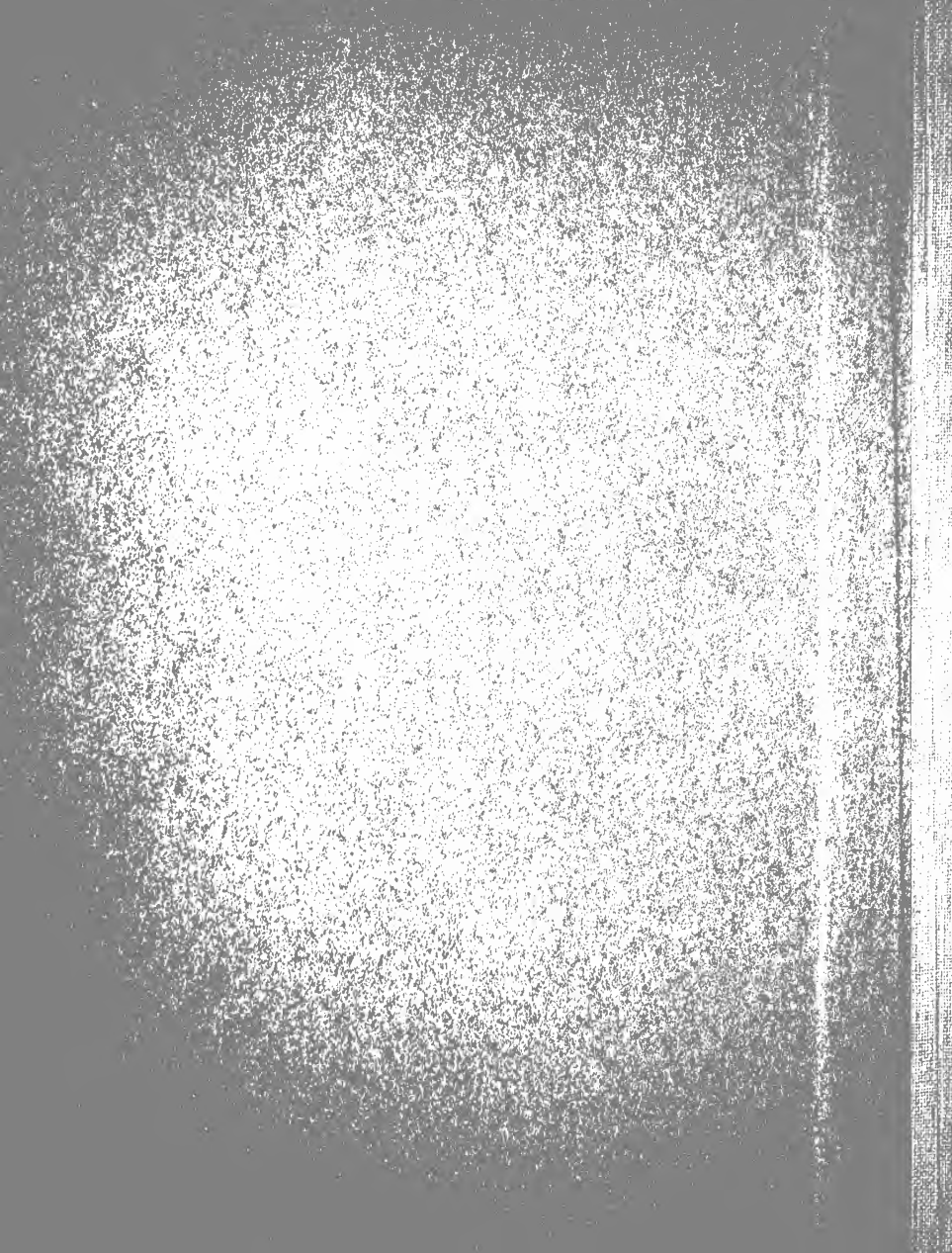


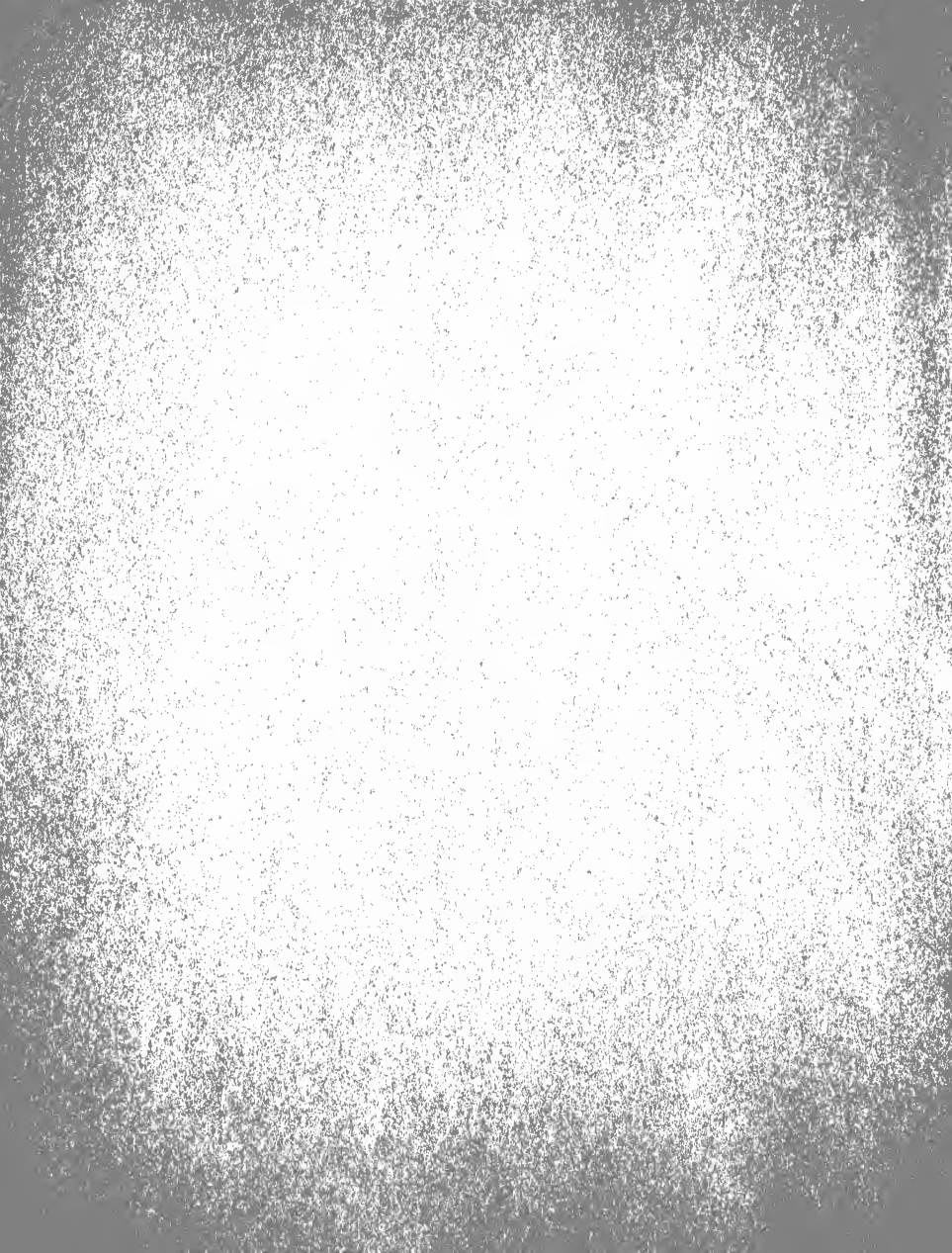
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# HISTORY

— OF —

# Franconia Township.

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By JOHN D. SOUDER.

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PUBLISHED BY  
BENJAMIN L. GEHMAN,  
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## INTRODUCTORY.

The "History of Franconia Township" is presented to the public as a memorial of the one hundred and fifty-fifth year of its incorporated existence. Material facts have been diligently sought after and patient labor cheerfully bestowed upon the work. Events are chronicled in a narrative rather than in a controversial form, and truth gleaned in a hundred sources has been condensed in order to make it a valuable work for the future and present generations. It is submitted to a generous and intelligent people in the belief that it will meet their approval. The labor of the author was shared by many residents of the township. Indeed Wm. W. Wile has our sincerest thanks for his cheerful information we received and gleaned from his own lips. The labor was also shared by R. R. Hangey, Wm. S. Hensing, H. K. Godshall, H. K. Hackman, R. R. Hartzell, I. C. Barndt and others. We finally extend our sincerest thanks for their co-operation and cheerful information. This little work was never intended to be published in book form at the beginning, but were hastily written to meet each week's publication of the WEEKLY NEWS, and, therefore we do not claim for them any measures of literary merit. The little book contains many mistakes due to the printer and author, but nevertheless it will fill its mission for what it had been prepared. The writing of a history is not as easy a matter as many may suppose. It is for one to pull in the far dim dis-

Franconia Township  
 20102  
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tance of the past, then where shall you begin and what shall be omitted. It is the pen of a general historian which gives us the principal events of the past and the present leaves much unwritten, like the husbandman in the harvest field, there is always something left for the gleaners. So the minor occurrences of life, if not gathered by the local historian, are lost to us and our children. It is to those following after us that most of this interest is attached. We seeing the every day events as they transpire around us do not realize how highly they would be prized in after years. The lives and habits of our country people far removed from the bustle and turmoil of city life do not reveal, it is true, striking characteristics, yet they have their way, their modes of life and living, their daily routine of business or of pleasure, which, if narrated in a simple way only, would be a gratification to many a household. We readily see how this would be the case if memory would only be carried back a single generation to behold what mighty changes have been wrought therein. The ways, methods and usages of former times are supplanted by new practices, and with it the bound of thought is enlarged. Our local historians have aided greatly in rescuing from oblivion much that would otherwise have been lost, and contributed largely to the fund of general information, as recorded by local historians in shape for further reference. It is both interesting and instructive to read the history of our forefathers, to understand by what toils, through what difficulties, over what obstacles they, from a feeble colony planted in an unexplored wilderness, struggled up to a position of wealth and power.

J. D. SOUDER,

Telford, August 10th, 1886.

## CONTENTS:

## PART I.

- ITS SITUATION—DERIVATION OF ITS NAME—NUMBER OF TAX-  
ABLES AND AMOUNT OF TAXATION—ITS EARLIEST SETTLERS—  
FIRST TANNERY—OTHER ASSESSMENTS. 1

## PART II.

- LAND-HOLDERS OF 1792—TAX ASSESSED ON BACHELORS—NAMES  
OF LAND-HOLDERS AND BACHELORS IN 1792. 3

## PART III.

- VILLAGES—TELFORD—COUNTY LINE HOTEL—SOUDERTON—  
FRANCONIA SQUARE AND FRANCONIAVILLE. 5

## PART IV.

- EDUCATION—PAROCHIAL AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS—HOW CONDUCTED—  
TUITION—COUNTY SCHOLARS—COMMON SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED—  
THE SCHOOLS CONNECTED WITH THE CHURCHES—  
THE PRESENT SCHOOLS. 8

## PART V.

- CHURCH—EARLY RELIGION—REFORMATION—RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS—  
MENNONITES, THEIR FIRST MEETING HOUSE—  
INDIANFIELD LUTHERAN CHURCH, FOUNDED AND REBUILT—  
MINISTERS—REFORMED CHURCH ON THE INDIAN CREEK,  
FOUNDED AND REBUILT—LEIDY'S CHURCH. 12

## PART VI.

- POLITICS—FIRST VOTING PLACES—TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE—  
VOTES IN 1775—ACTS PASSED AND VOTING PLACES CHANGED  
NUMBER OF VOTES IN 1884—JUSTICE OF THE PEACE—OTHER  
TOWNSHIP OFFICERS. 16

## PART VII.

- ABORIGINEES—THEIR RELICS—INDIANS ABANDON OUR TERRITORY. 19

## PART VIII.

- AGRICULTURE AS PRACTISED BY OUR ANCESTORS—AS PRACTISED  
TO-DAY 22

## PART IX.

- NEWSPAPERS AND LODGES—THE "MONTGOMERY COUNTY PRESS"

—SOUDERTON, “INDEPENDENT”—THE REDMEN AND SONS OF AMERICA. 25

### PART X.

EARLY GERMANS—CAUSE OF EMMIGRATION—THE GERMAN ELEMENT—THEIR RELIGION. 27

### PART XI.

ZOOLOGY AND MINERALS—BIRDS—REPTILES—MINERALS. 30

### PART XII.

ROADS AND CONVEYANCE—FIRST ROADS—CUSTOM OF TRAVEL—ROADS TO-DAY. 32

### PART XIII.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—SPORTS AND PASTIMES—LOCAL SUPERSTITION. 34

### PART XIV.

PRIVATE BURYING GROUNDS—FUHRMAN'S GRAVEYARD—OTHER NEGLECTED GRAVEYARDS. 37

### PART XV.

ACCONTS OF THE POOR OF THE TOWNSHIP—STATEMENTS OF THE OVERSEERS OF THE POOR. 41

### PART XVI.

THE LUTHERAN CONGREGATION—PASTORS—EDIFICE—GRAVEYARD. 47

### PART XVII.

REFORMED CHURCH—DOCTRINE—INDIAN CREEK REFORMED CHURCH—ITS BURYING GROUND—LEIDY'S REFORMED CONGREGATION—ITS BURYING GROUND. 52

### PART XVIII.

DUNKARDS OR GERMAN BAPTIST—THEIR PRINCIPLES—EMMIGRATION TO AMERICA—THEIR HOUSES OF WORSHIP—BURYING GROUNDS. 58

HISTORY OF FRANCONIA TOWNSHIP.

PART XIX.

THE MENNONITES—THEIR DOCTRINE—SCHISMS OF THE MENNONITE CHURCH—FRANCONIA MEETING HOUSE AND CONGREGATION—SOUDERTON MEETING HOUSE.

62

PART XX.

HERRITE DENOMINATION—THEIR HOUSE OF WORSHIP—BURYING GROUND.

69

PART XXI.

VILLAGE HISTORY—TELFORD—SOUDERTON—FRANCONIAVILLE—FRANCONIA SQUARE—MIDWAY—EARLINGTON—RISING SUN HOTEL—GEHMANS.

72

PART XXII.

PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION.

86

PART XXIII.

PIONEER SETTLERS—DESCRIPTION OF THEIR FARMING.

94



# HISTORY OF FRANCONIA TOWNSHIP.

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## PART I.

ITS SITUATION—DERIVATION OF ITS NAME—NUMBER OF TAXABLES, AND AMOUNT OF TAXATION—ITS EARLIEST SETTLERS—ITS FIRST TANNERY—OTHER ASSESSMENTS.

Franconia township is situated in the northeastern part of Montgomery county, joining Bucks county on the northeast and Upper and Lower Salford Hatfield township on the west, south and east. Its area is 148 $\frac{1}{2}$  square miles or 9520 acres. The surface is generally level, but sufficiently undulating to be susceptible of surface drainage into the headwaters of the Skippach, Branch and Indian creeks, all of which flow through the township, affording light but useful water power and mill

sites. The eastern branch of the Perkiomen forms the north-western boundary of the township.

The name of Franconia is derived from an old Duchy, which afterwards formed a circle of the Germanic Empire, and signifies "Land of the Franks," whence also France. On Holme's map of 1682 it is called the "Dutch township," from which we infer that the Dutch were its earliest settlers.

In 1734 the township contained thirty-four taxables and

land-holders, nearly all Germans. Amongst these may be mentioned John Fry, 150 acres; Henry Rosenberger, 125 acres; John Oberholtzer, 150 acres; Christian Meyor, 150 acres; Ulrich Hunsberger, 50 acres; Frederick Gotshalk, 100 acres; Michael Bing, 100 acres; Michael Hentz, 100 acres; George Hartzell, 100 acres; Andrew Barndt, 75 acres; Henry Barndt, 100 acres; Frederick Scholl, 100 acres; Jacob Bayard, 100 acres, and John Wilhelm, 50 acres. Most of these have descendants residing in the township at the present day. Christian Meyor arrived in 1727, Frederick Sholl in 1728, Jacob Oberholtzer, George Hartzell, Ludwig Hartzell, Michael Wilhelm and Johnmas Fry in 1730;

and Jacob Oberholtzer in August, 1732. These, perhaps, all came from the Palatinate or Pfaltz.

One of the first settlers of the township is said to have been Christian Funk, who settled on the Indian creek, below the mill of George S. Reiff. The Souders of the township are descendants of his family, and are now residing throughout the township in multitudes.

Leidy's tannery, one mile south of Souderton, was founded in 1780 by Jacob Leidy, grandfather of the present proprietor.

