COLLEGIATE instruction began at Ursinus on September 6, 1870. By far the most important feature of the opening ceremony was the inaugural address of President Bomberger, important because in it the President described his educational philosophy and the principles which were to inform and direct the work done at Ursinus during his administration. He believed, first, that students were to be "moulded", not just allowed to "grow" or develop as best they might without the active guidance and control of their instructors. The teacher was to build character as well as mind. Second, he believed in the old, completely prescribed pattern of courses in the liberal arts, the American equivalent of the trivium and the quadrivium, rather than the system initiated by President Eliot of Harvard in which a student could largely choose whatever courses seemed immediately useful or attractive to him. Dr. Bomberger's ideal of education was conservative in method and liberal in aim. It was summed up in this sentence: "We adhere to the old doctrine, that the first purpose of all academic education is thorough mental culture, the development of the latent strength of the faculties to disciplined activity." And in his peroration he declared: "Here, then, we stand today solemnly committed to the momentous task of educating young men and youth, truly and thoroughly, intellectually, morally, religiously (and are not these essentially one), and all in harmony with the pure principles of Evangelical Christianity."

The faculty of the new college opened on that Tuesday in September of 1870 was dominated by its president and professor of Moral and Mental Philosophy and Evidences of Christianity. President Bomberger was then at the height of his powers. Born in Lancaster on January 13, 1817, he was educated at various elementary schools in Lancaster, particularly the Lancaster Academy. In 1832 he was sent to the Reformed Church High School in York, then directed by Dr. Frederick A. Rauch, later the first president of Marshall College. As he was from early years destined for the ministry he carried a curriculum at York which would prepare him for admission to theological training without college. But in 1835 the High School was moved to Mercersburg and in the next year it was transformed into Marshall
College. At the new college, which placed its students in four classes and modelled its curriculum after that of Princeton, Dr. Bomberger was the senior class and subsequently the first graduate of Marshall College in 1837.

He spent the next year as a theological student with Dr. Rauch and as a tutor in his alma mater. He was examined and licensed by the Synod in 1838, ordained, and called to the Lewistown charge, subsequently to Waynesboro in 1840, and to First Church, Easton in 1845. Here he labored with marked success until in 1854 he accepted the second call extended to him by the Race Street Church (Old First) in Philadelphia. He held this charge at the time Ursinus was founded.

When Dr. Bomberger became pastor of Old First, the congregation was in somewhat shaken condition. Its pastor for many years, the Rev. Joseph F. Burg, had left it to enter the Dutch Reformed Church because he believed his own denomination was tending toward Romanism. Many of his members followed him, so that Dr. Bomberger became pastor of a church rich in tradition but now diminished to a membership of one hundred and twenty. Within five years he trebled the congregation, which in later years became a wealthy and generous sponsor of new Reformed churches.

It may be readily conjectured that so successful a pastor and leader would be active in the larger interests of the Church. Dr. Bomberger was an energetic supporter of the Theological Seminary and for some years a member of its Board of Visitors. He was interested in the union of Franklin College with Marshall College, helped to raise the funds which made the union possible, and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the united college from its inception in 1853 until 1869. He was approached for its presidency but seems to have discouraged the proffer. He was honored by the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the first commencement (1853), thus becoming the first honorary alumnus of Franklin and Marshall. In the national activities of the Church he was influential, serving in important capacities on the Boards of Home and Foreign Missions and their predecessors for thirty-six years.

His involvement in the preparation of the new order of worship has already been described.

An industrious and exact student of historical and current theology, Dr. Bomberger contributed many articles to the Mercersburg Review and later to the Reformed Church Monthly. His greater reputation as a theologian, however, rested on his translation and revision of Kurtz's Textbook of Church History and his Protestant Theological and Ecclesiastical Encyclopedia, a condensed translation of the German theologian Herzog's Real Encyclopaedia. Up to 1870 President Bomberger had already lived an active and fruitful life.

His associates on the faculty were men of satisfactory qualifications for that time and of ripe experience. The vice-president and "Professor of Mathematics, Mechanics, the Harmony of Science and Revealed Religion, etc." was the Rev. Henry William Super, who was to become president after Dr. Bomberger's death in 1890 and whose name is perpetuated in Superhouse, his home which was bequeathed to the College at the death of his widow. Forty-six years old in 1870, Dr.
Super was a graduate of Marshall College and the Theological Seminary at Lancaster. After serving the Waynesboro charge, which Dr. Bomberger had also served, he became instructor in mathematics in the Keystone State Normal School at Kutztown and taught there until he came to Ursinus. From the outset he was Dr. Bomberger's right hand man in the administration of the College.

