ *New York Observer*, September 20, 1834.

shipwreck themselves attempting the same course.¹⁷² To avoid creating an environment that made it too difficult for the majority of their students to focus on their studies, the trustees urged the students to keep a simple focus on their studies.

In the rigorous program, the students were to focus on learning their subjects. Rather than acquainting themselves with the topics and controversies of the day, the *Boston Recorder* argued, the students needed to spend their time in their books. Those who spent the most time in their books would be the most practical and useful after their schooling.¹⁷³ During their education, the students' responsibility was to learn "what is true and what is right."¹⁷⁴ After learning that, and then focusing their attention on learning to apply those principles, the students could properly focus their attention on the issues of the age.

Faced with a difficult position in the flood of media attention, the faculty and other colonizationists defended the traditional authority of their positions and the social order in which they existed. In their place, the Lane faculty and other colonizationist understandably raised questions about the place of this debate within their seminary and expressed grave concerns over the place of this debate in the nation. While they were certainly not defenders of slavery, they readily agreed with the students that slavery was a sin and a curse upon the nation. The Lane faculty and other colonizationists readily agreed with the abolitionists that the slaves should be free men and even treated as equals in the United States. Where they differed was simply on the approach to take in blotting out the stain of slavery.

¹⁷² *New York Observer*, September 20, 1834.

¹⁷³ *Boston Recorder*, September 18, 1834.

¹⁷⁴ *Boston Recorder*, September 18, 1834.

Chapter Four: What of my Brother?

As this Second Lane Debate developed, both the colonizationists and abolitionists had revealed several areas in which they agreed. Both seemed to agree on the evil of slavery and the need for it to end at some point. Both recognized the equality of those people held in bondage. Each agreed that the faculty held the rightful authority within a seminary. They had differences in the application of that authority, but did not differ in believing that authority belonged to the faculty. Many of the participants on each side were evangelical Christians. They held some different denominational beliefs, but each side held to a core of evangelical belief. Seemingly, these areas of agreement should indicate a basis for unity rather than division. Somehow, this division clearly happened. There was controversy in Cincinnati. The board did struggle with this issue. The students ended up leaving. This newspaper debate caught fire.¹⁷⁵

The divisive issue was slavery. While both sides of this Second Lane Debate agreed on the troubling problem of slavery, they differed starkly on their solution to the problem. Seeing the same problem through the same ideological and theological lenses, they each arrived at very different applications to implement their beliefs. Either colonization or immediate emancipation could be a solution to the problem, but neither side saw an ability for the two solutions to work compatibly. At this point, the two sides separated irrevocably. Passions increased. The rhetoric became stronger, even more emotional. Neither side had a desire to compromise. Neither side saw compromise as desirable or effective. This is the point of demarcation where the issue of slavery showed its true power to divide even people who lived and worked side by side, believed the same things, and held an affection respect for one another. When it came to the question of

¹⁷⁵ Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). This book helped to crystallize this idea while I worked to put that final piece of the struggle together. While Noll argued that the struggle of this chapter became a crucial one in the mid-1840s, I argue here that it really becomes a large concern in 1834 due to the events at Lane Seminary and the subsequent media debate.

what exactly to do about slavery, there was no longer any room for agreement, no longer any room to cooperate.

Here, the Lane students ran into a profound crisis at this initial stage of their abolitionist careers. Their “opponents” in this were not the sort of opponents they would expect to encounter. If the other side had been comprised of slave-owners or even businessmen whose primary trades depended on slavery, it would have been an easy thing for the students to point to bias and arguments based on self-interested, self-preserving eisegesis of their motives and Biblical texts. Presenting slaveowners as people looking solely to keep their source of income alive was a simple argument.

Instead, the other side of this debate involved their mentors, in terms of theology and ministry, and their role models in living the Christian life. These opponents were men with no clear interest in preserving slavery. They were Northern men, at a Northern school, with Northern backgrounds. They did not have personal biographies that depended on slavery in order to achieve what they had achieved. Also, these were not men of a different theological background. Rather, these opponents were their own theology teachers. These were men who read the same Bible, holding its words just as precious as did the students, and maybe even more seriously. They were serious theologians and Bible scholars who came to the same Bible soberly and thoughtfully. Even while agreeing that slavery was a great moral evil and a sin in the eyes of God, they managed to come to a completely different application of the Bible to the slavery question. This kind of disagreement without a biased interest presented a crisis for the fledgling abolitionists.

Under this backdrop, the Second Great Awakening moving forward, with serious-minded theologians approaching the same text and then diverging, we come across the real heart of the Second Lane Debates, the crux upon which hung the heart of the issue. If slavery were indeed a moral evil, a sin in the eyes of God, what should be done about it? What would represent a sufficient solution? How should each side apply their feelings and beliefs about the evil of slavery?

This chapter examines the central debate of this media controversy: the battle between colonization and immediate emancipation. The respondents in this Second Lane Debate proposed three options: an overarching view that analyzed both sides and attempted a compromise, which neither side adopted, and the two major views of colonization and abolition. While the slavery debate managed to dredge up all of these other issues, this controversy still centered on this major question. As we have seen in the other chapters, the Lane students and faculty took a measured, mature approach to the issue, while their supporters often fought with the fire we have come to expect from battles over slavery.

Even though the early student debate and the ensuing controversy brought various issues to light in the public debate, such as the relation of authority and free speech and the debates about the extent and use of authority within a school, none of these were the main issue spurring on the controversy. At the heart of the entire Lane episode was the issue of slavery. This facet of the media coverage is the most important contribution of the Second Lane Debates.

While both the colonizationists and the abolitionists agreed on the evil of slavery, each side took drastically different approaches to solve the problem. Colonizationists believed in a gradual process of emancipation, essentially allowing slavery to die out on its own. The

abolitionists took a much more active and instantaneous view, believing that slavery required an immediate end for the good of the slaves and nation. In addition, the abolitionists believed that slaveholders would convert to immediate emancipation and free their slaves if only the abolitionists presented them with the need to end slavery.

Overall, the colonizationist took a much more pessimistic view than the abolitionists took, even though each came from the same position on the issue of slavery itself. The colonizationists believed that slavery needed to end, but were never quite confident enough to press their point to action. The colonizationists also believed that the slaves, once freed, should be equal to whites, but they lacked confidence that such equality would be realized in the United States. Accordingly, they established the Liberia colony as a destination for freed slaves to live out their freedom.

In sharp contrast, the abolitionists took a firm stand that slavery did not need a gradual solution, but an immediate one. Expressing much more boldness and confidence than did the colonizationists, the abolitionists believed that the slaves deserved their freedom instantly, and that they could and should be considered the exact equal of the white man. Pursuing their point further, the abolitionists believed that accomplishing this full equality in the United States was not only possible but necessary.

In response to the continuing Lane controversy, the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* attempted to propose a compromise solution. While this attempt produced the most balanced article available, it also proved that compromise at this point was impossible. In this article, the *Advocate* introduced both major solutions while providing an analysis of their relative strengths and weaknesses. Deploring the division between colonizationists and abolitionists, the

Advocate wrote that principle suggested their agreement with the colonizationists, but practical concerns suggested that colonization was an unworkable solution. Doubting both the actual success of the Liberian colony and questioning the ability of colonizing slaves to end slavery in the United States, the *Advocate* argued that the slave population in the South grew more quickly than the ability to export the slaves. Ultimately, the *Advocate* compared the effectiveness of colonization in emancipation to the idea of emptying the ocean with a spoon.¹⁷⁶

Proposing that the slaves born in America considered America their home, not Africa, the *Advocate* argued that the best solution required the slaves to live freely in America. At the same time, the *Advocate* believed that an immediate emancipation of the slaves without any prior preparation for the slaves to live in freedom would result in disaster. Comparing it to the chaotic destruction brought to Europe by the Vandals, the *Advocate* claimed that immediate emancipation would result in torrents of blood flowing from the bodies of whites, with the South resembling the aftermath of a volcanic eruption or the release of wild cats into a village. Seeing both plans as insufficient, the *Advocate* argued for a middle ground that would prepare the slaves for freedom in the United States, but took place gradually.¹⁷⁷

After getting off to an inevitably late start in their responses, the colonizationists were not content to see the Second Debate dominated by the abolitionists. Although they did not write as prolifically as the abolitionists, the colonizationists produced several important works to publicize and explain the colonization position. The colonizationists wrote from several angles, providing a complete picture of their beliefs. The colonizationists explained what colonization was, both as an independent idea and in its relationship to abolition. They also illustrated the

¹⁷⁶ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

division that the slavery issue created, often among people with similar ideologies and strong relationships. The colonizationists made certain to thoroughly publicize colonization and its merits.