In 1785 there was one tavern licensed, two grist mills, one tannery and two slaves assessed. The taxes assessed was for defraying the public expenses of the county.



## PART II.

## LAND-HOLDERS IN 1794—TAX ASSESSED ON BACHELORS—NAMES OF LAND-HOLDERS AND BACHELORS IN 1794.

In 1794 George Bilger, a tax collector for that year, returned ninety-six owners and occupiers of improved lands in the township. Seventy-three of the number were assessed for taxable valuables over two hundred pounds, and twenty-three for sums less than two hundred pounds.

The tax assessed was for the purpose of defraying the public expenses of the county. The total sum of duplicate was seventy-four pounds, five shillings and two pence. In addition to this tax laid upon real and personal property, the sum of three pounds and ten shillings was laid upon eleven single men residing in the township. This

latter subject of taxation was so remarkable that we give place to their names: George Hertole, Jacob Landes, John Hunsberger, George Cope, Christian Hunsberger, George Rosenbergy,<sup>R</sup> Abraham Moyer, Samuel Moyer, Christian Moyer and Joseph Smith. The law under which these young bachelors were taxed was general throughout the State at the date of this assessment. Amongst the assessed land-holders of 1794 were John Althouse, George Bilger, Henry Berndt, Isaac Bergey, Christian Benner, Samuel Brode, Captain John Cope, Peter Conver, George Cressman, Henry Deitz, Peter Daub, Abraham Dulp, John Detweiler, Henry

Furman, John Freid, Jacob Gerhard, Andrew Hentz, George Hartzell, Christian Hunsberger, John Hackman, Jacob Hagey, John Kindig, Abraham Clemmer, George Kriebel, John Leister, Yeliis Landes, Henry, John, Isaac and Benjamin Landis, John Leidy, Susana Moyer, John, Isaac and Christian Moyer, Abraham Neiss. Jacob Oberholzer Philip Obedier, Jacob Oberdorf, Isaac, Henry, Christian and Jacob Souder, George Shoemaker, George Schooll, John Swartley, George Shneider, Jacob Wampold, Andrew Swartz, Daniel Wampold, Michael Wierman, John Wilson, George Wunderlick and James Yocum. It will be observed by reference to the tax duplicate of 1884 that many names will be found of those families, most of which descend from the above names. The number of taxable persons have increased in a just ratio with values in this township. In

1734 there were 34, 1741, 59; 1828, 190; 1858, 380, and in 1884, 678. The estimate value of all real and personal property assessed in 1794 was \$127,470; the value as returned by the assessor for 1884 is \$1,456,330. The per capita taxable value to each person assessed in 1794 was \$1327, and in 1884 it was \$2148. The increase in population has been in like ratio, in 1800 it was 629, in 1830, 998; in 1850, 1270; in 1870, 1950, and in 1880, 2556.

The last two decades seem to have been the most favorable of any in the history of the township. An increase of 1380 souls in a total population of 2556 persons, within a period of twenty-six years, argues well for an inland township. It was doubtless due to the opening of the North Pennsylvania railroad and the local commercial enterprise and village life brought with it.

## PART III.

VILLAGES—TELFORD—COUNTY LINE HOTEL—SOUDERTON—FRANCONIA SQUARE AND FRANCONIAVILLE.

The returns of the merchantile appraiser for 1884 shows that there are over sixty business firms within the limits of the township, which shows the capitalized energy and thrift of the Franconia people.

## VILLAGES AND POST-OFFICES.

The villages of the township are Franconia Square, near the centre; Franconiaville, in the southern part of the township, and Telford and Souderton on the railroad in the eastern part of the township, and another little vililage which has sprung up within the last few years in the northern part on the Allentown road called Earlington. The post-offices are Telford, Franconia, Souderton and

Gelman.

## VILLAGE OF TELFORD.

The ground on which Telford village stands was bought in 1737 by Conrad Detterer from Humphrey Murry. It embraces about 120 acres, the greater part of it lying on the Montgomery side. Quite early it became the junction of public roads. What is known as the county line road was opened in 1752. Since the location and construction of the North Pennsylvania railroad it has become an important place of business, supporting the usual industries of a village—Wheelwrighting and carriage making, smithing, tin smithing, stone cutter, harness making, carpeting, cabinet

making, watch making, cheese box manufacturing, planning mill and steam agricultural machinery repair shop, also a beer bottling establishment.

#### COUNTY LINE HOTEL.

The County Line Hotel in the village of Telford was erected in 1857, by J. N. Souder. Jonathan Barndt, residing on the cowpath, hauled the first load of stones for its erection. The wash and bake house still attached to the hotel is the first building in the village. One of the oldest buildings in Telford is a one-story structure on the premises formerly owned by Mr. Wigner, and is yet in good order. There are stores, dealers in lumber, coal, feed, flour, hay and live stock, all of which attract to it the patronage of a fine agricultural neighborhood. There is also located here a Union chapel, built in 1876; used principally for Sunday school purposes. The railroad facilities have made the place desirable for residences and the

population numbers now about 600.

#### VILLAGE OF SOUDERTON.

The village of Souderton is situated on the line of the North Pennsylvania railroad and about twenty-six miles from Philadelphia. It comprises about one hundred residences, with all the industries and commercial thrift that mark the enterprising towns along the line of railroad from Philadelphia to Bethlehem. The Union National bank is located here. It was established in 1876 with a capital of \$90,000. It has been well managed and is an indispensable institution to the community.

#### OTHER VILLAGES.

Franconia Square and Franconiaville are old-time landmarks, founded by the opening of hotels and stores, mechanical industries and post-offices. The origin is now scarcely known to the oldest inhabitants of the vicinity. The buildings of these villages are plain and substantial, but have the comforts and

necessities of life characteristics nying people who possess and  
of the unassuming and self-de- inhabit them.

## PART IV.

EDUCATION—PARCHORAL AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS—HOW CONDUCTED—  
TUITION—COUNTY SCHOLARS—COMMON SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED—THE  
SCHOOLS CONNECTED WITH THE CHURCHES—THE PRESENT SCHOOLS.

## EDUCATION.

The importance of educating the youth of the township was the subject of early and continued solicitude upon the part of the men having charge of the public affairs of the township. The common schools of the colonial era (prior to 1776) were those in connection with the church or meeting house, and sometimes in the family as private schools. The church and the school house were generally built side by side and the preacher was often the teacher. The parochial schools of the township was an important factor in society. The private schools were taught by persons

of exemplary character, and in many instances of eminent ability. It is edifying to compare the schools of the past to the present.

## SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The costs of building a school house were met by voluntary contributions. Whenever a neighborhood felt the need of a school house it was erected in a convenient place. The patrons elected trustees to take charge of the school property and to select a teacher for the school. If the teacher chosen by the trustees could secure enough pupils to warrant him to open a school he would do so, if not, he would seek a school elsewhere.

The teacher was paid by those sending the pupils. Those who could not pay received instructions at the cost of the county. The rate was two dollars per quarter or three cents per day. This was according to the act of 1809. The outfit of the pupil cost about one dollar, and consisted of an English reader or testament, a Comly's spelling book, a Rose arithmetic, a slate and pencil, an ink stand and a goose quill. A teacher who taught then informed me that their schools were in a miserable condition, and that today such schools as then existed would not be tolerated in the worst managed districts in the county. Said he, to me, "We had no furniture, no apparatus, no suitable text books, no classification, nothing. We could do but little else than mending quills and make out bills for tuition of poor children to present to the county commissioner who docked us unmercifully." The children whose schooling

was paid by the county were classed as county scholars. Thus the law created an unpleasant caste in the school and in the community. Many a parent who was unable to pay for the education of their children would keep them from school rather than say to the township assessor, "put me on the poor list." Many a poor scholar refused to go to school an account of the taunt, "Oh, you are a county scholar." The parochial schools of the township were held in the school house at the Indian Creek Reformed church, torn down at the time of the erection of the new church. There was also one at the Franconia Memmonite meeting house and a few more. Scholars attended those few schools from the entire township, thus some had to go a considerable distance. An old resident says, "When I was a boy, sixty-five years ago, we had no schools sometimes for two or three years, then a stranger

would come along and pretend to be a teacher, he would start a school, if supported, and would teach the lower branches.”

#### COMMON SCHOOLS.

The State at length awoke from her lathargy about the year 1833, and took the matter seriously in hand and passed an act to establish a general system of education by common schools and was approved by Governor Wolf, April 1st, 1834. The act was much opposed in this township and held to its parochial system as late as 1851, when the common school system went into operation, having opened the schools for five months. From the act of the Legislature we acquired our present schools. When the act went into operation for the establishment of common schools, our citizens in the township, as well as in some others, were greatly opposed, as they had in their opinion that it would displace their parochial schools, or the schools under the control of

the various religious denominations of the township, as the schools at this time were nearly all established on this plan, in which their children were taught the principles of their christian religion, and at the same time the necessary parts of learning, to which the attention of the youth is generally called. Now, when the foundation stone of their religious institutions was struck by the act of the common school system, which necessarily supplanted their parochial schools, they had reason to apprehend danger to their church. Therefore he who regards the Franconia German as opposed to education wrongs them. Civil and religious tyranny brought them here, where they were solemnly promised immunity against a re-occurrence of the same evil. With such a promise of Penn and his cradjutors they came and planted a German colony. It was not long, however, before they found themselves subject to English



laws, summoned before English courts and sentenced in a language of which they knew not a syllable. In the matter of religion they only enjoyed untrembling freedom, and this was undoubtedly dear to them because it was all that was left they brought from their Fatherland. Now, when the foundation stone of their religious institutions was struck at by an attempt to establish "common schools," there was sufficient reason to apprehend danger for their church.

For want of space and time I cannot give you a satisfactory history of the schools of Franconia township. There are twelve schools in the township, with 536 scholars enrolled for the school year ending June, 1884, and length of term taught was five months. The salary paid to teachers was thirty-five dollars per month; male and female employed. The school buildings are plain, but substantial, with ample grounds.

## PART V.

CHURCH—EARLY RELIGION—REFORMATION—RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS  
 MENNONITES—THE FIRST MEETING HOUSE—INDIAN FIELD LUTHERAN  
 CHURCH, FOUNDED AND REBUILT—MINISTERS—REFORMED CHURCH ON  
 THE INDIAN CREEK, FOUNDED AND REBUILT—MINISTERS—LEIDY'S  
 CHURCH.

## RELIGION.

Religion is one of the deepest instincts of the human soul. It is so nearly universal that no race has been found on earth destitute of the feeling; nay, few, if any, have been discovered whose aspirations do not extend beyond the present life. the ancient world was subject to the divinities and forms of worship prescribed by kings and priests conjointly; hence free denominations, the inherent right of free belief, was a liberty unknown to the ancient world. This dearly bought franchise, the glory of our age and nation,

is the legitimate fruit of the great reformation of the sixteenth century. In that era the sacred scriptures were dragged forth from the Cloisters, translated into the common tongue, and sent forth as "The Word of God." Nothing is more patent in our early history than that most of our progenitors fled, to a then wilderness shore, for this grand idea, the right to worship God according to the dictate of their own conscience. For this they fled from their country willing to leave civilization behind and face the wide ocean and land on a conti-

ment inhabited by savage men and wild beasts. All denominations conjoining then settled our new township, which are only distinguished by slight difference in belief and external conduct. The chief religious denominations of the township are Mennonites, Reformed, Lutheran, Dunkards and a few Evangelists, but have no edifice. The Mennonites are easily distinguished from other denominations in their non use of the sacraments in their testimony against war, oaths, a paid ministry, and the pride of life generally. They use also great plainness of speech and attire; they are opposed to law suits, slavery and intemperance; they settle their own disputes and maintain their own poor. Mennonites settled in Pennsylvania as early as 1683. In 1832 there were five houses of worship in Montgomery county, which since increased to thirteen. They have been rent several times by schism. The first Mennonite meet-

ing house in Franconia township was of stone and built in the year 1730, the second, also of stone, forty-five by seventy-five feet was built in 1833, and has a seating capacity of over seven hundred. The present membership numbers about 450. Josiah Clemmer was elected Bishop in 1861. The Souderton meeting house was built in 1879, of brick, forty by fifty feet.

#### INDIAN FIELD LUTHERAN CHURCH.

The Indian Field Lutheran church is among the oldest Lutheran congregations in Pennsylvania, and was from the beginning entirely Lutheran. A log church was built in 1730, enlarged in 1766, and gave place to the present stone church in 1792, which in 1868 received for the third time a new roof. An organ was procured in 1820. A fire in 1850 unfortunately destroyed many of the old documents of the church. The creation of a congregation at Sellersville took away many members, but there were still in

1878 200 communicants. Some of the names of the early founders are still represented in the church—Wambold, Cressman, Rees. The present constitution was adopted in 1836. The existing church record was begun in 1753 by Pastor Frederick Shultz. The earliest pastor known was John Conrad Andreal, who came to this country in 1742 from Germany, landing in Philadelphia and sett'ed at Goschenhoppen. He assumed charge of the Goschenhoppen, New Goschenhoppen and Indian Field churches, where he remained until 1751. In that year Lucus Rouse began service till 1752 when the Rev. Jacob Schultz became pastor, and served until 1763, when Rev. John Roth succeeded him. From that time to the present it was served by the old goschenhoppen church, and since 1865 served by the Rev. Frederick Waltz, who has also church at Sellersville. The Lutheran is the most numerous denomina-

tion in the county having in 1870 twenty-five houses of worship. Most of their ancestors came from Russia. In 1832 there were eight Lutheran churches. This denomination has undergone fewer changes by transplation from Europe and less disturbed by schisms than any other.

#### INDIAN CREEK REFORMED CHURCH

The Reformed church on the Indian creek was founded in 1753 by the Rev. Jacob Rees, who was its first pastor, and begun its labor June 3d. Among the founders of the church were John Neis, Jacob Arndt, Peter Gerhart, Jacob Leidy, John Shellenberger, John and Henry Sellers, William Althouse and Abraham Arndt. With the exception of Arndt and Neis these families are all represented in the church. In 1734 the present church lot was bought by Michael Bergey, and in that year a log church was built. This was replaced in 1775 by a rough stone church with a hip

roof, which was used until 1826, when the third church, forty-two by forty-eight, also of stone, was erected. The present church, forty-two by sixty-five feet was built in 1879. The Rev. Jacob Rees was its first minister, and was succeeded as follows: Revs. C. Gobrecht. Casper Wack, John T. Fabor, John M. Kern, Lenn, John A. Strausberger, Joshua Derr, P. S. Fisher and Jacob Kehm, who has charge of the pulpit at present, since 1871. The church has a membership

of 400.

#### LEIDY'S REFORMED CHURCH.

What is known as Leidy's Reformed church is located below Souderton and was built in 1858. A school house and a grave yard was there a hundred years before. The school house was also used for worship. Its members are from the Indian creek church, of which it was for a time a part. Its pastors were Revs. P. S. Fisher and J. G. Dengler, the latter is still in charge.

## PART VI.

POLITICS—FIRST VOTING PLACES—TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE—VOTES IN 1775  
 —ACTS PASSED AND VOTING PLACES CHANGED—NUMBER OF VOTES IN  
 1884—JUSTICE OF THE PEACE—OTHER TOWNSHIP OFFICERS.

## POLITICS.

The political history of the township of the past and present is now before me and is a difficult history to chronicle. Montgomery county became a subdivision of the State soon after the Revolution in 1775. At that time people only recognized one political division, that of Loyalist and Rebel, Patriot and Tories. The Patriots and Tories were greatly opposed against each other, and these two parties gave use to two political parties. There were less than twenty thousand people in the county at the time of its creation and only three voting places fixed by law to poll votes, *i. e.* Nor-

ristown, Eckert's tavern, in White Marsh, and Krep's tavern, in New Hanover. Voters in this township were compelled to go all the way down to White Marsh to cast their votes. The following are the names of the persons of the township committee of Franconia to represent the Montgomery county committee for electing the first Governor of Pennsylvania: Jacob Oberholtzer, John Wilson, Michael Shoemaker, John Alt-house, Jacob Gerhart and Captain John Cope. This was in the years 1799 and 1800.

Prior to 1777 the entire city and county of Philadelphia, now a portion of Montgomery county,

held their election in the State house in the city of Philadelphia.

At an election held in the State House, Philadelphia, October 3, 1775 there were 3122 votes cast. At a general election held for Governor in November, 1875, just one hundred years later, in the same territory, Philadelphia and Montgomery county. The total number of votes cast in the two districts was 120,836.

