Methodism In Southwestern Indiana

By John E. Igleshart

(Continued)

Peter Cartwright and His Boswell, Milburn, the Blind Man Eloquent.

Of Peter Cartwright, Professor Sweet says:64

"It is unnecessary to give an extended account here of this, perhaps the most famous of all Methodist frontier preachers. His Autobiography, which reads like a veritable fairy tale, is still sold and read by thousands, and through that medium his fame has gone beyond the bounds of the Methodist church."

Next, if not equal in importance, to the Notes of Doddridge describing frontier life in the up-country of the Alleghenies is the biography of Cartwright which describes the advancing frontier in the valley of the Ohio and Mississippi. As a child, when moving to Kentucky from Virginia, where he was born, the party of emigrants camped for the night, and his father who was on duty as sentinel, observing in the darkness what appeared to be a slowly moving object, shot it with his rifle and it turned out to be an Indian. So near was the boy Peter to death. A life such as he led in Kentucky still farther west from the frontier in the mountains naturally developed in him the ideals of physical prowess inseparable from a heroic age, which he exemplified in his own life dealing with the rude, lawless and wicked elements, which, until finally eliminated, made war on the circuit rider and his efforts to introduce Christianity among them.

*Circuit Rider Days in Indiana, page 10.*
Accounts of dramatic scenes, of which Cartwright was the hero, only modestly referred to in his biography, are given by Milburn in a volume profusely illustrating and describing in the spirit of true romance the life of the early settlers in the Mississippi Valley.65

Peter Cartwright's connection with Indiana Methodism was limited to the year he served on the Salt River and Shelby circuits in Kentucky in 1805, when he crossed the Ohio river and preached in Indiana, to his visit to the Busroe [Busseron] settlement in 1808, when he put the Shakers to flight, and established the Vincennes circuit, providing for its supply, and in the years 1812 and 1813 when he served as presiding elder of the Wabash district, which included within its bounds the Vincennes and the Patoka circuits.

He was a man of national celebrity, in the religious development of the west, and attended many sessions of the general conference of the Methodist church. He was contemporaneous with Abraham Lincoln in the early life of the latter in Illinois, and defeated Lincoln as a candidate for the Illinois legislature, the first time Lincoln ran for office, the only time he was ever defeated.

William H. Milburn has furnished the best description of Cartwright which I have read. Milburn was born in Philadelphia, a neighbor acquaintance when a child, of the afterwards celebrated Dr. John McClintock. At a very early age he lost the sight of one eye and the sight of the other was so impaired as to make reading difficult, though he was able with much labor and pain to read a little, and through it became an educated man and one of very high culture. At the age of twenty, in 1842, he finished a course in McKendrie College at Jacksonville, Illinois, and entered the ministry under Peter Cartwright, his first presiding elder. At the end of three years his abilities as a natural orator attracted attention, and he was sent east to collect money for a woman's college in the west.

On his trip east, traveling by boat up the Ohio river, just before congress met in Washington, a number of congressmen were on the boat, and with the freedom of western life, card-playing, whiskey-drinking and profanity developed, in which

*The Lance, Cross and Canoe, 392 seq.*
some of the congressmen joined. On the Sabbath, Milburn
was invited to preach, which he did, and at the close of his
sermon most sternly reprimanded the congressmen for their
conduct and condemned their action as an example of the
representatives of a great government. At the close of his
address, he retired to his stateroom, and prepared to meet
some form of criticism for this bold attack. When the mes-
sage did come it was in the form of a contribution of a large
sum of money for those days, together with an invitation on
the part of the congressmen to permit him to let his name
be used in connection with the vacancy to one of the two chap-
laencies to congress.66 Before he left the boat he consented.

He was, at the age of twenty-three or twenty-four, elected
chaplain to congress, and a generation later, in the nineties,
was again chosen chaplain to the United States senate. After
ten years of service in the ministry, largely in the south, and
after having left the Methodist church and taken ordination
as a priest in the Episcopal church, he returned to the ministry
of the Methodist church, a position which he held until his
death. At the end of ten years, his disability, resulting from
his almost total blindness, disabled him from the duties
of the traveling ministry, and he settled in New York city and
devoted his life chiefly to lecturing, in which Dr. McClintock
says he succeeded to an unusual degree.

The impressions of his early life, together with the ideals
developed in the west, had taken possession of him, and his
books are devoted almost entirely to a description of the life
and character of the early west, especially the introduction
of religion into that country. In his books he describes Webster,
Clay and Calhoun, whom he knew intimately while chaplain
of congress. He was intimately in touch with Washington
Irving, William Cullen Bryant, Longfellow, and the leading
men of American letters. He was recognized throughout
America as a man of highest culture. The London Athenaeum
said of him at the time of his lectures in England before 1860:
"To the list of John Milton and other blind men eloquent must
be added the name of William Henry Milburn". He thus de-
scribes Peter Cartwright:66

66 Ten Years of a Preacher's Life, W. H. Milburn, 110.
66 Ten Years of a Preacher's Life, 38.
The first Sunday after our arrival we attended the Methodist church. It was a bright June morning; the place, the people were all strange, and we felt the keen pang of loneliness more on that first day in our Father's house than at any other time. While sadly brooding over the dear old home far away, and thinking of the contrast between it and this unfamiliar place, our attention was arrested by a strange apparition striding up the aisle. All seemed whispering to their neighbors, "there he goes," and all eyes were riveted upon a man of medium height, thick-set, with enormous bone and muscle, and although his iron-grey hair and wrinkled brow told of the advance of years, his step was still vigorous and firm. His face was bronzed by exposure to the weather; he carried a white Quaker hat in his hand, and his upper garment was a furniture calico dressing-gown, without wadding. The truant breeze seemed to seize this garment by its skirt, and lifting it to a level with his arm-pits, disclosed to the gazing congregation a full view of the copper colored pantaloons and shirt of the divine—for he was a divine, and one worth a day's journey to see and hear.

He had then been a backwoods preacher for nearly forty years, ranging the country from the lakes to the gulf, and from the Alleghanies to the Mississippi. He was inured to every form of hardship, and had looked calmly at peril of every kind—the tomahawk of the Indian, the spring of the panther, the hug of the bear, the sweep of the tornado, the rush of swollen torrents, and the fearful chasm of the earth-quake. He had lain in the canebrake, and made his bed upon the snow of the prairie and on the oozy soil of the swamp, and had wandered hunger-bitten amid the solitude of mountains. He had been in jeopardy among robbers, and in danger from desperadoes who had sworn to take his life. He had preached in the cabin of the slave, and in the mansion of the master; to the Indians, and to the men of the border. He had taken his life in his hand, and ridden in the path of whizzing bullets, that he might proclaim peace. He had stood on the outskirts of civilization, and welcomed the first comers to the woods and prairies. At the command of Him who said, "Go into all the world," he had roamed through the wilderness; as a disciple of the man who said "The world is my parish," his travels had equaled the limits of an empire. All this he had done without hope of fee or reward; not to enrich himself or his posterity but as a preacher of righteousness in the service of God and of his fellowmen. Everywhere he had confronted wickedness, and rebuked it; every form of vice had shrunk abashed from his irresistible sarcasm and ridicule, or quivered beneath the fiery look of his indignant invective.

