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THE EPHRATA COMMUNITY

120 YEARS AGO.

INTRODUCTORY.

No portion of Lancaster county surpasses, and few equal, in interest the settlement of the Seventh Day Baptists on the Cocalico, at Ephrata. That religious community differed so greatly from all the others established within the borders of Lancaster county, and in various particulars rose so much above any of the rest, that it has always attracted more attention than the others.

The wonderful story of the Cloister Brotherhood has been told and re-told so often, the field has been so thoroughly explored, early and late, that there would seem nothing left to be said on the subject. From the earliest period of its history distinguished men made journeys to that monastic community to learn whether the reports that from time to time reached the outer world were correct, and, coming away, recorded what they saw and heard, and these long-ago narratives have added much to our knowledge concerning those people. Having been written at the time when these visits were made, and while all was still fresh in memory, they have come down to us with the impress of historic truth upon them, in which they differ from later accounts, in which fact and fiction are so intimately blended that it affords a genuine pleasure to go back to the eighteenth-century chroniclers to find out what manner of men and women they were,

and for a more intimate knowledge of the lives they led in their secluded home on the Cocalico.

Everything, therefore, coming down to us from the time when that Zionitic Brotherhood was still flourishing and when some of its great men—I use the term advisedly—were still in the flesh, must have an absorbing interest to us of the twentieth century. Our Society has recognized this fact by giving a place in its records to several narratives left us by the early visitors to the Cloister. In Volume IV. of our Papers and Proceedings we gave place to the excellent letters written by the somewhat celebrated D. Jacob Duche, D. D., who made the prayer at the opening of the first Congress in 1774. In 1771 he paid a visit to the Ephrata Community and upon his return told what he had seen and heard. In our first volume there appeared an article on the Ephrata Paper Mill, and last year our Society made its first pilgrimage to the historic spot, an account of which appeared in Volume VIII. Perhaps the most valuable of all the early accounts that have come down to us of the life of those pious Brothers and Sisters is that of the Swedish preacher Israel Acrelius who, in company with George Ross, the Signer, visited the Cloister on September 7, 1753. His lengthy account of what he saw is, next to the Chronicon Ephratense itself, perhaps the most valuable document that has come down to us of the life led by the Ephrata Community, and it is well worth publishing in these papers.

The name of the writer of the article now to be read is not known. He was an officer in the British army, and, in company with several brother officers, visited the Ephrata establishment. His letter is dated April

27, 1786, but the visit was made soon after the close of the Revolutionary war. It contains various inaccuracies, although it does not appear these were intentional, and, while it does not tell much that was unknown, the letter is, nevertheless, of much interest. The charge that Peter Miller was a litigious man is wholly untrue. The tenets of his faith forbade a resort to the courts of law and if he appeared in them at all it must have been because he was compelled to do so, and not of his own free will.

The article first appeared in The Edinburg Magazine in 1786, from which it was copied into Matthew Carey's "American Museum or Repository," Vol. VI., 1789. The note at the conclusion of the article is, no doubt, by the editor of the American magazine himself.

As you will hear, the narrator relates that the three large buildings standing there at the time of his visit were erected in the brief space of three weeks, and that, too, when the men connected with the Brotherhood did not number more than fifty! All the timbers for these large buildings had to be cut in the adjoining forest, squared and transported to the place needed. That alone was a task that collectively must have required months. It must be remembered that at that period they were not possessed of horses and oxen and the material required had to be collected by the actual manual labor of the Brethren themselves. Not five hundred men could have accomplished the work mentioned in three weeks nor in three months.

