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J. B.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST CHURCH. OBERLIN.

The divine method of propagating influence in the world seems to be largely by the mysterious connection of generations. Each generation is a board of trustees who hold in trust the legacy of the past, to be used and handed down with interest to the next following. We are trustees of character, truths, principles, and institutions as truly as of houses and lands. God has appointed a law and a testimony which he commanded our fathers to make known to their children, that the generations to come might know them, even the children that should be born, and that they should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God. This duty of transmission seems to be laid upon us by an unalterable decree. As to the fact of transmission we have no option. As to what shall be transmitted, we are graciously allowed to choose. We are bound especially to transmit the good, because we receive our own good largely from the past. "We have dressed ourselves by the help of the wardrobe of the past. We should have been as naked as savages, had not the poets, and sages, the reformers and men of God met us on our way to clothe us in the garments of a Christian civilization." This good that comes flowing in upon us from the past, we are bound to send forward purified and enlarged to those that follow. It is in view of this truth, that we are led naturally, at the close of this Centennial year, to review the history of this church.