In the character of the Christian minister might have been a slightly exaggerated infusion of the frontiersman's traits. The whole line of his conduct may not have been marked by the spirit of meekness, or guided by infallible wisdom; but let those who have been tried as he was, and have overcome, as he has, be the first to throw the stone of censure at him. Many a son of Anak has been leveled in the dust by his sledge-like fist; and when the blind fury of his assailants urged them headlong into personal conflict with him, his agility, strength, and
resolution gave them cause for bitter repentance. Another Gideon, he has more than once led a handful of the faithful against the armies of the aliens, who were desecrating the place of worship and threatening to abolish religious services, and put them to inglorious flight. But he only girded on his strength thus, and used the weapons that nature gave him, when necessity and the law of self-defense seemed to admit of no escape. The vocation in which he gloried was that of an itinerant preacher, his congenial sphere that of a pastor in the woods. To breathe the words of hope into the ear of the dying, and to minister solace to the survivors; to take little children up in his arms and bless them; to lead the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer, and to warn the ungodly of the error of their ways, entreating them to be reconciled to God by the cross of Christ, was the business of his life. Learning he had none, but the keenest perceptions and the truest instincts enabled him to read human nature as men read a book; a sagacity rarely at fault, a powerful fancy, and a vivid sympathy, that supplied the want of imagination—these, together with the dedication of his whole soul to his work, and a studious and prayerful acquaintance with holy Scripture, made him a workman that needed not to be ashamed.

A voice which, in his prime, was capable of almost every modulation, the earnest force and homely directness of his speech, and his power over the passions of the human heart, made him an orator to win and command the suffrages and sympathies of a western audience. And ever through the discourse, came, and went, and came again, a humor that was resistless, now broadening the features into a merry smile, and then softening the heart until tears stood in the eyes of all. His figures and illustrations were often grand, sometimes fantastical. Like all natives of a new country, he spoke much in metaphors, and his were borrowed from the magnificent realm in which he lived. All forms of nature, save those of the sounding sea, were familiar to him, and were employed with the easy familiarity with which children use their toys. You might hear, in a single discourse, the thunder tread of a frightened herd of buffaloes as they rushed wildly across the prairie, the crash of the windrow as it fell smitten by the breath of the tempest, the piercing scream of the wildcat as it scared the midnight forest, the majestic rhythm of the Mississippi as it harmonized the distant east and west, and united, bore their tributes to the far-off ocean; the silvery flow of a mountain rivulet, the whisper of groves, and the jocund laughter of unnumbered prairie flowers, as they toyed in dalliance with the evening breeze. Thunder and lightning, fire and flood, seemed to be old acquaintances, and he spoke of them with the assured confidence of friendship. Another of the poet's attributes was his—the impulse and power to create his own language; and he was the best lexicon of western words, phrases, idioms, and proverbs, that I have ever met.

Such was the man that now stood before us in the dusk; the famous presiding elder of Illinois—the renowned Peter Cartwright. All honor to the brave old man, who still lives after an itinerancy of untold toil, hardship, and sufferings, which reaches nearly to the verge of sixty
years, and is to-day as indefatigable, zealous, and faithful as when in
the prime of his strength. One feature of his life I must not omit to
mention, the fact that he has sold more books than probably any man
ever did in a new country. The Methodist economy enjoined it as a duty
on the preacher to diffuse a sound literature, and to place good books
in the home of the people. Unwearied here, as in everything else that
he believed to be his duty, this minister never traveled, if in a buggy,
without a trunk, or if on horseback, without a pair of saddle-bags,
crammed with books. These he disposed of with all diligence, and has
thus entitled himself to the lasting gratitude of many a youth, who, but
for him, might have slumbered on without intelligence or education. I
have dwelt upon the character of this man, not only because I love and
revere him, but because I know of no one who may more fitly stand as
the type of the pioneer preachers of the West—men whose worth, self-
sacrifice, and labors, have never had their need of recognition.

While Milburn was a man of northern birth and education,
he early lived and married in Washington, a city southern in
its social life, and spent a large part of the time of his active
ministry in southern cities as a pastor and preacher, beginning
in Illinois. He was familiar with the life and times of the
pioneer circuit rider in the west, both north and south of the
Ohio river, and he knew the writers of prominence in the
entire country in the early times, especially men of the south
like Johnson J. Hooper, Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, T. B.
Thorpe, Albert James Pickett, and others, whose books upon
pioneer life and character in the southwest show the pioneers
there to be in character and dialect only slightly different from
those of the northwest, as the historians also agree.

More than any other writer I know, Milburn, in the middle
of the last century, stood, not only a cosmopolitan American,
but distinctively a representative common type of the north-
west and southwest. His almost total blindness seemed to
enhance the vividness of his pictures of the pioneer fathers
of his time, both east and west. His appreciation of the best
as well as the worst side of human nature at the date of the
establishment in the west of American democracy and Ameri-
can methodism gives a wholesome and truthful picture of
western character in contrast with the apologies of certain
writers of narrow vision, and the continuation in certain
parts in the east, of the antagonisms born in a sectional

* This was still the pioneer age in Indiana, according to Parkman and
Esarey.
struggle to prevent the political scepter from passing west
of the Allegheny mountains.68

Milburn describes the fathers in early Methodism as
follows:69

From my earliest recollection my father's house had been a home
for Methodist preachers, and I had grown up with an ardent admiration
and vehement affection for the toil-worn veterans of the olden time.
The fame of their sufferings and self-sacrifice, of their simple faith and
burning zeal, of their persecutions and successes, of their humor and
elocution, was familiar to me. They were noble men, those fathers of
American Methodism, and worthy to be held in remembrance, Asbury,
McKendree, George, Roberts, Emory, Merwin, Capers, Hope, Hull, and
their associates. Their venerable appearance, set off with straight-
breasted coats and vests and white cravats; their heads surmounted
with broadbrimmed white beavers, and their grave dignity, relieved
and rendered more effective by rays of humor and pleasant recitals of droll
adventures, made a profound and lasting impression upon my childish
fancy. It was usual among people of our condition in Philadelphia, to
have "evening companies" several times a year, to which the prominent
preachers and their families, besides other members of the society, were
invited. I heartily wish that Mr. Dickens, whose chief ministerial
acquaintances seem to belong to the school of Stiggins and Chadband,
could have been present on some of these occasions. He would have
seen representatives of hearty manhood that must have won his admiring
regard, and heard bursts of humor as genial and pathetic as his own.

They were men of a wide and varied acquaintance with life, and
an experience of the deep things of God; not lettered to any considerable
extent, but reading human nature and its histories at first-hand. The
ardor of an early enthusiasm had not been toned down by conven-
tionalism, or chilled by skepticism and unbelief. The hardships, suffer-
ings, and dangers which they had cheerfully undergone, the smallness
of their salaries, the self-denying spirit which they were wont to manifest,
together with their straightforward, independent bearing, made them
dear to the hearts of the people. The relations of pastors and flock
were of the most simple, friendly, and even intimate character; and
whilst the seriousness of a Christian bearing was never compromised,
tercesse was beautified and adapted to all sorts and classes of persons
by an infusion of the most genial human tenderness.

Never, I suppose, will food taste as sweet to me again as did the

*Those writers who refuse to see the better side of western life and charac-
ter prefer to confine their view to that class of low life described by Dr. Frederick
J. Turner as "the scum that the waves of advancing civilization bore before
them." "The significance of the frontier in American history."—Report Am.
Hist. Assn. 1899, 232. Turner's essays have only recently been gathered in one
volume under the title, The Frontier in American History, which for the first
time gives an adequately broad view of the birth and growth of American
Democracy.

*Ten Years of Preacher Life, 35.
suppers of those early days at the children’s second table. But the
relish of the viands was surpassed by the zest with which we youngsters,
in the seats allotted to us among our elders, in the parlor, listened to
the stories and adventures of these men, who in truth seemed to us
prophets of the Lord. They were ever kindly in their regard for chil-
dren, and were accustomed to speak some comfortable words to each
cchild present. The evening’s close was always hallowed by a chapter
read from the Bible, a hymn in which the voices of all present joined,
and a prayer earnestly commending every one present to the care of
Him who careth for all. What a strange fire glowed within the bosom,
as I, a tow-headed urchin, stood with my face to the wall and listened
to the harmonious voices swelling the praises of God, and thought of
those glorious fathers, who, in all their wanderings and trials, felt that
they were hidden beneath the hollow of an Almighty hand. They were
the Paladins of my childhood’s chivalry; knights, the weapons of whose
warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down
d of strongholds.
This early veneration and affection went with us to the west, and
as soon as we were able to take possession of a house with a spare room,
that room was styled the prophet’s chamber, and our abode again
became the home of the preachers. Making allowance for the differences
between an older and a new country, they were men of the same school
as those we had before known; for, notwithstanding the play of the
most decisive individuality, the strongest family likeness marks all the
Methodist preachers I have seen. I knew no greater pleasure than to
act the part of hostler on behalf of the horses of our welcome guests,
aquiring thereby a knowledge and skill in the use of horseflesh which
stood me in good stead years after.