The media clearly laid out the colonizationists' position. In the already-cited article from the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, the *Advocate* provided a thorough summary of colonizationist' beliefs. Writing that the colonizationists favored a gradual process to end slavery, the *Advocate* stressed the colonizationists' perspective that Liberia would be the best place for the slaves to experience freedom, citing the area's climate and the opportunity for a fresh start as key factors for their belief. Working hard to broker a peace between the two sides and expressing hope that the former slaves could be useful in Christianizing Africa, even without exploring the slaves' general lack of Christian education, the *Advocate* argued that this hope was a powerful reason to favor Colonization.¹⁷⁸

As this controversy developed, another key part of colonization beliefs became opposition to abolitionist beliefs. Referring to the abolitionists as "infatuated zealots," the *New York Courier and Enquirer* published a strong denunciation of abolitionist belief along with a fear-inducing prophecy of its consequences. Describing the consequences in terms of an earthquake, the *Courier* insisted that the abolitionists, and especially the Lane students, were attempting to create something with abolition that would result in nothing except the crushing of the people they sought to help. Especially concerned with the prospect of potential violence, the *Courier* argued that emancipation carried within it a latent cruelty in pushing slaves from a secure home into a world where they owned no property, no homes, and had little prospect for employment. In this world, the *Courier* saw a bloody revolution as inevitable. Decrying the

¹⁷⁸ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

influence of abolitionists in seminaries, the *Courier* claimed that abolition was taking over the schools and producing wave after wave of young, Bible-perverting radicals. Strikingly, the *Courier* foresaw that a push for abolition would result in the dissolution of the nation and the fighting of a bloody civil war between North and South.¹⁷⁹

Colonizationists also found fault with the abolitionists' recruiting methods. Reprinting an article from the *Boston Recorder*, the *Vermont Chronicle* shared the *Recorder's* criticisms of abolitionist recruiting. Following an article that derisively examined abolitionist efforts to change the world or "turn it upside down," the reprinted piece argued that the standard practice of abolitionist recruiting was to go to a seminary, bypass the faculty, and talk directly to the students in order to mobilize young impressionable men.¹⁸⁰ Seeing this approach as one that distracted from the educational mission as well as disrupted the traditional authority structures of schools, the papers managed to draw a corollary to the destabilizing power of abolition beliefs that so concerned them.

Non-abolitionists sought to make clear that they were neither friends nor supporters of slavery. Seeing slavery as a universal evil, non-abolitionists believed it necessary for all people, North and South, to admit to the evil of the institution, and even argued that many slaveholders had done so. At the same time, non-abolitionists did not perceive slavery as a new institution but a long-lasting one. They argued that an institution with the deep roots of slavery could not be uprooted overnight. Instead, they pursued a gradual course aimed at the heart of the slaveholder.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ *Liberator*, May 31, 1834.

¹⁸⁰ *Vermont Chronicle*, November 14, 1834.

¹⁸¹ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

Non-abolitionists did vow not to oppose reasonable efforts towards abolition. From the very eye of the hurricane, the newborn Lane Seminary Colonization Society published their constitution. Putting forth their dislike for slavery, the Colonization Society members stated clearly that they desired the full elevation of blacks in America to full equality. Writing that this Society would not oppose abolition efforts that confined themselves to that very purpose, the authors wrote that they believed the days of slavery to be “numbered and few.”¹⁸² With slavery’s end drawing inevitably near, there was no need to push for emancipation out of turn.

Reacting to James Thome’s speech at the American Anti-Slavery Society Meeting of May 1834, non-abolitionists pledged to celebrate the end of slavery. Taking offense to the possible implications of the Society’s name, the *Western Christian Advocate* argued staunchly that they were also not friends of slavery, yet were certainly Americans. While seeking a solution that preserved individual rights and stayed true to the Constitution, the *Advocate* placed itself firmly as a colonizationist paper that would celebrate the end of slavery when it came about. The language of these colonizationists, using the word “when” to refer to end of slavery, revealed their belief in the eventuality that slavery would die out and did not require the efforts of the abolitionists.¹⁸³

In that same article, the non-abolitionists disagreed with Thome’s assessments of the nature of slavery. Accepting that Thome was in fact from Kentucky, the *Advocate* disagreed with his contentions. Flatly disagreeing with Thome on the charge of licentiousness, the *Advocate* moved on to challenge Thome’s very credibility. Writing of Thome’s claim that slaveholders slept with firearms under their pillows, the *Advocate* bluntly wrote that they would “allow him to

¹⁸² *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

¹⁸³ (Cincinnati, OH) *Western Christian Advocate*, May 30, 1834, hereafter *Western Christian Advocate*.

compromise with his own courage,” disclaiming the state of constant danger that Thome described so vividly.¹⁸⁴

A particular concern among Christian non-abolitionists involved the division that the debate created among Christians. Their concerns covered broad issues of Christian unity in general and in relation to the slavery issue. Their concerns also narrowed down to the specific case of the Lane Seminary.

The non-abolitionists had concerns covering several different arenas of the Christian life. Using colorful military language that would presage later slavery conflicts, one observer described the disagreement over slavery as a war. Writing that the topic of slavery always drew out men’s passions, the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* declared that the topic created a general and specific arena of warfare. Seeing the North against the South, and vice versa, locked in combat over the issue, the *Advocate* felt that tensions and passions were running high all over the nation. Additionally, the *Advocate* wrote that the different solutions to slavery were at war with one other: colonizationists at war with abolitionists and abolitionists fighting the colonizationists. The *Advocate* portrayed both sides as being at war with slavery. Closing that part of their discussion, the *Advocate* expressed remorse that the aroused passions prevented people from examining slavery with objectivity.¹⁸⁵

The members of the Lane Seminary Colonization Society plainly saw no need for division among Christians due to differing views on slavery. Affirming that they had no desire to interfere with genuine abolition efforts or to stand in favor of slavery, the Colonization Society reiterated their belief that slavery would soon die out. Using Scriptural references, the LSCS

¹⁸⁴ *Western Christian Advocate*, May 30, 1834.

¹⁸⁵ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

stated their belief that it was important both to stand up for the rights of the oppressed and to stand together as Christians. Bemoaning the divisions that arose with the coming of the abolition society, the members wrote that the bitter and divided feelings in the Christian community were avoidable and unnecessary if only abolitionists were as fervent to “judge righteously” their words as well as their beliefs.¹⁸⁶

Narrowing the focus even more, Professor Biggs questioned why this question should even arise at a seminary. Feeling that the Christian community in general should not enter into the slavery controversy, or anything with such a capacity for belligerent debate, Biggs mourned the presence of churches and Christians in this controversy. Most importantly, Biggs showed his alarm that this question would ever work its way into theological schools. Biggs believed that the questions of slavery, colonization, and abolition had their place among enlightened people, but not among students. The topic, Biggs argued, would prove itself far too consuming for students to handle alongside their studies.¹⁸⁷

In the continuing controversy over the Lane Debates, the non-abolitionists placed a special focus on the division at Lane Seminary. Acknowledging the momentous change of mind that the students experienced, many non-abolitionists showed a cultural or theological leaning towards learning the views of the Lane professors. Ensuring that both sides of the story reached the public, the *Religious Intelligencer* put it very plainly, referring to the students as “boys,” with this leading to the concept that perhaps the views of their instructors would be interesting and enlightening.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *New York Observer*, Jul7 26, 1834.

¹⁸⁷ *Western Luminary*, August 13, 1834.

¹⁸⁸ *Religious Intelligencer*, July 12, 1834.

While the abolitionist papers publicized the speaking efforts of the Lane students, the non-abolitionist papers focused on the speaking efforts of the Lane faculty members. Two prominent Lane faculty members, Beecher and Stowe, spoke at a meeting of the Cincinnati Colonization Society during the aftermath of the Debates. Providing a strong school presence at this weekly meeting, Beecher worked to present the idea that colonizationist and abolitionists could work together rather than engaging in a war between the competing solutions. At the same meeting, Professor Stowe also addressed the society. The papers did not preserve the content of Stowe's speech, instead referring to it as "highly interesting" and "perfectly satisfactory on every point."¹⁸⁹ The same article announced that Professor Biggs would speak at the next weekly meeting, which indicated that all three professors in the theology department held colonizationist beliefs. Citing this same meeting, the *Vermont Chronicle* expressed surprise and delight that the professors attended meetings of both abolitionists and colonizationists, arguing that this made them able to make an impartial decision on the matter. The *Chronicle* noted that the faculty each chose colonization, and that their opinions necessarily carried more weight than did that of the students.¹⁹⁰

The colonizationists then proceeded with several writings designed to promote colonization. The Lane Seminary Colonization Society published their constitution in response to the publishing of the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society's publication of their own constitution. Josiah Finley published a widely circulated letter written from Liberia in order to defend colonization to the Lane students. Finally, the non-abolitionists wrote about the need to work through various issues that colonization faced.