This, of course is incorrect. It was, in fact, a physical impossibility, and the writer must have wholly misunderstood what was said to him. Our highest authority, the Chronicon Eph-

ratense, tells us that "a meeting house to God's glory," named Kedar, was the first of the Community houses built, in 1735. It was begun in July and completed in the Fall. A prayer and school house was built in 1739. The mason work was done in six weeks. It was used as a hospital during the Revolution. The Brothers' House, "Bethania," was begun in March, 1746. In thirty-five days the framing of the heavy timbers was completed. Three days were required to place them in position and key them. But this heavy work was not done by the Brethren alone. The entire surrounding community assisted. By the end of September the large building was under roof. There was much timber left over and this was utilized in erecting a chapel adjoining the Brother House; the timbers of this latter building were put in place in the space of five weeks. Between 1735 and 1750 a number of minor buildings were also put up. We see, therefore, that it was a matter of many years before all the Cloister buildings were erected.

F. R. D.

**Account of the Society of Dunkards in
Pennsylvania. Communicated by a
British Officer to the Editor of
the Edinburgh Magazine.**

Sir, Edin. April 27, 1786.

The whole road, from Lancaster to Ephrata, affords a variety of beautiful prospects; the ground is rich and well cultivated, the wood (excepting upon the road, where it serves as a shelter from the piercing beams of the sun) thoroughly cleared, and the meadows abundantly watered by numerous refreshing springs. About twelve miles from Lancaster, we left the great road, and struck into the

woods, through which we were led by "wildly devious paths" to the delightful spot where Ephrata stands. The situation of the place is most judiciously chosen; it is equally sheltered from the piercing cold winds of winter, and the beams of the sun in summer; an extensive orchard supplies the inhabitants with peaches, apples, cherries, etc., their beautiful gardens with every vegetable they can desire. The rivulet which serves as a boundary to their possession upon one side is, though small, of infinite advantage to the grounds; and, in its course, drives a paper mill, from which they derive considerable profits.

The Arrival.

We arrived about the hour of breakfast, and were most hospitably entertained by the prior, Peter Miller, a German. He is a judicious, sensible, intelligent man; he had none of that stiffness which might naturally have been expected from his retired manner of life; but seemed easy, cheerful and exceedingly desirous to render us every information in his power. While breakfast was preparing, he proposed to give us some account of their society; which, as it was the chief object of our journey, we very willingly acceded to.

He told us, that their society was established about fifty years ago, by a very worthy old man, by birth a German, who had from repeated and numerous misfortunes, formed a rooted disgust to society, and had retired from the world for some years. Several others, both male and female, from similar misfortunes, or other causes, had likewise retired; and, from their habitations being contiguous, they had sometimes opportunities of seeing and conversing with each other. As their dislike to so-

ciety diminished, and their love of social harmony increased, these meetings became more and more frequent; they began to feel the inconvenience of total solitude; familiarity of sentiment and situation attached them to each other; and they ardently wished for the suggestion of some scheme, which might tend to link them together still more closely. The sagacious old German, whom they revered as a father, at length proposed the present society. He pointed out to them the many and great advantages, which would be derived from such a scheme; and, with very great pains, wrote out a code of laws for the regulation of their future conduct. His rules, though rigid, were admirably contrived, to preserve order and regularity in such a numerous society; he held forth to them, how absolutely necessary it was, to submit with implicit obedience to the rules prescribed; at length, by his eloquence, which seems to have been very great, he formed a perfect union; and, having obtained a grant of land, they began their work with ardour and activity. A spirit of enthusiasm seems to have inspired the whole; unassisted by anything but their own labor, they in three weeks erected the three buildings which yet remain, and which, from their present sound state, prove them to have been built of substantial materials. Their whole society, at this period, amounted to about fifty men and thirty women; they lived in harmony, innocence and peace, nor had any of them ever expressed the smallest disgust at the severe and rigid discipline they had sworn to observe. The most remarkable vows, and upon which all others depended, were chastity, poverty and obedience; a desire to encroach upon the first of these, and an impatience of the last,

proved the first source of contention, and occasioned a temporary revolution, which at one time threatened to exterminate them forever.

The Eckerlins.