IDEALS OF THE CIRCUIT RIDER

The foundations of American methodism were laid by
Francis Asbury on the ideals of John Wesley, who commis-
sioned the former for work. John Wesley was the first circuit
rider. Suzanah Wesley, his mother, a great woman, was the
twenty-fourth child of her parents, and her son, John, was
the fifteenth in a family of nineteen. Four of her children
became famous. John Wesley always claimed that his mother
was the founder of Methodism, and the history of his life
furnishes evidence in support of that statement. She was

*Elbert Hubbard, Little Journeys to the Homes of Great Reformers, John
Wesley. This talented writer aspired to lead a school of thought which gave
too scant reverence to religion in any of its forms, but who is cited because his
biography of Wesley contains pivotal facts in condensed form which show Wesley
to be one of the great reformers of the world, and his biography will be con-
ced to be free from bias in favor either of the Methodists or any other religious
denomination.
in the great religious awakening of the eighteenth century in England in a sense what Cornelia was in Rome; it was Max Muller who said that Rome owed more to the mother of the Gracchi than to all of her grammarians.

John and Charles Wesley were invited by Oglethorpe—all were Oxford men—to go to Georgia, of which the latter was colonial governor, Charles “the greatest producer of hymns the world has ever seen” as private secretary, and John as missionary. Oglethorpe’s plan was an ideal commonwealth. Slavery, which John Wesley christened “the sum of all Villainies” and the shadow in the colony of the “state religion of England which was a galvanized and gilded thing possessing everything but the breath of life," prevented John Wesley succeeding as he wished, and he returned to England and was chosen college professor at Oxford for his moral influence, where he became the centre and leader of the great evangelical revival which began in Oxford university. He induced Asbury to come as a missionary to America and ordained him bishop. Asbury compared to Wesley is described as one who saved America as Wesley saved England.71

Methodism raised the standard of intellect in England to a degree no man can compute, says Leckey, the free thinking historian.72 With the foundations laid by Asbury, American methodism became a vital and integral factor of American democracy which came into full development at the time and locality of John Shrader’s labors.

Asbury in labors, suffering, spiritual force, intensity and persistency of purpose and absolute selfishness, rivaled, if he did not outrival, Wesley. He became the faithful replica of Wesley. For nearly fifty years he was the out rider of an ever growing army of apostolic men who knew neither self nor fear, who conquered a continent, and who covered it with a network of circuits and conferences. Wesley himself never devised and carried into execution so many plans of benevolence in connection with societies as did Asbury for the Methodist Episcopal church. Nor was this all. He was the first man on the continent to introduce Sabbath schools73 in

71 Francis Asbury Centenary, Vol., 86.
72 Elbert Hubbard, John Wesley, 37.
73 Strickland, Life and Times of Francis Asbury, 217.
Hanover county, Virginia in 1786, five years in advance of all others. He did not wait for the organization of educational, missionary, Bible, preacher, relief, tract and Sunday school societies before entering upon that work connected with those benevolent departments of church action, but combining all these departments in his own person, he originated and carried them into successful operation, and from the fact that these benevolent agencies all stand to this day, constantly increasing in magnitude and power, it is obvious that to this wonderful man belongs a share of wisdom rarely found to exist in man, and such as fitted him in a most eminent degree for the position he occupied as the head of the Methodist Episcopal church in America.

Before his death, $2000 was given him to aid in his general work. This sum he left by will to the infant publishing department of his church, which, by continuous growth, became and for many years has been the greatest religious publishing house in America and the oldest publishing house in the new world.

Asbury, under a resolution suggested by him to the general conference in New York in 1789, read an address of congratulation signed by Coke and himself, bishops, to Washington upon his first accession to the presidency. The Presbyterians and others followed, but Asbury was the leader of all in this step. Washington's answer was addressed "To the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal church in the United States of America", and concluded by imploring "a divine benediction on the committee of bishops and your religious community". With Washington, Asbury had many and friendly interviews, and was always on the side of the patriots in the Revolution. Asbury had no home in America. In forty-five years he was always on the road. He prayed in 10,000 households and

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"Strickland, Life and Times of Francis Asbury, 218.
Strickland, Asbury, 232-234. These two documents are of historical interest. Seventy-five years later, in 1864, the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, sitting in Philadelphia, adjourned to permit its body of bishops to present an address to Abraham Lincoln, pledging to him in the darkest period of the Civil war the aid and support of northern Methodism, and he responded that it was not the fault of other churches that Methodism sent more nurses to the hospital and more soldiers to the field than any other denomination.
Strickland, 230-7-8."
preached 17,000 sermons—labors incredible but for evidence contained in his journal which records the times and places.**

Asbury was once asked by an eminent divine belonging to another branch of the church, "How is it that you take men from the tail of the plough, the blacksmith's shop, the carpenter's bench, and without sending them to college or divinity schools, set them to preach at once, and in a few years they became able ministers of the New Testament, equal, if not superior, to our men trained in collegiate and theological halls?" The venerable bishop answered, "We tell one another all we know, and then use it at once. A penny used is better than an idle dollar. You study books, we study men, the Bible, the hymn-book and Wesley's sermons, and are instant in season and out of season. I once picked up a fiddler, and he became a saint and a great preacher."

The almost military organization which Wesley impressed on methodism, gave it unequaled power in the new country. The class-meeting and its leader, the steward, the exhorters and local preachers, the circuit preachers and presiding elders, and over all, the superintendents or bishops, formed an army in which the drill and discipline were thorough and complete, while the spirit animating the whole was one of martial enthusiasm. Rank and file alike looked upon themselves as the soldiers of the Lamb. They looked upon human life as a conflict in which they warred against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Their modes of thought and forms of speech were full of militant images, while their hymns and songs throbbed with the spirit of battle and of victory, and the banner of the cross was the watchword of old and young, men and women.**

Milburn concludes a sketch of Asbury in these words:

Such a man was Bishop Asbury, to my mind one of the most important, if not the most important personage in the ecclesiastical history of this continent. With all respect to Jonathan Edwards, Dr. Dwight, Dr. Channing, and all the other eminent and pre-eminent men of New England—I have read them, and knew some of them—I think that Francis Asbury, that first superintendent and bishop of our Methodist church, was the most renowned and redoubtable soldier of the cross that

**Tipple, Francis Asbury, the Prophet of the Long Road, 158-182; Curnock's edition of Wesley's Journal.

**Milburn, Lance, Cross and Canoe, 351.
ever advanced the standard of the Lord upon this continent. Yet you will not find his name in a single history of the United States that I know of; and it is a burning shame that it is so. He traveled for fifty years, on horseback, from Maine to Georgia, and from Massachusetts to the far west, as population extended; journeying in that time, as was computed, about three hundred thousand miles. He had the care of all the churches; was preaching instant in season and out of season; was laboring indefatigably with the young men to inspire and stimulate them; winning back the lost and bringing amorphous elements into harmony, in a church, which, when he began with it, in 1771, numbered probably not fifty members; and which, when he was an old man—he died in 1816—numbered, black and white, from Maine to California, and from far northwestern Oregon to sunny southern Florida, nearly a million of members. So vast a church did Francis Asbury build, almost solely by his own profound wisdom, untiring effort, and ceaseless devotion; and he did as much for building schoolhouses and colleges, erecting churches, establishing sound views of morality, and lofty purity in the forms of life; for gathering and establishing in doctrine and discipline this immense body of Christians, now (1850) the most numerous in the country, having more by one-third of stated ministers, and more colleges, than any other two denominations in the land. That one who has done this should not have had his name even so much as named in a single school history in the United States, I say is a shame. This man was surrounded by men much akin to him; for he seemed to infuse his spirit into all with whom he came in contact.79

No man in the ecclesiastical history of the new world had labored and suffered as he had, and none had achieved greater results. The growing host of itinerant preachers beheld him with admiration and wonder as he hastily passed in his long routes—meeting them ever and anon for a few days and then disappearing on the frontier or in the distant north and south—night and day, sounding the trumpet of the gospel and hastening forward as if the final judgment were about to break upon the world.80 One of that host of itinerant preachers was John Shrader, who in his twenty-second year was ordained deacon by Bishop Asbury at Lebanon, Tennessee, at the Tennessee conference in 1814, two years before the death of the bishop.