¹⁸⁹ *Western Luminary*, June 18, 1834; *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, July 1834; *Religious Intelligencer*, July 12, 1834. All reprinted from the *Cincinnati Journal*, June 12, 1834.

¹⁹⁰ *Vermont Chronicle*, July 4, 1834.

The Lane Seminary Colonization Society published their Constitution in order to publicize the Society's existence and make their purposes clear. The *Western Christian Advocate* published an abridged version of their Constitution after receiving it from the *Cincinnati Journal*. In this bare-bones edition, the *Advocate* printed strictly the articles outlining the society's operation and the resolutions detailing its members' beliefs. In this abridged version, the LSCS was still able to demonstrate their disapproval both of slavery and of the "spirit of denunciation" shown to the American Colonization Society.¹⁹¹

The *New York Observer* also published this constitution, focusing on the reasons for the society.¹⁹² This society existed partially as a response to the formation of the LSASS. Also, it existed to defend colonizationists' beliefs from the attacks and charges that the abolitionists made. Reminding readers of their firm hatred for slavery and their belief that it was perishing, the Lane colonizationists politely rebuked the Lane abolitionists as overzealous in their pursuit of abolition beliefs, meanwhile failing to address the matter in a proper Christian way. This revealed another aspect of the society's formation. Not only was it a response to keep furthering and defending abolition, but it demonstrated the pressure felt by colonizationists in this controversy. Not only was did the aggressive new position threaten their beliefs, but the zealotry created by the debates also attacked the professors' ability to teach their students. In this, the LSCS wished to challenge the means used by the abolitionists.

Publishing only the articles of the constitution, the *African Repository and Colonial Journal* printed the methods that the LSCS planned to utilize. The LSCS members planned to collect and distribute materials that would explain their colonizationist beliefs. Of course, the

¹⁹¹ *Western Christian Advocate*, July 18, 1834.

¹⁹² *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

members hoped that this would convince the readers as well. Additionally, the LSCS proposed to create ways of elevating free blacks in the United States. For those free blacks that freely chose to emigrate, the LSCS intended to raise funds in order to assist them towards their chosen destination. Above all, the LSCS members planned to carry on through “calm and dispassionate reasoning,” as opposed to the zealotry they saw in the abolitionists. Using a method that sounds very similar to the moral suasion espoused by the abolitionists, the LSCS members believed that their calm reasoning would arouse the American people and slaveholders to end slavery. Firmly believing that slaveholders could be rational in regards to slavery, the LSCS members felt that they need only to appeal to the interests of the slaveholders, and the victory would be inevitable.¹⁹³

Almost as a Christmas present for colonizationists, Josiah Finley wrote a letter from Liberia to the Lane students. In a widely published letter that indicated both colonizationists’ confidence in his observations and the widespread impact of the Lane students to this point (after all, word of the First Debates clearly reached all the way to Africa), Finley set out to describe the situation in Liberia as an apologetic for colonization.¹⁹⁴ At the same time, Finley indicated his desire to convince the Lane students of the virtues of colonization, especially Stanton and McMasters, to whom he addressed the letter.

Showing their confidence in Finley’s fidelity, the *Western Christian Advocate* published a glowing introduction to his letter. Describing Finley as a man of “character and truth,” the

¹⁹³ (Washington, D.C.) *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, September 1834, hereafter *African Repository and Colonial Journal*.

¹⁹⁴ *Western Christian Advocate*, January 9, 1835; *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 26, 1834; *Daily National Intelligencer*, December 22, 1834; *New Bedford Mercury*, December 26, 1834; *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, January 1835.

Advocate was convinced that his account would rally the weary armies of colonization back to the “noble and sacred cause of colonization.”¹⁹⁵

For his part, Finley showed himself to have great enthusiasm for the condition of the work in Liberia. Writing that he had never found a town in Ohio or Indiana or anywhere else in the United States with the moral character of Monrovia, Finley gushed over the spiritual maturity and temperate nature of the people in Liberia. Concerning the climate in Liberia, Finley wrote that it was perfectly suited for the constitution of the blacks living there after a year or two. Almost harkening back to the settling of America, Finley wrote that luxury items were much more affordable in Liberia than they were in the United States, which paralleled the experience of the early American settlers’ consumerism.¹⁹⁶ In this way, Finley managed subtly to equate the experience of the settled Liberians to that of the American settlers. Finley expressed a great hope for the future of the Liberian experiment. Certainly, Finley believed that the colony had the ability, potential and circumstances to thrive, just as the early American settlers eventually did.

Even filled with enthusiasm for the Liberian future, Finley was honest enough to report that there were several problems and needs in Liberia. Liberia lacked colleges and experienced teachers at all levels. Liberia lacked a variety of seeds as well quantity. In addition, Finley saw a need for factories in Liberia, and signaled a need for assistance in building schools and churches. If the American people responded to these needs, Finley argued, the day would shortly arrive in which the Liberian people would at least equal the prosperity of the United States.¹⁹⁷

Finley showed a real confidence that a simple look at Liberia would cause any person to embrace colonization. Writing that “almost everything” he saw in Liberia convinced him of this,

¹⁹⁵ *Western Christian Advocate*, January 9, 1835.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Finley wrote that he was as convinced of the converting power of the Liberian experience as he was of his own existence. Finley boldly claimed that even an unnamed friend who denounced colonization from a famous American pulpit would embrace colonization exuberantly. In fact, Finley argued, that trip to Liberia would convert that man in two months or less.¹⁹⁸ While Finley's timeline was longer than the one exhibited by the Lane students in their debates, his letter showed that colonization had an advocate equally optimistic in his cause to those students.

Importantly, the non-abolitionists addressed the importance of working through the issues that arose. These criticisms included the cries that they did not believe in black equality. Colonizationists showed that they did not consider Liberia to be perfect, but rather a very good solution. They also explained the goals that they had as colonizationists.

The colonizationists saw a need to respond to abolitionist criticisms that they did not stand for Negro equality and emancipation. The resolutions at the end of the LSCS Constitution made it plain that they considered the "unalienable rights of man" to include blacks.¹⁹⁹ Specifically, the LSCS members wrote that requiring freed slaves to emigrate to Liberia was inconsistent with those rights. Therefore, any black that would go to Liberia needed to go only when it was a choice made through his or her own free will. As a response to the abolitionist criticisms, this resolution made it plain that the colonizationists were willing to accept blacks working for equality within the United States. Even with their willingness, though, the LSCS members still doubted whether black equality could happen in the United States. This propelled them to continue arguing the necessity of colonization.

¹⁹⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 26, 1834.

¹⁹⁹ *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

The colonizationists did not see Liberia as a perfect solution. A Dr. Skinner, while working as a physician in Monrovia, was appalled at the medical conditions of the nation. Noting the low elevation of the city as well as generally poor sanitation, Skinner expressed his concern over the unhealthy conditions that these situations created. Skinner shared his desire that people move to higher ground, or at least build a house on higher ground in order to help new arrivals acclimate to the African climate in a healthier situation.²⁰⁰

As noted earlier, Finley saw several needed improvements in Liberia. These improvements truly encompassed several important societal factors. Finley noted the severe lack both of qualified teachers and of advanced colleges. Finley also believed that Liberia needed factories. In terms of agriculture, Finley argued that the fledgling nation needed more variety of crops as well as a greater quantity of seeds. Lastly, Finley pleaded for American help to build Liberian school and churches.²⁰¹ Including these self-effacing needs in a letter designed to convince convicted abolitionists of the good that colonization could do demonstrated much humility and a serious willingness to consider soberly the conditions in Liberia.

The colonizationists spelled out how they wanted to go about their goals. The LSCS Constitution showed that the colonizationists sought to work through a gradual process. The LSCS members listed several good accomplishments of the American Colonization Society, such as increasing awareness of slavery through public discussion in both slave and free states. The LSCS members also wrote that they played an instrumental role in fostering public sympathy for the slaves, and especially played a vital role in convincing people that the slave was indeed a human being. The LSCS members also considered it important to prevent a hasty retreat from the

²⁰⁰ *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, January 1835; *Western Christian Advocate*, January 9, 1835.

