Historical Address

DELIVERED BY

JUDGE D. D. BANTA,

IN THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FRANKLIN, IND

November 30, 1874.

BANTA, DAVID DEMAREE, 1833-

Historical address delivered by Judge D.D. Banta, in the First Presbyterian church of Franklin, Ind., November 30, 1874. n.p. [1874?]

43p.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

The Presbyterian Church of Franklin has reached what we may hope to be the first mile stone in its journey of usefulness. Fifty years ago, to-day, three men and two women united in the organization of this church; and as a man may, with profit to himself, at stated times take a retrospective view of his past life, so may the members of this church, on this its semi centennial anniversary, profitably spend a few moments in reviewing the history which it has made. I do not suppose that this history presents any pages of special interest to the general public; it contains no startling incidents, no remarkable events, no curious revelations, no circumstances of dramatic interest whatever. It is a simple and an unambitious history. It is the record of the work of a succession of plain, earnest Christian men and women, laboring to build up and maintain a church reflecting their views of religious belief and Christian duty. Only this and nothing more. But simple and unambitious as it may be, surely there are some facts of encouragement or warning, some ex-

amples of good or evil, some practices to be approved or condemned, which it may disclose, and which it may do the members of this congregation good to know.

Up to within four years before the organization of this church, the Indians actually held possession of all the territory watered by the White River and its numerous tributaries, including that comprised within the present boundaries of Johnson County. In 1820 this possession was surrendered to the Federal Government, in accordance with the terms of a treaty made near the St. Mary's River, in Ohio, two years before, and in that year the lands within the *New Purchase*, as the region surrendered by this treaty was called, were thrown into the market; and in the same year the first settlers came into this county. Two paths led here. One came from the southern part of the State, and by this John Campbell, a Tennessean, entered the Blue River Valley and made a permanent settlement near the present site of Edinburg, in the month of March. Another path had been cut through the woods leading from Brookville to the bluffs on White River, through the northern part of this county, as early as 1818, by Jacob Whetzel, and along this Abraham Sells, an Ohioan, came about the time Campbell located on Blue River, and made the first settlement in White River Township. The wilderness had now been invaded by these two hardy pioneers, and although we can not say there was a deep and broad stream of immigration pouring into the county from that day on, as is the case with many places now being colonized in the

Far West, yet immigrants followed at intervals, and in less than six years after Campbell and Sells came, settlements were established in every part of the county.

In the autumn of 1821 Joseph Young, a native of North Carolina, located in the angle formed by the junction of Sugar and Young's Creeks. The autumn following, George King, Simon Covert and Garrett C. Bergen came from Kentucky in search of homes, and being pleased with the prospect, King entered that tract which he afterward laid off as West Franklin, and at the same time he purchased from Daniel Pritchard, who had a short time before entered the same, that tract or parcel of land which was afterward laid off as the original plat of Franklin, and Bergen entered the tract north of Pritchard's entry, while Covert entered over on Hurricane, to the east. In the month of March following (1823) David W. McCaslin, who was also from Kentucky, accompanied by his family, and King, and Covert, whose families (with the exception of King's daughter, Elizabeth) remained behind, and Isaac Voris, then a young and unmarried man, arrived at Joseph Young's on their way to the purchases made the fall before. No road led farther in that direction than to the cabin of Elisha Adams, who had located near the present site of Amity; but one was chopped out leading from Adams' to this place, and the wagons containing the families and movable goods of McCaslin were driven close after the ax-men. It was late in the evening when the little party, wearied and footsore, arrived at the Hurricane, which stream was so swollen with the spring rains that they dared not attempt the crossing

till the next morning, but camped for the night upon the knoll where now stand the college buildings. The next morning they crossed over, and threading their way through the "spice brush," which grew here to a most remarkable height, they began the erection of Mr. King's cabin, at a point a few rods west of the present crossing of the Cincinnati and Martinsville Railroad with Jefferson Street; and this was followed shortly after by David W. McCaslin's, built on the south side of Young's Creek, and by Simon Covert's, on the west side of the Hurricane.

On the last day of the year 1822 Johnson County had been organized, and sometime during the latter part of the summer, or early part of the autumn of 1823, the town of Franklin was located and surveyed; but no houses were built within the town limits until the spring of 1824, when a cabin was built on the west side of the square and a tippling trade established therein. It is due to history to say, however, that the proprietor of this house remained but a short time. It is remembered of him that his poverty was so great that he was unable to bring into the market any commodity save beer, and that, a cheap article, in a small quantity at a time. The younger men of the vicinity would occasionally visit his business house in a body, and, buying out his entire stock, would, after drinking a part, pour the remainder upon the ground. This was, as you perceive, a "mild-mannered" sort of crusading; but it had the intended effect. The dealer was not wanted in this place, and although his price was paid and his beverage sold, he nevertheless took the hint and left the county.

Other improvements followed in 1824. John Smiley built a log house on the corner of Main and Jefferson Streets, and opened therein an inn for the "entertainment of man and beast." Daniel Taylor put up a log storeroom to the west of the new tavern, and exposed to sale a little stock of dry goods and groceries, while Edward Springer built a smithy on the west side of the square, and William Shaffer a dwelling-house on the northeast corner. At the same time the county authorities caused to be erected a court-house on the lot lying immediately in the rear of the bank buildings. This was a log house two stories high. A broad flight of steps on the south end led to the upper story, which was furnished with four bark-bottomed chairs, three for the judges and one for the clerk. Benches made of split logs served to accommodate lawyers, juries and spectators. In this old log court-house the members of this church met for several years, when opportunity offered, to hear the preaching of the Word. Here no doubt Bush, and Dickey, and Hill, and Duncan, and others who ministered to this people in their days of weakness, sowed the seed which afterward sprung up and yielded so abundant a harvest in the central part of Johnson County!