Moses Ashworth attended the western conference in 1805, 1806, 1807, and 1808, over all of which Bishop Asbury presided, and Ashworth was ordained by him. Cartwright’s Autobiography is full of facts and incidents describing his

79 W. H. Millburn, Pioneers, Preachers and People, 369.
80 Stephen, Life of Nathaniel Bangs, quoted in Francis Asbury’s Centenary, Vol. 87.
meeting with Asbury, his ordination, his appointments as presiding elder by the bishop over his earnest protest, the fatherly care and advice received from the bishop, and a full account of his death is given.81 Much of the resemblance in spirit and work of these two wonderful men of different type may, no doubt, be traced to the impress of one upon the other.

Until his health gave way, under the exposure in all kinds of weather in continuous travel on horse-back, often sleeping in the unsheltered wilderness, which compelled him in 1821 to locate, and still later as a local preacher during a long life, John Shrader and his associates faithfully carried out the ideals of Wesley and Asbury, and followed their example in the introduction and spread of the gospel in the west.

HARRISON AND THE CIRCUIT RIDERS

The comparison already referred to between the life and work of John Shrader in the second decade of the nineteenth century as a circuit rider, like Cartwright, Ashworth and others, under the commission and inspiration of Francis Asbury, the greatest of all the circuit riders, with that of the early Jesuit missionaries of the Catholic church, has its confirmation in contemporaneous authority. The method of Catholic treatment of converts was, however, wholly different from that of methodism.82 The former was European in its origin and ideals. The character of the people of the early French settlements of the old northwest, Kaskaskia, Cahokia and Vincennes has been so frequently described as to leave no doubt as to the policy of the Catholic church in its dealings with the early French traders, Indians and half-breeds at the trading posts established by the French.

Faux on his trip west from Philadelphia in the fall of 1819, to visit his friend, John Ingle of Saundersville in the English settlement, stopped long enough in Vincennes to take an inventory of the people and their appearance, and thus describes them, but while honest, his want of judicial temperament, and his bias in favor of friendly treatment and against an unfriendly reception, so colors his story, as a rule un-

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81 Strickland, Cartwright, 58, 97, 98, 111, 122, 127, 139, 140, 152.
82 Holliday, Indiana Methodism, 49.
friendly to western life, that much allowance must be made for it:

The town of Vincennes is more than 200 years old; older than Philadelphia; but being of French origin, and in the neighborhood of the Indians, ever hostile to the inhabitants and settlers round it, has grown but slowly, and is an antique lump of deformity. Although long the capital and mother town of the state, it looks like an old, worn out, dirty village of wooden frame houses, which a fire might improve, for improvement generally has to travel through flames. Here is no church, save the Catholic church, the inhabitants being principally French Canadians, and the rest the refuse of the east, whose crimes have driven them hither, or dissipated young men unable to live at home. Hence Sunday is only a day of frolic and recreation, which commences on the Saturday evening, when every preparation is devoutly made for the Sabbath, and off they start in large parties on foot and on horseback, all riflemen and cunning hunters, into the deep recesses of the forest, camping out all night in readiness for Sabbath sacrifices, the bucks, the bears, the squirrels, and the turkeys, ready to be offered up by peep of day. This holy day is consequently ushered in by guns, which continue to roar in and around the town all day until sunset. The stranger might think it was closely besieged, or that an enemy was approaching.

I rambled round the town to the court-house, or shire-hall, really externally an elegant building, but decaying before finished, as though the state were unable to finish what it had so well begun before counting the cost.

I saw a large party of Miami Indian hunters, accompanied by their ugly squaws, all on horseback, and all astride, with their tomahawks and frightful knives girdled round them, dressed in blankets and turbans, and painted red, green, black, and white; every feature having a different shade of colour, and all, save the squaws, apparently half drunk, having their bottle of fire-water, or whiskey, with them, which, after drinking from it themselves, they stopped and handed to me and my friend Baker. We took it and applied it to our lips, it being considered the perfection of rudeness and barbarism, and little short of enmity, to refuse anything so kindly offered. This tribe had approached the town for the purpose of selling their venison. Each horse carried two or three quarters, fat and fine, ready skinned, and hanging down its sides. The price was only a quarter dollar for 30 lbs., not an English half-penny per pound.

Although Vincennes is an old mother town, abounding rich land, it is uncultivated, and there is occasionally a scarcity of necessaries, particularly of milk and butter, which, with the worst tea, are dealt out very sparingly; no lump sugar, no brandy, no segars, no spitoons are seen at this hotel.83

Wilson's History of Dubois County, a part of Knox county before 1814, including biographies of Capt. Toussaint Dubois

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83 Thwaites, Early Western Travels, XI, 297.
and the very Rev. Joseph Kundeck V.G., contains an interesting and impartial description of Knox county life at the time of which I am speaking. Perhaps the most comprehensive view of both sides of early French dominion and the nature of its mixed society under Catholic control is found in Milburn's delightful chapter which he calls a French idyll.\(^8^4\)

When W. H. Harrison was appointed governor of Indiana territory upon its organization in 1800, he removed to Vincennes capital, where he lived until after the admission of the state of Indiana to the union in 1816. Of this city, Esarey says, referring to Harrison's removal there as his residence "Besides, there was scarcely a western post at that time with a reputation as objectionable as that of Vincennes."\(^8^5\)

Here came Cartwright in 1808 as a great controversial debater and planted the standards of methodism in an organized circuit.\(^8^6\) In 1812 for a year Vincennes was his residence as presiding elder. Moses Ashworth in 1807 launched methodism on the Silver Creek circuit on its separate career, in Indiana territory.\(^8^7\)

In 1815 John Shrader was sent by the Tennessee conference on the Green River circuit to Vincennes, and the vigorous domination of methodism in the wilderness settlements is mentioned by Elijah Goodwin, a pioneer preacher of much force, whose relation to methodism as a preacher in a rival denomination became somewhat strained in "the struggle between the sects" but who as a youth in Daviess county was under Methodist influence, and whose testimony is an unconscious tribute to the wonderful success of Shrader's work on the circuit, which met him wherever he went, and this was on his first appearance in Indiana in 1815 and 1816.\(^8^8\) All of these circuit riders were men of prominence in the then thinly settled territory before the admission of the state, and there can be little doubt that Harrison knew them all when engaged in their work in southern Indiana.

The testimony of Harrison himself, based in part, I be-


\(^{85}\) Esarey, *Hist. of Indiana*, I, p. 175.

\(^{86}\) Cartwright's *Autobiography*, 55.

\(^{87}\) Sweet's *Circuit Rider*, 8.

lieve, upon his experience with and knowledge of Ashworth, Cartwright and Shrader, as well as others, must always stand as the judgment of a competent and impartial historian. The "Vincennes" circuit in 1809 was filled by Rev. William Winans.