The professor of classical languages, holder of a chair of great importance in those days, was J. Shelly Weinberger. A graduate of Yale, Professor Weinberger had been instructor in ancient and modern languages in Freeland Seminary, and he formed a strong connecting link between the old institution and the new. He was appointed the first dean of the College in 1893 and became through the years one of the grand old men of Ursinus. His daughter, Minerva, was to become one of the two first coeds and women graduates (1884).

Another important teacher in 1870 was Dr. J. Warrene Sunderland, professor of "Chemistry, Geology, Botany, etc." Dr. Sunderland was a graduate of Wesleyan (1836) who had taught at McKendree College in Illinois and Kemper College in Missouri before he came east in 1848 to join Abraham Hunsicker in his educational work. He was in 1870 also head of Pennsylvania Female College, which he and his wife had opened in 1855 and the closing of which brought co-education to Ursinus in 1881. Dr. Sunderland was also a director of the College and was active in the initiatory phase of its foundation. Although he was on the faculty for only three years, he remained for many years an important member of the Board.
The last of the original faculty members was the Rev. John Van Haagen, a Mercersburg graduate who had subsequently studied in Germany. He became professor of the "German Language and Literature, History, the History and Philosophy of Language, etc."

Not a member of the faculty in 1870 but equally venerable in the history of the College was Samuel Vernon Ruby, Esq., who in 1872 was elected "Professor of Natural Sciences and Belles Lettres" and whose name is perpetuated in the *Ruby*, the student yearbook. Born in 1832, Professor Ruby was graduated from Franklin and Marshall. He read law in the office of Thaddeus Stevens in Lancaster and was admitted to practice at Carlisle in 1858. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted and served throughout the war, moving up from private to first lieutenant. He fought at second Bull Run, South Mountain, Antietam, Frederickburg, and the Wilderness, where he was captured and spent the remainder of the war in prison. He was given his captaincy after the war and served as a judge advocate until his resignation in 1866. Having decided to teach rather than resume the practice of law, he became professor of ancient languages in Palatinate College in Myerstown, which he left to come to Ursinus. Here he taught English until his death, being in his last years the professor of "English Language and Literature, Aesthetics, and Social Science."

The first catalog (1869) lists also J. Warren Royer as lecturer on physiology and anatomy and William H. Snyder, J. Warren Custer, and H. W. Kratz, Esq. as "additional teachers." Snyder taught only the academy students, and the other two taught music, also on the pre-college level.

Samuel Vernon Ruby, Esq., in 1872 was elected "Professor of Natural Sciences and Belles Lettres." A veteran of the Civil War, his name was perpetuated in the *Ruby*, the student yearbook.
The students both in the Academic Department and the College were almost without exception Pennsylvanians. The catalog for 1870–1 (the first one recording a year of collegiate instruction) lists one student from New Jersey and one from Ohio out of the 120 total. Incidentally, not until the 1872–3 catalog are the students categorized by class. In that year there were five seniors, six juniors, eight sophomores, and twenty-two freshmen. The theological class numbered six and the academic students sixty-nine, a grand total of 119. Most of the students in whatever level of instruction came from villages and small towns in southeastern Pennsylvania. About half had distinctively Pennsylvania German names.

The campus they came to consisted of the main building and north wing (Freeland Hall and Stine Hall, razed in 1968) of the erstwhile Freeland Seminary, with, according to early woodcuts of the campus, twin gazebos to the right and left of the steps leading to the portico. To the east of the College, a little in front of where the former Alumni Memorial Library now stands, was Prospect Terrace, a large boarding house owned by James Palmer which the Board of Directors considered purchasing in 1871. To the west, three hundred yards away, was the Hunsicker farm, with a frame Victorian house and the usual farm buildings. This property was later purchased by the College, and the house, which stood on the site of the north end of Pfahler Hall, became Olevian Hall, the first dormitory for women.

In the first catalog the location of the College is described in terms which must arouse mingled feelings in the heart of every alumnus:

In a remarkably healthy district; on an eminence commanding the most attracting scenery with all the happy educational influence of such scenery; affording delightful walks, and inviting fields for prosecuting botanical and geological studies in a practical way; easy of access, by railroad communications, from all sides; surrounded by a moral and religious community; retired, and so far free from the distracting noise and stir of public life, and yet enjoying all the conveniences of a thrifty village.

Prospective students were apprised that the refectory, dormitories, study halls, and class rooms were “spacious, airy, and well-provided with every requisite for the health and comfort of the student”. In 1869 it was not necessary to explain that this meant bucket-a-day stoves for heating the rooms and outdoor plumbing.