In 1822 it seems that the Rev. David Proctor came as a missionary to Indiana, and remained until August or September of 1824; but I have failed to find any record or memory of him ever visiting this county. The first Presbyterian minister of whom we have any account came to Franklin sometime in 1823. He preached the first Presbyterian sermon in the county

at the house of Joseph Young on Sugar Creek; and, coming up to Franklin, he stopped at David W. McCaslin's and there preached again. Notice of the time and place of his preaching having been given by a messenger, who went with the news from house to house, the neighbors came in to the number of "some half dozen;" and the preacher, sitting by the fireside, preached to them with great power and eloquence. This was the Rev. J. H. Johnson, who came as a missionary from the East and traveled all over Central and Southern Indiana, preaching whenever and wherever opportunity offered. He is said to have been a plain but very impressive speaker, and certain it is, that his, the first sermon ever preached in Franklin, was long remembered by those who heard it. He subsequently settled in Madison, where he preached for many years; but now an "old, old man," he lingers in the city of Crawfordsville, awaiting the "time of his departure."*

What other ministers may have visited this place prior to the organization of the church I have no means of knowing. A Baptist Church had been organized in the neighborhood of Edinburg, which was the first church organization in the county, and I think it likely that the first sermon ever preached in the county was by a Baptist clergyman. In October, 1822, and before the Rev. J. H. Johnson came

* Since writing the above I have learned that Mr. Johnson did not arrive in Indiana until sometime in December of this year (1823), and he could not therefore have been the minister referred to. I received my information from those who are now dead, and while they remembered the circumstances of the preaching, they must have got names and persons confused. Who preached the sermon referred to is not now and probably never will be known.

to Franklin, the Rev. James Scott, a Methodist minister, itinerating up White River, stopped at the Bluffs and there preached to the people. Mr. Scott stood in a cabin door, with his female hearers seated within, while his male hearers stood up or lolled on the ground without, and there preached the first Methodist sermon that ever echoed in the woods of this county.

We come now to the time when this church is to be organized. Four men and three women are living in this almost unbroken wilderness who determine to found a church. For one moment let us think of the obstacles which must have appeared in the way of these heroic men and women. I have already indicated to you the extent of the town at that time. The county was as sparsely populated in all other parts as in this. There were not to exceed one hundred legal voters within its boundaries. Hensley and Union Townships had not an inhabitant living within their borders; but one man lived in Clarke; a few, not to exceed a half dozen, in Pleasant; probably thirty voters in White River; thirty or forty voters in Blue River, and a "few families" in Nineveh. And these were all poor men, poor even for the times in which they lived. Without money, and without the assistance which money brings, they had come here to make war upon nature in one of her most forbidding forms. Where now we may see broad fields and wide pastures of open woodland, then thickly stood the great oak, the poplar, the beech, the maple and the ash, their limbs and branches so closely intertwining that, when clothed in their summer verd-

ure, a shade so deep and dark was produced as to shut out the sun from May to October. From the damp earth below sprang a growth of underbrush so dense that it presented in many places an impenetrable barrier to the horseman, and in some it was almost inaccessible to the footman. In connection with this, let it be borne in mind that the level lands, which occupy so large a space in this county, were at that time inundated more than half the year. The forests were checkered over with the trunks of prostrate trees—some newly fallen, some sunk half their diameter in the oozy soil, and these lying in every direction closed the drains, till there was scarcely any escape for the flood save by the slow processes of evaporation and percolation. The soil, rich as it was and is, in organic matter, mechanically mixing with the watery element, rendered the paths and the woods almost untraversable for man or beast. There were no great roads upon which to travel; there were no markets in which to buy or sell; there were no broad fields in which to raise grain for bread. Under these circumstances, unpropitious as they were, the pioneer settlers were compelled to maintain themselves and their families. We may well imagine that it was in many instances a very struggle for life!

But this was not all. The moral difficulties which beset the path of these church organizers were also many and great. While the majority of the pioneer settlers of this county had come here to find permanent homes, and was made up of men of character, there was nevertheless a considerable minority composed of that class which is ever found skulking in

the gloom of the frontier. All history proves the proneness of the human mind to magnify the past at the expense of the present. This is true of men as individuals and as communities. The aged remember with lively satisfaction the pleasures of their youthful years. Forgetting the evil, they paint the past in the brightest colors that memory can command, and by contrast view the present as shaded in a somber gloom. And so every nation has its "golden age," about which its poets love to sing, and around which cluster the imaginations of all. The prevailing habit is to find in the past less of selfishness, and less of vice, and more of generosity, and more of virtue, than in the present. But this is the result of a mistaken philosophy. That the "world moves" toward a higher knowledge of the sciences and the arts is too palpable for even the liveliest imagination to dispute; and that it moves toward a higher plane of religious truth and morality, I believe to be likewise equally true. The mission of Christianity is to elevate and ennoble men, and the most careless student of history must see that Christianity has not failed in its mission. In some things we may have fallen behind the morality of fifty years ago. Thus in politics it can not be claimed that we are better than our fathers; but it must be remembered that our fathers did not pursue politics as a trade, as is now the case, and that with the advent of the professional politician came in the evils which all good men now deplore. And so in other particulars we may have fallen behind, but the general tendency has been upward; and it is no reflection upon those who have

gone before, for us to recognize the truth of this proposition. The early history of this county is remarkable for its comparative exemption from capital crimes. There was a less number of felonies of lower grade committed than is the case now perhaps in new settlements along the frontiers; but the number was large in comparison to the present; while in the region of crime known as misdemeanor, the spirit of turbulence and disorder manifested, is beyond anything with which we of to-day are acquainted. An examination of the records of the Circuit Court of this county, for a few years after its organization, discloses a state of society which indicates at a glance some of the moral difficulties in the way of establishing and building up this church. At the March term of this court for the year 1824, the second term of court ever held in the county, of *six* causes on docket, *four* were for batteries and affrays. At the September term of that year of *twelve* causes, *eight* were criminal, *five* being for batteries and affrays. At the March term for 1825, of *fifteen* causes on the docket, *ten* were criminal causes, *seven* of which were for batteries and affrays. At the September term for that year, of *fifteen* causes in all, *eight* were criminal, and were for batteries and affrays. At the March term for 1826, of *nineteen* causes in all, *thirteen* were criminal, and of these *eleven* were for batteries and affrays. At the September term for the same year, of *seventeen* causes on docket, *ten* were criminal, and of these *seven* were for batteries and affrays. At the March term for 1827, of *thirty-seven* causes in all, *nineteen* were criminal, and of these *sixteen* were for batteries and affrays.