William Henry Harrison, governor of Indiana territory, had established his headquarters there; and William Winans was the first protestant preacher to visit the place. One of his first services was a night appointment for preaching in the fort. The government officers, a few English and French settlers, and two or three Indians, make up the audience. A few tallow candles furnish all their light for the occasion. One of these is kindly held by Governor Harrison for the young preacher, while he reads his text and hymn. And in that dingy room young Winans delivers his gospel message in such a manner as commends both the preacher and his message to the hearts of his hearers. Winans was a young man of fine personal appearance; not handsome, but commanding in his appearance; a little above the medium height, with an open countenance, a clear, strong voice, an easy, rather negligent manner, that showed perfect self-possession and self-reliance, qualities of great value to the frontier missionary, who has no treasury to depend on, and whose audiences are, for the most part, composed of strangers. Winans did not disappoint the expectations of his friends. He rose to eminence, and was for many years a recognized leader of the forces of methodism in the state of Mississippi, into the bounds of which conference he fell by the division of territory.88

The following testimonial of the character of the circuit rider is given in a letter written by William Henry Harrison before he became president:

Who and what are they? I answer, entirely composed of ministers who are technically denominated "circuit-riders," a body of men who, for zeal and fidelity in the discharge of the duties they undertake, are not exceeded by any others in the world. I have been a witness of their conduct in the western country for nearly forty years. They are men whom no labor tires, no scenes disgust, no danger frightens, in the discharge of their duty. To gain recruits for their Master's service,

88 Sweet, Circuit Rider, 9; Esarey, History of Indiana, 1, 218; Holliday, Methodism, 26. For a fuller account of Dr. Winan's distinguished career see W. C. Smith, Indiana Miscellanea, 52.
they sedulously seek out the victims of vice in the abode of misery and wretchedness. The vow of poverty is not taken by these men, but their conduct is precisely the same as it would have been had they taken one. Their stipulated pay is barely sufficient to enable them to perform the services assigned to them. With much the larger portion, the horse which carries them is the only animated thing which they can call their own, and the contents of their valise, or saddle-bags, the sum total of their earthly possessions.

If within the period I have mentioned, a traveler on the western frontier had met a stranger in some obscure way, or assiduously urging his course through the intricacies of a tangled forest, his appearance staid and sober, and his countenance indicating that he was in search of some object in which his feelings were deeply interested, his apparel plain but entirely neat, and his baggage adjusted with peculiar compactness, he might be almost certain that the stranger was a Methodist preacher, hurrying on to perform his daily task of preaching to separate and distant congregations; and should the same traveler, upon approaching some solitary, unfinished, and scarcely habitable cabin, hear the praises of the Creator chanted with peculiar melody, or the doctrines of the Savior urged upon the attention of some six or eight individuals with the same energy and zeal that he had seen displayed in addresses to a crowded audience of a populous city, he might be certain, without inquiry, that it was the voice of the Methodist minister.91

While Harrison was an aristocrat and an earnest partisan in favor of slavery, (?) when he formed his estimate of the circuit rider of the Methodist church, the divergence of interest and ideals of the northwest and the southwest, particularly the result of slavery agitation, had not yet made great progress. There was yet much in common between these sections, which contributed to the formation of American democracy.92

STRUGGLE OF THE SECTS IN INDIANA

Shrader and Ashworth came from Tennessee—Cartwright from Kentucky. The first two were not controversialists and particularly Shrader was the opposite of Cartwright, who was a controversialist of first rank for the time. Shrader was educated, and the Wheelers and Parrett were educated in England.

The Baptists were first to cross the mountains with the earliest wave of pioneer life and, better than all others till the Methodists came, represented the body of the people and knew how to reach them, and they have held their precedence in Kentucky till this day.93 The stern character of the Scotch with a foundation of Calvinistic theology was not softened in that movement of the Scotch Irish into Kentucky, the third wave of frontier emigration, the overflow from which a generation later formed the body of the settlers of the southern tier of counties in Indiana. Roosevelt says that their theology lacked the warmth of that of the Baptists and the Methodists.94

The first aid to Baptists and Presbyterians in early Evansville came from the local organizations in Henderson, Kentucky, which town was a generation older than Evansville.95 But this was an organization merely and without a regular preacher.

The ideals of Methodists were Puritan English from Wesley through Asbury, presented by a pioneer ministry. Cartwright, Ashworth and Shrader were all ordained by Asbury and sent by him into the territory north of the Ohio river; the Presbyterian minister who represented that denomination came to the west as a missionary with the tenets and conventions of the theological schools.96

In the great revival of 1800 in Kentucky the Presbyterians,

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94 Roosevelt, Winning of the West, Pt. 1, Ch. 5, p. 170.
95 Riley, History of Walnut Street Church, 18.
96 The first Presbyterian minister resident in Evansville was Rev. Calvin Butler (father of the late John M. Butler, one of the leaders of the Indiana Bar). He came in 1830 and remained four years, after which they remained some years with no pastor to the church, which was built under Butler's administration, during which interval services were held by Parrett and Wheeler, in which all denominations joined. Riley's History of Walnut Street Church, 18.
Baptists and Methodists joined forces, but they were before and after that time at loggerheads, and the controversies among the sects were probably fostered by the jealousy and fears of the Calvinistic elements in the east that individualism unrestrained in the west would endanger the liberties and religion of the former. There seemed to be a real apprehension on the part of the leaders in eastern religious and intellectual life that the west was drifting into conditions which threatened the existence of organized society as it existed in the east.  

New England bitterly opposed the granting of homesteads to the early settlers upon the public domain in the west. John Adams in a speech in congress said:

The slaveholders of the south have bought the co-operation of the western country by the bribe of western lands, abandoning to the new western states their own proportion of the public property, and aiding them in the design of grasping all the lands in their own hands.

Turner says that the east has always feared the result of an unregulated advance of the frontier, and has tried to check it and guide it. The most effective efforts of the east to regulate the frontier came through its educational and religious activities, exercised by interstate migration and missionary activities. The dread of western emancipation from New England political and economic control was paralleled by her fears lest the west cut loose from her religion. Various sects and denominations strove for the mastery of the west. Home missions and western colleges were established, some of the sections sent missionaries, and the real struggle was between the sects. The contest for power and the expansive tendency, furnished to the various sects by the existence of the moving frontier, must have had important results on the character of the religious organizations in the United States. The multiplication of rival churches in the little frontier towns had deep and lasting social effects—the religious aspect of the frontier makes a chapter in our history which needs study.

"Lyman Beecher issued an address expressing this fear, which is quoted in Turner's The Frontier in American History, 35. Later his son, Henry Ward Beecher, came to Indianapolis and remained as pastor for some time."

"P. J. Turner, The Frontier in American History, 35. The Christian Traveler, by Isaac Reed, and Memoir of Sylvester Sooel, by Wood, contain reliable record of Presbyterian missionary work in Indiana in the early part of the last century."
The facts furnished by Turner which call attention to the struggle between the sects for the control of the west, throw light upon some dramatic events in the history of Indiana, especially in its educational history. Interpreting these facts from the viewpoint mentioned, the verification of Dr. Turner’s statement is found. In the establishment of a state university in embryo at Bloomington, and in the development of education by the state for a period of more than fifty years, the work was marked by a bitter struggle with the Presbyterian element, on the one side, thoroughly organized, probably in the east, and the Baptists, Methodists, Quaker and other denominations on the other side.