²⁰¹ *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, January 1835.

good works in Liberia, not wanting to see the work there suddenly undone in a violent sea change of opinion. For those reasons, the LSCS members saw a reforming course as more prudent than a course that destroyed all of the work done to date.²⁰²

A neutral observer, the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, argued that a successful colonization work would take the Gospel to Africa. Believing that someone would do the work of evangelism among the slaves or newly freed slaves prior to their emigration, the *Advocate* envisioned waves of black Christians heading to Africa with the mission of preaching the Gospel in their “home continent.” The *Advocate* foresaw a great civilizing effect on the African continent combined with a softening effect on the hearts of Southerners receiving news of the hypothetical revival. The *Advocate* clearly hoped that this would be the case, even while steadfastly refusing to choose one side in the battle.²⁰³

The colonizationists did not believe in Congressional action against slavery. The neutral *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* argued that the independence and sovereignty of the states ruled out Congressional involvement.²⁰⁴ Pointing to the history of colonization, the LSCS Constitution mentioned only means such as discussion, never pointing to political means as a way to achieve the end of slavery in the United States.²⁰⁵ Article 2 of that Constitution stated plainly that the LSCS members sought only to persuade the slaveholders by means of discussion and reasoning.²⁰⁶

To no one’s surprise, the abolitionists took a much different view on the solution to slavery, and wrote volumes to further their viewpoint. Like the colonizationists, the abolitionists

²⁰² *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

²⁰³ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, November 29, 1834.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *New York Observer*, July 26, 1834.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

strove to define emancipation and their goals. With their definition in place, the abolitionists pushed the urgency of emancipation, publishing their reasons for the solution of immediate emancipation. Attempting to leave no doubt about their methodology, the abolitionists wrote much to portray the power of moral suasion.

Building their case, the abolitionists wrote clearly about their definition of emancipation and their goals. They came to define an approach known as moral suasion. Seeking to assure a pensive public, the abolitionists worked to assuage fears that immediate emancipation possessed inherent dangers. The abolitionists also wrote to showcase the eventual outcome they desired to achieve through the emancipation of American slaves.

The abolitionists defined a position now called moral suasion. At the meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Lane student James Thome testified personally to the power of moral suasion upon a slaveholder. Thome related his background as the son of a slaveholder growing up in the slave state of Kentucky, writing that it destroyed his compassion for the slave people to the point where cruelty seemed normal. But, Thome writes, then he came to Lane Seminary. Describing himself as a man who previously supported colonization, both ideologically and financially, Thome wrote “Abolition principles do take strong hold of the conscience and of interest, too.”²⁰⁷ Thome claimed that no other subject claimed the heart as strongly as abolition, and that he now felt compelled, even as the heir to a slave inheritance, to “denounce the whole system as an outrage.”²⁰⁸ This change took place, Thome argued, because the Lane Debates exposed him to abolitionist principles.

²⁰⁷ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

The *Christian Watchman* reported the May 1834 meeting, focusing its coverage also on Thome's speech, especially the power of moral suasion to convert a slaveholder. Thome proclaimed that the principles of abolition had the power to completely change a person's racial ideology. Using imagery that purposefully called to mind pictures of a Finney revival, Thome described slavery as a system that made angels weep, and yet the power of abolition doctrine changed him completely. Abolition principles did not accomplish this through loud confrontation, Thome wrote, but rather through sound, reasoned, polite discussion. Such was their power that the ideas did not require anything more than a reasoned presentation, Thome argued. Essentially describing the power of abolition principles as irresistible grace, Thome preached that they raced through a person uncontrollably until that person made their inevitable conversion under the power of the ideas.²⁰⁹

The American Anti-Slavery Society argued that appealing to a slaveowner's interests was not sufficient to bring about the end of slavery. Placing slavery and slave trading as equals in evil, the AASS wrote that they were constantly challenged to approach slave owners by appealing to their interests. In contrast, the AASS wrote that moral reform never occurred as a result of approaching interests. Instead, to affect this massive reform required an appeal to the slaveowner's moral character and conscience. This approach demanded an honest presentation of the evil nature of slavery. This, and this alone, would create the response in the slave owner that would lead to a conversion like Thome's.²¹⁰ This approach made up the essence of moral suasion.

²⁰⁹ (Boston, MA) *Christian Watchman*, May 16, 1834, hereafter *Christian Watchman*.

²¹⁰ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

To counter the presentations of their opponents, the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society took pains to explain what means immediate abolitionists did and did not seek to utilize. Seeking first to assuage fears of their radical intentions, the LSASS published in their constitution the methods they intended not to use. The LSASS members wrote that they did not intend to end slavery through slave rebellion. Quoting the Sermon on the Mount, the students resolved that slave rebellion violated Jesus' commands.²¹¹ Refusing to advocate war, the students ruled out the use of force. In keeping with the very conservative times, the students refused to consider Congressional involvement, considering moral suasion to have more power than Congress possibly could.²¹²

Presenting the positive argument, the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society explained how they intended to approach the abolition of slavery. In this, they spelled out the practice of moral suasion. The students purposed to politely approach the mind of slaveholders, bringing to bear discussions based on patriotism and a sense of justice, meanwhile pressing the case as one also of financial interest to the slaveholder. The keystone to their presentation, the students argued, would be a presentation of facts about slavery along with a presentation of the practical nature of immediate emancipation. In this portion, the students proposed to present that immediate emancipation was both an expedience and safe measure, not one that would burn down the Southern countryside, as many feared it would.

In terms of the general public, the students proposed an educational and religious program. The students wished to pass along information about slavery and abolition. In a sense, this referred to a sort of educational activism. By this point, the students were actively engaging

²¹¹ Matthew 5:39, 44.

²¹² *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

themselves in doing just that through their prolific writings. In this process, the students hoped to affect public opinion while serving as examples of the power and belief of moral suasion. Lastly, the students invoked several Bible passages in seeking to have monthly prayer devoted to the abolition of slavery in all parts of the world.²¹³ In this, the abolitionist students hoped especially to recruit Christians to the cause of abolition.²¹⁴

Lane student William Allan sought to reassure people that immediate emancipation was not a dangerous doctrine. In a brief recap of his speech at the Lane Debates, Allan argued that the purpose of immediate emancipation was not to simply turn an army of slaves loose upon the nation. At the same time, Allan said, it was not the instant granting of equal rights, either. In Allan's eyes, immediate emancipation meant that slaves would no longer be subject to the "unlimited control" of their masters, but rather placed under the full protection of the law. The slaves' lives would change completely. Employers would employ freed black men to work as free labor, rightly compensated with protected earnings, in order to prevent a virtual return to slavery. The students intended that the protection of the law would secure their rights to personal education and to worship as well. These rights extended even to the right to build their personal wealth.²¹⁵

With an eye towards completion, the abolitionists presented the eventual outcome they desired for the slaves in the United States. The Lane students had a very clear vision for black equality after the abolition of slavery. Essentially quoting Allan's speech, the students intended to strive in order to see freed slaves, freely employed and protected by law. Notably, the students desired eventually to see those currently enslaved to be elevated to an "intellectual, moral, and

²¹³ I Thessalonians 5:17.

²¹⁴ *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

²¹⁵ *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834.

political equality with the whites.”²¹⁶ While full political equality would not be an instant process, this radical proposal was a vital part of the eventual end state for the slaves.

Lane student Augustus Wattles offered further clarification about the end state for American blacks. Wattles included nuggets from several of the students’ speeches, painting a dreadful picture of the slavery existence. With account after account from nearly every slave state, Wattles clearly demonstrated the horror of slavery in order to show that the Lane students desired the slaves to be free of this life of suffering. The Lane students also desired the slaves to be free from familial disruption. As free people, they should no longer need to worry that their families would be sold away from them. Overall the Lane students wanted a life for the slaves free from an institution that tolerated and accepted such violence and terror. Instead, the students desired a life of freedom for the oppressed slaves.²¹⁷

The Lane students presented their object and reasons for immediate emancipation in the Preamble to the Constitution of the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society. As expected for theology students, they began their reasons with a theological basis, moved on to practical concerns of individuals and society, and then returned in the end to theology. Beginning with their ultimate theological basis, the students argued that the slave was made in the image of God as much as the free man was. Based on this, the slave deserved the same freedom as white people enjoyed, but slavery robbed him of this freedom, treating the slave as an animal, and encouraging him to adopt that view himself.²¹⁸

Thinking of the practical concerns, the students wrote that slavery created hatred in the slaves for their oppressors, creating a potentially volatile situation that threatened the peace of

²¹⁶ *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

²¹⁷ *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834.

²¹⁸ *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834; *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

the Southern states. Interestingly, slavery created the same feelings in the slave holders, turning them into tyrants rather than the parents they claimed to be. While creating this hatred within slaveholders, slavery created a moral pollution within them as well, leading to a situation the students likened to prostitution.²¹⁹

Considering the American society, the students argued that slavery mocked American foundations of freedom. Due to the stain of slavery, the students wrote, our founding documents became merely sentimental ideas of an imaginary freedom. In the process, it rendered the United States as a hypocritical nation in the eyes of the world and ruined the example of freedom that Americans sought to be. While destroying the view of America in the world, slavery tore at the bonds that united the nation, creating division where unity once stood firm.²²⁰

Closing with theological considerations, the students argued that slavery created an impassable barrier to world evangelism. No nation would receive missionaries from a nation that tolerated the institution of slavery, they reasoned. Simultaneously, slavery opened up the nation to God's judgment. However that wrath might be manifested, it was a terrible situation that the students did not desire for their nation.²²¹

Lane student Henry Stanton offered several reasons for immediate emancipation. Stanton's work showed a remarkable consistency and unity with the other documents produced by the Lane students. Recalling the remarkable battery of eyewitness testimony presented at the Debates, Stanton wrote frankly that "slaves long for freedom."²²² Stanton argued that the masters had no right to hold the slaves in bondage, but more importantly, that the slaves knew it. The

²¹⁹ *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834; *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

²²⁰ Ibid; Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid; Ibid..