At the September term for that year, of *thirty-seven* causes, *twenty-one* were criminal, and of these *nineteen* were for batteries and affrays. At the March term for 1828 there were *twenty-six* causes in all, *eighteen* of which were criminal, and of these *eleven* were for batteries and affrays. At the September term for the same year, of *thirty-two* causes in all, *twenty-one* were criminal, and of these *eleven* were for batteries and affrays. At the March term for 1829, of *thirty-six* causes, *eighteen* were criminal, and of these *nine* were for batteries and affrays. At the March term for 1830 there were *thirty-one* cases on the docket, and of these *nineteen* were criminal, of which nine were for batteries and affrays. At the September term for the same year, there were *thirty-three* causes, *seventeen* of which were criminal, and of these *eleven* were for batteries and affrays. I have thus, at the risk of being tedious, gone over the court dockets for a period of seven years, in order that you might see for yourselves something of the state of turbulence and insubordination which prevailed in these early times. If you will but call to mind the sparseness of population during the time covered by these records, you can see at a glance what a large number of the people were inclined to vindicate their own personal grievances in spite of the precepts of religion and the penalties of the law. Thus, in 1826 there were one hundred and seventy-three votes cast in this county, and there were eighteen prosecutions in the Circuit Court for fighting, which is one fight to about every ninth voter. When I say, therefore, that the moral difficulties which confronted the little band of men and wo-

men in their effort to found and build up this church, were great, I think the facts will bear me out; and when we consider both moral and physical obstacles in the way, who will say there was not a heroism displayed by them worthy of all praise? To these faithful Christian men and women, and to all the little bands of faithful Christian men and women throughout this county and State, who, notwithstanding the adverse circumstances surrounding them, yet consecrated themselves to the building up of churches to the living God here in the wilderness, all lovers of Christianity and of good order in government owe a debt of lasting gratitude.

In what house the little congregation met to engage in "public worship" on the occasion of the organization of this church, I am not advised; but it is not unfair to presume that it was in the old log court-house; and while my faith does not allow me to attach any importance to *place*, I am not slow to confess that I would be glad to be able to say, with certainty, that it was in this house, dedicated to earthly justice. The church and the court-house! Both ordained to promote good order and fair dealing among men, though working in different modes, and neither able to stand alone, in my judgment, without the other. How fitting and how appropriate, that, in the infancy of this community, the same house in which evil-doers were taught to fear the laws of the land, the consciences of men should be taught to fear the laws of both God and man! But, be this as it may, the record chronicling the organization reads as follows:

FRANKLIN, Johnson County, Ind., *Nov.* 30, 1824.

This certifies that, after public worship, the following persons, who were members of the Presbyterian Church, came forward and were by administration of the subscriber, with prayer, constituted a Church of Christ, which was by agreement called Franklin.

Names of Members:

Males.	Females.
GEORGE KING,	ELENOR KING,
JOSEPH YOUNG,	NANCY YOUNG.
DAVID W. McCASLIN.	

The members proceeded to choose George King and David W. McCaslin to the office of ruling elders, who were ordained to that office after a sermon by the Rev. George Bush. The session then received Jane McCaslin, a member of the church, on examination.

(Signed.) REV. JOHN M. DICKEY, Moderator.

At this point it may not be improper to speak a word with reference to the ministers who officiated on this occasion. From the internal evidence contained in this record, it is apparent that the Rev. John M. Dickey preached the organization sermon, if we may call it such. This man was at that time engaged in missionary work in Southern and Central Indiana. He came from Kentucky, and, after several years of missionary labor, was settled as a pastor in the southern part of the State, where he subsequently died. He is described as "being small, and unprepossessing in his appearance." Like Paul, his "bodily presence was weak," but his words "were weighty and power-

ful." Of the Rev. George Bush, who preached the ordination sermon, more is known. He was born in Vermont, in 1796, was educated at Dartmouth College, and studied theology at Princeton. In 1824 he came to Indianapolis, and remained in this State for nearly five years, performing missionary work part of that time, and pastoral a part. He is said to have been of good "bodily presence," captivating in his manners and pleasing in his address. In his preaching he was scholarly, always clear and sometimes eloquent. After leaving this field he was elected Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature in the University of New York, where he soon became celebrated for his Biblical learning. He was the author of a "Life of Mohammed," of a "Treatise on the Millennium," of "Scriptural Illustrations," of a "Hebrew Grammar," and of a series of Bible commentaries, with which last production some of you are doubtless acquainted. In the later years of his life he adopted the Swedenborgian faith, and about five years ago he died almost in destitution and want. We do not know that Mr. Bush ever preached here again, but it is reasonable to suppose that he did, inasmuch as he remained in the field for nearly five years afterward. It is certain, however, that Mr. Dickey occasionally ministered here for several years following his first recorded appearance.

The church is now organized, the vine has been planted, and now let us glance over the fifty years that have come and gone since then, and take such note of the results as the opportunity allows.

The record read shows that Jane McCaslin, who

was the wife of David W., was the first member admitted on "profession of faith." On the 25th of June following, Simon Covert and Mary, his wife, were admitted on "certificates" issued by the Providence Congregation in Kentucky, and they were therefore the first members admitted in this manner. At the same time their infant daughter, Dorothy Ann, was baptized, and this was the first celebration of this ordinance occurring within the church. In August of 1827, Mrs. Margaret Gilchrist, the wife of Robert Gilchrist, died, hers being the first death of a member of this church.

The growth of the church was necessarily slow, but there was a gradual growth from the very first. We have seen that one member, Mrs. McCaslin, was added on examination the first year. Three were added on certificate in 1825, the second year. In 1827 seven members were added on certificate, and in 1828, four on examination. At the close of this year the membership numbered nineteen, but the year following it went up to fifty-one. Of the new members admitted this year (1829) ten were on certificate, and twenty-one, which was greater than the whole number in the church at the close of the year before, were converts. This is the first revival which is recorded in the history of the church. From the record it appears that the good work began in January, for on the tenth of this month, which was Sunday, the ten members were admitted on certificate, and two on examination. On the twelfth four more were added in like manner. On the fourth Sunday in June eight were added, and on the fourth Sunday in August eight

more, which is thirty-one in all. The next year, 1830, thirty members were added, all on certificate, save three.