Among those who had last joined them, were two brothers, men of active, daring spirits; bold and enterprising, but headstrong and obstinate. These men had experienced a multiplicity of adventures; they had been alternatively rich and poor, happy and miserable; they had traversed the whole continent of America; they had been engaged in innumerable pursuits, and been exposed to a variety of dangers; from some unlucky hits, however, or suspicious dealings, they found it necessary to abscond. They conceived a rooted disgust for the world, which would no longer be the dupe of their villainy; they became hermits, and professed to be the warmest enthusiasts in religion; they had resided for a considerable time in the back parts of New England; in which retreat, they heard of the dunkards, and seemingly from motives of pure piety, were induced to join them.¹

¹The brothers here alluded to were the Eckerlin brothers, four of them and not two, as the narrative has it, namely, Samuel, Emanuel, Israel and Gabriel. They reached Pennsylvania about 1725. They reached Ephrata about 1734, and at once became prominent in the community. Israel became the first Prior of the Brotherhood. To them the commercial development of the Brotherhood is owing. But for them the different mills would never have been built. It was through their efforts that the Brotherhood began to grow rich. They were active and energetic and, perhaps, more given to caring for worldly concerns than for the life led by their fellow-members. That brought them into trouble and conflict with the spiritually-inclined Beissel. The latter could, like the Turk, allow no brother near the throne, and he began laying plans for the overthrow of the four brothers. The charge of preaching too long sermons was first made against the Prior

For some time after their arrival, their behavior was most exemplary; they were active and industrious, and were constantly the first in their numerous religious exercises; they were universally esteemed, and in very high estimation with the original founder, who had now attained the title of spiritual father. This good man seems really to have been a most finished character; he saw the necessity there was for a president or ruler to this numerous body; but saw, likewise, that a strict attendance upon this duty would too much interfere with the acts of devotion, in which he so much delighted; he, therefore, fixed upon an old German, a man of profound and exemplary piety, to perform this office. This man was invested

brother, Onesimus. He was deposed from his high office, and in this game even Peter Miller took a hand. He had written a book against the Moravians, of which the Brotherhood had once approved, but now they burned the entire edition in a public bon-fire. Later, all his other books and hymns were publicly committed to the flames by the enraged and fanatical brothers. The four Eckerlins were then driven out. The one who had once been Prior and at the head of the Cloister Brotherhood begged to remain, offering to go out with the lay brethren and labor in the woods and fields as the humblest member of the community, but to that even the vindictive and perhaps jealous and fearful Beissel refused to give his consent, and in September, 1745, two of the brothers took their weary way towards the wilds of Virginia. Even the friends they had left behind them were visited with the ill will of Beissel. Even the convent laundry house, which had been erected under their direction, was dismantled and burned. According to an article by Saur, the Germantown printer, the entire trouble was caused by the Prior Samuel, ordering a bell from England, at a cost of £80, without the consent or wish of the Brotherhood. The bell was afterwards sold to the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church, and, after a number of vicissitudes, now rests, in a damaged condition, in Grace Lutheran Church, of this city. The bell episode was probably only an additional excuse of Beissel and his party to make more certain the overthrow of the Eckerlins and their adherents.

F. R. D.

with unlimited authority; his voice was a law, but he did not abuse his power; his whole behaviour was truly noble.

Brother Onesimus.

One of the brothers mentioned had attained to the place of treasurer to the society; for, notwithstanding their vow of poverty, they always had a stock of cash by them, in case of particular exigencies. Some failures here created suspicions of this man; he was aware of his danger, and had been tampering with some of the weaker brethren for some time; the prior interfered; an investigation took place, and they soon found that he had embezzled the cash to a very considerable amount; they likewise discovered, that he had been guilty of some most infamous debaucheries in the adjacent country, and that he had formed a party in the society, to depose the present prior, and be elected in his room. An immediate confusion commenced; parties were formed; and it seemed as if a final end was to be put to this innocent and industrious society. This scoundrel had polluted the minds of many of his brethren, with ideas of independence, and with rebellious notions, perfectly inconsistent with their original constitution; he was an artful, cunning, designing man; he displayed, in the strongest colours, the servility they were held in, and argued the natural freedom of mankind in support of his opinion. He was listened to with attention, and he did not fail to make use of his good fortune; that enthusiasm which at first inspired them, arose chiefly from novelty of situation, or respectful adoration of the good old German; these feelings, in many of them, were blunted, in some, totally subsided; which proved no small assistance to him in his endeavors. Things seemed