²²² *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

slaves felt the power of the wrong done to them by their owners. Still, knowing the reality of their situation, Stanton wrote that slaves were too intelligent to bring it up. Every slave understood the punishment that would come from crying too loudly for freedom. Stanton wrote that slaves paced themselves working without freedom, because they knew that there was no reward for their efforts. Conversely, when slaves were motivated with a real promise of freedom, they worked quickly and faithfully, inspired by the promise of freedom's reward. Like Thome, Stanton wrote of the effect of slavery upon the private, moral lives of the slaves, describing their resulting condition as licentiousness.²²³

The abolitionists made certain to present the reasons that immediate emancipation needed to be the solution to the slavery problem. Seeing colonization as an option that could not bring slavery to an end, the abolitionists insisted that only immediate emancipation through moral suasion could accomplish that end. The abolitionists continued to stress the humanity of the slave as a key lynchpin to the need for abolition. Most of all, abolitionists believed that immediate emancipation provided the only solution with the ability to solve the slavery problem.

Flatly, the abolitionists did not believe that colonization could free the slaves. To put his views in context, Augustus Wattles referred to his past as a colonizationist, even serving as the President of a Colonization Society at the Oneida Institute prior to attending the Lane Seminary, offering his personal testimony about colonization and abolition. Following the Debates, Wattles disclaimed any connection to colonization, believing that it would interminably postpone the end of slavery. Wattles wrote bluntly that he believed the doctrines of colonization did not serve the best interests of the American slaves, and that they destroyed any effort to better the slaves' lot. Instead, colonization doctrines hardened hearts of prejudice among slave owners through their

²²³ *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

refusal to challenge the slave owners' consciences, Wattles wrote. Condemningly, Wattles added that slaveholders contributed financial support to the American Colonization Society, raising the specter of a possible conflict of interest.²²⁴

Overall, the Lane students did not believe that colonization pursued equality for blacks in America aggressively enough. The students noted this by drafting a clear mission statement in the Preamble to their Anti-Slavery Society's Constitution. Here, the students clearly stated their purpose: "the immediate emancipation of the whole colored race within the United States."²²⁵ With their language, the students made it clear that they considered the location of this equality to be of the utmost importance. It was not to be overseas, but in the United States. As noted earlier, this emancipation included the ending of slavery, the ending of prejudiced opinion and perception of blacks, and would ultimately include complete equality with whites.

As previously seen, the abolitionists fervently maintained their belief in the humanity of the slave. James Thome put it very simply. Demonstrating the power of the Debates upon his thinking, Thome showed that an understanding of the slave's humanity played a key role in his conversion to abolition. Likewise, Thome felt, it would do the same thing across the South as abolitionists showed it clearly to slave owners. Vividly, Thome remarked that the "stony heart would melt," firmly believing that no man wanted to see another human being suffer as the slaves did in their bondage.

Stanton contrasted the humanity of the slave with the inhumanity of slavery. Writing that the slaves longed to be free, Stanton argued that their masters had no right to hold them, and that those masters trapped the slaves who longed for freedom in a degrading life of unrighteous

²²⁴ *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834.

²²⁵ *Liberator*, April 12, 1834.

subjection. Noting the slaves' ability as people to express themselves, Stanton rued that they remained in a position where such expression brought only more suffering. Stanton bemoaned the lack of free speech that the slaves actually experienced. Stanton demonstrated again that the slaves loved their families, yet lived in a constant fear that their masters would separate them from their loved ones. Showing that slaves continually exhibited intellect, emotion, and will as human beings, Stanton noted that the slaves lived in a system where slaveholders felt free simply to kill them as easily as killing an animal. Sharing the example of Louisiana, Stanton wrote that owners readily worked their slaves all the way to their death for the guarantee of high sugar prices. Even a notion of freedom could not equal true freedom, Stanton argued, since the free blacks lived in the shadow of slavery, knowing that they might return to slavery after being kidnapped and sold.²²⁶

In a letter to Lewis Tappan, picked up and published by various papers, Lane student Theodore Weld remarked that free blacks in Cincinnati desired to buy the freedom of friends and family, but did not want to leave the nation. Citing the vast majority's experience as freed people who worked to purchase their own freedom, Weld wrote that "multitudes" were working to buy that freedom.²²⁷ Writing that he visited nearly 30 families that week, Weld wrote that over half of them were engaged in this process. In an effort to raise funds on their behalf, Weld argued that Cincinnati's free black population provided an example the nation needed to see. Weld argued that people would marvel when they saw what blacks were doing through their own efforts to secure freedom. Weld pleaded that the schools for free blacks needed money. Even though the Lane students' schools in Cincinnati provided more opportunity than anywhere in the nation, Weld wrote, they needed funds in order to provide all of the opportunity possible. Pointing to

²²⁶ *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

²²⁷ (Baltimore, MD) *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, May 1834, hereafter *Genius of Universal Emancipation*.

Cincinnati as a strategic location, Weld saw the city as the best place in the nation to demonstrate the blacks' continued ability to grow and handle life as freed people.²²⁸

Stanton believed that free blacks could take care of themselves. To illustrate his point, Stanton pointed to his classmate, James Bradley. Briefly recapping Bradley's speech at the Debates, Stanton showed that Bradley disarmed two lingering American doubts: that a freed slave would be dangerous to his community and that the slave's condition would worsen upon emancipation. Simply reciting Bradley's biography, Stanton demonstrated that Bradley made the choice to work for his freedom and had the capacity to both plan and accomplish that end. Also, Stanton showed the choices that Bradley made upon his freedom. Not only did Bradley not present a danger, but he chose to move to a free state and enter a training school for ministry.²²⁹ Thus, for Stanton, Bradley clearly showed that a freed slave could handle his freedom, and indeed thrive with the opportunity.

Augustus Wattles believed that slaves possessed the ability to live well in freedom. Reporting the speech of a Lane student from Virginia, Wattles recounted that student's story of a freed slave living in Lynchburg. Years earlier, the slave had saved up \$1200 to buy his freedom, and that only launched his entrepreneurial talents. Through Wattles, this student explained that he visited this man. By that point, the man had purchased "quite a respectable property," and worked a team of five horses.²³⁰ Regarding the man's reputation, the student related that this man was as respected as anyone in town. Surprisingly, neither Wattles nor the student noted that this freed slave lived, worked, and thrived within a slave state. Still, the story made the case that those in captivity had the potential to live greatly productive lives in freedom.

²²⁸ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, May 1834.

²²⁹ *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

²³⁰ *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834.

The abolitionists were convinced of the ability and power of immediate emancipation to solve the slavery problem. While they felt great concern over the power that slavery held, they felt just as confident that immediate emancipation could break that power's hold.

Showing their concern about the power and influence of slavery, the American Anti-Slavery Society painted with a broad brush slavery's dangerous influence. Equating slaveholding to piracy, the AASS decried the loss of individual freedom that slavery entailed. At the same time, the Society looked at the impact of slavery upon all of American society. Writing that slavery brought dishonor to Christianity, the AASS argued that it brought great pain to American churches and controlled their pulpits. In another problem for the First Amendment, slavery forced a stifling of the press. Displeased with slavery's influence in politics, the AASS argued that every national conflict in the United States found its origin in slavery. Due to the bounties placed by slave owners, slavery even threatened to take the lives of free men.²³¹

Wattles believed that people were not abolitionists because they did not see the true picture of slavery. Believing that people did not see the full truth because of the great pains taken to gloss over the truth of slavery, Wattles wrote that no subject in America carried with it so little understanding as slavery. In the North, Wattles argued, people did not understand the terrifying nature of slavery or the miserable life it gave to the slaves. At the same time, immediate emancipation through moral suasion could change all of that by portraying slavery as it existed, thus opening the eyes of the North.²³²

Abolitionists felt a great urgency to act because of the terrible nature of slavery. Using the trial of Lane student Amos Dresser for passing through Nashville with anti-slavery materials,

²³¹ *Liberator*, May 17, 1834.

²³² *American Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1834.

the *Anti-Slavery Record* shared some insightful notes about the nature of slavery. With his carriage in a shop for repair, the workmen noticed Dresser's anti-slavery materials in the carriage. Immediately, the *Record* reported, the "spirit of slavery was roused." The authorities arrested Dresser and brought him to trial.²³³ Quickly convicting Dresser of membership in an anti-slavery society and distributing anti-slavery literature, the court in Nashville promptly sentenced Dresser and forced him to leave the city. This episode prompted the *Record* to ask an important question about the nature of slavery, asking what kind of respectable institution cannot bear to have people speak of it. Noting that free speech in a slave city resulted in Dresser's punishment, the *Record* thought that this shed much light onto the nature of slavery, and greatly hastened the urgency for abolition.