Dr. Holliday, who had personal knowledge of the facts relating to the history of education in pioneer Indiana, charges with much feeling that the Presbyterian church assumed practically exclusive control of the state university, the selection of its teachers, and the expenditure of its funds, directly in aid of that religious sect and to the injury and exclusion of members of other sects.99

Professor Sweet gives the facts on this subject in an impartial manner. The Indiana Methodist episcopal conference in 1834 presented a memorial, including a petition to the state legislature of Indiana, demanding an equitable share of the privileges in the state university for the Methodist church with others. In the memorial it is stated:100

We would impress it upon your honorable body that literature belongs to no one denomination of persons, and that no one exclusively, should be allowed to possess the keys that unlock her treasures. We apprehend that the funds of our State College were designed by their munificent donors to patronize science and advocate the cause of general literature and not of religious sects, and should it be divested from its original design (directly or indirectly) the donors are despoiled of a rich inheritance, and the legacy itself betrayed to a very questionable purpose * * * . We look in its charter (State College) and read that the places of president, professors and tutors are open, soliciting capacity to occupy them without regard to religious professions or doctrines. We then turn our eyes on the faculty from the organization of the institution up to this hour and we see one common hue, one common religion characterize every member, as if capacity and fitness were combined to one church and one set of religious opinion. The memorial did

99 Indiana Methodism, 317.
100 Sweet, Circuit Rider Days in Indiana, 59.
not ask that the state college be put either in whole or in part under the control of the Methodist church but they simply asked that the trustees of the college be elected for a definite term of years and that vacancies, as they occurred, should be filled by the legislature and not by the remaining members of the board of trustees, as had been the custom heretofore.

This memorial was signed by the members of the conference, and six other similar memorials were presented to the state legislature numerously signed, all of which were referred to the committee on education, but for some reason the committee never took any action in reference to them.

That there were deep feeling, controversy and friction among the people in Indiana resulting from this struggle among the sects, there can be no doubt. It began with the beginning of the state university, and was in a large degree the cause of the establishment of a number of denominational colleges, some of them in protest against what was called the denominational control of the state university; but it required two generations of educated men and women from all the colleges in Indiana to silence that controversy, and it is only in recent years that the large appropriations for educational purposes by the legislature to the state university have not met with more or less opposition from the source mentioned; the deep and permanent influence of that struggle upon the social and religious life and character of the people of Indiana can never be measured, and can only be understood by the older generation; there is little mention of it in the writings of the time.101

Whatever may be said of this controversy which began with the beginning of public education in the state, much allowance must be made for the spirit of the age, and it cannot be denied that among the backwoodsmen who first settled Indiana there was much illiteracy, and that both secular and

101 It is said by persons well informed on the subject that during the term when Conrad Baker was governor, and Will Cumback, lieutenant governor of Indiana, the fierce controversy which arose between those two gentlemen in connection with the proposal to elect Baker U. S. senator and permit Cumback to become governor, was one in which two great religious denominations became involved; and that these gentlemen, who were both men of high ability and character, each a leader in one of the churches referred to, were killed politically in the duel, although it was conceded by all that the influence in the legislature of the members of the two churches combined could easily have controlled it.
religious education was greatly to be desired. However such results may have been obtained, and making due allowance for the weakness of human nature under the circumstances, it must be admitted that the stand taken by the Presbyterians, both in the matters of secular education and in the demand for an educated ministry, have in a substantial degree aided in the elevation of those standards to that extent they are entitled to credit.

AMERICAN METHODISM AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

When I was drafted by the mayor of Evansville, in 1916, into the organization and work of the historical commission of the centennial of Evansville, I began immediately to extend my reading on frontier history. In 1918 appeared a History of the American People, in which I was astonished to find the statement that “Dr. Frederick J. Turner is the first true interpreter of the frontier in our history”; and as a summary of the chapter on the “Northwest a National Domain”, Professor West defines “the key to the meaning of the west in American history” in terms first announced by Turner in 1893. In his reference to Turner, West also particularly recommends every student to read an article by Woodrow Wilson, and one by Samuel Crothers. The article of Wilson included the statement in substance that our national history has for the most part been written by New England men from a sectional viewpoint, which over-estimated Puritan influence in the development of national character. The article of Crothers in a vein of keen humor if not sarcasm charges in substance that the narrow sectional view of New England life has been mistaken as the basis of the spirit of the life of the whole nation.

Turner’s writings, with the exception of the volume Rise of the New West, have been delivered as addresses and published in magazines, but in 1920 most of them were published in book form under the title The Frontier in American History.

10a William Mason West, History of the American People, 270.
10b Id. 270
10c For a fuller statement on this point, see Indiana Magazine of History, 15, p. 144; also Woodrow Wilson, The Course of American History (more literature), 218; Samuel McChord Crothers, The Pardoner’s Wallet. The land of the large and charitable air, 148.
Without attempting to quote the summary of Professor West, or to summarize in limited space so great a work, which throughout all of the addresses centres to the single theme, I may say that Dr. Turner's views expressed in various forms are to the effect that the dominant democracy recognized as the true type of our national democracy, was developed into full life and power about the period which he fixes as the rise of the new west (1819-1829), that Thomas Jefferson was the John the Baptist, not the Moses of democracy;\textsuperscript{104} that notwithstanding the shudder with which New England Federalism looked at the democratic ideas of those who refused to recognize the established order, there came into the union a sisterhood of frontier states, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri, with provisions for the franchise which brought in a full democracy;\textsuperscript{105} and that the spirit of that democracy typified by Abraham Lincoln embodied as its ideal, emphasis upon the worth and possibilities of the common man, of its belief in the right of every man to rise to the full measure of his own nature, under conditions of social mobility. "Western democracy was no theorist's dream. It came stark and strong from the American forest."\textsuperscript{106} The westerner has been the type and master of our national life.\textsuperscript{107} In his editor's introduction to the \textit{Rise of the New West} Albert Bushnell Hart emphasizes the fact that Turner is a descendant of New Yorkers of New England stock, "but" admits that "he is native to the west".

He does not even call attention to the originality or great historical value of Dr. Turner's interpretation of frontier life and dismisses the subject generally with three sentences, including a reference to the transformation of the west from a rude and boisterous frontier to a group of states, similar in part to the process through which Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and Virginia passed as colonies.\textsuperscript{108}

The authorities cited referring to Turner's writings and especially the writings themselves make clear that the dominant democracy of America today came from the beginnings of frontier life in the Ohio valley in the society of the children

\textsuperscript{104} Frontier in American History, 251.

\textsuperscript{105} Turner, \textit{Rise of the New West}, 251-2.

\textsuperscript{106} Id. 113.

\textsuperscript{107} Woodrow Wilson, \textit{The Course of American History} (mere literature), 218.

\textsuperscript{108} Editor's Introduction, \textit{Rise of the New West}, p. XIV.
of the wilderness tutored in the schooling of the wilderness, freed from poisonous European germs existing in the Atlantic coast states from which the backwoodsmen of the Alleghenies and the men of the western waters and their ancestors had fled or been driven into the wilderness. Their Hoosier descendants have come into their own, but they also are very slow to recognize the fact. Parkman is recognized by all succeeding historians as master in his matchless narration of the story of frontier life during the period covered by his writings. “Perhaps because he was a New Englander he missed a great opportunity and neglected to portray the formation and advance of the backwood society.” Turner has done this, and has made it clear that upon free soil, under free institutions, about the time and place of Abraham Lincoln, in the midst of the “plain people” in southern Indiana, American democracy produced its first true type.

Methodism came from the southwest to the northwest. A proper understanding of the development of both, in the first three decades of the last century, will show that the itinerant system of methodism was the handmaid of democracy in the Ohio valley. The Methodist preacher made no compromises on questions of right and wrong, and when the issue of toleration of human slavery in the ownership of slaves by a Methodist bishop's wife was first presented, the church was divided by secession of the southern churches in 1844. The great schism in methodism resulting in the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church south was caused by the controversy over slavery and was one of the most potent exhibitions of public opinion in the nation following the rapid growth of free American democracy. Political compromises delayed the Civil war seventeen years later, but it resulted from the same cause.

Allen Wiley’s History of the Introduction of Methodism in Southeastern Indiana traces for a short period a number of the circuit riders in southwestern Indiana while both sections were in one conference, but gives meager details of little aid in any inquiry like the present one. But as a history of methodism beginning in territorial days, as well as the record of pioneer life and society, it will rank as one of the most

\[\text{Turner, Frontier in American History, 163.}\]
These were the times of Christian commonwealth builders who came, as Harrison describes them, with the first pioneers in the wilderness. Such men were Francis Asbury, Moses Ashworth, Peter Cartwright, John Shrader, and that host of itinerants, worthy to be described and carefully studied by the future historian. No history of Methodism, no history of American democracy, is complete without them.