But if the physical prospects were so pleasant, the inward aspect of the College was serious indeed. Prospective students read that

The DISCIPLINE of the Institution will be Christian and parental. No special injunctions or prohibitions need to be detailed. The students will be treated as gentlemen and expected to conduct themselves accordingly. Every proper liberty will be allowed, and no arbitrary or oppressive restraints will be imposed. Violations of decorum and good order will, however, incur prompt and decisive penalties.

Every evidence indicates that these were not empty words. President Bomberger would admonish offenders against decorum in the presence of the whole student body, and few dared to provoke his thunder twice. The President did report to the
Board of Directors in 1873 the expulsion of two students for "contumacious insubordination", a penalty which, he said, was "inflicted with reluctance and sorrow but which has been followed by good results."

In the first few years collegiate work began slowly. Most of the students were in the academic department, and only as those prepared reached the higher levels was the full curriculum as described in the catalog of 1869–70 actually taught. In February of 1872 President Bomberger wrote an interesting description of a typical day at Ursinus which portrays the pattern of studies then offered and also the almost military regimen. Observant readers will note that no senior courses are listed, for the first students to complete four years (or their equivalent) of collegiate study were to be graduated in 1873.

Believing, therefore, that it will be gratifying to our numerous patrons, who have sons and relatives in Ursinus, and to the still larger number of friends who take a lively interest in the Institution, we shall attempt a pencil sketch of a day's doings in the school. The first day of the working week is selected, as being a fair specimen of what takes place on all the others, except Saturday, when, according to general custom, there are no recitations or lectures.

We start, then, with 5:30 A.M., on Monday, when the large bell rings, rousing the inmates of the building from their slumbers, and summoning them to preparation for the work of the day and week. To new-comers, the loud, clear peals of the early bell are at first quite startling. In most cases, unused to such sounds at that hour, when, during the Fall and Winter months, it is still dark, they leap at a bound from their couches, and, half-scared, hurry through their preparations for breakfast. Soon, however, the ear becomes accustomed to the sound, and the sleeper wakens slowly to the call, rises reluctantly from his rest, and barely manages to reach the dining hall before "the door is shut."

At 6 A.M., the steward's bell rings for breakfast. All the students in the house meet in the large recitation room, and at the tap of a small desk-bell pass, bench after bench in due order to the dining hall. Each boarder has his proper place. At present two long tables accommodate them, by a little close packing. One of the Professors, residing in the building, occupies a seat at the head, another at the foot of each table, as far as they may be said to have a head or foot. About twenty minutes are occupied at the meal. When all have finished, they are dismissed in order by a stroke of the tap-bell.

Then follows an hour of study in their respective rooms. From half past seven until the time for morning prayer and roll-call, they are at liberty for recreation. If the weather allows, this time is mostly given to walking, base ball, or some other amusement involving bodily exercise, and the exercise of the respiratory and vocal organs in mirthful ways.

At 8:45 A.M. the large bell again rings, summoning Professors and students to the large recitation room (not yet used as a chapel) for morning prayer and roll-call. After calling the roll, a chapter is read from the Bible, a hymn sung, and prayer offered. These devotions are conducted in strict accordance with the simple usage of the Reformed Church. Any requisite statements or announcements are then made by the Faculty.

The students are then dismissed in classes, by a stroke of the tap-bell, to their respective recitation rooms in the following order: first bell, the Theological Class, and Professor Super's class in Elementary Algebra. Second tap, Professor Weinberger's, the Junior Class (Agamemnon or Tacitus' Agricola). Third tap, Prof. Van Haagen's Freshman Class (Latin). Fourth tap, Prof. Bowers, a Preparatory Class, Reading. Fifth tap, Prof. Snyder's, Reading and Orthography. The Theological Class is occupied an hour and a half, the other classes three-fourths of an hour.
At 9:45 a large tap-bell strikes the second recitation hour. Then the Juniors repair to Prof. Supper’s room for Mechanics; the Sophomores to Professor Weinberger’s, for Latin; the Freshmen to Prof. Van Haagen’s, for Greek; Academic students to Prof. Bowers’, for Latin; and another class to Prof. Snyder, for Bookkeeping.

At 10:30 the large tap-bell sounds the signal for the third series of recitations. The Juniors meet the President for a lecture or lesson in Mental Science, occupying an hour and a half (on Tuesday and Thursday, Natural Theology). The Freshman recite in Algebra (higher) to Prof. Supper; the Sophomores, Greek, to Prof. Weinberger; the first class in Latin to Prof. Van Haagen; a class in History to Prof. Bowers; and a class in Geography to Prof. Snyder.