The abolitionists saw great importance and power in immediate emancipation. Lane Seminary students wondered how they could ignore such a powerful subject as slavery. The students railed against the idea of limiting their examinations to popular topics. Defending their practice of free discussion, the students questioned whether theological students ought to be awed by either popular opinion or the immensity of a particular issue, or whether they needed examine it as part of their ministerial education. The students argued that their role was to examine an issue, especially one as great as slavery, and then determine what was right and wrong, not popular. Since slavery was the greatest issue of the day, they argued, they needed to examine it.²³⁴

Abolitionists believed that immediate emancipation was unstoppable. Believing that the doctrine possessed both life and truth, the abolitionists felt that emancipation would irresistibly

²³³ *Anti-Slavery Record*, November 1835.

²³⁴ *New York Evangelist*, January 10, 1835.

advance. Listing off numerous potential opponents, such as lies and ridicule, the abolitionists called the struggle against abolition vain, and shared the example of a proslavery minister almost instantly converted when presented with abolition. The abolitionists used two statistics to show this growth, demonstrating the explosive growth of both Anti-Slavery Societies and their membership numbers as well. Writing that there were over 150 such societies and over 7500 members, the abolitionists showed an extremely rapid growth in just over a year from the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society. As people heard, they believed and joined, and the cause moved forward, the abolitionists believed.²³⁵

Most importantly for a group of theologians, the Lane students believed that abolition was the cause of God. Theodore Weld wrote this very plainly, reminding readers that God had “commanded us to break every yoke.”²³⁶ Writing that people of the North did not know the truth of slavery, Weld told that it took very little travel in the South to see slavery for what it was, and to experience a shock to their emotions. In Weld’s eyes, a person could spend just a short time in the South and become fully acquainted with the sinfulness of slavery, with the suffering of the slave, and this would quicken his heart to oppose the institution. Believing fully in the holiness of the cause, Weld was convinced of abolition’s divine purpose.

Specifically, the abolitionists pressed the power of moral suasion in abolition. With Lane Seminary as a choice example of this, the abolitionists wrote about the example of Lane Seminary. They wrote about the process of the First Debates, and they wrote about the power of moral suasion. Predictably, many of these writings came from the pens of the students, providing their eyewitness testimony to the power of moral suasion.

²³⁵ *New York Evangelist*, March 7, 1835.

²³⁶ *Liberator*, April 26, 1834; Isaiah 58:6.

With the powerful testimony of the students, abolitionists stressed the example of Lane Seminary. The *New York Emancipator* published an article in which the editor wrote that nothing in the last year provided the animating power to abolition that the First Lane Debates provided. Considering previous efforts to be planting seeds and the First Debates the first fruits of the harvest, the *Emancipator* took considerable joy in pointing out that the First Debates featured the conversion of actual slaveholders. Noting Cincinnati's strategic location, the *Emancipator* gushed over the power of abolition when presented to slaveholders, describing this as the first inroad of their principles into the South. Answering those who objected to preaching about anti-slavery in the North, the *Emancipator* said that the Lane experience proved plainly that such a strategy would be effective and even necessary. This case, with slaveholder conversions, showed that moral suasion could work without the need for hostile confrontation.²³⁷

The students themselves publicized the process of moral suasion as it occurred at Lane Seminary. In the race to publish accounts of the meetings, Lane student Huntington Lyman assured readers that the conversions to abolition took place as part of a long process rather than a brief emotional event. Lyman wrote about the fateful fall semester at Lane Seminary, noting that there were at that time no students opposed to colonization and none advocating immediate emancipation. Instructing his audience as to the slaveholdings of the Southern students, Lyman effectively painted a picture of a group of students that was not seeking to become radical abolitionists. At the same time, Lyman showed the making of a revival for abolition that resemble Finney's evangelistic revivals. With suspicion towards immediate emancipation, several students began to examine it early in the fall term. Many of those, Lyman wrote, became abolitionists. This led to more conversations, and ultimately the Debates with their examinations

²³⁷ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, April 1834.

of the documents of the American Colonization Society. Calling himself and his fellow students “astonished” at their abolition conversions, Lyman continued on to show the actions that the new converts took, including their work among the blacks of Cincinnati and their founding of the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society. Throughout the piece, Lyman made it clear that the mass conversions took place only through a reasoned examination of the issue.²³⁸

The students described their process as a mature one, not a decision they arrived at rashly. Defending his classmates, Theodore Weld wrote that these students were not children. Answering charges by the *Western Monthly Magazine* that these students lacked the maturity to handle such a powerful issue of slavery, a criticism which used such language as “precocious undergraduates” and “embryo clergymen,” Weld stood strong to defend his fellow students. Employing enrollment statistics, Weld demonstrated the maturity of his classmates. Showing that 30 of the theology students were over 26 years old, and nine of them in their thirties, Weld began his argument. Showing also that the students had practical life experience, Weld pointed out that one student practiced medicine for ten years, that twelve others previously served as agents for charities, and also that six students were married, with three of them married longer than ten years. Moving to the literary department, Weld showed that 18 of those students were between 25 and 30, with 28 students between 21-25, and 10 students between 19 and 21. He further demonstrated that only one student was under nineteen at Lane Seminary. Using this evidence, Weld argued that the maturity of the Lane students was undeniable.²³⁹ Wattles and Weld each described the meetings as mature episodes. Wattles wrote in an abbreviated style that the

²³⁸ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, April 1834.

²³⁹ *Liberator*, June 14, 1834.

meetings were characterized by “candor, fairness, and manhood,” with every option fairly examined, concluding that every student left the Debates satisfied that “justice has been done.”²⁴⁰

In his response to the *Western Monthly Magazine*, Weld refuted the publication’s claims that rancor and volatility filled the meetings. Dismissing this accusation as one with no basis in fact, Weld offered his assessment of the Debates. Weld argued that every student agreed that “courtesy and kindness pervaded the whole debate.”²⁴¹ No student accused any other student of unfairness, and no student impugned another student’s motives, Weld claimed. Instead, Weld described a prevailing spirit of “harmony and brotherly love” during the Debate and throughout the subsequent events.²⁴²

The students described their long, mature process as a process based upon examining evidence. Huntington Lyman stressed that the students examined actual documents of the American Colonization Society, arguing that they could do no less than that if there were to examine the correctness of the nation’s largest charitable organization. By examining the ACS documents, speeches by its officers, and the pro-colonization newspapers, the students arrived at the conclusion that colonization could never bring about the abolition of slavery. The Lane students came to believe that their previous allegiance to colonization came from sentiment and attachment to the prominent names associated with the movement. After examining the evidence, the Lane students almost unanimously became abolitionists, Lyman wrote.²⁴³ Corroborating this

²⁴⁰ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, May 1834.

²⁴¹ *Liberator*, June 14, 1834.

²⁴² *Liberator*, June 14, 1834.

²⁴³ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, April 1834.

testimony, Stanton wrote of the same documents, and insisted that the Debates were “emphatically a discussion of *facts*, FACTS, FACTS.”²⁴⁴

The Lane students credited free discussion with bringing them to their position. Writing as a whole, the students explained their view that free discussion was a right and a duty, and one that they took seriously in examining several key American issues. Finally coming to the issue of slavery, the students discussed it the same way: praying, examining facts, and peacefully discussing the controversial issue. Claiming sympathy as their motivating force, and not an angry spirit, the students proceeded to take action to help slaves and free blacks alike.²⁴⁵

Weld saw the Lane process as one that could be replicated both at the school and all over the nation. Writing to defend the students’ meeting as well as to prove that free discussion would draw students to the school, Weld argued that the presence of converted Southern students at Lane showed this very principle. Arguing fervently that Southerners were not prejudiced or cowardly enough to shut out those who believed in abolition, Weld believed that Southerners in general could listen to abolitionist claims. Upon that listening, Weld believed that those Southerners would convert to abolition, just as the Lane students did.²⁴⁶

As seen earlier, the Lane students testified unanimously to the power of moral suasion to convert them into immediate abolitionists. Laying a foundation, abolitionists described the forming of the Lane Seminary Anti-Slavery Society. Writing that they comprised the largest class of theology students in the nation, the *New York Evangelist* emphasized the diverse backgrounds of these students, noting particularly that they hailed from all parts of the country. Even with their diverse backgrounds, the students found unity in abolition because of their

²⁴⁴ *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

²⁴⁵ *New York Evangelist*, January 10, 1835.