approaching to a crisis; business was at an end; even their religious duties were for a while suspended, and, an immediate revolution was expected. This little society was an epitome of the most celebrated revolutions; fears, jealousies, suspicions, invaded the heart of each members of the community; the good brothers were intimidated by the greatness of the danger; the bad were not yet prepared for a general revolt.

Peter Miller Takes a Hand.

Things had continued in this situation for five days; upon the sixth, in the morning, Peter Miller, the present prior, who was that time printer, and ten more of the original institutors, went and boldly seized the brothers. Resistance was vain; they carried them into the great hall; the whole brotherhood was soon collected, and the spiritual father made his appearance. The venerable figure of this good man, his rigid devotion, his exemplary piety, his numerous virtues, struck at once upon their minds, and they listened to him with attention, whilst he made a very long and pathetic harangue. He lamented the melancholy occasion of this meeting; recounted the causes, which had first brought them together; gave them a clear view of their original institution, of the oath which they had made to obey implicitly the rules prescribed, the happiness they had experienced, previous to the admission of these wicked brothers, and the fatal consequences, which would inevitably arise from being left to themselves, or the still more dreadful alternative of submitting to be governed by such a reprobate; he then finished, by proposing to banish this vagabond from their society; to permit any other discontented members to depart in peace;

and, finally, that the great power of the prior should be somewhat limited.

This speech had the desired effect; the instigator of this rebellion was banished; and Peter told me, he retired to Canada; the other brother, with a few of the members who were discontented, left them, and all things remained upon the same footing as before. Thus was this dangerous revolution, which seemed to threaten their destruction, finally ended, and their former happiness re-established. What is most extraordinary, the women were entirely passive in this affair, and received the acknowledgements of the society for their behaviour.

Death of the First Prior.

For some time previous to this revolution, the good old spiritual father had retired to a hut about a mile from Ephrata, chiefly with a view of indulging himself more freely in his devotions. After this period, he became more and more attached to his solitude, and seldom made his appearance in public; a settled melancholy seemed to oppress him, and he died, poor man, in the course of the year, eleven years from their institution. He was buried at the door of his cabin; a flat stone is laid over his grave, but at his own desire there is no inscription. The hut yet remains; and Peter tells me, he often retires to it, and waters the good man's grave with his tears.² Some few years after this, the

²The person here alluded to was Michael Wohlfarth, whose Monkish name was Brother Agonius. He was one of the first, as well as one of the ablest, of the Brotherhood. He joined Conrad Beissel in his hut on Mill creek, near Bird-in-Hand, in 1723. He was the man who first suggested the name of "Father Friedsam" for Conrad Beissel. The Chronicon Ephratense says he was buried in the meadow which stretches from the Cloister building to the Cocalico. It is claimed that Beissel caused a tomb-

prior died, and Peter Miller was unanimously elected in his room. They have lived in harmony and peace ever since; they never quarrel; indeed, Peter says, his office is merely nominal, as he has never once had occasion to exert the authority vested in him.

They are now reduced to seven men and five women. Their original grant of lands consisted of several thousand acres; part was wrested from them by force, part was disposed of to settlers, who chose to live near them, and who entertain the same religious opinions, and attend at the place of public worship on Sundays and holidays, of which they have a great number.