At 12 the large bell announces the close of the morning’s work, and the boarders meet in the chapel, ready for the call of the steward’s bell to dinner.

After dinner follows an hour of recreation and exercise for those who choose to take it. At 1:30 the afternoon’s work begins, the large bell again summoning all the students into the chapel, to be dismissed to their several class rooms, in the order already indicated. Prof. Supper’s 2d class in Elementary Algebra. Prof. Weinberger’s advanced class in Reading. Prof. Van Haagen’s Freshman Class in History. Prof. Bower’s class in German. Prof. Snyder, 3d class in Elementary Algebra.

At 2:15 Prof. Supper, class in Natural Philosophy; Prof. Weinberger, 1st class in Grammar; Prof. Van Haagen, junior class in German; Prof. Bowers, 3d class in Grammar; Prof. Snyder, 2d class in Grammar.

At 2:45 the Theological Class, Dr. Bomberger; the Sophomore class, Analytical Geometry, Prof. Supper; Latin class (Virgil) Prof. Weinberger; German, Prof. Van Haagen; Prof. Bower’s 3d class in Mental Arithmetic; Prof. Snyder’s 2d class in Mental Arithmetic.

At 3:30 the Theological, Junior, and Sophomore classes in the Greek Testament, Dr. Bomberger; Geometry, Prof. Supper; Greek (Xenophon) Prof. Weinberger; Freshman, in German, Prof. Van Haagen; Latin (Caesar) Prof. Bowers; Penmanship, Prof. Snyder.

At 4 P.M. the large bell rings for roll call and evening prayer, with which the public duties of the day close.

In addition to the above, Prof. Sunderland attends to Chemistry.

Immediately after evening prayer the steward’s signal calls to supper. This over, the students have about two hours for exercise and recreation.

At 7 P.M. the large bell calls all the boarding students into their rooms for study, for which they are allowed time until 9:45, when the large bell rings the signal to prepare for bed; and by 10 o’clock all lights are required to be extinguished.

From the above inside view of our work it will be seen that instructors and pupils have had a busy day of it. The President is occupied four hours of the day, and each of the other professors five and a half hours. The students also are kept busily employed, morning and afternoon, passing, in many cases, from one class-room to another in rapid succession and allowed but little time for “play”—yet enough for needful recreation. During study hours the students are required to be in their own rooms; interrupting each other by visiting from room to room being strictly forbidden.

The differences between a typical college day in 1872 and one of today are too obvious to need comment. They become even more apparent when the curriculum is examined.

When collegiate instruction began at Ursinus in 1870, secondary school training had not yet been standardized by state regulation. There was no general system of course and credit bookkeeping and no external agency, public or private, to serve
as a means of certifying the quantity and quality of a candidate’s preparation. Each college had to set up its own standards of admission and its own means of determining who was qualified for admission, i.e., its own entrance examinations. The system, if it can be called that, was not as individualistic as these conditions might suggest to a person in the twentieth century, for colleges then as now tended to follow each other’s practices.

Admission requirements at Ursinus, thus, followed the common patterns of the times. Candidates for the freshman class had to be qualified for examination in English Grammar, Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, Geography, Latin and Greek Grammar, Caesar’s Commentaries (four books), Virgil (Aeneid, four books), Cicero (four orations), Arnold’s Latin Prose (twelve chapters), Greek Lessons, the Anabasis (two books), and one of the Gospels in Greek, or their equivalent.

Except for the omission of Hebrew these requirements were closely akin to those set at Harvard two hundred years earlier, and for the same reason, that they were the foundation upon which a higher education for those who would be clergymen was based.

The curriculum established in 1869–70 was not altered substantially in the first decade. The courses for freshmen and sophomores were completely prescribed. Freshmen studied Latin, Greek, German, Mathematics, History and Geography, Rhetoric and Elocution. The sophomores studied the same first four subjects and in addition History for two terms, Botany for one term, and Rhetoric (without elocution) for three. In the junior year classical and modern languages became elective, for the required courses now included Anthropology, Logic, Physiology, Natural Philosophy (physics), Natural Theology, Evidences of Christianity, History of Civilization, Science of Language, Zoology, and History of Philosophy. One might wonder how a student of 1875 could possibly take ten required courses and be able even to consider electives in Latin, Greek, German, Integral Calculus, and Analytical Mechanics. The answer is that some of the required courses were of one term length in a three term calendar.