The Circuit Rider as Preacher, Statesman and Educator

One of the primary duties of an itinerant was to seek out the settlers and to conduct service in private houses or public places, and, whenever local talent in the person of local preachers was available, enlist it in religious work. It was an important step of this character in which John Shrader had gathered together three educated and able Wesleyan ministers, who had just come into the English settlement in southwestern Indiana, and announced regular preaching every other Sabbath in the hamlet of Evansville, just one hundred years ago, recorded in local history as an event of unusual importance which we celebrate today.

Milburn thus describes his first sermon in Illinois:

As we proceeded, he told me I should have to preach that afternoon at four o'clock, and he turned a deaf ear to all my entreaties to be let off. Up to this time I had never taken a text, for all my exercises had been in the shape of exhortations, delivered after some more experienced person had expounded. My first sermon must be preached somewhere, and why not then and there? So it was delivered to half a dozen men in their shirt-sleeves, with the sweat of the plough on their brows, their teams left standing in the fields the while, and to as many women in sun-bonnets, whose knitting and pipes were laid aside when the hymn was given out. The rustle of the green leaves stirred by the pleasant wind, the song of the birds, and the golden sunshine as it lay upon the puncheon floor on that cheerful summer afternoon, are remembered yet, and also that my first sermon was but fifteen minutes long.

The next day we reached a village consisting of a dozen or twenty houses. In the evening we attended an examination of the school; at

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120 Thirty-seven articles in the Western Christian Advocate in 1846 by Allen Wiley. No. 2 of this series is an ably written description of the character, life and habits of the men and women of the early time in Southern Indiana. With it should be read Dr. Logan Esarey's article on the "Hoosier Aristocracy," Indiana Magazine of History, Sept., 1918.

121 W. H. Milburn, Ten Years of Preacher's Life, 60 and 90.
the close of the exercises, one of my new friends mounted an empty barrel which stood in the corner of the room, and had been used as a seat, and called out in the old Norman form, "Oyez! Oyez! Take notice Brother William Milburn will preach in the meeting-house to-morrow night at early candle-lighting!" No sooner was the last word out of his mouth than the barrel-head gave way and the reverend clerk, falling to the earth, went after the fashion of Regulus, rolling about among the legs of the audience, his desperate exertions to escape only making his plight the sadder and increasing the confusion.

In busy seasons of the year, when the people were engaged in ploughing, planting, harvesting, or gathering corn fodder, a week-day congregation would sometimes consist of three or four aged sisters.

The preacher was frequently a fine singer, and his equipment as chorister was essential to successful church meetings. He usually armed himself with three tunes, a long, short and common meter; but this did not always prevent someone starting a long meter tune to shorter meter words. Milburn describes the work of pastor in the sparsely settled wilderness, which shows the adaptation of the itinerant system to the needs of all of the settlers.\textsuperscript{112}

It required four weeks to make the round, a ride of nearly three hundred miles, and demanding on an average a sermon a day. After the public duties of the ministry are performed, it is expected that the preacher shall meet the members of the society in private, and converse with each one on his spiritual concerns. In his twelve or thirteen rounds during the year, if he be a man of active and enterprising habits, he will almost inevitably make the acquaintance of every man, woman and child in the county, and break bread at the tables of the great majority of the hospitable householders.

The circuit rider was in many localities almost the only means of communication of the backwoodsmen with the outer world. He was more intelligent than the great majority of the settlers.\textsuperscript{113} He was interested in their general welfare. He often took the place of the presiding elder, and was often the only emissary of the gospel or professional man who came in the settlements, more frequently called "clearings", for long periods. He was active in matters of right and wrong, public and private, which became important in secular life. His field and his discretion were almost without limit in the exer-

\textsuperscript{112} W. H. Milburn, \textit{Ten Years of Preacher's Life}, 81.
\textsuperscript{113} See testimony of a pioneer in Warrick County, 556.
exercise of authority given him by the church, and in public opinion he often sounded the key note in matters of general public concern. To this day, when some question of great public interest calls for information it is a common occurrence for some Methodist bishop to be interviewed by the Associate press reporter in any part of the country where he may happen to be found, and such avenues to public opinion have weight, as the intelligent reader has learned to have faith in the knowledge and reliability of this source of information. In a more simple way, in keeping with the spirit of a primitive age, the itinerant was the outrider on matters of public interest from the world without to the farthest borders of the wilderness.

The circuit rider was an educator as well as a religious instructor. There were with many pioneers no books or papers, no public lectures or educating platform addresses. The stump speech of politicians and a jury argument in court always attracted a good crowd, but the sermon and private influence of a prominent minister often outranked them all, and the school teacher himself. I have heard my father, who always spoke with reverence of the impress on his early life by the circuit rider, say that he inspired in him his highest ideals, and he recognized the influence of the early preacher in his home above that of the school teacher in inspiring his youth. The preacher rode horseback, generally reaching the cabin before dinner, where he was expected, upon each trip around the circuit. On his arrival the horses, if in the field, were unhitched where they stood, and the boys sent post haste in all directions to call the scattered settlers to a preaching service usually held at the cabin about four o'clock.

As the historian of the events celebrated on this occasion, I declare the obligation not only of individuals but of all the people of the state of Indiana to these early preachers who sacrificed their health, their chances of worldly promotion, and sometimes their lives in the effort to carry the searchlight of Christian education and civilization into this wilderness, one hundred years ago.

During the world's war, Bishop William F. Anderson ranked high among the statesmen of America in his knowledge of conditions actually existing and in his judgment upon the problems relating to great interests involved in negotiations following the war.
I have heard my father say that the first English grammar he ever saw was given to him in his youth by a Methodist preacher, an event which seemed at that time to be one of supreme importance. It was to him a great book, for it was the science of correct speech among illiterate backwoodsmen.

Macaulay says that the Greeks had but few books, but they were great books, and that the best mental discipline does not come from turning over great libraries, but from reading and re-reading a few great books and mastering them. A remarkable illustration of this truth is found in the life of Abraham Lincoln. John Nicolay, in his single volume edition of the life of Lincoln recently issued, mentions five books which Lincoln is known to have read while he lived in Indiana from the age of seven to the age of twenty-one, although there is reliable testimony to the point that he read many books, the names of which are not preserved. The fact is, proper investigation at the proper time of facts relating to Lincoln in Indiana was not made, and the result is this important period of his development is almost a blank in his biographies or treated as such by his biographers.

After mentioning these five books, Nicolay says of Lincoln “When he had exhausted other books, he even resolutely attacked the Revised Statutes of Indiana.”

Another biographer of Lincoln, commenting upon the statement of historians, based upon the statements of Lincoln’s neighbors that Lincoln read and re-read those statutes with the deepest interest and, even after he left Indiana at the age of twenty-one, while in Illinois, was so familiar with the contents of that volume that he could refer to them page by page at much length, ridicules these statements, and as conclusive evidence of the fact that they are untrue, declares that they are the uninteresting record of statutes.

But these men know not of what they speak. I have had in my law library for fifty years an old copy of the Revised Statutes of Indiana of 1824, with the names of two generations of lawyers written upon it, a book from the Corydon press, a duplicate in every respect of the statutes which Lincoln borrowed from Turnham. The first thing in these statutes is

115 Nicolay, Abraham Lincoln, 14.
the Declaration of Independence; next, the Constitution of the
United States; then the Constitution of Indiana, and then a
series of statutes setting out the procedure and practice in
law and equity as applied to civil government, and an outline
of the form of organization of the government of a free de-
mocracy, state, congressional, county, township and town,
with a variety of statutes upon subjects of interest to the
people.