The number of these people may amount to five hundred; but they have no manner of connexion with the dunkards at Ephrata (though they bear the same name) farther than a familiarity of religious opinion. Many of them, from choice, wear the same dress, and allow their beards to grow; which may have given rise to the mistake of several gentlemen, who have written upon this subject. It is likewise to be observed, that the Mennonists of Pennsylvania affect this mode of dress; and that many widowers in the back settlements assume no other mourning than a long beard; all which may have deceived cursory observers,

stone to be placed over his remains, with this inscription, written by Beissel himself:

Hier ruhet der gottselige Kämpfer
 AGONIUS
 Starb Anno 1741.
 Seines Alters 54 Jahr, 4 Monat, 28 Tage.
 Der Sieg bringt die Kron,
 U. der Gloubens-den Kampf den Gnaden
 lohn,
 So Krönet der segenden seligen
 Kämpfer,
 Der allheir ein Sünden und Belichs
 Dämpfer
 Im Frieden gefahren zu seiner Ruh-
 Kammer,
 Allwo er befreyet von Schmertzen und
 Jammer.

F. R. D.

and given rise to the opinion of these people being so very numerous.

Their Lands.

The ground they at present possess, and where their town is built is not above six acres.³ It is almost filled with fruit trees; the rivulet formerly mentioned, serves as a boundary on one side, and the rest is inclosed by a deep ditch and hornbeam hedge. The town consists of three wooden houses of three-story high each, and a few outer houses; the cells of the brethren are exceedingly small, and the windows and doors extremely ill-contrived for a hot climate; the doors in particular are narrow and very low. I enquired, but could not discover, the cause of this awkward and inconvenient mode of building. Each brother has a cell with a closet adjoining; he is supplied with a table, a chair, and a bench for sleeping on; the bench is covered with a woolen mat, and a billet of wood for a pillow; the smallness and darkness of the rooms are extremely disagreeable, and they were by no means clean; their dress, likewise, is most unfavorable to cleanliness; and, in fact, my friend Peter had a most unsavory smell; his winter dress was not laid aside, though it was the middle of May, and very warm

³This is wholly misleading. The six acres of which the above writer speaks may have been those immediately surrounding the buildings of the Brotherhood, but as early as 1741 Israel Eckerlin had a warrant issued to him under the direction of Governor John Penn for 239 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres of land. The warrant was made to Eckerlin, but the land was intended for the Brotherhood, and with it the title ultimately remained. At the present day there is a farm of 110 acres belonging to and cultivated by the Cloister Community. In 1772, by his will, a Mr. Shoemaker donated 200 acres of land to the Brothers and Sisters of the Ephrata Society. The Brotherhood sold 150 acres of this tract. Part of this, 101 acres, was sold to Robert Coleman, for £1,136. This

weather; and his gown of white flannel had attained a yellow hue from the perspiration, which really proved a most unseemly sight; the length and blackness of his beard, with the greatness of his cowl or hood, for they wear no hats, added not a little to the uncouthness of his figure. They are most unsociable; they do not eat together, but each in his own cell, which literally serves him for kitchen, for parlour, and hall; they are continually engaged either in acts of devotion, or business; indeed, they seldom meet, excepting at worship, which they have twice a-day, and twice during the night. Their churches, for they have two, were clean and neat, but perfectly unadorned, excepting by some German texts of very elegant penmanship by the females. They have no set form of service, but pray and teach extempore; and in this the females join them. Their church is supplied with a small but neat steeple and clock; this clock strikes the hours from one to twelve progressively, from the rising of the sun, and begins again at sunset.

Their Paper Seized.

They have a paper-mill, formerly mentioned, a printing-house, and a library; they derive a considerable profit from the mill; but they print little, and have but a trifling library. I expressed some surprise at this, and was informed by Peter, that, before the war, they had a very excellent one, and were possessed of many valuable books in sheets for binding; but that the rebels being at this period at a loss for paper to make cartridges,

was as late as 1809, so that the Society must have been the owners of very considerable tracts of land at the very time when this English writer declares they had only six acres.