#### CHANGING VOTING PLACES.

An act of the general Assembly was passed June 14, 1777 dividing the county and city of Philadelphia into three election districts. Voters at that time were called freeman, The freemen of the second district were ordered to hold their election at the public house of Jacob Wentz, Worcester Township. This district included Franconia township. By an act of the Legislature passed September 10, 1784, Montgomery county was taken apart of Philadelphia county,

and is the same to-day as when first laid out. The county was then formed, and it became necessary to change the places for holding general elections. An act of the general Legislature was passed which divided the county again into three districts. Franconia township again constituted a part of the second district and was ordered to hold their election at Michael Krep's tavern, New Hanover township. By an act passed March 31st, 1797 the county was again divided into five election districts. Franconia constituted part of the fourth district and was ordered to hold their election at the private house of Christian Weber, Towamencin township. By an act of March 31st, 1806, Franconia township was annexed into the fourth district and held their election at the house of John Hughs, in Towamencin township, now Kulpville. By an act March 16th, 1847, the township of Franconia was first formed into a separate elec-

tion district, and was ordered to hold their election in the store house of Daniel L. Moyer. In 1882 there were sixty-two election districts in Montgomery county, which polled a total vote of 20,468 for the different candidates for Governor. Franconia being the largest Republican district and polled for Beaver 396 votes, The number of votes now polled at the permanent place of election, Franconia Square, is upwards of 700 votes, of which two-thirds are zealous Republicans. Should Franconia ever be divided into two election districts, East and West, the latter would contain about enough Democrats to hold an honest election.

#### TOWNSHIP OFFICERS.

The first Justice of the Peace of Franconia township was Samuel Wampole, and Jacob Schlof, being elected in conformity with the revised constitution of 1838. Prior to 1802 the township officers were two Supervisors, one Assessor and two respectable citizens for inspectors. Since the adoption of the new constitution in 1838 considerable change was made, the office of the Justice of the Peace Constable, Supervisor, Assessor, Assistant Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer, to which were, since 1851, added School Directors. The first election of township officers was held on the third Friday in March, 1840, which day has since been changed to the second Tuesday in February.



## PART VII.

## ABORIGINEES.

In connection with the history of Franconia township I will give a brief statement of the aborigines that once inhabited our broad acres. It is now 392 years since the commercial world learned first of the American Indians, and from whence they came remains a mystery to us. Indians who were once the proud possessors of this tract of land we now occupy and honorably and peacefully acquired of them by William Penn, the founder of our great commonwealth, have completely vanished from our soil over a hundred years ago. Two hundred years or more have elapsed since Christian civilization first confronted

these savages on our soil. Since then their hunting grounds have been turned into wide areas of agricultural wealth and commercial splendor, and the rude implements of their simple mode of living are on exhibition for antique curiosities. Back to Alleghaneys, across the fathers of waters, across the Rocky mountains they receded through the strong arms of a superior race of men. By succeeding generations this savage race will undoubtedly disappear from our wide continent. It is certainly true that they have left no impression of their existence in this part of the country, except a few relics of their rude war utensils which were lost by

them. It is true to them the earth seemed to have had no higher utility than a hunting ground. There is perhaps no other portion in Montgomery county that is richer in historical events than our own township of Franconia. Watered by numbers of streams and rivulets and covered wide with dense forests rendered it a most favorable home for the Red men. The Indian creek valley was perhaps more thickly settled with Indians than any other place. The vast amount and variety of relics found within this valley clearly establishes this fact. In the vicinity of springs along this creek, of which many abound, skillfully executed flint arrow heads have been collected, and stone implements in great variety of forms and features. Tradition says it was here that there last council fire was burning before they left our soil. The first settlers found the valley of the Indian creek under rude cultivation of the

Indians as practical by them, and named this stream of water at once in honor of the Indians. The Indians plied their hands to husbandry here long after the first settlement. It was not until the township was thickly settled and the main hunting grounds succumbed to the woodman's axe that the native foresters or Indians abandoned their wigwams and hunting grounds to the white settlers. Their method of agriculture would contrast strangely with those of ours at the present day, but it met there immediate wants, and their little clearing, no doubt, left them many a pounder full of hominy for their evening meal. It is supposed that there is much gilt incurred in the manner which the early settlers treated the Indians as well as under the present treatment in the Western Territories, although it is deemed necessary to sweep the Indians away from our great continent to make place for the husbandman to till

and cultivate the soil to feed the millions in our crowded cities professing a Christian civilization. For want of space I must close the history of the aborigines in connection with history of Franconia township.

Indeed, William Wile, an old sage in his eightieth year, has our sincerest thanks for the information we gleaned from his own lips on the subject of the Indians.

## PART VIII.

## AGRICULTURE.

The annals of agriculture of this township is flattering that we deem it appropriate to give a brief history of their farms and plantations. The farms are so divided in proportion that the work is mostly performed by their sons and daughters. The active tillers of the soil here are the same kind of men as those who fill the profession of mechanical and commercial pursuits. It was not here like in the South that the work was only performed by degraded slaves, and the proprietor living in luxury and splendor. It is reported that there were never more than two slaves employed within the limits of Franconia, and

I am indeed proud that we may not boast of no more. The primitive condition of the soil in this township as compared with those lying in river valleys is considered improductive, but under the skillfull husbandry of these modern farmers and a liberal use of lime, manure and fertilizer this vast tract of land yields abundant harvest, and supports a prosperous population. In 1681 this tract of land consisted yet in proprietary grants held by comparatively few persons, who lived a frontier life in almost daily contact with the Indians, since its broad acres must have passed through at least six generations, and hundreds of purchasers have

acquired titles to soil that have always been priced in the inventory of worldly possessions of those who lived and died on the soil of Franconia. The lands are greatly diversified by ranges of hills, with beautiful valleys. The country is a source of perpetual wealth to agriculture, which yield an immense surface product. There is much to be admired along the little creeks diversifying the township. The Skippack and Indian creeks and the Branch creek, which forms the northern boundary of the township, draining as they do a large area of rolling country, improved by elegant and commodious residences and farm houses, with barns and improvements unsurpassed by any agricultural people on the face of the globe. The primitive condition of the country known as Franconia was land timbered with heavy oaks, hickory and chestnut. The consumption of wood for fuel prior to the introduction of

anthracite and bituminous coal was very great. This wealth of primature forest was the foundation of many substantial fortunes in years past. The old characteristic farmer of Franconia took commendable pride in maintaining large tracts of primature forests. It was useful in many ways, for fuel, building, fencing, and whether it was deemed ornamental or not had a rare charm for him. It was their parks of woodland that preserved to the hunter until late years choice games and birds.

As already stated before the township of Franconia was organized March 1st, 1731, from the township of Salford, containing 952 acres, having a population in 1800 of 629, which have increased by the year 1880 to 2556. The township in the year 1734 having thirty-four land-holders, the names are contained in the previous parts, having also two slaves, two grist mills, one tannery, 153

horses, 266 head of cattle and one licensed tavern, that of Elizabeth Gerhart. In 1882 the number of cattle increased to 1147, 515 horses, nine licensed taverns, seven grist mills and no slaves. Thus we may see how the Franconia farmer progressed in the last eighty years. What will be our condition at the end of the future eighty years? We may not

live, however, who will live to see it may perhaps have a greater and sadder history to chronicle to the future generations than I at the present day. We are living in a progressive age and advancing year after year; otherwise we are in a state of degradation, which should prove an end to our glorious republic.

## PART IX.

## NEWSPAPERS AND LODGES.

The press is a potential factor of the country. Local newspapers have always been received favorably, and at this day have a large circulation throughout the township. As a source of local and general information they are valuable, and they afford an excellent index to the current history of the people, whose habits, costumes and manners are mirrored in them. At present there are two newspapers published in the township.

The *Montgomery County Press* published in the village of Telford, was founded in Norristown in 1860, by John Shupe, its present editor and proprietor, and there published until 1868,

when it was removed to Lansdale and within a year again removed to its present headquarters at Telford. It is a German paper and its support by the people shows the fondness of the German people for their native language. The *Souderton Independent* was founded in that village in 1879, by William Goettler, its present editor and proprietor. It is a weekly, printed out side, with a moderate circulation.

Secret organizations in Franconia township are not so numerous. Two secret organizations have been established within the past year. The Patriotic Order of Sons of America, is a secret, fraternal

and beneficial organization, and possesses much comment as a secret society. The order was founded in Liberty hall, Souder-ton, in 1885, in a year hence its membership numbered upwards of forty. This being the first secret organization ever orga-nized within the township with success. An attempt was made to organize an Inedpendent Order of Odd Fellows, in Fluck's hall, as early as 1882, but soon abandonded for want of support.

An Improved Order of Red Men was organized at the same place in October, 1885. The organization is a paternal and benevolent organization, based upon the customs and antiquities of the American Indians. It originated first as a patriotic as-sociation among volunteers who garrisoned Fort Mifflin in 1813. The present order at this place has sixty-five members since its organization.



## PART X.

## EARLY GERMANS.

Among the various nationalities that settled Montgomery county and our present township of Franconia the Germans were an important one, and their descendants at this day, within its limits, are the most numerous. The Germans have always been a most industrious and intelligent, as well as a devout, Christian people. A majority of these early Germans became members of the church of Friends. Here in our township they became members of the Mennonite, Lutheran and Reformed churches. The Germans of the Mennonite denomination arrived as early as 1702 and settled at Germantown, and years later—1720 and 1730—

this denomination of Germans settled within our township; most of them coming from the Palatinate of the Rhine; most of them having their clergymen among them.

Among the German Lutherans the congregation established in New Hanover township is the earliest established in America, being established in 1703, and in 1730 they established a church in this township known as the Indianfield Lutheran church. It is stated that the Germans who directly immigrated from the Palatinate into this colony purchased and honestly paid for their lands, conducted themselves respectfully towards the government, paid their taxes

readily, and were sober and honest in their religious and civil duties. In 1734 this township having a population of thirty-four, of which thirty were Germans, mostly farmers, but a few mechanics resided in the township at that time.

The misfortune of the Palatinate Germans that settled our township and county was largely due to the fact that her geographical situation placed her between powerful rival countries that were almost continuously at war, and the religious intolerance of the age was also a fruitful source of domestic trouble. The people could not profess their religious opinions as to the dictate of their conscience, as to be in agreement with their reigning Prince, and in consequence were persecuted with relentless severity. No wonder those people were glad to get away from a country that had such a succession of woes and misfortunes. Many had lost their property, and came

away so poor that they had to indenture themselves for their passage money across the sea. They naturally chose Pennsylvania for their new home, because William Penn had extended an earnest welcome, and had guaranteed absolute civil religious toleration. This is a part of a series of hardships and calamities that our forefathers had to endure before they established our present homes in a wild country. The Germans are slow in adopting an opinion, but they seem to be a great deal slower in changing after once adopted. During the wars the countries which were strongly settled by Germans were looked upon as hot beds of disloyalty. I mean to be impartial on this subject and abide by the truth. I must say it is a pride to one of German parentage, that at least some of the race manifested the proper spirit during the revolutionary struggle in the infancy of the Republic, which may well lead to forgive him

the errors of their prosperity in later years.

The Germans living in this county, and others who were termed wherlos—the Mennonites and Tunkers—were generally counted with the Tories during the struggle for independence. The religion would not persist them to resist the prevailing authorities. They were even averse in aiding the American armies with provisions while at Valley Forge, and actually did a great deal to smuggling when the British army was in siege at Philadelphia. This was one of the reasons why the American Congress allowed Washington, while at Valley Forge, this county, the privilege to collect all the provisions necessary for his army among the citizens of Montgomery county. However, we do not think that any provisions were ever collected in this township by the American army. Dur-

ing the early period of the Republic the people termed “Wherlos” were disfranchised. Through the efforts of John Adams they obtained all the rights of citizens. Many of these people reside in our township and are still adhering to the “Wherlos” doctrine. In early times they belonged to the Federalists and naturally in latter years affiliated with the Republican party, and it followed that during the rebellion. Though remaining loyal to the government they were always strongly opposed to slavery. Franconia would undoubtedly have been a much greater slave district had it not been for the strong German element, which was strongly opposed to slavery. Necessity compelled these Germans, Welsh and English to form settlements by themselves owing to the general ignorance of their languages.

## PART XI.

## ZOOLOGY AND MINERALS.

The history of Franconia is not complete without giving a short history of the zoology of the township. Very little attention has yet been given in our histories to the habitation and distribution of our existing animals. The existing mammalia within the present limits of Franconia it is very probably do not exceed thirty-five species, of which perhaps half do exist at the present day.

## BIRDS

While perhaps one-third of our various species of birds have diminished, we do not doubt that in this county the balance are increasing. The planting of trees and various evergreens in and around lawns,

lanes and roadsides has largely tended to promote their augmentation, by affording them sufficient shelter and security. The number of species of birds that ever existed in this vicinity has been estimated over 200, of which numbers have left our midst and are still passing away, while others are increasing. The English sparrow, which has been introduced since 1868, has multiplied rapidly and spread over the whole country keeping chiefly in flocks around buildings and have, to some extent, driven away some of our more useful birds.

## REPTILES.

The removal of trees and stones in the cultivation of the

soil, and the increase attention given to drainage, has considerable to do with diminishing our large reptiles, which are becoming scarce. The most predominant at the present day are various species of snakes, several species of frogs and a few lizzards.

#### MINERALS.

Precious metals have been found in the township to some extent, but in such small quantities that the occurrence is more of scientific interest than of any practical value. Gold was found by Dr. Charles M. Wetherill on the property of Mr. Yoder, near Franconia Square. The gold was found in quartz rock and iron prytes. In the sand and gravel thrown

out while digging a well he found brilliant scales of gold. From an analysis he found that every hundred pounds of gravel contained a quantity of gold worth twenty-six and a half cents.

Tin, too, has been found in the township. It is interesting to observe that this rare metal is found in its native state of purity in the gravel of Franconia. The largest piece of tin found adhered to the gravel and formed a rounded mass of a white malleable metal, which was analyzed and found to be pure tin. This metal being first noticed by Dr. Charles M. Wetherill. This instance is the only record of tin in Pennsylvania.

## PART XII.

## ROADS AND CONVEYANCE.

As stated in our previous history that the township of Franconia was set apart from the township of Salford in 1731 by the court of quarter sessions, on account of being to large a territory, to be served by one constable, and for the supervision of the public roads, two supervisors.

The first roads, from one new settlement to another, were simply paths through the forests. No notice was taken by the owner of the unclosed land of the use made by the few neighbors of his premises as a roadway. After a time, as the number of settlers increased, it became necessary to place restrictions upon the privilege of

passing and repassing over private property. Petitions were accordingly addressed to the court of quarter sessions, at Philadelphia, praying that roads be laid out for public use. The petition for the principle roads of the township, running from north to south, was presented to the court of quarter sessions in 1741. This was that of the Allentown and Cowpath roads.

The turnpike road leading from Harleysville to Souderton was chartered and built in 1866. Other roads were laid out from time to time as the settlements increased. Down to the beginning of this century much transportation was done on horseback; huge sacks, wallets and

baskets were constructed and used for this purpose. In this way nearly all the produce was taken to Philadelphia, and horse-men would thus be seen surrounded with poultry, pork, butter, flax, etc., and even live calves and sheep would be taken to market by such means. Old and young, male and female were usually conveyed on horseback; it mattered not whether on business or pleasure, as well as to their different places of worship on the Sabbath. For hauling sleds were used previous to wagons, the latter being rudely constructed, with little or no iron, and the wheels were generally of solid wood. As not much attention was paid to roads at that day at intervals they became almost impassable. A tongue-cart was the first general conveyance to market, and as a protector against the weather a cover would be stretched on hickory boughs. Gigs and chairs began to come in just before the revolution as a vehicle for conveyance on business or pleasure. As these were taxable we find in 1785 but two riding chairs in the township of Franconia. This demonstrates how much, even a century ago, the people were addicted together on horseback or foot. At this period it is stated that it was regarded as no unusual thing for a woman to go on horseback to Philadelphia, a distance of thirty miles, to do their shopping and return the following day. It would certainly require a good physical constitution for the sex to endure this now. Of course the days for horseback riding is now past for either sex, and we have the comfortable carriage for either business or pleasure. Farmers generally go to market on rail and sell out in a large, comfortable market house at fair prices.

## PART XIII.

## MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—SPORTS AND PASTIMES—LOCAL SUPERSTITION.

According to a list of landholders and tenants residing within the township, the German element, judging by the surnames, composed almost the entire population. The several townships of the county were, however, also settled by the Welsh and English. Necessity compelled the Germans, the Welsh and the English to form settlements by themselves, owing to the ignorance of each others' language, which prevented general intercourse. These communities were, therefore, calculated to preserve and foster the peculiar manners and customs of their native country, which, after a residence of nearly two centuries here are still,

to some extent, discernible in their descendants. German books and newspapers still continue to be printed for the German people. The Germans being numerous spread over the township it must necessarily follow that their manners and customs have exerted here a considerable influence on society, judging from the increasing observance of Christmas. New Year's, Good Friday, Easter and there circumstances. These Germans belong, as they do, to several religious denominations have never interdicted these holidays, which days, in consequence, have been more or less observed among them after the manner of the fatherland



unto this day, which were observed in many cases in a very superstitious manner, more so in this township than in any other, in consequence of being so German an origion.