From the standpoint now of Lincoln's life and career this
collection in one book was indeed a great one. The English
common law, in the study and practice of which I have spent
fifty years of my life, is in my judgment the best system of
logic applied to the practical affairs of men which the litera-
ture of the world has produced. The system of equity arose
out of the conscience of the English judges, and law and equity
as outlined in these old statutes represented the evolution of
the life of the English people for one thousand years, and
the form of these statutes on court practice and procedure
was taken largely from those of the older states. There is
a maxim in equity most frequently quoted and most effective
of all defenses when properly made out, that he who has un-
clean hands shall not come into a court of equity. This maxim
is taken from a verse in the Psalms, which declares that he
who hath not clean hands and a pure heart shall not come into
the house of the Lord.

Let the historians answer the question, What more was
needed after he had mastered the contents of this volume to
equip Abraham Lincoln for the lifework before him, as he
later followed it, when in his twenty-second year, on foot, he
drove an ox team out of this wilderness to the prairies of
Illinois? In a very short time he entered a public career and
soon measured to the mastery with the best equipped and
ablest men of the state.\footnote{In an address delivered before the conference of the Historical Societies
of Indiana, December 12, 1920, published in Indiana State Historical publications,
Judge Robert W. McBride, who served for a long period in his youth in the
select cavalry body guard of Lincoln when President, makes the following state-
ment of the influence of his Indiana life on Lincoln: "I realize that the recital
of any authentic incident connected with the life of Abraham Lincoln has in-
terest, but there are reasons why the people of Indiana should feel especial
interest in anything relating to him, for he was essentially an Indiana product.
When he was brought from Kentucky to Indiana, he was only seven years of
age. When he left Indiana for Illinois he was twenty-one years old—a man

answer that question. Referring to the influence of the Declaration of Independence and the constitution of the United States, particularly the former, in forming his life and character, hear what he says on that subject himself in two speeches made in Liberty Hall in Philadelphia February 22, 1861, when he was on his way to Washington for his first inauguration:

I can say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

In his speech of February 21, 1861, in that hall, he said:

As it were, to listen to those breathings, rising within the consecrated walls wherein the constitution of the United States, and, I will add, the Declaration of Independence, were originally framed and adopted. I assure you and your mayor that I had hoped on this occasion, and upon all occasions during my life, that I shall do nothing inconsistent with the teachings of these holy and most sacred walls. I have never asked anything that does not breathe from those walls. All my political warfare has been in favor of the teachings that come forth from these sacred walls. May my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if ever I prove false to those teachings.

It was no accident that when the constitution of Indiana, in 1816, prohibited human slavery and the government domain in the old northwest was practically free, Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln brought the boy Abraham into the wilderness of Indiana the same year. The Almighty had set him apart in the wilderness and led him up to Himalayan heights, so that he might, in the fullness of time, as the apostle of freedom and divine justice among men, strike the shackles from the hands of slaves.

In years, in stature, and in mentality. The fourteen years between seven and twenty-one are in large measure the formative years in a man’s character. In those years the boy Lincoln had become the man Lincoln. The foundation for the future lawyer, statesman and humanitarian, had been laid, direction and color had been given to the trend of his thoughts and inclinations, and that which followed was only development. It was the flowering and fruiting of a plant transplanted from Kentucky but grown on Indiana soil.” Lincoln’s growth to manhood in Indiana is given full emphasis by Turner. The Frontier in American History, 256-241.
It was in this wilderness, from those dry statutes, as the historians speak of them, and the works on equity in Pitcher and Breckenridge's offices, that Abraham Lincoln learned that justice on earth comes from the throne of God.\textsuperscript{118}

THE PASSING OF JOHN SHRADER

The historian tells us that the backwoods pioneers loved to call themselves the “Men of the Western Waters”, because they had settled along the streams where communication with others was easier and life was safer, than in the interior of the dense forests, and this is the title given by Roosevelt to the greatest chapter in the greatest of his books.\textsuperscript{119} Our pioneer Christian fathers named their conferences, districts, circuits and societies after the streams. There was, when John Shrader joined the Tennessee conference, the Cumberland and Green River districts, and north of the Ohio river there were, in southern Indiana, circuits called Whitewater,

\textsuperscript{118}These words appear in the ms. of my address delivered in December, 1919, prepared before that date, and it is a coincidence that the same idea, though in different words, is found in the work of William B. Barton, \textit{The Soul of Abraham Lincoln}, 60, published in 1920, where he says:

“They involve a certain rude and noble faith that the Judge of all the earth will do right and the divine justice and human justice have a common measure. Lincoln never forgot that and he learned it on Pidgeon Creek.”

John A. Breckenridge was a talented member of the family of that name which furnished great men and great orators to the west for a century. He lived in Warrick and Spencer counties at an early day. When the slavery struggle became acute he moved to Texas, where his son, George W. Breckenridge, died very recently, a very old man. See Lincoln’s testimony to the inspiration of Breckenridge’s court speeches in his early manhood. \textit{Lincoln the Lawyer}, by Frederick T. Hill, 13. John Pitcher was one of the greatest trial lawyers in Indiana, educated, studied law in Connecticut, and came to Indiana about 1819. In his office at Rockport Lincoln studied law. I knew Judge Pitcher very well in his old age, yet active at the bar. The biographers of Lincoln spent too little time in gathering facts of Lincoln’s early manhood life in Indiana at the proper time. Attention was paid to the stories of ignorant and illiterate braggarts, such as Dennis Hanks, and the life of early Indiana people was taken from the bottom instead of the top, where Lincoln found his visions. Breckenridge and Pitcher both lived until near the close of the century, without any attempt, so far as I know, to supply with their aid the missing chapter in Lincoln’s life. Pitcher had northern ideas on slavery. He was one of the chosen and fit actors in the great drama staged in the wilderness of southern Indiana. Strong circumstantial evidence exists to show that the influences following the Missouri Compromise, which according to Charnwood so powerfully influenced Lincoln’s whole life, were correctly interpreted to him by John Pitcher, whose life, when written, will, I believe, shines in the reflected light of the life and ideals of Abraham Lincoln.
Blue River, Silver Creek, Patoka and Wabash, the last named extending into Illinois. Here John Shrader spent the greater part of his life in his work in the ministry, and, from the time of his location until the age of four score and seven years, when he died April 15, 1879, he retained his home near Poseyville in Posey county, Indiana, though at times he temporarily lived elsewhere as an active minister.

The last work John Shrader ever did was in his 87th year, to walk two miles from his house to collect quarterage for the support of the church to which he belonged. When he started to return, a friend said to him that if he would wait a short time he would have a chance to ride, but he answered that the distance was not far and he would walk. The distance, however, was too great for his strength, and coming up the hill near the end of his journey he fell and bruised his face; erysipelas set in and took his life.

The minister who preached his funeral sermon, and who knew him well, said if John Shrader had any vices he did not know of them, and if there were any virtues which he did not have he did not know of them—a beautiful tribute to a beautiful character and a beautiful life.

In his dying hours he was delirious, so the doctors thought, but there came from his lips an audible, continuous, coherent prayer to God. He was in communion with his God. It was the passing of John Shrader from among mortals, to the ranks and the land of immortals.

In that prayer he might have said, as did Tennyson, when nearing his end, in his last prayer, while pleading with his God

I shall pass but shall not die.

If it were given to me, a mortal, to proclaim a vision, I would say, so it came to pass with John Shrader.

From the neighboring village of Poseyville, where in the old village churchyard his body lies today, in one of the garden spots of the earth, where the valley of the Patoka joins the valley of the Wabash, where he had reared his children and finished his great work—great for time and great for eternity—where he had lived to see the wilderness into which he had come in the vigor of his young manhood, from the southland,
before the birth of this commonwealth, in the twilight of our history, blossom into a Christian empire of between two and three million souls, the foundations of which were in part laid by him—one of God's commonwealth builders—there passed out into the spirit world, greeting its Maker ere it left its body, the soul of John Shrader.