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general Washington sent an officer to seize all the paper and books he could find at Ephrata: his orders were implicitly obeyed. In vain did poor Peter represent the inhumanity of this action; in vain did he offer to redeem them with a sum of money; in vain did he remonstrate; insult was added to inhumanity; and books were taken, which, from their smallness, were unfit for the use assigned. A similar arbitrary order was issued to seize their woolen cloth, of which they generally have a large store; but fortunately a French frigate arrived in the Delaware before this second order could be put in operation.

An Englishman Among Them.

In the course of our walk we met with one or two of the brethren, one in particular an Englishman, indeed the only one in the society; he was employed in making shingles, a business that requires both strength and dexterity; his head uncovered, and his venerable countenance exposed to the piercing rays of a mid-day sun. He was eighty-five years of age, yet was hale and stout; he was affable and cheerful; he asked several questions about England and about the war; and shewed no signs of age, except in being rather deaf.

We then proceeded to the house occupied by the nuns, to whom we were introduced by Peter, as British officers. The prioress, who was, I think, near eighty, received us with the utmost politeness, thanked us for the honour we did her in calling upon her, and conducted us through the house: it was uniformly clean, and the cells were in excellent order; they did not, however, stick up to the strict rules of their order, but indulged themselves upon good featherbeds, of which they had a great number. They shewed us

some volumes of most excellent penmanship and needlework. They were employed in instructing some girls in sewing, others in reading and writing; they were the children of the neighboring dunkards, who are by them initiated into the mystery of their religion; the boys are, in like manner, educated by the men.

Miller Fears For the Future.

Peter expressed great fears that their society would become extinct; two members only, one a male, the other a female, had joined them in the course of forty years.⁴ He said he had some hopes, that they might be joined by some of the British officers at the peace: we could not give him much encouragement in the opinion. He assured us that he was perfectly happy: at first, indeed, their frequent and fatiguing religious duties, their abstinence, and, in particular, their vows of chastity, were hard to be observed; but these ideas had long since subsided. He employed his time, he said, when unoccupied with business, in reading and expounding the scriptures; he discovered many things, which sometime or another he meant to publish; he was still discovering, with regard to his present religious opinions, which were the sentiments of the whole. They retain both sacraments but admit only adults to baptism: they deny original sin, as to its effects upon Adam's posterity; they deny, likewise, the eter-

⁴The Chronicon notes accessions of families and unmarried Brothers and Sisters in 1746, in 1747 and 1748. In 1749 there was an increase of twenty members. There were also large accessions in 1751. I have not examined the records further, but no doubt more or less testimony could be found if searched for. The statement, as given in the above-named narrative, is absurd.

nity of torments; and suppose, that we only suffer a certain time, in proportion to the nature and number of the sins we have committed in this life; these being purged away by a thorough repentance, the souls are raised into heaven. All violence they esteem unlawful; even going to law, they look upon as contrary to the spirit of the gospel. Peter paid taxes; it was his principle to submit to the ruling power; but he confessed that had he been to choose, he would have given the preference to a British government.⁵ He had been a clergyman of the Lutheran church⁶; he was an excellent scholar, and well qualified to teach Greek; he understood the Hebrew, Greek and Latin, spoke French tolerably, and had a very competent knowledge of the English; he

⁵This I believe to be a wilful misstatement. Peter Miller was not a Loyalist. There is no evidence whatever to that effect. Neither was the Brotherhood, as a body, inclined towards the British crown. There is abundant evidence to the contrary. It is well known that Prior Miller was on close terms with the Colonial Government. Whether the legend that he translated the Declaration of Independence into seven languages for Congress be fact or fiction, there has not so far as I know, been a suspicion thrown upon his loyalty to the cause of the Colonies. The fact that most of the wounded at the battle of Brandywine were taken to Ephrata and entrusted to the gentle care of the pious nuns of the Convent tells the story of loyalty to the new order of things beyond all possible contradiction.