The church has now been organized for six years, and it has grown from five members to seventy-seven. Of these thirty-two are males and forty-five are females. Twenty-seven have been admitted on profession and fifty on certificate. During these years there has been neither pastor nor stated place of worship. Sometimes the meetings were held at Pleasant Hill, now Hopewell, sometimes the members met at private houses, occasionally in the open woods, but oftener in the old log court-house. Those who ministered to this people then came at the charge of others; Franklin was a missionary station. Of these missionaries, the names of Revs. Isaac Reed, William Duncan, John Moreland, Jeremiah Hill and William Wood are the most familiar to the reader of the records of these times. Of these men I have been able to learn but little; so little that it is scarcely worth the telling. Isaac Reed lived at Bloomington, in this State, when preaching here, but subsequently moved to Illinois, and died in the city of Alton. William Duncan was a Scotch divine, and the preacher of long, methodical, doctrinal sermons. He belonged to a ministerial school which is now believed to be extinct. A dear lover of tobacco, he always preached with the "weed" in his mouth, and the younger members of his congregation counted with lively interest the number of quids taken, for thereby they could calculate with unfailing certainty the near approach of the end. It is said of him, upon what seems at this time

to be good authority, that he occasionally tasted of strong drink, for the "stom ch's sake;" and, in justification of the act, he said, in the language of Paul to Timothy: "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." After being worn out in the service, Mr. Duncan went to Ohio, and there died. The Rev. John Moreland was of Southern origin. He was tall and commanding in his person, affectionate, social, enthusiastic and eloquent. As a sermonizer he had many superiors; but as an exhorter, he was excelled by none. The Rev. William Wood was also a Southern man—a Tennessean; his academic acquirements were limited, and his theological training was had under the celebrated Dr. Anderson, of Marysville, in his native State. He died about the close of the late war, while acting under the auspices of the Christian Commission in the South. The Rev. Jeremiah Hill was an Eastern man, and in his earlier years followed the sea; and, like John Bunyan, was a proficient in all the vices peculiar to his vocation. Being converted after he arrived to years of maturity, he moved to Tennessee, where he entered the theological school of Dr. Anderson, along with William Wood; and, like him, of limited scholastic acquirements, he imbibed the theological theories of his teacher. Both were ardent and enthusiastic, and both strong in exhortation rather than in sermonizing. In the great controversy of 1837 and 1838 which shook the Presbyterian Church of the United States to its very center, and which resulted in the second great division which has come upon it in its history in America,

Wood and Hill took an active part, and they were the recognized leaders of the New School brethren in this Presbytery.

It is a fact well known to the most casual readers of western history, that about the close of the Revolutionary War a strong tide of emigration set into Kentucky from the seaboard States. With these emigrants came a colony from Northern New Jersey, principally from Bergen County—the descendants of the Dutch colonists of New Amsterdam—which located in the neighborhood of Harrod's Station, now Harrodsburg, in Mercer County. These people brought with them a Calvinistic faith, and for a time maintained their connection with the Dutch Reformed Church, of New Jersey. A missionary, Dominie Laubaugh, was sent out to them by the Classis of that State, but after a short time he returned, and the Voorhees, the Demarees, the Smocks, the Coverts, the Bantas, the Vannuys, the Bergens, the Vanarsdalls, the Brewers, the Lists, and others of this Dutch blood and Dutch faith gravitated into the Presbyterian Church.* After the lapse of a few years the Mercer County Dutchmen became restless, and a part of them made another move, this time coming down into Shelby and Henry Counties, in the same State, where

*From a letter received from the Rev. David D. Demarest, D. D., of New Jersey, after the above was written, I learn that Peter Laubaugh was sent out by the New Jersey Classis, in response to a request from members of the Reformed Church who had settled in Kentucky. "He was," says Dr. Demarest, "ordained by the Classis of Hackensack, July 21st, 1796, with a view to settlement among the people of Salt River, Mercer County, Kentucky." * * "Early in February, 1797, after a journey of about three months," he reached Mercer County, where he seems to have organized a church at once, and at the expiration of three months set his face eastward; and though it was his intention to return to Kentucky, yet from some cause he never did.

they located, in what is still known among Kentuckians of that region, as the "Dutch Tract." Here they organized a church, and old Archibald Cameron, a Scotch Presbyterian divine, of remarkable eccentricity of character, but theologically as sound to the core as old John Knox himself, long ministered unto them. The original colonizers of the Dutch tract having passed away, their children, uneasy and restless as their fathers had been before them, again took up the line of march, and this time came to our own county. The first considerable number which arrived, as appears from the church records, was in 1827; and making their location in the vicinity of the "Big Spring," now Hopewell, they were joined by others, until in 1830, forty of the seventy-seven members of this church were living in that neighborhood. It now became evident to all, as well as desirable, that the church should be divided, and a separate organization established for the accommodation and convenience of those living in the country; and, accordingly, in the spring of 1831, Presbytery, then in session at Greensburg, ordered a division to take place; and in May, of the same year, this was done by the forty members being dismissed, who, on the 23d day of that month, duly organized the church of Hopewell.*

*When the question was first agitated among the people there was a desire manifested by some of the Franklin members to continue the connection, and build a house of worship at a point about half way between Franklin and the present site of the Hopewell Church. The location indicated for the proposed house was on the high ground, immediately east of the iron bridge over Young's Creek, on the Bluff Road. A meeting was held at the house of Simon Covert, who then lived in the Hopewell neighborhood, when the proposition was discussed, and, as we now see, wisely voted down. The Hopewell people were unanimously opposed to it.

In June, 1830, it appears that the Rev. David Monfort, of the Presbytery of Chillicothe, Ohio, was present on the occasion of the celebration of the Lord's Supper, at Pleasant Hill. This is the first indication we have of his presence in this country, and I think it altogether likely that he was then looking out for himself a field for his future labor. He seems to have been satisfied with the prospect, for on the first day of the following November, as appears by an entry upon the record made in his own hand, he "commenced labors as a stated supply or missionary." This position he occupied until the next October, when he was regularly installed as pastor of both this and the Hopewell Church, on a salary of three hundred dollars per year. The Revs. William Sickles and Eliphalet Kent had been appointed by Presbytery as a committee, to assist in the installation, and Mr. Kent, who still survives, a hale hearty old man of seventy four years, preached the installation sermon from Jeremiah iii. 15: "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding;" and Mr. Sickles delivered the charge to the people.