In the senior year those who had survived the feast of learning thus far set before them were regaled by the rich, required diet of Moral Philosophy, Astronomy, Political Economy, Chemistry, Greek, History of English Literature, Science and Religion, Geology, Cosmogony, and Sacred Elocution (which meant preaching). Electives in the senior year consisted solely of additional language study. The rationale of the four years was to make a graduate a nineteenth century polymath, one learned in all the major branches of language, literature, philosophy, religion, social sciences, mathematics, and the natural and physical sciences. Contrary to modern theories of education by which college students work, presumably in depth, in five, four, or even only three subjects in a term and concentrate largely on a major to the relative exclusion of other disciplines, the nineteenth century faculty at Ursinus felt that one could not have too much of learning and that all the subjects required were essential to a learned man. Whatever profession he chose to enter he was prepared for.
Before 1887 there was no description in the catalogs of what was actually done in the various courses. They were for the most part, especially in the freshman and sophomore years, textbook courses. In the language courses the authors and works to be read were specified, and in the other courses the texts to be used were named. These when once adopted did not often change. The writer's father in his years as an undergraduate (1888–91) studied many of the same texts that were used in 1874–5: Loomis's *Analytical Geometry*, Gray's *School and Field Book of Botany*, Hart's *Rhetoric*, and Bacon's *Manual of Gesture*, to name but a few examples. Question and answer was the method of teaching in conditions that approached the tutorial system, for while students and faculty alike had far more courses to study and teach than their counterparts today, the number of students was so small that each class was seminar size. In 1875–6, for example, the senior class numbered seven, the junior eleven, the sophomore and freshman each eight. Ten years later the corresponding numbers were six, eleven, three, and sixteen.

In the upper class courses, particularly those in philosophy and religion, much of the teaching was done by lecture, as the catalogs indicate. Students were expected to take full and coherent notes, particularly when there was no text to supplement the lectures; some sets of these notes that have escaped the ravages of time testify to the care with which at least some students did their work. Written exercises, compositions, and essay answers were required in that innocent era before the invention of multiple choice and "objective" examinations.

Beginning in 1886–7 a description of what is done in each subject, and in part in each year of that subject, is given in the catalogs. One can readily see another difference between college then and now by a few examples. The description of the work in chemistry is given thus: "Inorganic and organic chemistry are placed, respectively, in the second and third terms of the Sophomore year. They are handled, by means of lectures and accompanying recitations, in the shortest possible space of time." In contrast the catalog states that "no equivalents can be found that compare favorably with the languages of Latin and Greek for efficiency in mental discipline." And after stress is laid on the central position of the classical languages in liberal education, the thoroughness of the training in grammar, translation, and pronunciation is described, ending with this assurance: "The laws of Greek accentuation are carefully taught, by which the student is enabled to give a reason for every oxytone, paroxytone, proparoxytone, perisponomenon, propenspomenon, enclitic, and proclitic." No "shortest possible space of time" here.

In all courses where it could legitimately be done great emphasis was laid on oral presentation, for two reasons. It was an age of public speaking, of florid, spread-eagle oratory, in which every professional man was expected to be easily articulate, able to speak fluently whatever the circumstances. And because most of the Ursinus students of that era intended to wag their heads in the pulpits of a church that held to the old Protestant tradition of sermonizing, they needed and wanted all the training and experience they could get. Consequently, in class and out, particularly in the meetings of Schaff and Zwingli Literary Societies, they...
spoke and they spoke. The training stuck. The writer can remember Dean Kline describing and illustrating the precepts in gesture and oratory he had learned from Bacon’s *Manual* forty years earlier.

There was a third reason peculiar to Ursinus and colleges like it in eastern Pennsylvania. Many of the men who were to take churches there had to be trained to preach in German as well as English. At the same time many of them came from Pennsylvania Dutch communities with accents so thick that they had in effect to be taught standard English pronunciation. One alumnus of the early nineties from the Lehigh valley used to say, with some exaggeration, “We would cluster around the boys from Perry County to hear how English was spoken.” Professor Ruby, a stern figure, would clear out the dialectal pronunciation, and all the other faculty members helped to eliminate it not as an evil but an impediment. Some alumni later found it useful to regain their “Dutchiness.”

In 1876 the Scientific Course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science was instituted. This was a three year course differing from the four year course only in that it prescribed no study in classical or modern languages. Students taking it simply got to a bachelor’s degree a year sooner by taking in the second and third years what the B.A. candidates took in the third and fourth. They took no more work in science than the B.A. candidates for the simple reason that all students in the College had to take all the science courses offered, at this time ten terms of botany, physics, physiology, zoology, astronomy, and chemistry, equivalent in modern terms to a little more than three full-year courses. The rationale of this truncated curriculum and new degree was dual. One reason was that not all students intended to study theology and some of these were not skilled in languages. The other reason, and it was frankly avowed, was that not all students could afford to attend college for four years, low as the costs then were. A study of the lists of students for the decade 1870–80 suggests that students occasionally missed a term or two, or even a year, in order to earn money to complete their education. Thus the B.S. was in both time and money a short cut to the desired goal.