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⁶This is incorrect. Peter Miller was a regular clergyman of what was then called the German Reformed (now the Reformed) Church. As such, he served the German Reformed congregations at Tulpehocken, Muddy Creek, White Oak, Bethany and Lancaster city. He was the most learned of all the men who were connected with the Cloister Brotherhood, and from all the recorded evidence a conscientious and pious man and one who served well both his community and country. He quitted the ministry and retired to private life, and in 1735 united his destinies with the Ephrata Brotherhood.

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seemed in all respects a sensible, well-informed, intelligent man. At parting, he presented me with a pamphlet, written originally in the German by the spiritual father, and translated by Peter; it is, a Dissertation upon Man's Fall, and is, in truth, a curious piece. We rode about six miles further to a village called Reams Town, where we dined. The country was level and well cultivated; as we returned, we called upon Peter, who, to our great surprise, presented us with a glass of excellent Madeira: he told us, that, by the strict rules of their order, they were allowed only vegetables and water; but that, as old age advanced, he really found it impossible to submit to such rigid discipline: we admired his candour, and joined him in drinking a cheerful glass.

Upon our return to Lancaster, we could not help giving Peter and his brethren very great credit for their peaceable dispositions, and praising them for their prudence in avoiding law-pleas: we had formed plans of transplanting some of them to this part of the world, if possible, to quell that spirit of litigation and love of law, so prevalent among us; but we were, I confess, not a little surprised, to find, that Peter himself was one of the most troublesome, litigious fellows in the whole county, and that he never failed to make his appearance at the quarterly sessions in Lancaster, with some frivolous, silly complaint: we were heartily ashamed of our too easy credulity, and determined to ask no more questions, lest they might tend to further discoveries.

Note by the Editor of the American Museum.

The writer of this account of the Dunkards has shamefully misrepresented facts, and deviated from the

truth in many particulars. The reverend Peter Miller, the worthy president of the Dunkards, whose character is so indecently and unjustly aspersed by this illiberal writer, gives, in a letter to William Barton, Esq., of this city, dated in April last (1788), the following account of the transactions referred to, in opposition to the royalist's assertions.—“It is false,” says he, “that we ever had any library—the books, taken from us, were of one impression, unbound. It is also false, that we offered money to release those books: much less is it true, that we had a woolen manufacture, except for our own exigency; and never was any wool cloth demanded of us, except our blankets, when the militia went out first, for which we were paid. The truth, is, that an embargo was laid on all our printed paper—also, that, for a time, we could not sell any book. At length, some one came, Captain Henderson, with two waggons, to fetch away all our printed paper; he pretended to have an order from general Washington. As, at that time, the English army was in our vicinity, we remonstrated and told the captain, that, as this would hurt our character, we would not consent, unless he should take them by force, for which we should have a certificate; to which he consented. Accordingly, he ordered six men, with fixed bayonets, from the hospital, which was at that time at Ephrata: and they loaded two waggons full. The captain afterwards settled with us, paying us honestly, and we parted in peace; though we never asked from him a certificate, but trusted to providence. Whether the said captain acted herein by an express or implied order of his Excellency, I can not say: I never saw any written one.” “You are right,” continues Mr. Miller, “when you say the



account was written by a British officer. They (the British officers) came here but once when peace was concluded; but, being strong loyalists, they found little satisfaction with us. I may have told them, that the paper was taken upon the General's order; for, all military orders were issued under that name and we always obeyed such verbal orders, without seeing any written one. The gentleman is very liberal, in granting me new titles: I thank him for it; and wish that such greedy vultures, as he and his companions were, may never more come to America."

Mr. Miller's statement of these facts may be relied upon. The character of this venerable man needs no defense, against the slander cast upon it by the man, who had been kindly and hospitably received under his roof.

Minutes of January Meeting.

Lancaster, Pa., Jan. 6, 1905.

The regular monthly meeting of the Lancaster County Historical Society was held to-night (Friday) in the Society's rooms, in the Young Men's Christian Association Building, President Steinman in the chair.