At this time the membership of the church numbered sixty-six; and for us to fairly appreciate the work done during the nineteen years of Mr. Monfort's pastorate, we must bear in mind the material and moral condition of the county, at the time he came and during the time he remained. Eleven years have now passed away since Campbell and Sells came; eight since King, Covert, McCaslin and Voris built cabins in this immediate vicinity, and seven since

King, Young, McCaslin, and the wives of the two former united in the organization of the church. Settlements had now been made in all parts of the county, and all the political townships had been established, except Clarke. The county contained a population of four thousand and nineteen, as shown by the census made the year before, and it had within its borders this year about six hundred legal voters, of whom about one hundred and eighty lived within Franklin Township. Unfortunately there are no records in existence by means of which we can arrive at the population of the town of Franklin at this time, but it did not, in all probability, exceed two hundred; though this is an estimate based upon unsatisfactory data. The people were still without a market in which to sell their surplus produce nearer than Madison, on the Ohio River, sixty five miles away. Wheat was worth here from twenty five to thirty five cents per bushel; corn ten cents, and oats eight. Good work horses sold at from thirty five and forty dollars per head to fifty and sixty; cows at from five to ten dollars each, while all cotton and imported woolen goods and groceries of all kinds cost at least double the present prices. Those in the entire county who were not compelled to toil for their daily bread and raiment you could have counted off on the fingers of your right hand. The men tilled the soil during the tilling season, and cleared lands for themselves or others during the fall and winter seasons, and spent the long winter evenings in making and mending shoes for their families, or other domestic labor; while the women not only looked after the ordinary and daily af-

fairs of the household, but spun flax, carded and spun the wool, and wove linens, flannels and jeans with which all were clothed. The statement of these facts may at first blush seem to some as irrelevant in a discussion like the one in hand; but let me remind such, if any there be, that, notwithstanding the hard fate of the members of this church at the time of which I am speaking, they nevertheless undertook the support of their pastor. Up to 1838, Mr. Monfort preached for both this and the Hopewell Church, at a salary of three hundred dollars per year—a salary so small that, were we not to appreciate the impoverished condition of the people generally, we would feel compelled to charge them with having been stingy and mean toward their pastor; but when we remember the condition of the country and of the people, instead of blame, we are bound to give praise.

In this connection it may not be amiss to tarry a moment while we briefly pass under review certain congregational habits in vogue during those times. Up to about 1840, so far as my memory goes, it was the custom in the country congregations for the men and women to occupy different seats in the church. There was a "men's side" and a "women's side" in every meeting-house; and, while it is probable that the modern custom of promiscuous seating came into fashion in this town church sooner than in the country, it is nevertheless certain that before and after Mr. Monfort came, the old custom prevailed here.

On the 18th of June, 1831, it is recorded that "William G. Shelleday was elected singing clerk," and again on the 28th of March, 1834, Alban Y. Howsly

and Cornelius Hutton were elected to the same "office." This is an office which has long been unknown in this church, and to many of the younger members, doubtless, the name carries with it but an imperfect idea of the functions appertaining to it. The "singing clerk" was a man of far more consequence in the old times than your modern leader of church music; indeed, he filled a place only a little lower than the minister himself. Occupying a seat in front of the high old fashioned pulpit, it was his duty not only to rise up facing the congregation and pitch the tune, but to "line out" each hymn as it was sung. Hymn books were not so plentiful then as now. The poverty of the people made the office of "singing clerk" a necessity.

The custom observed in celebrating the Lord's Supper differed materially from the custom of the present. Long tables were prepared in the aisles of the meeting-house, covered with snow-white cloths, and the communicants, each of whom had been presented by the officers of the church with a "token" [pieces of lead resembling in shape and size a silver dime, I have seen used for this purpose], as a sign of his or her right to eat the Supper, took their seats at this table of the Lord, and after presenting their "tokens" to the office-bearers, partook of the sacramental feast.

It would certainly prove interesting, if not instructive, to pursue this theme at length and in all its bearings and ramifications did time permit. Great changes have taken place in the world of thought during the past half century. Men in the search of truth, in the domain of the natural sciences as well as in the meta

physical, have drifted from point to point until the modern view often bears scarcely any resemblance to the opinion of fifty years ago. Truth must ever be the same, be it scientific, metaphysical or religious; but the intelligent thinker, who has learned to distrust the infallibility of the human intellect, is ever questioning, ever doubting and re-examining; and as a necessary consequence old views are ever being discarded or modified, and new shades of thought are continually intervening. So far as theological questions are concerned, this shifting of thought is necessarily slower and less marked than in any other department of knowledge, save mathematical; but there is, nevertheless, an element of change to be found here. Measuring time by the centuries this change is apparent to the most superficial student of history; but taking a measure extending over no more than fifty years, the traces of thought-movement are not so obvious. Still this increment of time shows a change—not a change, mark you, in the leading and fundamental doctrines of the church, but a softening down of the tints; a shading here and a lighting there, until the picture—the same in outline and detail as ever before—nevertheless presents the old ideas of theological truth in the light of an advanced state of thought.

I have told you of a pioneer Presbyterian preacher who occasionally took his morning dram, and I am sure this recital must have excited the surprise of the younger members of this congregation, and set them to wondering what manner of man he was (unless, indeed a like statement made by Dr. Tuttle, on yes-

terday, had already prepared them for this); but when it is remembered that less than fifty years ago Presbyterians very generally did not believe that it was morally wrong to drink the social glass, and that some of them actually did so drink, I am sure this surprise and wonder must disappear. Within the memory of men still living, Presbyterian elders kept the decanter on the sideboard, and furnished whisky freely and without price to the electors on the occasion of standing for public office. It is due to history, however, to say that this never was the rule in this county but the exception, and it is believed that no other denomination can present a better record.