The custom of levying marriage toll, we believe, is exclusively of German origin, as, on inquiry as to the matter we cannot find that it is practiced by those of any other descent. This practice is still in vogue more or less throughout the township, but the custom is fast disappearing. Wakes or staying up with the dead were, to some extent, practiced as late as 1860 and 1865, being usually performed by two or three invited neighbors. The face of the corpse would be uncovered every few hours to see whether all was right. An apprehension prevailed that it might be disfigured by rats or mice, which would prove a scandal to the funeral and family. Before 1835 very few hearses were used and light wagons little in-

troduced. On these occasions large wagons, with two or four horses, would be provided for the family, who would sit around the coffin on chairs and proceed to the place of interment. I find stated that in 1844 a funeral conducted in this manner being the last of the kind in this township.

About the close of the last century harvest was made a jolly time, nearly all went out in the field with the sickle to cut the waving grain. A young man would take his place beside a young woman and assist her like a gallant knight in her labors. This was before the general introduction of the cradle, which has been only recently superceded by the reaping and binding machines. Such changes have taken place in the customs and institutions of society since the formation of Franconia township that it can hardly be credited at the present day.

As the country was but

sparingly settled every neighborhood, for want of good roads, good accommodations and traveling facilities, formed a community by itself. The hamlet and village, even when only a few miles apart, caused such a separation as to give to each its peculiar habits and superstition. Of all our German superstitions undoubtedly witchcraft was the most odious, but it never, that we are aware of, at any time became so abused as to lead to any actual evil. No people are entirely free from superstition, for no mortal man possesses the power or even the knowledge necessary to draw a line as to where it begins or ends. When we come to consider the disadvantage our forefathers labored under and compare them with the facilities we now enjoy we

need not wonder at their humble superstitions, which were peculiar to the time and circumstances in which they lived.

From the force and circumstances the early settlers were compelled to lead what would now be considered a rugged and laborous life. To clear the land and bring it under cultivation and to provide comfortable buildings must have required considerable effort. Roads had to be opened, streams bridged and made passable, and this alone could only be accomplished by toil. Our ancestors had their sports and pastimes to vary the monotony of existence, though they may have been few and rude, yet they were adapted to their condition and no doubt gave them pleasure and served their age.

## PART XIV.

## PRIVATE BURYING GROUNDS—FUHRMAN'S GRAVEYARD—OTHER NEGLECTED GRAVEYARDS.

In the early times it was customary among the leading families to bury their dead on the farm, on a spot set aside for this purpose. In the course of time the neighbors brought their dead for burial in these private grounds. A few of these graveyards are maintained in this township, others are neglected and overgrown with brambles and bushes and still others have relapsed into their former uses as fields for farming, and traces of them are lost. The Fuhrmans graveyard is the largest of this kind in the township. It contains about one-quarter of an acre of ground, taken from two adjoining farms. It is an open

field on the farm of Henry D. Wile, several hundred paces southwest of the Indian Creek Reformed church. The most unfortunate affair connected with it is the fate of the graveyard, in which, no doubt, interments have been made as early as 1725, and which was actually used for this purpose until 1790; some have estimated that within that period from one hundred and fifty to two hundred may have been buried there; the headstones yet traceable, are all common stones, about half of the number have letters and dates. On a visit to this graveyard we copied the following: In memory of George

Ludwig Hange, born October 26th, 1696, died 1769, aged 73 years; the rest of the stones having no regular epitaph, having only letters, few having dates in the following manner: I. A. H. T., 1766; S. B. H., 1747; C. H., 1790; I. F. M., 1763; A. D., 1758; E. H., 1788; M. L., F. M. and K. M., these are all having marks of inscription, the rest are only rude stone. The farm where this graveyard is situated is owned by Henry D. Wile, purchased from his father, William, and since it has been reduced to one-half its former size. Year after year the plow is approaching nearer, which makes us believe that the time will not be long hence when the entire graveyard will be under cultivation, and the existance of the same can scarcely be pointed out. The tradition is that some of the headstones have gone to the wash gullies and covered over likely to be revealed some day. The fate of this graveyard cer-

tainly teaches a humilitating lesson on human avarice. Had it not been the resting place of our lovely forefathers, the pioneers of the township, the desolation of the same would not sink so deep on the mind of the present generation. Indeed, on our recent visit to the neglected graveyard, looking over the ruins and desolation, we were so moved that we sat down and wrote the following lines to express our deep regret.

Far up the lonely Indian Creek.

My wondering footsteps led,  
The moss grew thick beneath my feet,  
The wind moaned o'er my head.  
The traces of a graveyard old  
Were plainly to be seen,  
Surely some weary pilgrim soul,  
Is here at peace I ween.

The Bramble bushes and the weed.

Lay thick upon a mound,  
The headboard where the name we read,  
Had rotted to the ground.  
No flower e'er had been planted there,  
No loved ones knew the place,  
No marble slabs or granite rare,  
This lonely mound did grace.

I raised the headboard with my hand,  
From dust its words made clear,  
It read "The Settlers of Our Land,"

“Franconia’s Pioneer.”

The rest was blurred with rust and age,

Long years had worked their rot ;

But fame that’s writ on history’s page,

Long years can never blot.

Roll on, proud Indian Creek, roll on,

Adown the stony glen ;

Above thee in the shadows lone,

Sleep brave, undaunted men.

No brutal foes, no bloody wars,

Our Christian people fear,

For thou hast made our pathway smooth,

“Franconia’s Pioneer.”

The condition and situation of this old graveyard is well expressed by the above lines. The remaining spot is thickly covered with trees and thicket ; the walk to the place must be made across the fields ; the Indian creek, too, is below near its base, the same as it had when the first interment was made, probably a hundred and fifty years ago.

Tradition states that a place in the meadow of Samuel Muselman, in the western part of the township, near the Indian creek, was formerly occupied with graves. There are no stones there at the present day. The mounds, however, are ob-

served by the unevenness of the ground. Tradition states that it was here that Christian Funk was buried. Funk, it is stated, lived half a year alone in the township on the farm now owned by Isaac C. Godshall and where he was burried is unknown, at least, not more than what tradition states, which, in matters like these, is sometimes very wrong.

There was also a private burying ground at the graveyard connected with the religious edifice, so-called Herrite house, also situated in the western part of the township, near the Indian creek. The history of this edifice and graveyard will be given in another part seperately. This house was only built at the side of this grave yard in later years, which is the reason that this graveyard is maintained at the present day, otherwise the graveyard would probably have been neglected and laid to waste the same as the rest in the township.

There was another private

burying ground, called the Harley's burying ground, situated on the pike leading from Harleysville to Souderton. It was commenced by Rudolph Harley, in 1746. One tombstone we found bears the date of 1758.

On this lot a frame house was erected by the Dunkards in 1843, in which worship is held on alternate Sundays. The history of this burying ground and meeting house will also be given in another part,

## PART XV.

## ACCOUNTS OF THE POOR OF THE TOWNSHIP.

From the township book, dated March 25, 1766, we copied some accounts which will be of interest. It will, however, be observed by a glance over this book, where the yearly accounts of the "overseers of the Poor" were kept, that in the early settlement of the country very little appears to have been done for the support of the poor. The population was sparse, labor was in demand on every side, and necessities of the people were limited to such few absolute requirements that pauperism could scarcely be said to exist, which, of course, is quite different from the present, when we think pauperism has reached its highest point.

The society of Friends, the Mennonites and the Dunkards have invariably supported their own unfortunate poor to the present time, which, however, seems to become more of a burden every day to these few denominations.

During the whole colonial period, down to the erection of a house for the support and employment of the poor, they were maintained by their respective township or district. For this purpose two overseers were appointed for each district by the judges of the county courts. Their duties were to secure for those committed to their charge homes and employment at the most

favorable rates. An act was passed in 1771 that provided for two overseers in every township by the justices at a special meeting to be held every year. The expenses incurred in providing subsistence, shelter and employment for those whom misfortune had rendered a burden to society was to be supplied by the regular county rate. The overseers were responsible for the collection of the amount assessed and were required to pay over the money in their possession. A record was kept of the poor and an order of the justice of the peace was necessary to be admitted to the list before assistance could be furnished. All those having near relations who were paupers, were compelled to support them, if their circumstances enabled them to do so. Among the duties of the overseers were supplying the immediate wants of families reduced to poverty, and in case of death to give them a decent burial. Those that

could work were kept on a farm among the farmers. On the formation of the county and prior the justices of the court made the following appointments for overseers of the poor of the township, which, however, does not embrace all since the incorporation of the township, 1731. They are recorded in the township book in the following manner: In 1769 James Robison and Jacob Hacman, in 1779 Michael Shoemaker and Jacob Leite, Sr., in 1785 again Michael Shoemaker and Jacob Leite, Sr., both resigned, and in their stead Jacob Leidy, Jr., and Yelles Landis were appointed; in 1788 Christian Chresman and Yellis Landes, in 1790 Abraham Nice and Jacob Hengen, in 1794 Martin Dethwiler and Henry Siple, in 1796 John Dethwiler and John Swartley, in 1799 Christian Moyer and Andrew Shwartz, in 1801 George Shneider and Abraham Rosenberger, in 1802 James Zohem and John Wilson, in 1803 Chris-



tian Hunsberger, Sr., and Christian Hunsberger Taylor, in 1804 Tobias Sholl and Henry Landes, in 1805 Abraham Delb and Jacob Swartley, 1806 John Althous and John Sahler, in 1807 John Bergey and Isaac Moyer. From this date on the overseers of the poor were notified by the directors of the poor house, which was established from acts of the State Legislature, to be present at the poor house in order to receive the paupers of the township, with their goods, to be valued by two persons appointed for that purpose. The subject of providing a house and home of employment of the poor, instead of the former method of having them working or boarding around with those who would consent to receive them, began to receive attention soon after the formation of the county (1785). The first move in this direction was the holding of a public meeting at the house of John Davis, in Norristown, January 23, 1801, when all the

overseers of the respective townships were to be present, on the expediency of petitioning the Legislature of the State for the privilege of building a poor house, for the use and benefit of the destitute of Montgomery county. But little was done in the county on this point until March 10th, 1806, when an act was passed authorizing the purchase of a farm and to erect thereon suitable buildings for the purpose by the county. Subsequent acts were passed January 26, 1807 and December 22, 1806. The house was not ready for the county until 1808, when the directors notified the overseers of the poor of the respective townships of the county, as stated before, to direct the poor with their goods to the newly erected poor house. Isaac Moyer and John Bergey were overseers of the poor of Franconia township at that date and they at once removed their poor to the new poor house on the Schuylkill. We, however,

found that at this time only a single individual was maintained by the township, and this being a girl. In the township book, where the auditors kept their yearly accounts of the overseers of the poor of the township of Franconia, we clipped the following :

“March 20, 1807.

We, the subscribers, as freeholders of Franconia township, who, being auditors chosen by the township aforesaid, for making settlement for the ensuing year of the last overseers of the poor, namely, John Sahler and John Althous, that they have to pay for supporting a young girl twenty pounds, and balance in hand which they have to pay to the new overseers, John Berkey and Isaac Moyer, two pounds, nine shillings and six pence.”

TESTES :

Michael Shoemaker.

Captain Summers.

John Bergey and Isaac Moyer being next overseers they re-

ceived the balance in the treasury, which they, during their term, together with the poor girl maintained by them, handed over to the poor house erected for this purpose. Thus ended the maintaining of the poor in this township. From this time on a tax was levied on the freeholders of the townships of the county for the maintenance of the poor of the county, which is the practice yet to the present day.

We here give place to another Auditors' account as set down in the township book :

PHILADELPHIA, }  
March 25, 1768. }

To cash the overseers recieved of the previous overseers five pounds, ten shillings and six and one-half pence. By cash they paid for the burying of a poor person two pounds, seventeen shillings and eight pence. Examined this account and find a balance of two pounds twelve shillings and ten pence, which is ordered to be paid to the suc-

ceeding overseers, which are Jacob Debtwhiler and George Stump.

TESTES :

Sam G. Mifflin,  
Geo. Bryant,  
Jacob Hall.

Below this auditors' notice the following note is written: "In 1767 the township of Franconia had no poor." The following shows the amount expended by the township of Franconia for the maintenance of the poor in the township in every decade of ten years: In 1766, seventeen pounds, sixteen shillings and nine pence; in 1777, sixteen pounds and two pence; in 1786, thirty-nine pounds; in 1796, twenty-six pounds and two pence; in 1806 the auditors made the following settlement of the overseers of the poor of the township:

March 18, 1806.

We, the subscribers, as freeholders of the township of Franconia township as auditors for making settlement for the

ensuing year of the last overseers of the poor, namely, Abraham Delb and Jacob Swartley, and found that they have paid for supporting the poor of the township, and expenses did come to twenty-five pounds 16 shillings and eight pence. Balance in hand which they have to pay to the overseers, John Althouse and John Shaler, which is five pounds and fourteen shillings.

TESTES :

Michael Shoemaker,  
John Gerhart,

Auditors.

Thus we see that the expense for maintaining the poor in the township a hundred years ago were only trifling in proportion to the present, but it is evident that pauperism among us is increasing in spite of the great diminution taking place in the use of intoxicating liquors and the considerable increase of immigration, which must be admitted that a great number are improvident paupers.

The expenses for maintaining the present poor house are met by funds raised from taxes levied by the county commissioners on requisition of the directors of the poor house, and through their order paid by the county treasurer.

## PART XVI.

## THE LUTHERAN CONGREGATION.

In our previous parts we treated upon religion of the township, in this part we desire to give the entire history of the churches and burying grounds within the limits of the township. To meet this want we were furnished with the necessary papers of the various congregations. The early settlers were, with few exceptions, Germans, who were in many cases driven hither by the scourging wars, and religious persecutions then raging in Europe. Being pious men and women they soon formed themselves into religious societies, which I am now to treat, as they settled within our limits. The Indianfield Lutheran Church, as stated in our

previous parts, was the first religious edifice in the township, and undoubtedly the Lutherans comprised the greater part of the earlier settlers, but they do not at the present time, however, comprise more than one-third of the population, the Mennonites are fully up to their present membership. However, the Lutheran is the most numerous denomination in Montgomery county, having twenty-five houses of worship in 1870, probably more now. Most of their ancestors came from the German nations of Central Europe between 1710 and 1770. Like most of our early settlers, they were refugees from religious disabilities in the Old

World, bringing a sterling faith and domestic habits with them. From the date of the founding of their mother churches, the Old Goschenhoppen and St. Augustus, Trappe, their emmigration and settlement must have been large and rapid during the period named. As Gordon in his "Gazetteer" of 1832 puts down the Lutheran churches of Montgomery at eight, which were increased as above stated. This denomination has undergone fewer changes by transplanting from Europe to America, and has been less rent by schisms and disagreements among themselves than any other. Some years ago a few of their congregations held "protracted meetings," but none do so at present in this county. Like most denominations, the Lutherans have an organization to promote church extensions, and it is found their great increase to be due to the practice of regularly catechising the youth at proper age and in-

ducting them into the church fellowship by rite of confirmation. The efficiency of this mode of keeping up church membership leads some to conclude that it is a better method than that in vogue of "disciplining" the people by protracted meetings as an adjunct of Sabbath school instructions. The advocates of the latter system allege that religion learned in the former mode only fills the head, while the heart or affections are unreached by it. The Indianfield Lutheran church, of which we are now going to treat is one of the oldest Lutheran congregations in Pennsylvania, and was from the beginning entirely Lutheran. A log church was built in 1730, the first religious edifice in the township, enlarged in 1766, and rebuilt in 1792, and gave place to the present stone church, which, in 1868, received, for the third time, a new roof of slate, being repaired again in 1881. The building committee composed of

J. B. Wampole, J. Benner and R. R. Cressman. The ground plan of the present church is of rectangle in form, with a length of 54 feet facing southeast and the end facing northeast 40 feet. It is one story high and is about twenty feet to the ceiling.

The building is graced with an elegant tower ninety-five feet in height. The architecture is the work of Jonathan B. Wolf, of Telford, and presents quite a model of architecture. The interior is filled up most admirably and the decorations and paintings being fine work of art, and contains a gallery on three sides, which is refitted on one side with a celebrated pipe organ secured in 1820, and there being connected with the church at various times a good choir and at the present needs no commend.