The roll of officers was called and absentees noted. The minutes of the December meeting were read, and, on motion, approved. The following applications for membership were presented: Mrs. James D. Landis, of Lancaster; Mr. Charles O. Lynch, of Bausman; Arthur K. Reist, of Lititz, and G. Howard Werntz, of Lancaster. The applications, under the rules, were laid over for action at the next meeting.

The donations to the Society were large and valuable, consisting of about two hundred volumes of various kinds, donated by The New Era, and others received through exchanges. The hearty thanks of the Society were extended to the donors for their valuable gifts.

This being the annual meeting, the reports of the officers were presented, in compliance with the mandate of the constitution. That of the Secretary came first. It gave a resume of the year's work of the organization. It showed that during the year ten monthly meetings were held, the attendance at which was the largest in the Society's history. About a dozen original papers were read at these meetings, the whole making an annual volume of 275 pages, a record which, it is believed, has not been equalled by any County Historical Society in the State. Incidentally, it was also mentioned that the Society has issued eight annual volumes of Papers and Proceedings, one for every

year of its existence, containing one hundred and twenty-four articles, nearly all of which have been written for the Society. The eight volumes comprise an aggregate of 1,864 pages, and are illustrated with sixty-three cuts, most of which were engraved for the Society. A number of recommendations were made in the report, upon which the Society acted favorably.

The report of the Librarian was of unusual length, and was very favorable in most particulars. The aggregate additions to the library for the year were 397, of which 273 were bound volumes and 66 pamphlets, besides pictures, curios, maps and other articles. A new book-case was purchased to accommodate these donations. The Society library was more generally used by members and others than previously. The Librarian urged the great need of the Society to be larger quarters, and more facilities for the display of its treasures—in short, a permanent home. Lacking this, many valuable things that should naturally gravitate to us are diverted to other societies and places.

The report of the Treasurer was favorable. The amount received during the year from new members and dues was \$210.66, and \$200 from the county. The expenses incurred were \$275, but there are still some printing and other bills unpaid, which will reduce the balance in the treasury considerably.

On the whole, the reports of the officers show the Society to be in a very prosperous condition, with 158 members on its rolls, who receive its publications, besides twenty-five sent to sister societies and libraries.

This being the annual meeting, the election of officers to serve for the current year was the next business called up. It resulted as follows:

President, George Steinman.

Vice Presidents, Samuel Evans, Dr. Jos. H. Dubbs.

Secretary, F.R. Diffenderffer.

Corresponding Secretary, Martha B. Clark.

Librarian, S. M. Seiner, Esq.

Treasurer, Dr. J. W. Houston.

Executive Committee, Hon. W. U. Hensel, A. K. Hostetter, Dr. J. W. Hassler, G. F. K. Erisman, Monioe B. Hirsh, Simon P. Eby, Esq., B. C. Atlee, Esq., R. M. Reilly, Esq.; Mrs. Sara B. Carpenter and Dr. John S. Stahr.

On motion it was resolved to place upon the minutes of the Society this record, the recent loss, by death, of its old and faithful member, Adam Geist.

The paper of the evening was an article which appeared in the Edinburg Magazine for 1786, giving an account of the visit of a British officer to the Ephrata Monkish Brotherhood at the close of the Revolutionary War. The account was a most interesting one, and brought out some new things, but was also full of errors, and in some respects unjust. An introduction to the narrative prepared by the Secretary corrected some of these misstatements. The paper was read by Mrs. A. K. Hostetter, and was received with much acceptance. It was afterwards discussed at length, which brought out various interesting details.

The usual donation of \$25 to the Y. M. C. Association for the use of the room occupied was voted, and \$5 to Mr. Thaddeus Henry, the attentive caretaker of the room. There being no further business the Society adjourned. Owing to the very inclement weather the attendance was not so large as usual, but yet a goodly number of members braved the elements to be present.







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