Again: Who of the older men and women, who are here, have forgotten the loyalty of the people of all sects, thirty or forty years ago, to the church of their choice? Why, it once was so rare for a minister of one denomination to occupy another's pulpit, that when it did happen to occur, it occasioned a "nine days' talk." I remember a circumstance which took place in this county about thirty years ago, which illustrates the sentiment of the times and the feeling of the people. It was a bright summer Sunday morning, and a little Presbyterian congregation had met in the old "hewed log" church to sing and pray, and listen to the reading of one of Burder's sermons by one of the elders. Pending the preparatory exercises, a Methodist circuit-rider rode up with a friend, and, dismounting, the people perceived he was coming in. The elders, after holding a solemn and hurried consultation, came to the conclusion that they would forego the safe and orthodox Burder, and risk this,

to them, ranting disciple of John Wesley; and accordingly one of their number—good man, he has been dead so many years—was sent out with a flag of truce to formally invite the Wesleyan in. The preacher, who must have been a great wag, was apparently inspecting the horses hitched to the trees in the most approved jockey style; and you may better imagine, than I can describe, the effect this conduct had upon those who formed their opinions of clerical propriety from the models furnished by the serious Monfort and the solemn Sickles. He came in, however, on the invitation; and, after the introductory services, took as his text: "*Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" Then, looking straight into the solemn faces before him, said, in substance, that this was one of his favorite texts, that he had preached from it many times before, but had never yet succeeded in getting through a sermon without shouting; and while he intended to try and remember the place and the occasion, and forego shouting this time, yet if he failed in his endeavor, he begged his hearers would remember that he was only a Methodist circuit-rider, and that, as such, he had a right to shout. Had a thunder-clap come from the clear sky then, it would have occasioned no greater astonishment than was now pictured on the faces of that little congregation; but the preacher was equal to the emergency. Though he made a wonderful noise about it, yet it was conceded that his sermon was about as sound as one of old George Burder's; and while the older heads may have criticised the arrangement and the manner of delivery, the younger took notice that he

used the same texts and preached the same salvation that Sickles and Monfort were in the habit of using and of preaching.

Instead of that harmony of feeling among the ministers of the different churches, and that charitable co-operation which we now expect as a matter of course, then the ministers stood intrenched behind the sounding-boards of their own pulpits, either in a state of armed neutrality toward each other, or else engaged in actual theological conflict. Sometimes they met in the hand to-hand fight of debate; and if I have not been wrongly informed, Dr. Monfort and a Baptist minister of this town once tried their skill in this arena; but, most generally, clergymen were content with firing at long range from pulpit to pulpit, while the laity, a most willing soldiery, carried on a sort of guerrilla warfare from week's end to week's end.

Happily we are beyond these uncharitable years! The wheels of time have carried us out of the gloom of that narrow, selfish sectarianism wherein could be seen nothing good save in the creed of our own professing; and now, while we may on all convenient occasions "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints," and which we may honestly believe to be systematized in our Standards, we may, and we do, nevertheless, rejoice in the prosperity of the church whenever and wherever manifested. The vail of the temple of our prejudices has been rent in twain from the top to the bottom; the middle wall of partition has been broken down, and no longer may soldiers of the same great Captain waste their strength in contending against each other.

But a truce to the manners and customs and habits of thought of the old times. Let us take up the thread of our narrative and briefly note some of the results of Mr. Monfort's ministry. We have seen that at the close of 1831, the church numbered fifty-five members. In 1832 twelve were added, all but two on certificate; in 1833 ten more, six on certificate and four on examination, which brings us up to 1834, when the second revival came with blessings to this people. It appears that the good work began the last of February, and continued up to the end of March, during which time sixteen were added on profession of their faith. This year a school-house was built on the lot which abuts this one on the east, and here the people worshiped until they built a large and rather pretentious frame edifice, for the times, on this spot in 1837. "It was built by Peter Shuck, at a cost of $816, not including the seats and pulpit," and "being the first church edifice in town it was regarded as a grand affair."

In the fall of 1838 the pastoral relation between Mr. Monfort and Hopewell was dissolved, after which he devoted his entire time to this church. At this time the following preamble and resolution were adopted by the church session, viz:

"WHEREAS, By a recent arrangement our pastor is to devote his whole time in the Franklin congregation; and,

"WHEREAS, On special effort being made for the purpose of his support only three hundred dollars per annum has been raised for that end; and,

"WHEREAS, The session believe that on account of

the state of their pastor's family, and the present state of his own health, not less than five hundred dollars per annum are sufficient for his support in this place; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That our representative to the next Presbytery be instructed, and he is hereby instructed, to lay the case before the Presbytery, for the purpose of obtaining their leave to apply to the Board of Missions for the additional aid necessary to sustain our pastor."

What relief, if any, was received from the Board of Missions I have not been able to learn; but it is certain that the pastor's salary was about this time nominally raised to five hundred dollars per year.

In 1839 a third great awakening took place. From the 21st to the 28th days of July, inclusive, eighteen converts were admitted. From this on to 1842, yearly additions, both on certificate and examination, were made, but no special manifestation of God's grace appears until January of that year, when from the 5th of that month to the 19th of the month following, thirty seven were taken into the church on profession. This ingathering brought the membership at the date of the Presbyterial report, made in April of the following year, up to one hundred and eighty-seven; but from thence on to 1851, a period of nine years, there was a slow but sure decline. New members were taken in from time to time, both on certificate and examination, but not in numbers large enough to supply the waste from dismissions, suspensions and deaths. And right here one of the most impressive lesson which the history of this church presents

may be learned. The common experience of mankind, I think, agrees in the observation, that next to a family quarrel, a church difficulty excels all others in bitterness and virulence. During the years which mark the decline of this church under Dr. Monfort's pastorate, a bitter and unrelenting personal warfare was waged between certain of the members, and while I would not utter a single word reflecting upon the motives or questioning the Christian integrity of a single member of this church *living*, much less of any one dead, yet it is due to history, it is due to you, that the fact be stated, that pending this personal warfare between the professed followers of Christ, the cause of Christ was seemingly altogether neglected. I know nothing of the merits of this controversy; I know not who was right and who wrong; but for an examination of the records I would not have known of any difficulty at all, and I therefore censure no man, no party; I only note the fact of the dissension. No doubt during these gloomy years the pastor preached with all the clearness that marked his sermons of former years; no doubt his appeals were as persuasive and his exhortations as eloquent; no doubt sinners felt the arrows of conviction, but the war within the camp went furiously on, and inquirers sought other folds or turned their backs upon the church for ever. All the actors in that whirl of strife are now dead save one. Their bodies have returned to the dust and their sad difficulties have disappeared with them The merits of their controversy no one now knows or cares to know. How insignificant it must have been and yet how baleful in its influence upon the

cause of Christianity. Brethren, let us take the lesson to our homes. Forever let us sink out of sight and memory, every element of controversy, every vestige of discord!

