

Levi Burnell

by Charles Finney

This sermon is a biographical sketch of Levi Burnell, Treasurer and Secretary of Oberlin College, and a series of letters exchanged between Finney and Burnell regarding salary payment and health updates.

Scripture: Proverbs 27:17, Galatians 6:2, Philippians 1:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:24-25

Topics: "Brotherhood in Christ", "Communication in Leadership"

Description

In his correspondence to Levi Burnell, Charles Finney discusses the ongoing developments at Oberlin College and the challenges of securing suitable professors. He shares updates about his own situation, including a recent illness that prevented him from attending a meeting, and expresses gratitude for the financial support received. Finney emphasizes the importance of communication and collaboration among the college's leadership as they navigate these transitions, highlighting the bonds of brotherhood in Christ that unite them.

Transcript

To Levi Burnell

15 December 1837

[Autograph signed letter in Correspondence of Oberlin College.]

Levi Burnell (1803-1881) was the Treasurer and Secretary of Oberlin College. Born in Northampton, Massachusetts, he went to Rochester as a young man. There, he ran a drug store, and became involved in the religious and reform movements. But he had a bent for scientific invention. He became a member of the Franklin Institute, where he delivered a pioneering address on electric telegraphy in December 1827. He was head of the Lorain Iron Company in Elyria before taking up the post of Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary in Oberlin College 1835. It was his plan for a cooking stove that led to Philo P. Stewart's invention. (See Chellis S. Hopkins, "Recollections of Other Days" in *The Oberlin News* [May 17, 1901], p. 8.)

Finney received the following letter from Josiah Chapin when he was in Cleveland.

Dr. Brother Finney Providence Nov 22d 1837

Your letter of the 10th inst came

[to] hand yesterday. Annexd. you have H. E. Hudson Cash.
check on the Bank U. State Philadelphia for one
hundred dolls, which please accept in part payment
of your salary as Professor in Oberlin Institute &endash;
I hope soon to hear of the arrival of Prof. Morgan
who will from what I know of him be most likely
to suit our people the best, of the two who are coming East
of your Profs. We have all most daily some Minister
proposed to us, but we do not yet find one who
appears to be suited for us --- Your Bro in christian love Josiah Chapin
(over)

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P.S. I could not find readily a check on New
York, and when to be had, they are 2 per cent premium.

I could have got a check on Cincinatti Ohio, but I
presume this will be best, as funds at the west are
wanted[?] by Merchants to [?] as well as Banks

J. C

Finney then wrote to Levi Burnell as follows:

Cleveland 15th Dec. 1837.

Dr. Br. Burnell.

I recd. your communication

in due time. I wrote to Br. Chapin

informing him that Br. Cowles & Morgan

were going East & one of them would

be at Providence I did not know which

(for then it was not determined.) He wrote in

reply that they should prefer Br. Morgan & requested that he might come. This was the reason of his saying to Br. Cowles that they did not expect him. But Br. Chapin's last letter I did not receive until since I have been here. With that letter he sent me a check on the U.S. Bank for 100 dollars I recd 75 cents premium on it, so that you may charge to me on the treasurers Book one hundred dollars & seventy five cents recd on my Salary per Josiah Chapin.

The state of things here is interesting. I am at present laid aside by a cold. Last evening was the first meeting I missed.

Your Brother in the best of bonds.

C. G. Finney.

I wish you wd notify my wife when there opportunities to sen[d?] to me at Cleveland.

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[Addressed] Levi Burnell Esqr

Oberlin

Ohio

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