There was a school house situated near this church in early times, which was abandoned and afterwards refitted for the janitor of the church. It was

George Smith who lived last in this school house, when at the time, in 1834, it was consumed by fire. It was here that many of the early church records were destroyed. The creation of a congregation in Sellersville took away many members, but were still in 1885 over 200 communicants. As a part of the Goschenhoppen charge it has been since 1752 connected with the ministerium of Pennsylvania. The present constitution was adopted in 1836, and the existing church record was begun in 1753 by Pastor Frederick Schultz. The earliest Pastor known was John Conrad Andrea, who came to this country in 1742 from Zweibreucken, landed in Philadelphia and settled in Goschenhoppen. He assumed charge of the Goschenhoppen, New Goschenhoppen and Indianfield churches, where he remained until 1751. In that year Lucas Raus began services as catechet under Pastor H. M. Muhlenberg's direction. He

closed his services in 1752, when the Rev. Frederick Schultz became pastor and served until 1763, when Rev. Joseph Roth succeeded him; from 1758 to 1770 Rev. John Michael Enterlein was pastor, from 1770 to 1795 Rev. Conrad Reller, Rev. Frederick Geisenhainer, 1795 to 1797; Rev. George Reller, son of Conrad, 1797 to 1840; Rev. Englebright Peixto, 1840 to 1864; Rev. Frederick Waltz from 1865 to the present day. The congregation was originally formed by the Rev. J. Conrad Andrea, an expelled Lutheran Clergyman in Germany, who, without any recommendation, so insinuated himself into their confidence that he became their pastor, but who was soon afterward discharged for immoral conduct. The first regular Lutheran minister was the Rev. Lucas Raus, who preached two years to the congregation.

The graveyard is an ancient one and an object of much in-

terest; since the organization of the church (1730), no doubt, 1500 may have been buried here. To meet the increasing demand for space for burying the graveyard has been enlarged again and again, and at this writing (1886) the congregation again enlarged their burying grounds by purchasing a tract of land of Tobias Wile, for \$300. On a visit to this graveyard we copied some very old dates from headstones. We think, however, that the very oldest buried here bear no dates or inscriptions at all, at least, we find many of this kind. Most grave stones of this kind have sunk in the ground and are almost invisible. Some of the earliest buried here which are marked with stones having letters and figures are M. Conrad, 1769; S. Cressman, 1767; H. R., 1790; Sn. Do., 1771; H. E. N. M., 1777; I. F., 1776; A. B. 1776; S. H. 1768; we also copied the following surnames: Barndt, Nace, Cressman,



Herman, Kramer, Keiler, Stillwagon, Wambold, King, Gehman, Dannehower, Bilger, Souder, Frederick, Gerhart, Badman, Ritter, Haens, Musselman, Beltz, Rosenberger, Kober, Reller, Benner, Kratz, Herr and Conrad. We also find here the grave of Pastor John George Reller, whose tomb is marked with a flag stone. Rev. J. G. Reller was pastor of the congregation forty-three years.

At the present writing the congregation has purchased a tract of land from Tobias Wile, for \$300, and has been laid out into convenient lots for a ceme-

tery. On a visit to the place while the work was in progress we had reason to believe that, when finished, the cemetery will be one of the grandest and best arranged cemeteries in Montgomery county.

The janitor's house connected with the church was built in 1834. The present incumbent is David Cressman. We are proud to state, on inquiry as to the unity of this congregation, that harmony prevailed from the beginning to the present day and religious unity was maintained in general.

## PART XVII.

REFORMED CHURCH—DOCTRINE—INDIAN CREEK REFORMED CHURCH—ITS BURYING-GROUND—LEIDY'S REFORMED CHURCH—ITS BURYING GROUND.

Contemporaneous with Lutherans, the old "German Reformed," or "German Presbyterians," came to our country from different parts of Germany, they only differing from their countrymen as Zwingle and Calvin disagreed from Luther about some non-essential doctrine, and the proper form of church Government. They were stern defenders of the Holy Scriptures as the sole rule of faith and as the perpetuity of the Sabbath as a day of divine appointment. The Reformed denomination in Pennsylvania gathered congregations as rapidly as the Lutherans. Gordon in his "Gazetteer" of 1832 sets down the number of Reformed

congregations in Montgomery county at seven, which by 1870 had increased to nineteen, in 1880 to twenty-three and in 1886 to twenty-five congregations. This church has suffered more from schismatic influence than the Lutherans, though no serious open rupture has ever taken place, but rather disagreements, mainly consisting of old and new views of theology and old and new measures, such as protracted, night and prayer meetings for the promotion of revivals. One thing in our church history stands to the credit of both Lutherans and Reformed in the colonial age and even down to the present day, that they fraternized in building

houses of worship, which, for more than a century, in many cases, have been occupied jointly and alternately by both denomination. That is amity in dissent, a wholesome lesson to adjacent sects to live peacefully with each other. As wealth and more frequent worship have afforded the means and opportunity in recent years, however, the desire arose for separate buildings. So nearly all these union churches have divided, and, in most cases, one or the other erected new buildings. However, to our knowledge, there was none of the kind in our township except when one house or another was undergoing changes. The greatest disquietness in all our churches of the various denominations throughout the German section is the elapsing of the German tongue and the introduction of the English to accommodate the new generation, who rather prefer the latter language. In our German township of Fran-

conia the services were always conducted in German, with the exception of late, when English services are held on alternate Sunday evenings in the Indian Creek Reformed church by Rev. Kehm. Attempts of alterations of the German language has always been resisted by the elder members of the upper churches. Sunday schools, too, which seemed innovations upon old customs, was for a while resisted by elder members until recently, when Sunday schools were organized in almost every church, and in some cases special houses were built.

There are two Reformed churches in the township—the Indian Creek and the one called the Leidy's or Emanuel's Reformed church. The Indian Creek Reformed church is the oldest, is located about one mile west of Telord on the Indian creek, and was founded in 1753 by Rev. Jacob Reese, who was its first pastor, began his labors June 3d, in that year. Among

the founders of the church were John Nice, Jacob Arndt, Peter Gerhart, Jacob Leidy, John Shellenberger, John Sellers, William Althouse and Abraham Arndt. With the exception of Arndt these family names are all presented in the congregation at present. In 1754 the present church lot was purchased of Michael Berra, and in that year a log church was erected. This was replaced in 1776 by a rough stone church, with a hip roof, which was used until 1826, when the third, 43x48, also of stone was built. This being a large and substantial church, having walls two feet thick, and the interior was well finished with a gallery on three sides. The present church, 42x65 feet, was built in 1879, of brick. The building committee composed of Andrew Hartzell, Martin Shipe and Henry C. Hartzell. The cost of building the same was upwards of \$11,000. This church has three corner stones, two of which were altered from

the previous buildings, however, this being the fourth church probably the first, the log church, did not contain a corner stone. The building is surmounted to the height of 115 feet, containing a metallic bell weighing 1500 pounds, cast in Philadelphia, to call together its worshippers, and toll for the sorrowing, who bury their dead, and whose tombstones are fast whitening the capacious ground upon which they are planted. The church was dedicated to the congregation in 1880. The basement is used for Sunday school purposes. It was here that a Sunday school was organized as early as 1868. This Sunday school connected with the church at times being prosperous until of late when Sunday schools were organized in the neighboring villages, and this one had to be abandoned for want of support. The interior of the church is fitted up most elegantly, with frescoed walls. The gallery is graced

with a large pipe organ secured in 1865. The exterior, too, presents quite a model of architecture. At the spot where the present church stands formerly stood an old log school house, at least tradition states so, prior to the log church. An old member of this congregation informed me that at the time of this log church the Indians were still plenty throughout the Indian creek valley, also that the old log church contained no chimney. At that time fire was unknown in churches, and the floor being laid with bricks.

The graveyard here is an old one and it may be expected that many have been buried in it, as it has undoubtedly been used for more than 130 years and being situated in such a populous section. On a visit to the grave yard we copied the following from the tombstones, which we think are among the oldest : Hannes Fuhrman, 1798; George Geir, 1767; John Frederick, 1764; Reib Sellers, 1769; John

Fuhrman, 1798; Michael Hartzell, 1784; M. B. R., 1760; Chr. Pl., 1761; Frederick Weil, 1767. There are also many tombstones that have no date at all, and probably some that were buried here still earlier than the above named. We also found close to the church a stone that was engraved in the following manner: "In memory of Heinrich Hartzell, wife and two children, who emigrated from the Palatinate in 1727, being the first settlers in Rockhill township, died at an advanced age." It is also here where Rev. Jacob Lenn is buried. On his tombstone we found the following: "To the memory of Rev. Jacob Lenn, who was born January 4, 1774, departed this life January 18, 1818, aged forty-three years, was minister of the Reformed churches in Sussix, Hardwick and Nolltown four years, and at Dohickon, Indianfield and Swamp nineteen years." His wife, too, is buried at his side

died October 30, 1872, aged ninety-one years. The following family names we copied in addition to those already named and are inserted here for the use and benefit geanologist, who may desire to secure additional information in this direction: Gerhart, Scholl, Moyer, Strausberger, Cressman, Steiner, Benner, Auchy, Sansel, Troxel, Sleifer, Kehm, Bauman, Shive, Sellers, Barndt, Ott, Wack, Bilger, Hilgerd, Kraft, Huber, Hendricks, Hengey, Henig, Raudenbush, Kooker, Fluck, Bealer, Slutter, Dorn, Ziegler, Trumbauer, Wile, Frantz, Lenn, and others. Necessity has compelled them to enlarge the graveyard again and again, and contains now more than two acres, enclosed with a substantial wall, and the yard is surrounded with shade trees. Here, too, are sheds on all sides for the protection of horses from the inclemency of weather during all seasons.

#### LEIDY'S REFORMED CHURCH.

What is known as Leidy's Reformed church, later Emanuel's Reformed church, is located below Souderton, and was built in 1858. A school house and a graveyard was there over a hundred years ago. The school house was used for public worship until it was desired by the neighborhood to build a house adapted for that purpose, Its members are from the Indian Creek Reformed church, of which it was for a time a part. Its pastors have been Rev. P. S. Fisher and J. G. Dengler, the latter of whom is still in charge. Previous to those named there being no regular installed ministers. Worship was held on alternate times. The church is situated on an elevated tract of land and affords a beautiful glimpse of country life. In the yard, too, on all sides have been planted maple trees for shade.

The grave yard is an old one. On a recent visit to this burying ground we noticed quite a

number of tombstones that have been placed there between the years 1760 and 1780. We have copied the following surnames and are inserted here for the use of the geanologist: Leidy, Scholl, Fluck, Beidler, Weiss, Slifer, Snyder, Schnabel, Holzapple, Oberholzer, Kinsey, Yocum, Nace, Nice, Klein, Wack, Hunsberger, Schwenk, Shellenberger, Miller, Bauer, Bernd, Eaton, Cressman, Weaver, Althouse, Bair, Kulp, Conner Hagey, Garis, Rosenberger, Winter, Ratzell, Reed, Delp, Gœttler, Sheib, Bitting, Moyer, Cope, Lane, Zane, Rudy, Bloom, Landis, Worman, Lever, Robartaux, Savalcool, Mayers and others. We have found in in this graveyard more old stones bearing dates and without dates than in any other burying ground in the township. We judged the number buried here probably two thousand together with the more recent buried.

The remains of Rev. Casper

Wack slumbers beneath the sod of this graveyard, from his tombstone we have copied the following: Sacred to the memory of Rev. Casper Wack, who departed this life the 17th of July, 1839, aged eighty-seven years.

And is your pastor gone;  
Is he no more that living truth  
That we have seen before.  
He is gone, he's past the gloomy shade of  
night,  
Safe landed in eternal realms of light.  
Happy exchange, to part with all below for  
worlds of bliss where joy unfading  
flow;  
Triumphing in his friend, who will be yours  
If you pursue the path he oft taught to  
you.

His wife, Barbara Wack, is buried by his side, aged eighty-six years. Their graves are marked with a flagstone. The old grave yard is enclosed with a substantial stone wall. There is also a cemetery connected with the church which has been recently opened, is situate on elevated ground, arranged and divided in convenient lots and enclosed with a board fence. A number of interments have already been made, and quite a number of lots are enclosed with iron fences.

## PART XVIII.

DUNKARDS OR GERMAN BAPTISTS— THEIR PRINCIPLES—EMIGRATION TO PENNSYLVANIA—THEIR HOUSE OF WORSHIP—BURYING GROUND.

Nearly simultaneous and intermixed with the Mennonite emigration came the German Baptists, who had been stigmatized and persecuted in Germany under the name of "Anabaptists" (rebaptisers). They were a very pious and devoted people differing little from the Mennonites, except in the rite of baptism, which, with them, is always administered by what is called "trine immersion," the penitent being dipped three times, face downward, in the name of the Trinity, hence the appellation Dunkards (dippers). They differ from Mennonites also in strictly observing feet washing and the love-feast, a sort of sim-

ple supper of plain food, to testify brotherly unity and love. They also differ from the Mennonites in this part of the country in holding revival meetings after the manner of English speaking Baptists. In common with all denominations bearing the name of Baptist, they utterly reject infant baptism as unscriptural. The Bible is their only creed. There was published in a weekly newspaper an article on the Dunkards, which was certainly a very readable and interesting article, where, among other things, it is stated that the term "Dunkard" is used indiscriminately for several denominations of a kindred nature. The proper term of the



sect is German Baptist or Brethren, having assumed the latter name for themselves, on account of what Christ said to his disciples, "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." They originated in Schwartzenan, in the year 1708, in Germany. The first constituents were eight neighbors, six men and two women, "who agreed to read the Bible in company." They desired Alexander Mack as their minister to baptise them, but he deeming himself in reality unbaptised refused; upon which they cast lots to find out who should be the administrator of the baptism. On whom the lot fell was carefully concealed. They were baptised in the river Eder, and then formed themselves into a church, choosing Alexander Mack as their minister. They increased rapidly and had congregations in Marieborn and Epstein, with John Naas and Christian Levy as their ministers in those places. Persécution quickly

drove them thence; some to Holland and some to Crefelt. Soon after the mother church voluntarily removed from Schwartzenan to Serustervin, in Freisland, and from thence emigrated to America in 1719. In 1729 the Brethren of Crefelt followed. As to their principles they believed that they should do what the Bible says and not what it might mean. They preserve their ancient customs, their lives are singularly pure and unselfish. They recently established a college in the West, which contains a large portion of the remarkable library of A. H. Cassel, of the sister township Salford, being a noted antiquarian and a Dunkard. The census of 1870 places the number of their congregations or houses of worship at nine. They are located principally along the Perkiomen and its tributaries.

The Dunkards have only one house of worship in this township, where worship is held only on alternate Sundays. The

building is a frame structure 30 x42 feet erected in 1843 and is located about one mile east of Harleysville, on the turnpike leading from Harleysville to Souderton. This place was used in early times as a private burying ground, and was opened by Rudolph Harley as early as 1740. On a visit to this burying ground we copied the following names and dates: M. H., 1743; A. H., 1758; H. K. St., 1783; B. H. 1791; A. H., 1794; I. O. H., 1793; I. H., 1795; H. S., 1794; N. S., 1783; A. S., 1802. Among the aged buried here we find the following: Jacob Stauffer, 76 years; Jacob Stauffer again, 81 years; John S. Harley, 79 years; Samuel Harley, 81 years; Samuel Harley, 82 years, and Samuel Johnson 81 years. The graveyard is not very large but seems as if many have been buried there on the little spot. The surnames which appear on the stones are Harley, Markley, Cassel, Moyer, Kurth, Freed.

Rahs, Walter, Kindig, Hartman, Fronefield, Shelly, Johnson, Young, Frederick, Henge, Binder Kline, Schissler, Schueck, Landes, Stauffer and Brey. The tombstones are of various sizes and designs, some being four feet high, and the inscriptions are about as numerous now in English as in German. The Dunkards are very plain people in dress, permit individuals to exercise their own judgment respecting the size, inscription and pattern of their monuments, as may be observed in any of their burying grounds. This burying place contains about one acre of ground enclosed with a substantial fence. There are also trees in the yard, such as oak, hickory and sassafras, all of which appear to be very old trees. The "Dunkards" who bury here and hold alternate services in the house have also a meeting house on the west side of the Indian creek, just over the Franconia line in Salford, which is their regular place of

worship. The present ministers are William P. Price, Jonas Harley, Henry A. Price and Jacob Booz, with a membership reaching nearly two hundred.

## PART XXIX.

THE MENNONITES—THEIR DOCTRINE—SCHISMS OF THE MENNONITE CHURCH  
—FRANCONIA MEETING HOUSE AND CONGREGATION—SODERTON  
MEETING HOUSE.