We now approach the time when Dr. Monfort's labors are to come to a close in this church. It is the year 1850, and he has been in the field nineteen years, eighteen of which have been devoted to pastoral services. And these years have been busy stirring years with him, for he has not only preached with great regularity here, but he has preached in the country wherever there seemed to be any prospect whatever of establishing a church, He assisted in the organization of Hopewell, of Shiloh, and of Providence. But his age and other physical infirmities warn him that he must have a rest, and the relation between him and this people is accordingly sundered. During the years of his preaching here, the record shows that two hundred and ninety seven in all united with the church, of whom one hundred and twenty-eight were males and one hundred and sixty-nine were females. Of the total number which was added to the church, one hundred and forty-nine were on profession of their faith and one hundred and forty-eight on certificate. Of these received on profession, sixty-seven were males and eighty-two were females; and of those received on certificate, sixty-one were males and eighty-seven were females.

A biographical sketch of Dr. Monfort having been prepared by another, I allude to no facts in his history not related in some manner to this church. But in bi ding him farewell, it may not be inappropriate

to dwell briefly on some of the more salient features of his character. He was a man of wide and varied learning; so much so, that in a day when Doctorates were more stintingly granted than in this, Hanover College conferred upon him the merited title of "Doctor of Divinity." He must have been about forty-five years of age when he came here, and was trimly built though undersized in person, had dark hair and eyes, a narrow high forehead as I remember him, and was exceedingly neat in his dress. His manners were engaging. Whilst always serious, yet he was never gloomy and forbidding. He held in scrupulous regard all the proprieties and conventionalities of life. "He was," says one authority, "a mild, modest, prudent man, had a pleasant way in his daily intercourse with the people, and wielded a great influence in the town." I do not remember to have ever heard any anecdote told of him indicating that he had any wit or humor, or that even on occasion he exhibited any powers of sarcasm. He went through the fight which led to the separation of the Church into Old School and New School, a recognized leader of the Old School party in this Presbytery, and yet I find no memory of wounding words ever having been spoken by him, lingering in the minds of those who were then arrayed against him. He came here at a time when his mind was fully developed, and in addition to his extensive learning, both literary and theological, he was possessed of a sound and discriminating judgment. He knew how to gain the good will of men and how to hold their esteem. His views of religious truth were clear and decided, and he believed, with

his whole heart and his whole soul, the doctrines and tenets of the Presbyterian faith as laid down in her Standards; and what he believed, he preached with all the might that was in him. He was, in a word, a thoroughly conscientious man, speaking boldly for the truth and vehemently combating what he deemed to be error, on all proper occasions As a speaker, his most marked characteristic was his great clearness. He not only possessed that incisiveness of mind which enabled him to grasp an idea firmly, but he had that further and rarer accomplishment, which enabled him to so present that idea to his hearers stripped of every superfluous shred of thought, as enabled them also to see it and grasp it in its full significance. By virtue of this gift he was a teacher of men; and he excelled as a doctrinal preacher. But on occasions he preached with great feeling. One says, his manner of preaching was "deliberate, calm, solemn and earnest—sometimes deeply impassioned;" another, and a co-laborer in the ministry with him, says he was a "solid emphatic speaker, and when aroused quite eloquent."

The close of Dr. Monfort's ministry here may, in some respects, be said to mark the line between the past and the present in the history of this church. It is about that time the people began developing the material wealth of the county. Franklin had lately been linked with iron to the Ohio River, and a ready market had at once been opened for all articles produced by the labor of the people. A spirit of enterprise followed; a plank road was constructed leading from this place to White River; a proposition to build

a railroad connecting Martinsville with this town was agitated and finally consummated, and a general liveliness in traffic and trade was exhibited never before known. The population of the county was 12,101, and the town of Franklin contained 1,057 souls. The church numbered one hundred and forty-three communicants, a less number than at any period since 1839, but the old fires of discord had burned out, and with the advent of a new and younger man as pastor, it was hoped that the misfortunes of the past would be retrieved. Accordingly, a call was made for the Rev. Jas. A. McKee, then stationed at Vernon, in this State, who accepted and entered upon the discharge of his duties at a salary of seven hundred dollars per year. Mr. McKee was a Pennsylvanian by birth, but had been educated in the collegiate department of South Hanover, in this State, and also in the theological school which was then located in that place.

I do not think that the time has yet come when it would be profitable or interesting to dwell upon the events connected with the pastorate of Mr. McKee or of any of his successors. All the ministers, and a large majority of the members, are yet living who participated in the various scenes enacted in this church since 1850, and it would be as a "twice told tale," were I to recount these over now. Moreover, I have nearly consumed my hour in an endeavor to bring to your minds a view of the early history of this church, and the time warns me that I can not much longer claim your patience.

The year following Rev. Mr. McKee's entry upon his labors here, the membership of this church went

down to one hundred and fifteen—twenty-nine members having been dismissed and seven having died. But in 1852 the gains began to exceed the losses, and, with the exception of two years, this has been the case ever since. In that year a refreshing revival came to bless the labors of the new pastor. The good work seems to have commenced in the last of February, and it continued up to the middle of April, during which interval forty persons in all were added on profession of their faith. In the spring of the succeeding year another shower came, and twenty-five converts were added, which, with the additions of those who joined on certificate, brought the membership up to one hundred and eighty-six, the highest number then ever reached. In 1854 the number was carried up to one hundred and ninety-four; but this increase was mostly due to admissions on certificate.

It is evident to one who peruses the records of this date that a church trouble is again brewing. What the cause was, I am sure, I don't know. All I can say is, that in 1854 only five converts were added; in 1855, *not one;* in 1856, three; and in 1857, *not one!* Other work seems to have required the attention of the people during these gloomy years. The younger members of the congregation appear to have been seized about this time with a mania for dancing, while the older brethren had more serious business of their own on hand. A tempest had arisen—a controversy was up—a first-class church quarrel was on the carpet, and while the brethren were cutting and thrusting this way and that way at each other,

no recruits ventured to come from the enemy without. How eloquently do these mute figures plead for *peace* within the church!