In part the same reasoning underlay the establishment of the Normal Course in the Academic Department in 1881. In the catalog of 1869 it was announced, its purpose “To afford young men an opportunity of fitting themselves for teachers in our Public and High Schools.” A teacher’s class was to be organized each term and certificates were to be awarded to those who proved their competency. That certificates were to be given suggests that the Normal Course was to be on the pre-collegiate level. In any event, it was not actually established until 1881, when it appeared as a two year course in the Academy. Unlike the regular Academy curriculum it did not include Greek and it emphasized arithmetic rather than geometry in the second year. In the last two terms of the second year it included the “Science and Art of Teaching.”

At this same time women were first admitted to the College and the Academy. In the first listing of the Normal Class (1881–2) three of the nine members were women. Apparently, creation of the Normal Course did not in itself stimulate the
admission of women, for in that same year there were 28 women in the Academy. It is probable that most of them were girls from the immediate area who had no local school to attend after Pennsylvania Female College was closed in 1880. The Female College, like Ursinus, had had a preparatory department which had been a large part of its operation.

The curriculum of the Normal Course largely overlapped that of the Preparatory Course. Apart from the difference already noted in Greek, the chief differences were that some courses taught in the College such as physiology and psychology were included and that in the last two terms Teaching (Ursinus did not at first use the pretentious term “pedagogy”), including observation and practice, was a major subject. From 1883-4 on it was a full year course, including “organization and management of schools” and comparison of American and European methods. The observation and practice was defined as “Observation of model lessons given by the instructor, actual teaching by the student under the eye of the instructor, and criticism of errors in management or instruction.” Presumably this meant practicing on one’s fellow students rather than teaching in a public school as is now the practice.

The fact that this program was in the Academy and that it was called the “Normal” course is characteristic of the times. In the latter part of the nineteenth century most public school teachers began their career immediately upon completion of high school or equivalent training. The normal schools, later called state teachers colleges, had programs of one or at most two years, and they were secondary rather than collegiate in level. The fact that this program was instituted when it was at Ursinus can be accounted for by two conditions: one, that in the years just before 1881 enrollment had markedly declined and a curriculum to attract more students was needed; two, that teaching was the only profession open to women, and if they were to be admitted to higher education, then teacher training must be provided. Oddly enough, a scanning of the student lists in the 1880’s and 90’s shows that men were in the majority in the normal class and that some of them went on to the four years of college instead of out to teach.

In 1886 the Scientific Course, introduced ten years before, was extended to four years. Candidates for admission to it had now to satisfy all requirements set for candidates for the B.A. except Greek. The chief difference in the extended curriculum was the requirement of Latin and German in the first two years. Otherwise it paralleled the Classical Course in almost all particulars. The amount of science taught was not increased. Despite this change to equivalent length the Scientific Course was still below the salt, for it was stipulated that the student standing highest in the course at graduation could be awarded only the fourth honor in the class; the first three were reserved for classical students.

Having increased the Scientific Course to four years, the faculty in 1887 established a third curriculum, the Literary Course for Ladies, a three year program leading to the degree of Bachelor of Letters. Just as the Scientific Course had been distinguished not by the inclusion of more science than the Classical Course, so the
The Literary Course was distinguished not by the inclusion of more literature, but by the omission of certain courses required for the classicists. Two years of German and French (hitherto an inconspicuous elective, when it was offered, but now described as having “so much that is valuable both in literature and in science that a polite education is incomplete without, at least, a reading knowledge”) were required, and music and drawing were offered as electives. Otherwise the educational diet for “ladies” was the same as for men. In the pecking order the Literary Course came last; the fifth graduation honor was awarded to its best senior.

Despite its university charter Ursinus offered no post-graduate work in the first decades except for the Theological Course, which will be treated later. It did in 1874–5 institute the degree of Master of Arts to be conferred on graduates who “shall have been engaged in literary or scientific pursuits at least three years after graduation, and who shall, meanwhile, have sustained a good moral character.” In 1877–8 the degree of Master of Science was instituted to be awarded on similar conditions. In thus creating unearned master’s degrees the Board of Directors and faculty were following a pattern common among American colleges in the nineteenth century and deriving its ultimate precedent from Oxford and Cambridge, where a few years after his graduation any alumnus could, upon the payment of certain fees, be made a master of arts. In later years Ursinus did have a program for earned M.A.’s, but it did not flourish or develop into true graduate study.