Almost contemporaneous to the Quakers came the disciples of Menno Simon, usually called the Mennonites. No Quakers are known to have ever settled in our township. The Mennonites, too, were long in this country before they settled in this township. Penn had made the acquaintance of these people in their native country and after founding of the colony invited them to emigrate to Pennsylvania, which some of them did as early as 1633, and many more in the early years of the last century. In faith they are mainly evangelical, as shown by a confession instituted at Dort, in 1632. Though they hold

peculiar views about the "Persons" of the Trinity, still they are Trinitarians. They baptize adults only by pouring, and partake of the Lord's supper; originally observed feet washing, and only allow marriage "in the Lord," or between church members. Their testimony against war, oath litigation, and participation in the affairs of civil government and against civil constraint in matters of religion has ever been maintained from the first. In industries, plainness of attire and speech, and frugality they are in exact accord with the Quakers. It is known that the lesser German and especially

the peace sects, as individuals and societies, resist innovations in dress, customs and worship, in short, concerning everything brought with them from their Fatherland; hence these, as also their tenacity in religious belief exposes them to constant schisms. In the interior of the State there are several branches of the society unknown in our township, called "Omish," "Hooper," etc. In Montgomery county there have been several divisions of the Mennonite body. The first one took place in 1847, in what is called Old and New Mennonites. The latter party was led by Rev. Abraham Hunsicker, a bishop, who thought the old testimonies of the society against scholastic learning and general participation should be reformed. Five years afterward finding himself and his adherents trammelled and uncomfortable in the "new division" he withdrew and organized the Trinity Christian church, which, in doctrine, accord with the old societies, ex-

cept in patronizing institutions of learning, Sunday schools, revival meetings and the like. There are two prosperous societies of this denomination, one in Freeland and one at Skippackville. Subsequently divisions in Bucks and Lehigh counties were organized under the title of Evangelical Mennonites. Several of these small parties are known by the names of their leaders, such as "Funkites," "Oberholtzer," "Johnson" and "Herrites," all of which appellations they repel, of course. The last one of the four named takes its name of John Herr, of Lancaster county. They have two or three societies in Montgomery county, and one in earlier times in this township, but have become extinct. We shall treat on the Herrite congregation in Franconia in a forthcoming part. The Mennonites having one congregation and two houses of worship in this township, and having a membership of nearly five hundred and still fast increasing.

The first meeting house built was probably as early as 1730, at least tradition states so, of stone. The second and the present large house was also of stone, 45x75 feet, and has a seating capacity of over eight hundred. The present officiating ministers are Jacob Landes, Bishop Josiah Clemmer, Michael Moyer and Deacons Abraham Clemmer and Jacob Freed. The attendance is regular and on fair days the house is filled to overflowing. This meeting house, as is usual with Mennonites, is surrounded by noble shade trees, particularly oak and maple. Some of the former undoubtedly remnants of the ancient forests. Here, too, on all sides are extensive sheds for the protection of horses from the inclemency of the weather in all seasons. There is also a well of lasting water in the yard. The graveyard here is an object of interest and since used for a burial ground, no doubt, one thousand have been buried here. To meet the increasing demand for

space it has been enlarged again and again and comprises now about two acres of ground, usually enclosed with a substantial stone wall, but recently replaced with a substantial board fence. On examining this ground at leisure we find the time honored names of Nice, Moyer, Clemmer, Souder, Gehman, Freed, Swartley, Landes, Bergey and others. We propose to give some of the names we copied therefrom which may prove of interest to some of their surviving kindred or friends residing beyond the neighborhood. We copied the following names as we passed through the graveyard on our recent visit: Godshall, Nice, Hagey, Young, Musselman, Detweiler, Landis, Hackman, Krupp, Ziegler, Kolb, Conver, Shoemaker, Freed, Bergey, Wesler, Bar, Weierman, Johnson, Schrauger, Rittenhouse, Delp, Swartley, Alderfer, Souder, Gehman, Kindig, Yocun, Halman, Kriebel, Frederick, Moher, Weil, Benner, Yelles, Ruth, Clemmens, Oberholtzer, Klaen, Derstine,

Stover, Schleifer, Preice, Sell, Markley, Umstead, Dettery, Kratz, Yoder and Cassel. We here find many stones bearing no names or dates at all, and we also find stones bearing the date of 1760, which being the earliest we could find, however, we suppose interments may have been made much earlier, as the many stones that have sunk into the ground, almost invisible, bearing no date or inscription at all may prove.

The history of the Mennonite congregation is hard to chronicle as no records are kept by the congregation from time to time, and, therefore, undoubtful much of interest is left unwritten. But like the husbandman in the harvest field there is always something left for the gleaner. So the minor occurrences, if not gathered by the local historian, is lost to us and our children. It is to those who follow after us that most of this interest is attached. We seeing things as they transpire before our eyes do not realize how highly they would

be prized in after years. We therefore chronicle facts as they are presented to us.

The first step leading to the founding of this congregation is due to Heinrich Funk, who emigrated from Europe in 1719 and settled at the Indianfield, having five miles to his nearest neighbor, consequently being the earliest settler in the township. There came more of his brothers and settled with him, when they organized a Mennonite congregation and he (Heinrich Funk) being elected minister. In 1731 Christian Funk was born, a son of the named Heinrich Funk, married in 1751 and remained at home with his father. In 1757 he being appointed minister by his father, who died in 1760. Christian Meyer being the first deacon of the congregation, and soon after Isaac Kolb was elected bishop, and not long thereafter trouble began between Kolb and Meyer, to such an extent that Kolb, at the yearly conference, suggested to withdraw from the congrega-

tion if he had to remain in service with Meyer. Through the advice from strange ministers the congregation decided to elect new ministers. The lot fell on Samuel Bechtel and Christian Funk. After the lot was cast Meyer and Kolb were again in harmony with each other, and offered to restore their services again to the congregation. The congregation from this time (1755) remained in peace and being properous until the breaking out of Revolutionary war between the American colonies and English in 1774. The immediate cause of this war was the right of taxation without representation, as claimed by England. The American colonies pleaded that England had no right to tax them without their consent, as they were not allowed to send representatives to the English Parliaments they could not give their consent. The British Parliament passed several acts, one of which imposed a tax or duty on all merchandise impor-

ted, but the Americans refused to comply with the act; However, the king sent a cargo of tea to Boston and to collect therefrom the duty or tariff. the ship was, however, boarded by Bostonians and emptied the chests containing tea into the harbor; thereupon the king sent a regiment of soldiers to Boston; soon after their arrival the several colonies called together a Congress and army, During all this time the colony of Pennsylvania remained in peace because the colony of Pennsylvania did not belong to the king of England, as it was given to admiral Penn as a part for pay for services rendered to the British Parliament. After his death this tract of land came into the hands of his son William, who was a Quaker, and he made known through Europe that he had a grant of land in America, where he invited all prosecuted Christians, securing for them political freedom and religious intolerance, 'life, liberty and the pursuits of happi-



ness." This being the main cause that induced our forefathers to leave their homes in Europe and emigrate to a wilderness, inhabited by wild men and beasts. Living here in peace and enjoying their liberty until the outbreak of the Revolutionary war. It was in the year 1776 when our township was notified to hold a meeting and to appoint three men, who should be sent to a convention, where it would be decided whether our State of Pennsylvania would also enter into war with England, as the other States already did, or whether it would remain neutral or cite with England. These circumstances made the Menmonites believe that their religious freedom would probably have to suffer. The township meeting thus called composed of Lutherans, Reformed and two-thirds of the number constituted Menmonites. The whole township being assembled and considerable difficulty was experienced in electing delegates to the con-

vention. Many wanted to cite with Europe, while others supported the new constitution and cited with the other States already in war. These circumstances had caused the Menmonite congregation in this township considerable difficulties and bitterness among its members. Suffice to say that we cannot give the entire history thereof as it would make a work like this of volumes. Christian Funk, a resident of this township, wrote a pamphlet in German in 1809, under the following title: "A Mirror for all Mankind." Christian Funk was a faithful minister of the work of God among the Menmonites during and after the American Revolution. It was written inclusively from circumstances connected with the Franconia Menmonite congregation during the Revolutionary war.

#### Souderton Meeting House.

The Souderton meeting house was built in 1879, of brick, 42 x 53 feet. Being located on the western outskirts of the village

on an elevated tract offering a beautiful glimpse of country life. There being no ordained congregation at this place services are held tri-weekly by ministers from the various congregations, and the house is generally well filled by members from different denominations. There is also a tract of land set aside for a graveyard and quite a number of interments have

been made therein. Here, too, are sheds on all sides for the protection of horses from the inclemency of the weather in all seasons. The ground plan is laid out elegantly, surrounded by shade trees, which is an object always well provided by our forefathers to have the yard around their house of worship well provided with shade trees.

## PART XX.

## HERRITE DENOMINATION.

It is known that the Mennonites, especially the peace sects, as individuals and societies, resist innovations in dress, customs and worship, in short, concerning everything brought with them from their Fatherland; hence these, as also their tenacity in religious belief, exposes them to constant schisms. The Herrites, which we are now to speak of, is a schism of the Mennonite church, and was led by John Herr, of Lancaster county. They have at present two societies in Montgomery county, in Worcester and Perkiomen. The one in our township has become extinct to such an extent that only a few members are scattered in our midst. They are usually and incorrectly called Herralites, and their ways and views are so peculiar that some of them are appended. "They do not or dare not, for fear of the ban of separation (a sort of penance), hear the ministers of another denomination preach." When one of their members commit a sin or break their rules, he or she is put under the ban, and is kept in avoidance; then they do not eat or sleep with him or her, nor sit at the same table, under pain of like censure. These more than monkish ansterities are calculated to split society into many factions, yet peace is so ingrained in their nature that to their credit be it spoken, serious quarrels are rarely reported among them. The "Her-

rites" originate from the second schism of the Mennonite church, which took place at the beginning of this century, the portion that withdrew erected for themselves a small one-story stone meeting house over the Franconia line in Salford township, near the present turnpike leading to Souderton. By 1850 they had diminished so that building was used only for a school house, and in 1855 it was torn down. The building was an old log structure, and some of the material was used to build the present "Herrite House" in 1855 situated on the Franconia side, several hundred yards north of the Harleysville and Souderton turnpike. It was here that a private burying ground was maintained and also used by the Herrites, as there burying ground hence it was considered convenient to built their house of worship at this place. Funds were raised by contribution for the erection by a few scattered members of the Herrite denomination, and others who desired

to be buried in this graveyard. Suffice to say that it is supposed now that they have become extinct here. They have houses of worship in Worcester and Perkiomen townships and several in Lancaster county.

On a recent visit to the graveyard adjacent to the meeting house lot we copied some very old dates. Of those who sleep here the stones gave us the family names of Yoder, Moyer, Kratz, Booz, Landis, Funk, Delp, Kline, Wisler, Godshall, Cassel and others. We also found stones bearing the following dates and letters: 1732, D. E., N. I. Q., I. V. N. E. H., H. S.; 1777, G. W. D.; 1783, C. L.; 1793, C. S.; 1783, M. C.; Jacob Landis, 1807. There are also many stones bearing no dates or letters at all, and others have sunk into the ground. Among the aged slumbering beneath the sod are Christian Funk, aged 80 years; Valentine Kratz, 95 years; Abraham Delp, 81 years. The aged graveyard is certainly an object of interest. It con-

tains about a quarter of an acre, enclosed with a substantial board fence, situated on elevated ground, with a beautiful glimpse of the surrounding country into the quiet valley of the Indian creek.

It has been a long time since the Herrites held their last worship in this house. Worship

is sometimes held at this place by ministers of other congregations. The writer attended services here on a beautiful Sabbath day in June, 1880, with but seventeen persons present. The minister was a Rev. Landis an offshoot of the Mennonite church.

## PART XXI.

## VILLAGE HISTORY.

Houses for the entertainment of travelers were soon established in Pennsylvania. We find as the population spread into the country, and roads were opened, that at the most prominent points or intersections inns were soon located, and soon followed by the village blacksmith shop and various small business establishments, forming villages. The villages in the township are Telford, Souderton, Franconia and Franconiaville, to which we may now add Earlington, Gehman, Rising Sun Hotel and Reliance Hotel, or Midway, a place between Telford and Souderton. The places away from the railroad are not very large though supporting the usual industries of a village, but the

places along the railroad have become important places of business

## TELFORD.

The first settlers who emigrated to this part of the country were mostly Germans and Welshmen who immigrated from Germany and Great Britain. A part of the land where the village of Telford stands, was bought in 1737 by Conrad Deterer, of Humphrey Murray, and embraced 120 acres. Another tract on the Bucks county side, was bought by Heinrich Hartzell, who emigrated to this section and bought different tracts of land at various times in 1732, aggregating nearly 1,000 acres.

This place became quite early

an important junction of public roads; what is known as the County line Road was opened in 1732.

Since the location and construction of the North Pennsylvania railroad, it has become an important place of business, supporting the usual industries of a village. The railroad was finished ten years before a station was established at this place, there being already quite a village when the station house was built and arrangements made for the stopping of trains, in 1867. The present station house was built by the community, and money was raised by contribution for the same.

When this place was made a stopping place it was necessary to adopt a permanent name to the station and village. It was at the the time when Mr. Telford was the greatest civil engineer in America; hence it was considered a suitable and appropriate name for the station. In 1849 the place was known as Hendrick's Blacksmith Shop;

later as County Line.

The first house built in Telford was a one-story stone structure, built in 1825, by John Gerhart, on the premises now owned by Dr. J. E. Bauman, and is still in a good state of preservation, having lately received a coat of plaster, and is now used for storing away old and more or less useless household utensils. The house was first occupied by a man named John Wolf, a cobbler by trade.

At that time Telford was a quiet, dull and dreamy place. No noise or smoke from forges or factories to disturb its tranquility. The rumbling sounds from long trains of cars and shrill whistle of the locomotive had not been dreamed of. A steam chopping mill was the first business enterprise at this place, was built by Jacob N. Souder, in 1857, and did a good business at times, but was destroyed by fire in 1861. It stood near the spot where the present steam mill of Moses Shelly is located. There was

also a feed store connected with this mill, and is also to the present day. The present mill was built in 1884, by C. G. Barndt & Son, who run it about a year when they made an assignment of their property to E. C. Bean, for the benefit of their creditors. The whole business establishment was sold at assignee's sale for \$8,000, to Moses R. Shelly, who, at this writing, is doing a thriving business.

M. S. Kulp & Bro., who are running a steam chopping mill opposite the station, took possession of the same in 1880. The establishment was founded by F. H. Souder, in 1876.

The County Line Hotel was erected in 1857, by Jacob N. Souder. The wash and bake house still attached to the hotel was one of the first buildings in the village. The following is the line of landlords of this hotel: Jacob N. Souder, Alexander Sellers, Abraham Eschbach, George Schwenk and Isaiah Barndt, the present landlord. There is also connected

with this hotel a large hall for the use of singing schools, literary societies and other public gatherings. In the winter of 1884-5 good literary societies were flourishing here. It is here where also a singing class meets on alternate Sunday evenings, for a period extending back for probably more than fifteen years.

The Telford Hotel was built in 1869, by Alexander Sellers. A post office was established here in 1871 and Mr. Sellers was appointed postmaster, and ever since the post office has remained at this place. There is also connected with the hotel a hall for the use of public meetings and societies. The line of landlords of this hotel are Alexander Sellers, Francis Weisel and John Kuhn, who has possession at present.

The village contains four general stores at this writing. The first one established was that of I. G. Gerhart, on the Bucks county side in 1861, the present commodious store building



was erected in 1880. The next establishment of the kind erected was that of J. W. Hoff, in 1869. Both stores are doing a flourishing business. The others were established, and are of less importance. A blacksmith shop was established in the village in 1860, which number has increased to three.

The first school house in the village was built in 1876. Prior to this the scholars of the village attended the neighboring schools in the rural district. From this date the village rapidly increased, and a desire for more and better school accomodation arose among the citizens and therefore an addition was built to the old school house in 1883, and a graded school founded. E. C. Bean taught the first term of the Grammar and of the Primary; during the last terms the schools, both Grammar and Primary, being crowded with scholars, and it will soon be necessary to enlarge the school facilities of the village.

The foregoing described business places was about all that composed the town in its infancy prior to 1870, with the exception of a few private dwelling houses. Finally it began to grow rapidly in wealth, improvement and popularity, until it reached its present capacity in population of about 600 inhabitants, including about 250 children under fifteen years of age, with over 100 dwelling houses and thirty-five business establishments.

Three general stores, three blacksmith shops, two coal and lime yards, two hay presses, two hotels, two hardware stores, one steam planning and sash factory, two boot and shoe establishments, one wheelwright shop, one cabinet maker, an agricultural machine shop, two feed stores, connected with them extensive chopping mills; a clothing manufactory, one watchmaker and jeweler, one physician, two tinsmiths, a bakery and confectionary store, two lumber yards, one furniture

manufactory, a beer bottling establishment, a marble yard, two telegraph offices, one saloon, a cheese box manufactory and several smaller business establishments constitutes the business places of the village.