²⁴⁶ *Liberator*, June 14, 1834.

discussions. Seeing this as evidence of the power of moral suasion, the Evangelist eagerly anticipated the day that these students, many of them southerners, would spread this same message all over the South. To further cement their claim, the Evangelist published a list of the LSASS officers, paying special attention to the fact that every officer hailed from a slave state.²⁴⁷

Weld described the scene at Lane Seminary eight months prior to the Debates. Weld wrote clearly that no student believed in immediate emancipation eight months prior to the Debates. It did not matter what part of the nation the students came from, North or South. None were abolitionists. Several, Weld noted, were from slave states. The students took part in an active colonization society. Not only were there no abolitionists, but every student viewed abolition as “the climax of absurdity, fanaticism, and blood,” wrote Weld.²⁴⁸

Lyman pointed to the division among the students prior to the meetings, as opposed to the unity they experienced afterwards. Like Weld, Lyman reported that no students stood for abolition, but that they took part instead in an active colonization society. Lyman emphasized that the students not only refused to embrace abolition, but viewed any student that read or carried an abolitionist newspaper with suspicion. If that student spoke about those papers, the other students viewed his words as inflammatory, and largely refused to participate in a dialogue about abolition.²⁴⁹

To complete the picture, the students showed the dramatic effects of the meetings. Emphasizing the unanimity following the meetings, the students painted a picture that very much resembled a revival meeting, both in terms of the unity and the power they experienced. As a result of the meetings, nearly every Lane student from a slave state became an immediate

²⁴⁷ *Liberator*, April 5, 1834.

²⁴⁸ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, May 1834.

²⁴⁹ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, April 1834.

abolitionist. Weld testified to this unanimous conversion, writing that every student from a slave state embraced immediate emancipation except for one. The case of that one student was unique to the Lane student body, in that he was away from the school during the Debates. Therefore, this student did not hear the body of evidence the other students listened to.²⁵⁰

Listing in detail the backgrounds of the Lane students, Weld wrote that every slave state had a representative at the meetings, as well as the Arkansas Territory.²⁵¹ Even with these diverse backgrounds, the vote took on an overwhelming nature. Writing of the verdict, Stanton wrote again of the students' backgrounds, much as the other students had. Relating the previous state of indecision among the students, Stanton stressed that the diverse and divided students reached this point of near unanimity strictly through considering the evidence before them.²⁵²

In his famous speech, Thome proclaimed that the Lane Debates showed the power of immediate emancipation when reasonably presented to slave owners. Detailing his Kentucky background, Thome related the conscience-killing influence that slavery formerly held on him. Even with this background that killed any compassion he may have had for black people, and even sitting as the heir to a slave fortune, the principles of abolition convinced Thome to denounce the entire system of slavery.²⁵³ Again, Thome stressed, this conversion came from the power of the ideas and the complete grip that they took on a man.

Publishing Augustus Wattles' letter about the Debates prompted Garrison to comment on the meetings. Relating the familiar facts of the students' backgrounds, Garrison argued that their interests would naturally be in favor of slavery. In Garrison's eyes, "nothing but the irresistible

²⁵⁰ *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, May 1834.

²⁵¹ *Liberator*, June 14, 1834.

²⁵² *Liberator*, March 29, 1834.

²⁵³ *Christian Watchman*, May 16, 1834.

force of truth and justice” was sufficient to lead them to their abolition conversion. Seeing this as a tremendously encouraging anti-slavery development, Garrison wrote that even the most skeptical person must concede that moral suasion was effective upon slaveholders after they examined the evidence from Lane Seminary.²⁵⁴ Furthermore, Garrison argued, the power of moral suasion would bring slavery to a speedy end.

Through this part of the media coverage of the Lane Debates a virtual conversation took place between people who held two very different points of view towards a solution for slavery. Both sides clearly presented their hatred for slavery. Both sides based this hatred on the same theological ground. Both sides took great pains to debate the opposing opinion while simultaneously making sure to promote their own solution.

Each side reflected a different background in formulating their opinion based on their position in the seminary and society. The colonizationists in this story, with most of them being professors or others with official positions, looked at things in terms of unity among Christians and the nation. The colonizationists carried a great concern for societal stability. On the other hand, the abolitionists pursued their beliefs with the zealous vigor of a new convert. While keeping peace in the meetings and composure in their relations with authority, the Lane students saw the great need of the Negro slave as the paramount concern. Believing that slavery would ultimately bring about a national division, the students sought to correct the nation’s greatest moral problem before it ran its destructive course any further.

The colonizationists showed the careful sobriety of judgment that comes with an authoritative position. This sobriety often appeared to be a fearful pessimism, and may have been just that. At the same time, that careful judgment led them to adopt their slower, gradual process,

²⁵⁴ *Liberator*, May 3, 1834.

and combined that graduality with their very real concern that full Negro equality could not happen in the antebellum United States. Presenting a much bolder and optimistic view, the abolitionists argued that full Negro equality not only could be achieved in the United States, but mandated it as the only acceptable ending for slavery. Arguing ceaselessly that free blacks wished to remain in the country of their birth rather than returning to a “home” they never knew, the abolitionists presented equality as a moral obligation of the American people to the slave and free black. Propelled by the optimism of new converts, the students worked tirelessly to prepare the nation for this end state.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The Lane Debates gave a bold, assertive new voice to American abolition. From the days immediately following the Debates, the Lane students actively and energetically wrote to publish their newfound beliefs in immediate abolition. Finding a very willing part in the abolitionist press, the students produced article after article to further their belief in abolition through moral suasion.

Of course, the students were not the only authors in this media controversy. Intriguingly, this back-and-forth became a conflict between two parties that seem to have no real reason for conflict. The abolitionists and the colonizationists at Lane were all evangelicals. They all came from the same doctrinal background. From all accounts, students and faculty had extremely cordial and strong relationships throughout their Lane experience. One can safely assume that these were two parties that had no reason for such a profound and destructive conflict. Yet, the conflict came, and in so doing, demonstrated the true divisive power of slavery. Even when presented in a calm, reasoned meeting of like-minded people, slavery still divided a strongly united institution.

Both the abolitionist students and the colonizationist school officials based their beliefs in the same theological ground, with each one arguing that the slave was made in the image of God, just like whites. With that same basis, both sides shared a desire that the slave owners not only free their slaves, but that both North and South partner in a major societal shift. Believing in the common humanity of blacks and whites, the colonizationists and abolitionists at Lane argued that the American blacks deserved full equality with whites.

But at that point, both sides reached the crucial difference. As the last chapter suggested, the Lane faculty and trustees took a much more careful and measured approach marked with a very real pessimism that the United States could see Negro equality actually happen. On the other hand, the newly converted students, with their energetic zeal, believed that equality was not only possible but necessary and even inevitable. One can almost feel their voices thunder and fists pounding pulpits when the Lane students wrote that immediate emancipation was the cause of God. Powered by the zeal of their newfound beliefs, the abolitionists passionately pressed their case. On the contrary, still powered by their convictions, but from a stance of defending an established position as opposed to pressing a new one, the colonizationists wrote less voluminously. The colonizationists, especially Stowe, still wrote effectively, but with nowhere near the apparent passion of the abolitionists. The colonizationists, appropriately enough, wrote as teachers correcting pupils.

Examining the ancillary issues that the slavery debate drew out further instructs us in this as well. Without downplaying their powerful convictions, each party in this conflict played their expected cultural role. This is emphasized by the subjects each presented in the media. Both colonizationists and abolitionists wrote on the nature of slavery and the need for full black equality in the United States, but they largely diverged after this point of agreement.

Even though both sides agreed on the necessity and totality of faculty authority in the seminary, they disagreed strongly on its application in this case. The faculty ascribed much purer motives to the trustees than did the students, and described the trustee actions in much gentler terms. The students saw the trustee actions as a clear abuse of power, and blamed the massive departure of the student body on those heavy-handed actions. Reflecting their societal position, the Lane colonizationists and their backers in the press placed great importance on hearing the

opinion of the teachers over those of the students. The colonizationists saw this especially in a parental role, although they also placed it in terms of a general societal need to respect authority. For their part, the students simply understood their actions to be the normal activity of college students, and further underscored their actions as obedience to the school's President, Lyman Beecher, and to Scriptural commands.

Rather than seeing the resulting controversy in terms of a failure to respect their authority figures, the students saw it as a necessary exercise in free speech, and vigorously defended their right to take up the controversial subject. Basing the necessity to handle controversy in terms of their future ministerial careers and obedience to Biblical commands, the students truly believed that they had taken the only possible course by holding these debates. Seeing another side to the issue, the faculty and trustees saw the troubles and unrest in Cincinnati that resulted from the Debates, and therefore saw slavery as a subject too controversial for their fledgling school to handle.