Yet one more element in the educational program must be examined. As was said in the account of the founding, Dr. Bomberger intended from the outset to teach theology. As early as April of 1870 advertisements for the College in the Reformed Church Monthly stated that a “Free Theological Department” would be opened. “Free” here meant without cost to the students. Reaction to this announcement, which had been expected, was at once forthcoming in Philadelphia Classis, where attacks were made on the Theological Department before it was in existence. Dr. Bomberger immediately wrote articles defending the right of the College to train ministers, and he began that training in 1870, though nothing about it appears in the catalogs until the issue of 1871–2. In the next year the theological class (six students) is listed in the report of the student body. The curriculum in the Theological Department was a three year one, but since men could enter the ministry without a bachelor of divinity degree, upon examination and licensure by classis, two men were graduated with a certificate rather than a diploma at the first commencement on June 27, 1872. Both had already been ordained.

Philadelphia Classis had determined that Ursinus was within its rights, both by its charter and the Constitution of the Church, to give theological instruction. Those who felt otherwise carried the issue to the meeting of Eastern Synod at Martinsburg, where the high church party was able to secure the passage of a resolution declaring Dr. Bomberger’s action in teaching theology “disorderly” and enjoining him to desist. He was not at the meeting of Synod, but Vice-president Super, who was associated with him in the work, stepped into the breach, appeal-
ing the decision of Eastern Synod to General Synod. At the General Synod in Cincinnati on November 27 the whole issue was debated at length, Dr. Bomberger now standing in his own stead. The question hinged on the assertion by the opposition that teachers of theology had to be elected and ordained to their office by Synod. On this point of constitutional interpretation and on the point that Eastern Synod had acted unconstitutionally on a matter that should have originated in Philadelphia Classis, the matter was brought to a vote and the appeal in favor of Ursinus was sustained by a vote of 100 to 78. An attempt was made at the next General Synod (Fort Wayne in 1875) to reopen the issue, but without success. Efforts to impede or embarrass Ursinus in its work as a school of theology thereafter were largely subterranean.

The problems of finance were as prompt in appearing and far more stubborn. As has already been noted, even before the College was opened more money was being spent than received. Payments on pledges came slowly, and progress could not wait for ready cash. After a year of operation it was apparent that the two buildings of the College were not adequate for teaching and housing the three divisions of the institution. Negotiations were initiated with James Palmer for the purchase of Prospect Terrace, but the Board of Directors decided instead to build an addition of forty by twenty-six feet to the main building. Palmer apparently tried without success to rush the Board into buying his property, for which he asked $31,000, but the Board on further thought continued with its resolution to build the “East Wing”, now on the scale of thirty-eight feet by sixty feet, four stories with a basement like the main building and west wing.

Bids were received and the contract was awarded to Frederick Stonacker of Pottstown for his low bid of $4,445. The money for the construction was secured through the efforts of Henry Leonard of Basil, Ohio. Leonard, who was known throughout the Reformed Church as “The Fisherman”, had been for years an itinerant fund raiser for Heidelberg College. He was persuaded by the Rev. W. A. Helffrich to “fish a little for Ursinus College.” This he did with success, for the Board received the report on July 25, 1872 that he had secured $7,000 for the College, a report heard “with emotions of thankfulness to the Lord.” Two months later it was reported in the Reformed Church Monthly that he had obtained $10,000. Construction went on apace, and the new building was dedicated on October 1, 1872. In his address of dedication Dr. F. W. Kramer of Lebanon after touching on “skeptical geologists” who have sought to “startle the world” with “discoveries which they proclaimed to be antagonistic to the Mosaic account of the creation”, said that true science and religion will never conflict. “With a joyful confidence, then, we dedicate this building to science, the graceful handmaid of religion.” The point of these remarks was that one of the five recitation rooms in the basement of the new building was a “convenient room for scientific lectures.”

“But,” continued Dr. Kramer, “we next dedicate this building to religion.” The main floor contained a hall, thirty-four by forty-eight feet, which was used as the College chapel until the erection of Bomberger Hall in 1891-3. The second and
third floors were used for dormitory ("private rooms of good size"), and the fourth floor or attic was used as its meeting place by Schaff Literary Society. Appropriately, since the building was to be used in part for scientific instruction, part of the dedication ceremony was devoted to the inauguration of Professor Ruby as "Professor of Natural Sciences and Belles Lettres."