In 1858, the smoke of this conflict having disappeared, God smiled again upon the labors of Mr. McKee, and in February, March and April of that year, fifty-eight were added on examination.

In 1860, after ten years' service, he resigned his charge and was succeeded by the Rev. A. B. Morey. The record shows that during these ten years two hundred and thirty-eight were admitted to the church, of whom one hundred and twelve were males and one hundred and sixteen were females. Of the whole number one hundred and forty-four were added on examination and ninety four on certificate.

The Rev. A. B. Morey, a native of New York, came fresh from Princeton, within a short time after Mr. McKee left, and entered at once upon ministerial labors. At this time the communicants numbered one hundred and seventy-two, and when he left, eleven years afterward, the number had run up to three hundred and seventy-five; an increase of over ten per cent. per annum. The most marked feature of his pastorate is the great revival which came to this church in 1870. On the 16th of January the record shows the admission of five on examination, and it goes on showing daily admissions throughout January, February and up into March, until one hundred names have been entered. During this pastorate three hundred and seventy four were added to the church, of which two hundred and twenty-one were on examination and one hundred and fifty-three

on certificate. Of those, on examination, ninety-five were males and one hundred and twenty-six were females; while of those, on certificate, sixty-one were males and ninety-two were females.

On Mr. Morey's resignation, the Rev. S. E. Wishard, our present pastor, was called and came. He is a native of this county. His father came into White-river Township the year after this church was organized, and a few months before the son's birth. At the age of twenty-two he began a course of study at the Wabash College, where he graduated. His theological education was received at Lane Seminary, after which he went into the State of Michigan, where he preached until called to this church in 1871. He has now been with us nearly three years, during which time the membership has increased by the addition of one hundred and twenty-five, of which fifty have been on examination and seventy-four on certificate.

I have now passed hastily over the fifty years which have come and gone since the foundations of this church were laid, and I am fully conscious that many matters immediately connected with my subject have been entirely omitted or passed over with the barest mention. The complete history of this church during these years would require a volume, and its presentation, in an address of reasonable length, is therefore out of the question. I have already, I fear, trespassed on your patience, but I beg your indulgence while we briefly consider some of the results of the work which has been done.

A list of the membership has been prepared, em

bracing the names of all found scattered through the church books. This list is not absolutely perfect, for the books themselves have been somewhat carelessly kept, and an absolutely perfect list is therefore out of the question. But it is believed that it approximates very nearly to correctness, and it is from this that I have made up the statistical reports as to the work done during each pastorate. Now, looking at the work as a whole, we find that eleven hundred in all have been added to this church during its first half century. Five hundred and ninety seven, a little over half, has been on examination and five hundred and one on certificate. Of the entire membership, four hundred and sixty-seven are males and six hundred and thirty-three females. Of the number added on examination, the names of two hundred and seventy-one are males and three hundred and twenty-eight are females; of those on certificate, one hundred and ninety-six are males and three hundred and five are females.

Of the oldest and most numerous families identified with the church, the name of Wilson is found upon the list, ten times; the Coverts and Allisons, each twelve times; Shellady, a name now extinct, so far as the records show, thirteen times; Alexander, fourteen; Herriott, fifteen; Voorheis and Thompson, each sixteen times, and the Thompson family has likewise disappeared; Banta, eighteen; Bergen, twenty-two; Adams, twenty-four; and the McCaslin, which leads them all, sixty times.

Six ministers have gone out from this church, five of whom began their religious life here. The first is

John C. King, son of George King, one of the founders of the church, and who united with this congregation on the 28th of March, 1834, and is now preaching in Chase City, Virginia. Then comes the name of Anderson Wallace, who joined on the 3d of September, 1837, and who is, or was, when I last knew of him, performing ministerial duty in Illinois. After him we have the name of Samuel E. Barr, whose profession took place on the 14th of January, 1842, and who so lately went from the neighboring church of Hopewell to the city of Elkhart, in Northern Indiana; and his name is followed by that of James H. L. Vannuys, who entered the church on the 6th of February of the same year, and who is now pastor of the church at Goshen, in this State. All these were the fruits of Dr. Monfort's ministry.

Robert M. Overstreet, now preaching at Emporia, in the State of Kansas, joined by letter from the church at Bloomington, October 10, 1848, and Sylvester Bergen, who is now preaching at McKinney, in the State of Texas, united, on profession of his faith, on the fourth day of January, 1863.

These are some of the numerical results, but who can calculate the moral? The Presbyterian faith demands an unqualified belief in the divine authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, in the sovereignty of God, and the absolute subordination of man to his authority. This faith, as interpreted by our fathers, held them to a strict accountability, morally speaking, for the manner in which they trained their children; and they not only taught their children obedience to parental authority, in accordance with the divine

command, but tutored them carefully in all the fundamental doctrines of their own faith. Trained then, to fear God and to keep his commandments, and trained to habits of obedience to human government from infancy up, the young man when he left the roof-tree, went forth *prepared* to yield that willing obedience to the laws of the land, which is the distinguishing characteristic of every good citizen. He may not have been the most noisy citizen; he may not have been the most forward with advice on public occasions; he may not even have aspired to public place; but he was nevertheless a law-abiding citizen, and the State was seldom, if ever, called upon to vindicate her laws in his punishment. The same records which bear testimony to that spirit of lawless vindictiveness which prevailed so extensively in this county from its organization up to about 1840, and which has been elsewhere alluded to, bear ample testimony to his good character for peace and submissiveness to the laws of the land. I do not wish to be understood as magnifying one faith at the expense of another, or of making invidious comparisons between the Presbyterian Church and others; I trust we are all too thoroughly imbued with the charity which thinketh no evil for that, but I will say, and that without fear of successful contradiction, that Presbyterianism, in Johnson County, has proven in the past, pre-eminently successful as a school for the training of the highest order of citizenship.

Just how much has been achieved by this particular church in that school, the human intellect is inadequate to the task of measuring; Omniscience alone

can do that; but if we can not apply the measure, the results are yet so certain that the Christian and the patriot, of whatever faith or belief, may on this the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Church of Franklin, join in the prayer: *Let it be perpetuated!*