There is located here a large Union chapel, built in 1876, used principally for Sunday school purposes, and religious services by ministers of the various denominations in the neighborhood, on alternate times. The building is located on elevated ground on Main street, and surmounted by a bell-fry. The building committee was composed of I. G. Gerhart, Daniel Clowel and Jonan Loh. There was organized a Sunday school in the same year, and ever since a Sunday school flourished here during the whole year with about 150 scholars enrolled. The present officers are: Superintendents, E. C. Leidy and E. C. Beans; secretary, J. D. Souder and F. H. Keller; librarian, Wilson Butterwick and R. R. Hengey. The Sunday school

is in a flourishing condition.

#### SOUDERTON.

The first settlers who emigrated to this section of the country were Welshmen. The first building erected by them was on the premises of Ephraim Freed, on the upper Skippack below this place. Where the greater part of the town is now located, a few hundred yards east of the railroad depot there stood an old fashioned loghouse and a "Swiss" barn, then owned and occupied by Jonathan Hunsberger, who also owned all the ground where now the depot of the North Pennsylvania railroad is located, and where most of the business is now transacted. Thence along Church road, a few hundred yards northwest of the depot, on the right hand of the road was the residence of Henry Souder Sr., and on the left his carpenter shop and lumber yard. Still farther up on the northwest side of the Skippack creek stood an old log cabin, formerly owned by George Henge, deceased, the

ancestor of the Henges of this place and vicinity, thence due north, about one-third mile northwest of the railroad depot was the residence of Michael Henge, lately deceased, now owned by William Henge. These were all the inhabitants of the town in its infancy, would say prior to 1850. It is now probably more than 150 years since the first settlers set foot on this section of the country. We find many of their descendants living near the original settlement of their ancestors, and still a great many keep moving westward from time to time, and we now hear of them from places on the Pacific coast, or more than three thousand miles away from the homes of their ancestors.

Fifty years ago, what is now the principal street of Souderton, was a narrow lane, having a low washed out bed, with high sloping banks; on one side of which was a forest and on the other lay barren fields. This road originally extended to the

Cowpath road, near the Indian Creek church, the upper part of which was abandoned since 1865. What is now known as Water street was its only branch.

There were only a few houses in the surrounding country, traces of which still remain.

The oldest house in Souderton was built in 1837, by Henry Souder, Sr., at the corner of Water street and what is now known as Main street. This property is now owned by the railroad company, was bought to avoid bridging Water street at this point.

About 1843 Henry Souder, Sr., established a lumber yard at this place. The lumber was hauled from Point Pleasant, on the Delaware river, a distance of eighteen miles.

In the fall of 1855 S. D. Hunsberger & Bros. commenced the flour and feed business opposite the place where the depot now stands. The present building was erected in 1864.

The North Pennsylvania rail-

road was completed in 1856. Although no depot being built the place was known as Franconia station, Wm. Souder acting as agent for the company. The present depot was built in 1865. J. C. Landis, was the first agent who received a regular salary from the company. Upon the organization of the National bank, he being elected its cashier, resigned and Morris D. Zendt, the present incumbent was appointed in 1876 to succeed him.

The railroad gave a new impulse to business and from this time the growth of the town was rapid.

In 1864 Jesse and Joseph Huber came into the village and built several houses and established a cigar factory which gave employment for a time to many persons, but we are sorry to say, that it suffered the fate of many others who were engaged in the same business.

A post office named New Harbor was established May 12th, 1860, Wm. Souder was

appointed postmaster. Its name was changed January 13, 1864, making it agree with the name of the station which was then Souders. William B. Sliker was appointed postmaster June 12, 1869, who moved the post office from Wm. Souder's office to his store. It was again removed after the appointment of Milton D. Zendt as postmaster, February 26, 1876. The name of the post office and station were changed to Souderton in March, 1876. Postmaster Zendt resigned June 4, 1885, and was succeeded November 6, 1885, by William K. Shellenberger, whose appointment dates from October, 28, 1885. The post office was again removed from Hunsberger's store to its present location, in the store of Landis & Co.

The Harleysville and Souders turnpike was chartered June 2, 1863, but was not completed until 1856. A stage route was established between this place and Green Lane, but was soon abandoned.

The Souderton Hotel was founded in 1861 by E. H. Souder. It was enlarged as built by Jonathan Hunsberger, in 1858. It was occupied by Franklin Zepp, two years, Alexander Sellers six years, Frank F. Hendricks seven years, Elias Snyder six years, W. D. Hunsberger three years, W. B. Siifer two years, and W. B. Freed, the present landlord, took possession in 1885.

Liberty Hall, a spacious building connected with the building connected with the hotel, was built by W. D. Hunsberger in 1885.

The store known as Landis & Co.'s was built in 1860. Souder & Bergey occupied it four years, Henry Souder, Jr., two years, W. B. Slifer fifteen years and Landis & Co. since 1882.

Hunsberger's store was built in 1860, and occupied by Wm. D. Hunsberger one year. The next occupant was Milton D. Zendt, who took possession in March 1870. He was succeeded by S. D. Hunsberger & Bro., June 1st, 1885.

The first hardware store was

founded in 1861 by E. H. Souder. It was enlarged as business increased to its present size. It is now one of the largest hardware stores in Eastern Pennsylvania outside of Philadelphia. E. H. Souder carried on the business for sixteen years. In 1877 he formed a partnership with B. C. Barndt, and the firm was known as E. H. Souder & Co. In 1883 E. H. Souder retired and Dan'ley & Barndt succeeded. B. C. Barndt took possession in 1884.

Moyer's feed store was founded by H. K. Godshall in 1864, who continued in business three years and A. K. Frick two years. Moyer & Bro. took possession in 1869. The building was enlarged in 1871 and in 1882. In the latter year a chopping mill was added to the business.

M. B. Bergey erected a planing mill on Main street in 1862. It passed into J. M. Souder's hands in 1872. It was removed to green street its present site, in 1874. It was destroyed by fire in 1884, but was rebuilt the

same year. It was leased in 1883 by John Gerhab, agent, who still carries on the business.

In 1871 another planning mill was erected on Chestnut street by Hemsing & Souder. On the erection of Souder's steam saw mill in 1872 adjoining the place, horse power was superseded by steam. In 1880 the partnership was dissolved and since that time the business was continued by H. F. Hemsing, the present proprietor.

The Unional National bank was incorporated May 15, 1876, and opened June 10, 1876, in Henry Souder's store house, opposite the depot. It was moved into its present building, January 1, 1877. It has a capital of \$90,000.00, with a surplus and undivided profits amounting to \$30,000.00. Its deposits on May 22, 1886, amounted to \$171,304.97, discounts \$192,713 95. The first board of directors were I. G. Gerhart, A. Sorver, C. D. Loch, Henry Ruth, John S. Moyer, Chas. Godshall,

Aug. Thomas, H. K. Godshall, G. H. Swartz and M. B. Bergey. The present board consists of I. G. Gerhart, A. Sorver, John S. Ruth, Henry Ruth, E. H. Souder, John B. Moyer, Wm. Souder, Isaac H. Moyer. J. G. Metz and Aug. Thomas. I. G. Gerhart has been president and J. C. Landis cashier since the organization of the bank. Jas. M. Slifer was the first teller appointed January 2, 1877, and served until 1883 when he resigned to accept the position of cashier of the Farmers' National bank, Pennsburg, Pa., but is now cashier of the Topton National bank. He was succeeded by J. D. Moyer.

On August 2, 1878, Peale & Gøttler, established a printing office, on Main street, in the building of Mrs. Barbara Price. On the fourth day of August the first sale bill was printed in Souderton, for the sale of real estate and personal property of Henry Yoder, near Franconia Square. On the 16th of August the *Germania Gazette*, a seven

column paper, printed in the German language made its appearance weekly until April 23 1881, when its publication was suspended, and the German type sold to John Shupe, at Telford. In January, 1879, prior to the suspension of the German paper, Charles L. Peale withdrew from the firm and W. F. Goettler, the present proprietor succeeded. On April 16, 1881, the *Southern Independent*, then only a five column folio made its appearance for public favors. On June 4, of the same year it was enlarged to six columns, and again on October 28, 1882, to its present size.

The printing office was moved from the building of Mrs. Price, in the Spring of 1880, to the hotel hall, then owned by W. D. Hunsberger, and which was torn down in the summer of 1881. From the hall the printing office was moved into an open shed, then located on the site of the new hall. The printing material was removed from the shed in order to move the

building to where it now stands and then it was again occupied. On November 26, 1881, the office was removed to its present location.

J. G. Leidy's store was opened in September, 1882. It is known as the Central Store. The business was for a short time carried on by Leidy & Alderfer, but since 1883 Mr. Leidy is the only proprietor.

M. B. Bergey's hosiery mill was started January 1, 1885, and moved into the new building September 1, 1885. It gives employment to fifty-seven persons, forty in the factory and seventeen outside.

A school house was built on Chestnut street in 1875. Prior to this time the children attended Five Points and Rosenberger's schools. The teachers who taught here during the winter terms were F. G. Wile, one term, J. H. Leidy, three terms and Jacob A. Bucher, one term. Those that taught, subscription schools were F. G. Wile, John A. Wile, D. B. D.

weiler, J. H. Leidy, Rev. Henry Gerhart, Albert Miller and A. M. Alderfer.

As the population of the town increased more school accommodations were required. In 1880 the old school building gave way to the present two-story structure. It would be an injustice to the citizens of Souderton should we fail to state that they voluntarily raised a considerable amount of money toward the new building. The line of teachers of this school is as follows: The teachers of the Grammar school were I. L. Gehman, one term, Enos C. Beans, four terms, C. N. Gerhart, one term; of the Primary, D. S. Harr, one term, Chas. White, two terms, Miss Connie Durrin, one term, and Miss Jennie Moyer, two terms. Those that taught subscription schools were F. G. Wile, J. H. Leidy, Albert Shitler, Jacob K. Moyer and Enos C. Beans.

The Souderton Library, located in the school house was opened March 5, 1886. It is

opened for the exchange of books the first and third Friday of each month. The library contains over two hundred volumes of travel and adventure, reference, scientific, biographical and historical works.

There is only one church in Souderton, built by the Old Mennonites. It was dedicated on Christmas Day, 1879. There is tri-weekly worship and occasionally at other times. It is also used by the Sunday school for about nine months in the year.

The business of the place may be summed up as follows: Three general stores, one grocery store, two furniture stores, two hardware stores, two shoe stores, one jewelry store, one drug store, one tinware store, two steam hay bailing establishments, two planing mills, one saw mill, rim and spoke factory, one cigar factory, two cigar box factories, one carriage factory, one hosiery mill, two steam mills, one furniture and organ manufactory, one harness man-



ufactory, two clothing establishments, two lumber yards, two coal yards, two blacksmith shops, one barber shop, two tailor shops, one repair shop, one bakery, one printing office, one National bank, two telegraph offices, one post office and two hotels. The population of the town in 1886 was 611. It contained 125 dwelling houses, or one for every five inhabitants.

#### FRANCONIAVILLE,

Is an old-time land-mark, founded by the opening of a hotel and store. The origin of which is now scarcely known to the oldest inhabitants of the vicinity. The buildings of the village are plain and substantial, and have about them the evidences of the solid comfort and necessities of life characteristics of the unassuming and self-denying people who possess and inhabit it.

This place has grown so rapidly that it is impossible for anyone to picture to the young generation the condition and appearance of things half a cen-

tury ago. For many years this section was thinly settled and being largely covered with wood. It has been but lately that this section had to yield to the woodman's axe. The place where the present store and hotel are located had first to be cleared from trees. These two business places, especially the store, probably date back to the colonial days.

It is now probably a hundred years since the first house was built in the village by Jacob Shafer. It was located where the present dwelling house of Isaac Freed now stands, and is now about seventy years since Hagey A. Weand kept store in the building; after that it was sold to Henry Hackman, who leased it to Daniel Price. Ten years afterward it was again sold to Jacob Harley, who kept store there until 1834, and in the meantime established an hotel in the same building in addition to his store business.

The present store house of Henry F. Hackman was built

late, 1878, when Eron Gerhart bought it of Zeno Gerhart. Prior to the construction of the North Pennsylvania railroad this road where this inn is located required a great deal of team accommodation. It was one of the great roads leading from Philadelphia to Allentown, Easton and Bethlehem. I was informed by an old resident that he saw as many as twenty loads of hay passing the roads in one string, and one herd of cattle after the other, but since the construction of railroads the

traveling on this road has lessened.

GEHMANS,

A place hardly perceptable to the stranger, is located in the northwestern part of the township, and was founded by the opening of a store. A post office was established in 1883 and Abner Gehman was appointed postmaster. There is also a clothing manufactory at this place. This, together with several houses, comprises the village.

## PART XXII.

## PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION.

This year we close the one hundred and thirty-fifth year of incorporation of our township. There can be no hesitancy in saying that none of those who lived within its borders at the time of its organization, imagined that at the close of 135 years would find it a home of nearly three thousand souls.

The men of one hundred years ago knew nothing of steam as a motive power. To-day iron roads traverse our country from East to West and from North to South. Little did they know of mechanical arts, but now, by the aid of inventive genius, our country is spotted all over with the busy mill and workshop. The Constitution of the United States was not framed when

our township was organized. Now, securing to all political freedom and religious tolerance, life, liberty, and the pursuits of happiness, it is an assured fact a union of States which none can sever. Let me then say, those gala days which we are now living, we should devoutly thank an indulgent Providence for the many blessings bestowed upon us in the past, and pray that the institutions which made these blessings possible be secured to us, or children and our children's children forever.

We have cause to rejoice, the hundred and thirty-five years just rolled by has brought us much prosperity.

In forming the township, the chief idea was that the territory

of Salford, of which Franconia is part, being too large to be served by one constable; overseers of the poor and assessor—Franconia township was thus established March 10, 1751, with a population of thirty four land-owners, probably not more than one hundred souls. The township has grown since then from one hundred to nearly three thousand souls. Our growth was great in the past and must be greater still in the future. Situated as we are, in railroads, near the great coal bed of Pennsylvania, with easy access to all the largest cities in the country, in the midst of fine scenery, with fertile land and healthful surroundings, we have every element for future development. As we mark this era, we contemplate the past, when we see the possessions of our own ancestors for comparison with things of to-day, we find among them revived fashions of times, so different from ours; we find still in the hands of the present generation works of their fore-

fathers, whose hands have long since been crumbled to dust. When we see their works we are reminded of their ways, in many ways simpler than ours. We honor and respect their memories.

“It is well in the flight of time to pause and review the events that have transpired around us; to know whether we have advanced or intrograded as concerns the general welfare; in what respect, if any, we have really progressed. Time will not pause a single moment, and no people can remain stationary. Changes, more or less, is a law of nature to which all that has life must admit. It behooves us then to guard that it be for the better. The writing of the history is not an easy matter as many may suppose, because it is one hundred and thirty years since the incorporation of our township, and nearly two hundred years since the first settlement, where then shall I begin, and what shall be omitted.

According to the list of land-

holders of 1734, we find the early settlers consisted entirely of Welsh and Germans; the proprietary had been among these people in their native land and encouraged them to come. Here liberty of conscience had been proclaimed, and an exemption from tithe; though neither was tolerated in Great Britain, along the valley of the Rhine where many of our first settlers emigrated, were also the frontier lines of powerful France, and the frequent wars of Germany from which these settlers had to suffer greatly from their hostiles, a dark future was indeed before them. To facilitate this a company was organized and numerous pamphlets circulated throughout Germany, in the language of its people, setting forth the peculiar advantage of the distant colonies. Hence it may not be wondered that the weaker sex were the first to come, for no matter how strong the attachment of nativity the fatherland presented, from their experience of the past no bright

or sanguine future. In this brief and hasty survey of our progress it is well to glance at what our township was fifty years ago. It then comprised 9520 acres of land with a population of 998 souls, or little less than ten acres to every person. In 1880 the same territory contained a population of 2,556, or a little over three acres to every inhabitant. This decade is the most favorable of any in the history of the township, an increase of 1550 souls in a total population of 2556 persons.