The fund raising of Henry Leonard and the construction of the East Wing as it came to be called (vide The Campus Song) suggested to the outside world a greater prosperity than the College was in fact enjoying. Despite low salaries (Professor Ruby was given a salary of $700 "upon conditions that he shall reside in the college building and share the responsibilities of the domestic discipline"), Ursinus was running in the red. The balance sheet for the year ending June 26, 1872 showed total receipts of $11,993 and expenditures of $12,275. The deficit of $281 was paid by President Bomberger. The outstanding debt on the property was $13,700. The public statements were always optimistic. In September of this year President Bomberger wrote that "The past two years' experience has shown, that with the property clear of debt, for which only $10,000 more than has already been secured will be needed, with the needful apparatus and library supplied, and the endowment of the Presidency completed, the college will be able to support itself." This statement refers to a decision of the Board of Directors in April of 1869 to provide an endowment of $40,000 for the presidency and to raise $50,000 through the sale of stock to complete the purchase of the property and finance the erection of additional buildings. The 1869 catalog has a tinted frontispiece showing an enlarged and Victorianized main building flanked by two large identical buildings with mansard roofs and fancy porticoes. These proposed buildings were never built.

The financial reports of the next few years show what really happened. In 1872–3 current receipts actually exceeded current disbursements by $27. But in the next year receipts of $14,379 were exceeded by disbursements of $17,823, leaving a current deficit of $3,443 and a total indebtedness of $20,511. The reasons for this condition are clear. The College had begun on the strength of pledges and much of what Henry Leonard had obtained also was in pledges rather than cash. The depression of 1873 wiped out some of the most promising supporters and reduced their pledges to scraps of paper. It also accounted in part for another source of trouble. The financial report for 1873–4 cited above showed that outstanding student accounts for the year amounted to $3,373, over one sixth of the total business for the year. The charges made by the College were moderate indeed. Tuition in the College was $20 for the fall term and $14 each for the winter and spring terms, a total of $48. The charge for boarding and room was $3.50 per week or $140 a year. With the addition of laundry and incidentals the regular expenses for a year, exclusive of fire, lights, books, and stationery, were calculated at $195. These figures (1872–3) remained stable for many years. But ridiculously low as these charges seem a hundred years later, they were high in terms of average incomes of that time, when, as we have seen, Professor Ruby was being paid $700 a year and Professor Weinberger, married and with a child, got only $800. President Bomberger in
commenting on the costs of education at Ursinus in 1876 said “to enable it [the College] to offer these terms, the members of the Faculty must do almost double work. But they do this cheerfully, for the good ends to be thereby secured, ...” This was true, but it did not suffice to overcome the deficits caused by the inability of students to pay their bills in full and the lack of endowment.

One expedient to overcome financial difficulties was the employment of a fundraiser, and the Executive Committee of the Board recommended in June of 1875 that one be employed. There was a series of such agents in the next thirty years. Usually clergymen, they worked for a percentage of the money and pledges they got for the College plus expenses. Few lasted at the job and even fewer produced any significant results; consequently, they will not be named or their efforts recorded. During these twenty years the two successful fund raisers were the President and Dr. Henry T. Spangler.

The immediate necessity of meeting the College’s principal obligation was met by the mortgaging of the property to Samuel H. Bibighaus of Philadelphia for $22,000 in January of 1876. This was done to pay off the remainder of the debt still owed to Henry A. Hunsicker for the purchase of Freeland Seminary. Mr. Bibighaus later bequeathed to the College its first endowment fund, $15,000 for the endowment of the presidency. The mortgage thus effected was the first of a long series of efforts to keep the College afloat and fund its major obligations. That it did not succeed in its ultimate purpose is shown by the fact that after this mortgage was extinguished by a new one in 1887-8, the total debt still outstanding in June of that year was $21,012. Another evidence, if more is needed, that Ursinus suffered from a continuing insufficiency of support is found in “A Plea for Ursinus College” published in the Christian World of 1880: “All told, the amount of money (cash) donated to Ursinus College since its foundation is less than $20,000 including what has been applied to the payment on its property.”

One final element in the financial situation of the College is alluded to in a statement in the Reformed Church Monthly for May of 1876. After referring to the effects of the depression and the debt on the property it gives a third cause of “pecuniary embarrassment,” that “too heavy a burden of free scholarships (virtually) has fallen upon the school in its first years.” No reference to these scholarships appears in the catalogs except possibly in the statement at the end of the section on expenses that for “special information” those interested should apply to the president. The scholarships were of a peculiar sort. For the payment usually of $500 a person could have a perpetual scholarship on which any person he might designate could go through college without cost. It was a quick way to get money but proved in the end far more costly than it was worth, both for Ursinus and other colleges that tried it.