Seeing the school in purposeful terms, the faculty and their supporters argued that slavery was not the issue that the seminary was founded to discuss. Focusing on their role as a ministerial training center, the seminary desired no more discussion on slavery, feeling that it either had or would create a distraction to take the students away from their studies. The students, of course, saw things through the opposite lens. Sounding like students of all ages, the Lane students argued that this was the school's exact purpose. Specifically, the students failed to see how they could properly minister to an age and culture that they did not properly understand. Without discussing slavery, they would fail to understand the nineteenth Century, and fail to apply their theological education to their world. On the other hand, the school argued, too much time on slavery would take the students away from their primary purpose of learning theology,

Biblical studies, and their application to practical ministry. Here, each side divided largely based on their societal position.

Based on the number of occurrences and prominent placements their articles received in the press of their day, it is safe to say that the Lane Debates produced a massive compilation of public debate between abolitionists and colonizationists. Showing that the issue of slavery could divide even the closest, most united people, this controversy and media debate stretched over a year and a half. Along the way, a school crumbled, one spouse passed away, schools for free blacks began, and the Lane Seminary students blazed a new path for the fledgling abolitionist movement.

The Lane Debates resulted in an explosion of publicity for the abolitionists of the United States. Providing a clear and powerful picture of the power of abolition principles to convert actual slaveholders, the Lane Debates gave tangible hope to abolitionists such as Garrison that moral suasion was effective as an anti-slavery strategy. With their presence at the American Anti-Slavery Society meeting in May 1834 and their inclusion in widely-distributed abolition materials, the Lane students made an impact across the North in the beginnings of the movement towards immediate emancipation.

Appendix A: Listing of Lane Seminary Students and their Home States for 1833-1834 Academic Year²⁵⁵

Theological Department:

Student	Home State
William T. Allan	Alabama
John W. Alvord	Connecticut
Hiram Babcock	Ohio
Andrew Benton	Missouri
Lorenzo D. Butts	New York
Henry Cherry	New York
George Clark	Connecticut
Amos Dresser	Peru, MA
Alexander Duncan	New York
John E. Finley	Ohio
Joseph D. Gould	Ohio
Zerah K. Hawley	Connecticut
Augustus Hopkins	Ohio
Enoch S. Huntington	Connecticut
Edwin Hutchinson	New York
Russell J. Judd	New York
Huntington Lyman	Louisiana
Israel S. Mattison	Ohio
John J. Miter	New York
Charles W. McPheeters	Missouri
Joseph H. Payne	New York
Samuel Payne	New Jersey
Samuel Penny, Jr.	New York
John T. Pierce	Massachusetts
Ezra A. Pool	New York
George Porter	Indiana
Josiah Porter	Indiana
S. Fuller Porter	New York
Marius R. Robinson	Tennessee
Henry H. Spaulding	Ohio
Henry B. Stanton	New York
Asa A. Stone	New York
Sereno W. Streeter	Massachusetts
James A. Thome	Kentucky
H. St. John Van Dyke	New York

²⁵⁵ *Fourth Annual Report of the Trustees of the Cincinnati Lane Seminary Together with a Catalogue of the Officers and Students* (Cincinnati, OH: Lane Seminary, 1834), 25-28. Names and states in bold are such in order to emphasize students from slave states and territories.

Calvin Waterbury	New York
Edward Weed	New York
Theodore Weld	New York
Samuel Wells	New York
George Whipple	New York
Thomas S. Williamson	Ohio
Hiram Wilson	Ohio

Preparatory Department:

Student	Home State	Student	Home State
John C. Alexander	New York	Deodat Jeffers	New York
James M. Allan	Alabama	Barton Lee	Ohio
George W. Ames	Ohio	Elisha Little	Massachusetts
Benjamin F. Arnold	Rhode Island	Enoch R. Martin	Indiana
Courtland Avery	New York	Samuel Masters	Arkansas Territory
Lewis Barnes	Ohio	James H. Mattison	Ohio
Enoch N. Bartlett	New Hampshire	James Morrison	Ohio
John M. Boal	Ohio	Alexander McKellar	Scotland
Lewis Bradley	New York	Abraham Neely	New York
James Bradley	Arkansas Territory	Lucius H. Parker	New York
Carlos Brainard	New York	Jacob Parsons	New York
Lewis Bridgman	Massachusetts	Algernon S. Pierce	Massachusetts
George Brubaker	Kentucky	Munson S. Robinson	New York
Talbot Bullard	Massachusetts	David Rowe	Arkansas Territory
Charles P. Bush	New York	Abner S. Ross	New Jersey
Christopher C. Cadwell	New York	Charles Sexton	Michigan
William W. Caldwell	Pennsylvania	Robert L. Stanton	New York
Uriah T. Chamberlain	New York	James Steele	New York
Eben B. Chamberlain	New York	Calvin H. Tate	Missouri
John Clark	Connecticut	Henry P. Thompson	Kentucky
James S. Cook	New York	Samuel Thompson	Ohio
Charles Crocker	New York	J.C. Tibbils	Unlisted
Amasa Frissell, Jr.	Massachusetts	John A. Tiffany	New York
Myron A. Gooding	New York	Josiah J. Ward	Ohio
Isaac Griffith	Ohio	Matthew Watson	Missouri
William Hamilton	New Jersey	Augustus Wattles	Connecticut
Aaron M. Himrod	Pennsylvania	Joseph Weeks	Ohio
Burritt Hitchcock	Connecticut	Isaac H. Wright	Pennsylvania
Coleman S. Hodges	Virginia		
David S. Ingraham	New York		

Appendix B: Background and Place of Publication of Cited Print Media Sources

Name	Affiliation/Background	Place of Publication
<i>African Repository and Colonial Journal</i> ²⁵⁶	American Colonization Society	Washington, D.C.
<i>American Anti-Slavery Reporter</i>	American Anti-Slavery Society	New York, NY
<i>Anti-Slavery Record</i>	American Anti-Slavery Society	New York, NY/ Boston, MA
<i>Boston Recorder</i> ²⁵⁷	Congregational	Boston, MA
<i>Christian Advocate and Journal</i> ²⁵⁸	Methodist	
<i>Christian Secretary</i> ²⁵⁹	Connecticut Baptist Missionary Society	Connecticut
<i>Christian Watchman</i> ²⁶⁰	Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts	Boston, MA
<i>Daily National Intelligencer</i> ²⁶¹	Whig	Washington, D.C.
<i>Emancipator, and Record of Public Morals</i>		New York, NY
<i>Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate</i>	Unitarian	
<i>Genius of Universal Emancipation</i>	Benjamin Lundy	Baltimore, MD
<i>Ohio Observer</i>	Presbyterian	Hudson, OH
<i>Liberator</i>	William Lloyd Garrison	Boston, MA
<i>New York Evangelist</i>	Joshua Leavitt	New York, NY
<i>New York Observer and Chronicle</i> ²⁶²	Presbyterian	
<i>Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics</i> ²⁶³		Portsmouth, NH
<i>Religious Intelligencer</i> ²⁶⁴	Ecumenical	New Haven, CT
<i>United States Telegraph</i> ²⁶⁵	Congressional and	Washington, D.C.

²⁵⁶ African Repository and Colonial Journal No. 1 March 1825, "The Eighty Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States. With an Appendix," *The North American Review*, Vol. 21, No. 48 (Jul. 1825), 230-232.

²⁵⁷ Mott, 206.

²⁵⁸ Mott, 206.

²⁵⁹ Online Computer Library Center, www.worldcat.org/title/christian-secretary/oclc/639956809.

²⁶⁰ National Endowment for the Humanities and Library of Congress, "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers," Library of Congress. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lcom/sf89090890.

²⁶¹ Mott, 179.

²⁶² Mott, 206.

²⁶³ National Endowment for the Humanities and Library of Congress, "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers," Library of Congress. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83020324.

²⁶⁴ Johns Hopkins University Libraries, "Catalyst," Johns Hopkins University Libraries. https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_1827951.

	government news	
<i>Vermont Chronicle</i>		
<i>Western Christian Advocate</i> ²⁶⁶	Methodist and Episcopal Church	Cincinnati, OH
<i>Western Luminary</i>		

²⁶⁵ Mott, 198.

²⁶⁶ National Endowment for the Humanities and Library of Congress, "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers," Library of Congress. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lcon/sn89075028.

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Christian Advocate and Journal
Christian Secretary (New Haven, CT)
Christian Watchman (Boston, MA)
Cincinnati Gazette (Cincinnati, OH)
Daily National Intelligencer (Washington, D.C.)
Emancipator, and Record of Public Morals (New York, NY)
Episcopal Recorder (Philadelphia, PA)
Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate
Genius of Universal Emancipation (Baltimore, MD)
Liberator (Boston, MA)
New Bedford Mercury
New York Courier and Enquirer (New York, NY)
New York Evangelist (New York, NY)
New York Observer (New York, NY)
Ohio Observer (Hudson, OH)
Portsmouth Journal (Portsmouth, NH)
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