At this time, though a century had elapsed since the first settlement, there was not a turnpike, no post office, no newspaper, no almshouse for the support of the poor in the several townships of Montgomery county, no bridges, not a single village containing a dozen houses. To-day we have seven houses of worship, four post offices, two railroad stations, two newspapers, our streams are all well bridged, and a number of villages, the township contains 175

persons to the square mile, approaching the most thickly settled countries. Such are the wonderful resources of our people and their general happiness that they can not realize that they are densely peopled, which, in other and much older countries, has so long been associated with wretchedness, and as they have, arising from an inability to secure a sufficiency of food. What a subject is here for the people of Europe to ponder on. Taken collectively and consider the progress we have made since the first settlement, how eventually and at no great distance of time, we must surpass in population and resources, not only Europe, but perhaps every country on the face of the globe, when we say this we are not speaking of our township alone, but of our country in general. In the long course of two hundred years not a single instance can be found where a white man or an Indian ever shed blood; mobs have never prevailed here, the most violent

have had their way, and no churches or other buildings have ever been destroyed under such temporary excitement. Though peopled by Welsh, Germans and mention may be made of the English, speaking various languages, holding different political and religious views; they resolved to live here peaceably together, while they diligently labored to improve their possessions, until they have become as we now behold and enjoy at the present day. "Let then the present generation regard these things as a deserving memorial due to our forefathers, who have so long preceded us, and whom we should endeavor to follow in every good example."

To determine whether we are continually advancing, let us only glance back over a short period of ten years, which is memorably with the centennial year; the time certainly seems short and to have passed rapidly, but we have not been idle. If there is any one doubts our progress, let him pause a mo-

ment and take a retrospective glance, compare 1876 with 1886, and see the marked advancement. The new revelations that were showered upon us then have come up into general use, and we find them so familiar that we scarcely realize ever having been without them. In science, in art, in architecture, in every branch of industry the same wonderful progress is shown. The electric light was then in its infancy, the telephone was merely a toy, yet both have now become so essential that we could not do without them. Such illustrations could be multiplied indefinitely, but they only go to show how far we have come within the past ten years.

Life is full of surprise and unexpected happenings that we cannot understand, much less control the daily happenings of the world. There are strange things happening every day in art and science, which we merely look at, shrug our shoulders, and pass them by. We think at the first

glance that they are wonderful, but do not understand, and so we let them pass. Was this always so? Let us for a few moments glance back a hundred years. If a man would have told our Revolutionary forefathers that in a hundred years hence the mail would be carried from New York to California in six or seven days; that vessels would cross in ten days; or that we could talk from Maine to Florida, and get an answer before breakfast, they would have hung him for a dangerous lunatic or an impostor. But has not this, and indeed much more become true? And what thanks have the great and noble men, who have thus benefitted the world? Instead of making them better and more contented than before, they have made the people expect ten times more than has ever yet been accomplished, and while all these wonderful achievements have been taking place, humanity has merely started and coolly asked, "Wonder what

they will do next?" Why, my dear readers, I should say, what do you want? Are we not satisfied? The public mind has more than it could digest, long ago, and why shall we continue feeding it if it can not digest what it already has. Things have already advanced so far that a man can send his wife a morning kiss if she is a thousand miles away; and yet people will merely start and ask "What next," without perceiving what has already been accomplished. Nor is this asking without an effect, man is an inquisitive creation and from this one trial much has been found out. By it Sir Isaac Newton, discovered the force of gravity, Franklin the facts of electricity, Watts the steam engine, all of which are of great value, much greater, in fact, than the greater mass of humanity here have ever taken it to be. But the world is full of idlers who cannot understand great objects, and so they simply sneer at great things, and with their

hand in pocket and their brain in pickle, they lazily inquire "what next?" But certainly this asking what next will cease, the next we will hear that the idler and the person who is never satisfied, but is continually wondering what next, have been swept away from the earth, with no one to wish him here yet to continue his good works; but he has departed "unwept, unhonored and unsung." All great men of the world who have tried to understand the present before wondering what would happen next, were men who were satisfied with the present and tried to do their good deeds in the time they had and were not continually trying to look in the future and think they would rather live in it than the present.

It is altogether useless for us to be trying to peer into the hidden future. Life is one constant change, narrowed into a moments time, which we call the present. Time is passing so rapidly that all that we can



do is to look with wonder and amazement at the things of the present moments as they which passed us and are gone. They then lie back of us a confused mass; a chaos out of which it is almost impossible to call order. Everything is so mixed up so that we do not know where any of the things belong. \* \* \* Confused as the past may seem the future is far more chaotic and uncertain; of it we know positively nothing. We know not if the things that have happened every day of our lives will happen to-morrow. Yes, we do not even know if our lives will be spared for another day.

All is dark before us. We

think and plan for to-morrow, but how foolish; we may lie down this evening never more to rise. Our sun may have set for the last time.

Verily we are as the grass that one day is growing and the next is cut down and cast away. And so the curtain of time, which, hapily hides our woes as well as our joys of the future from us, and which we cannot lift aside, and as one thing after another passes from the future to the past, silently wonder "what next." Such is certainly our position and thoughts of man at present, which have thus lived to see a triumphant record of matchless progress which is looming up before us to-day.

## PART XXIII.

## PIONEER SETTLERS.

It is now more than one hundred and fifty years since the first settlers set foot on the section of the country which is now the township of Franconia. Many of their descendents still live near or on their original settlements in the township, and still a great number kept moving westward from time to time, and we now hear of them from places on the Pacific coast, more than three thousand miles away from the early homes of their ancestors.

In the year 1734 the township contained thirty-four landholders that paid quit-rents. Probably some of our readers may not know what a "quit-rent" is. (Quit rent is a reserved rent in the grant of land

by the proprietary by the payment which the land holder was to be freed from other taxes. They were not uniform varying from one shilling sterling per hundred acres to six shillings per annum, and in some instances more.) We have secured a complete list of landholders of 1734.

The following are the names and number of acres of each: Johannes Fry, 150; Jacob Oberlio'zer, 150; Jost Pfannenkuch, 100; Joseph Althous, 141; Ulrich Hunsberger, 150; Leonard Christoleer, 200; Johan Greisman, 40; Conrad Kuster, 100; Michael Bang, 75; Jacob Fuhrman, 40; Johannes Hentz, 100; Ludwig Zerkel, 100; Johannes Wilhelm, 50; Hein-

rich Rosenberger, 100; Jost Schindler, 140; Christian Mayer, 150; Abraham Reif, 200; Jacob Hunsberger, 50; George German, 100; Frederick Gottschalk, 150; Wilhelm Hauk, 100; Henrich Zerkel, 50; Michael Hentz, 100; Gorg Hartzell, 50; Frederick Scholl, 100; Jacob Bayard, 100; Andrew Barndt, 75; Henry Barndt, 100, and Christian Funk, 100. These being all farmers, which we find was the occupation of nearly all the colonial inhabitants

The colonial inhabitants were exclusively an agricultural people and lacked nearly every farming implement now in use. Many of the plows had wooden mouldboards to turn the soil; wheat was cut with a sickle, gathered and threshed by hand, hay was cut with a scythe attached to a staight sneath, and when harvested and his small surplus prepared for market it must be borne to the city over miry roads to exchange for the few groceries and British manufactured goods. Nearly all the consumption of the family, however, was raised on the farm. Flax grown, swingled, spun at home and woven supplied shirting, bedding and summer wear. Sheep yielded their carcass for food an winter flannels. After the laboring ox had done the summer hauling and was fattened the flesh was consumed, and the hide taken to the tannery to be converted into leather for home use. This description of olden-time farm life only needs the further picturing of the rustic open-kitchen fire-place, half way across the room on which lay a huge green back-log expected to last a week. Here the mother was sitting and spinning stocking yarn while her daughters were sitting around and knitting by the faint fat-light. But these things have all passed away from our borders and the book, paper, piano and sewing machine have taken their place. The foregoing discription indicates to the people of our time how our fathers and mothers worked a

hundred years ago. But new ideas and methods of living are dawning our age from the town, the village and the remotest farm house. Free schools and improved lands have excited all over the country a desire for more easy and sufficient methods of farming and other productions.

Years ago farmers threw aside the sickle, scythes and hand rakes resolving to keep abreast of the times by using horse power implements to cultivate, gather and prepare farm products for the market. Thus by improved land with the free use of lime and fertilizers crops have been nearly doubled; and now instead of spending two months of exhaustive labor, as formerly, to gather and store a harvest it is now done in a fortnight. Thus, also, increased profit in agriculture excited a desire for more comfortable dwellings, capacious barns, more elegant equipages and attire, also handsomer churches and school houses. No sooner did

the railroad get into operation across our territory than the telegraph followed it, thus putting us into instantaneous communication with all the advanced countries of the world. Now poles and wires pass through many of our villages and stations along the railroad, which enables us to converse with friends and correspondents along distant places. But the two grandest elevates—we might say institutions—of society in this last quarter of the century are the reaping or mowing machine of the farmer and the sewing machine of the household. By their use the man or woman who employs either has quadrupled his or her productive power. Husbandry and farm work has been so completely transformed that few women participate in farm work, dairy being the chief occupation in this township, boys and men doing the milking while the product is worked into a marketable shape at creameries recently built and furnished all over

the country. The latter also worked by men and boys while many of our mothers and sisters only ply the needle and sewing machine, or perhaps finger the piano or harp.

At the commencement of the colonial age our ancestors were like half taught youth let loose from school almost untrained in the practical life that lay before them. But they came here on a mission of peace to all men, to establish justice and love. Instead of fighting the natives they attacked the forest and rocks, which fell or were removed before them on every side. The first thing wanted was shelter from the howling beast and weather. Seeking out, therefore, near a spring or creek a southern declivity a rude cabin of logs was built. Provided with a few tools of iron and steel and some wooden and tin vessels their toils begun, while the generous Indian looked on admiringly and pleased with his new brethren. A habitation thus finished, a small clearing

made with a few domestic animals and a supply of seed for planting the enfranchised emigrant felt himself "Lord of the manor." The children, the future of the family, were the next source of solicitude. The next want of the settlement now was a rude school house, which might also serve as a place for religious meetings; it was soon up, in like manner of logs, by the joint effort of the neighborhood. Soon after the first public institution just described came the neighborhood blacksmith shop, to prepare farm implements, and the rude mill to prepare the new grain for food. These were all established, not much advanced in architecture, but served the age.

With what novelty at the present day must we view such a progress when we reflect on the many and mighty changes we have made since the first settlement of our township that man and time wrought in so short a period? When we behold its railroads with their long

dark trains, the many thriving villages that adorn our territory and the many busy business enterprises, and quiet, pleasant villa residences. What a tale is told of progress? To refer at a period, would say 1850, when hamlets and villages were almost unknown in our township, when the spots where now the villages of Telford and Souderton stand were unmarked by a single business place. The hills and valleys were covered with their majestic ancient forests, with the exception of here and there, where occasionally the hardy farmer settlers had effected the forests and erected for themselves a residence.

To-day our country is covered with a network of railroads and telegraph wires; when sixty-two years ago not a single railroad or telegraph pole was dreamed of in the world. Such is progress. The present generation scarcely realizes what a dull creaping old world was when our grand-fathers were boys. Not a sewing machine,

not a reaper, not a steam engine, not a match, not a threshing machine, not a clothes wringer in all the wide world. But then Europe was crowded and old-fashioned, miserable America consisted of a narrow strip of cultivated soil along the Atlantic coast, with here and there a village. Now we cross the continent in six or seven days, the ocean in the same time, send a dispatch to Buenos Ayres and have an answer in a few hours. We have almost annihilated time and space. Another half a century of such progress will so transform our country as to make the present generation stand on their heads with wonder.

Of the blessing which civilization and philosophy bring with them a large proportion is common to all ranks, and would, if withdrawn, be missed painfully by all laborers. For instance the market place which the rustic can now reach in an hour, was thirty years ago, a day's journey from home. The streets

which now affords to the artisan during the whole night, a brilliant light and convenient walk, was a hundred years so dark after sunset that he would not have been able to see his hand, so illpaved that he would have run constant risk of breaking his neck, and so ill watched that he would have been in imminent danger of being knocked down and plundered of his small earnings. Every bricklayer who falls from the scaffold, every sweeper of a crossing who is run over by a carriage may now have his wounds dressed and his limbs set with a skill such as a hundred and fifty years ago all the wealth of a king or of a merchant prince could not have purchased. The term of human life has been lengthened over the whole union, especially in the towns. The year 1685 was not accounted sickly yet more then one out of every twenty-three inhabitants of the capital died. When we speak of this date we have not in view our immediate township, because

civilization was not dreamed of in our section. At present only one inhabitant of the capital in forty dies annually.

It is pleasing to reflect that the public mind of our country has softened while it has ripened, and that we have in course of ages not only a wiser but also a kinder people. There is scarcely a page of the history or lighter literature which does not contain some proof that our ancestors were less humane than their posterity. It is true the compassion ought, like all other feelings, to be under the government of reason, and has, for want of such government, produced some ridiculous and deplorable effects, but the more we study the annals of the past the more we rejoice that we live in a meriful age, in an age in which cruelty is abhorred and in which pain, even when deserved, is inflicted reluctantly and from a duty. Every class, doubtless, has gained largely by this great moral change, but the class which has gained the most is

the poorest, the most defenseless and the most dependent.

The homes of our forefathers where they had to work under few heavy obligations, will ever be a place of interest to us and the coming generations. They not only cleared the land and built houses for their families, but also established churches, schools and besides defended their country when freedom of speech was ever untremmeled. Deeds have been accomplished that may never be blotted from truthful history. Their homes and localities may suffer changes by the onward progress of time, but their associations can never decrease in value to the sensitive mind. The rude columns may crumble from the churches, their dwellings, which have withstood the storms of ages, may fall, the skill of their mechanics may come defaced from the surface, but the fragments scattered over the ground in masses will still speak as the works of theirs. We truly look upon such relics with reverence,

for they recall the fact that ages past they were prominent supporters and ornaments to gigantic edifices, such as their circumstances allowed. Certainly these circumstances excites veneration, because, while we gaze on them, we feel ourselves in the presence of antiquity, living representatives of centuries which have their origin way back in the dim distance of the past. When we reflect upon the past in the dark days of the Revolution it spreads a mystic charm over the aspirations, leads the thoughts back through the archives of the past and repaints the dark days of our country's history. Such are the reflections that comes over the sensative mind by studying our country's history. Their voices seem still to ring on our ears, and their manly forms stand before our eyes; upon these reflections the mind loves to ponder on, for here it learns to appreciate the value of those blessings which we enjoy, but which were purchased at a costly



price by our brave forefathers. fifty years ago.

Is it nota phenomenon, worth our study, that we should be so anxious to place our eyes in the back of our heads just now? That we should so simultaneously and unanimously turn from the rising to the setting sun? That we should one and all slight the glorious future and the prolific present to severe alone the 'dead past'?

The answer varies ever as the souls of men? "Many men of many minds."

But it is certainly pleasure to learn and honor the departed ancestry. Age is honorable.

Our ancestry's record does seem very poor and simple, aside of the prolific catalogue of to-day.

They never built an engine, they never launched a steamboat, they never surveyed a railroad, they never saw a telegraph, they never whispered in a telephone, they never rode a reaper, they never run a sewing machine; it was easily said this world was not worth living in

To enroll facts of by-gone days is an instinct of the race which ever did and ever will continue to come to surface of human society among all nations and at all stages of the world's march. To deny this proposition is to contend against history. The memory of men does not know of a time or a people that did not grace itself with monumental deeds and memorial honors. In the time of the premial Sabbath of God, when the miracle of creation was first commemorated festival days and jubilee songs bloomed and flavored the great highway of time.

Our vanished ancestry made but few things, but those they made well. Their homesteads stand like castles aside of the frail structures of to-day, with the moss of a full century under their roof trees. Their hand work was and is still hand work, the product of patient souls and nimble fingers, and proof against moth and rust. In every sur-

living article which the hands of our fathers and mothers have made we may read their craving after an enduring name and being.

Nor can their offspring fail to respond to so natural a longing. We need not blush over sires so genuine and noble as they proved to be. They were stalwart generations of men and women, of fathers and mothers, of sons and daughters; a hardy race of good blood.

Their century's relics and doings are precious, not merely because they are a hundred years old, but because "they are which testify of them," of the generations that went before. We admire the mountains, not because of their dizzy height alone, but for that those have been passing through all ages that have been. We admire the stars, not on account of their brilliancy alone, but because they looked down on all gener-

ations of men. And such an unction rest upon the remains of our venerable pioneers.

Why are now the handiworks of a century withered effects of an ancestry that is to-day no more than if it never had been, handed down as precious heirlooms to our children, and prized above all others? It is because these relics are not without fathers and mothers. They are the title deeds of homes and land our sires once acquired, and we are but their heirs. Hence do we embalm in memory's cabinet their clumsy tenements, their rude utensils, their instruments so rough. their coaches lubberly, their home spun linens and all their hands have made. Our forefathers have certainly performed works of filial piety and we, in memory of a worthy ancestry, thereby challenge the fulfillment of the first commandment with promise, "Honor thy father and thy mother."

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