

Methodism In Southeastern Indiana

From *Western Christian Advocate*

(Continued)

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No. XI

To relieve the monotony of circuit details, I will present the reader two numbers containing short biographical sketches of some of the excellent of the earth, whose praise was in all the churches, but the remembrance of whom is rapidly passing; unless their few remaining friends adopt some plan to prevent such a result, it will not be known, in a short time, that such men ever lived, suffered, labored, and were successful in planting and watering the now flourishing Methodist church in many parts of the great west.

When John Sale died, the absurd practice prevailed of making the notices in the *Minutes* of the deceased preachers as short as possible; hence, there are not quite five full lines, in giving an account of a man who was worthy to have his life written in extenso. Some years after, his friend Moses Crume, gave a short account of him. In these brief notices, we have all the information extant of a pioneer of Methodism in many parts of his early travels in the west.

Sale was a Virginian by birth and education. When a youth, he became religious, and joined the then feeble and despised Methodist Episcopal church. At what age he became a preacher, I have no means of ascertaining; but from the *Minutes* it will be seen he was received on trial in 1796. The names of districts were not then given as now; but from the names of the first three circuits which he traveled, I infer he traveled most of the time in North Carolina and Virginia, mostly, however, the former. From the name of his fourth circuit, I suppose it was in western Virginia. In 1800, he is found on Salt river and Shelby in Kentucky, where he traveled until the meeting of conference in May, 1801, when he

was reappointed to the same work, where he traveled until the next conference, which met in October in the same year. From this time onward, the Western conference uniformly met in autumn. At the fall conference in 1801, he was appointed to Danville in the same state, and in 1802 to Scioto in Ohio, embracing much of the centre of the state. In 1803, I find him appointed to the Miami circuit, named after the Miami country in general, but after the Little Miami in particular. The circuit embraced all that section of country east of the Great Miami, and west of the country dividing between the Scioto and Miami valleys, and north from the Ohio river as far as there were any settlements, which must have been as far as the Mad river country. In 1804, he was sent to Lexington circuit, Kentucky. This year closed his circuit labors for eleven successive years, as he was made presiding elder in the fall of 1805, and sent to the Ohio district, which embraced a part of Virginia and all the settled part of Ohio, except that part west of the Great Miami, which had no regular Methodist preaching until the spring of 1806, when it and the east of Indiana were added to his extensive field of labor, which he continued to travel for three successive years. In 1808, the district was divided, and the western part called Miami district, on which he remained two years. It seems the superintendents were not as strict then as they are now in the construction of law; for the Miami district was wholly in the same territory which he had traveled three years preceding, except White Water circuit, which was added the second year, so that he traveled the same work five years, with the exception of one circuit. Sometime, while on the Ohio district, he married, and became the first married traveling preacher which we ever knew in these western regions, unless William Burke was an exception. The next four years found him on the Kentucky district, when he had to travel from near Xenia, where his family lived, some fifty miles or more, to reach the nearest part of his work. The next two years, he was on the Miami district again, partly in Ohio and partly in Indiana. In 1816, he was sent to Union circuit, where his family lived. The circuit embraced Lebanon, Dayton, Xenia, and the adjacent country, and had been unwisely named after a meeting-

house of that name. I say, unwisely, because the name designates no one place in the whole world more than another; the names of circuits, we think, should always designate the particular place. The following year, he was on Mad river, not far from home. In 1818, he was again placed on Miami district; and at the ensuing conference, he was superannuated, and so remained for five years. In 1824, he was appointed to Wilmington circuit; and the next year to Union again; and in 1826, to Piqua, where he ended his long and useful labors in the following winter. He traveled four years in North Carolina and Virginia, seven and a half in Kentucky, seven and a quarter in Ohio, seven partly in Ohio and partly in Indiana, and was five years superannuated, making in all thirty years and three-quarters from the time he was received on trial until his happy—his triumphant—death.

Any person who will look on the fields of his labor, and consider the physical, intellectual, and moral state of the country in which he traveled for many years, must be convinced he was in many perils and abundant labors; but he shrunk not from any peril, toil, privation, or suffering, while he was able to travel and preach, and be the pastor of the flock.

I will now present a few traits of this man of God. In person, he was more than medium size, being heavily built, a little inclined to corpulency. He was very neat in his dress, being equally removed from the fop on the one hand, and the sloven on the other. I never saw his habitation, but I presume he carried out the lines quoted by Mr. Wesley.

Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation,
On thy person, clothes, and habitation.

He possessed a large share of good, strong common sense, much improved by reading and observation, so that he was a safe counsellor to his junior brethren, and the conferences of which he was a member. The piety of this brother was deep and uniform through his whole course. In his preaching, there was very little uniformity. Sometimes he was very dry and uninteresting; but at other times he was sprightly, able, vigorous, and powerful. Often on Saturday at quarterly meet-

ings, he would preach on the numerous and various duties of religion, sometimes with animation, but mostly in a phlegmatic manner. On the Sabbath his sermons were more doctrinal and experimental, and much more elevated in thought and language, and much more powerful in their effect on a large and mixed audience. At some times in his life there were manifested uncommon displays of divine power through the instrumentality of his ministry. I once heard Brother Strange make the following statement, which he received from Brother Sale himself. He was preaching, and some began to scream aloud for mercy, and others to shout for joy, which seemed to him a violation of that decorum and order, which should characterize the worship and service of God. He was going to rebuke the persons deemed disorderly with as much severity as Joshua desired Moses to rebuke Eldad and Medad; but, just at that moment, such a divine influence came upon him, that he had well-nigh fallen prostrate, and his heart was filled with as much emotion as his hearers, and he never afterward dared to interfere with Heaven's method of working on men's minds and hearts. He, however, always had such a reverence for God, and religion, and such a regard for the decencies of public worship that he would not suffer anything which was manifestly enthusiastic or extravagant in religious assemblies to pass without rebuke, and endeavors to correct it, and separate the precious from the vile. His nice sense of propriety induced him to keep the very best order at the meetings superintended by him.

His long experience and close observation enabled him to understand the general economy and details of the *Discipline* of his church most accurately; and his conscientious regard for his duties and the welfare of the church influenced him to do what he could to carry that economy and *Discipline* into full effect. The consequence was, that some, among the preachers and people, thought him too precise; but the more enlightened and upright were pleased with him; for they felt sure the administration was safe in his hands. Such was the confidence of the superintendents in him, that when the presiding bishop (either Asbury or M'Kendree) was prevented by affliction from reaching the seat of the conference to which

Sale belonged, he sent a letter appointing him president for the time.

He was eminently a peacemaker. For several years between 1810 and 1820, there was a most fierce and unpleasant controversy among Methodist preachers, concerning infant purity on the one hand, and innate depravity on the other. The preachers and people of the present day can form no estimation of the asperity of feeling and language which prevailed in those days of bitter waters, even among good men and able ministers. When I look back, it seems to me little less than a miracle that the church was not rent into a thousand fragments. God, however, overruled the storm; and the consequence has been, that the native depravity of the human heart has ceased to be doubted and controverted by Methodist ministers and people; and perhaps there never was a more general agreement on any point of doctrine, than that which now exists in the Methodist Episcopal church on the subject then controverted. Now all the metaphysical trash, started by Pelagian or semi-Pelagian nonsense, whether by the instrumentality of Unitarians, or Universalists of all sorts, or the new divinity men of modern days, with their absurdity of natural ability, but moral inability, has not moved the weakest among us, unless they had previously backslidden. In all the boisterous days to which I have referred, Sale, although firmly believing in man's inherent depravity, was always the kind and zealous peacemaker between his brethren. If any of them expressed ultra views, or used harsh expressions, he would in a most kind spirit and bland manner, urge them to forbear such views and expressions as were calculated to give offence, or wound the feelings of their brethren.

Perhaps Methodism in much of Ohio and eastern Indiana, is more indebted to John Sale for its symmetry and beauty than to any one man on earth, or in heaven. Providence placed him in this field just at the time when the minds of many young men were to be trained; and through them the church was to be molded. Had he been a ranting, extravagant and eccentric preacher, or a lukewarm drone, or a rash or careless disciplinarian, it does not require much penetration to see what would have been the result to the young church in

the wilderness. She would have been marred in the outset, and crippled in her influence; and instead of being, as she now is, the most numerous, active, and influential, she would have been a sickly dwarf that could scarcely live and could do no good. Many of the young preachers who never knew Sale, and his coadjutors, and scarcely ever heard of them, are much indebted to them. If there never had been the mind and heart of Susanna Wesley, there never would have been the minds and hearts of John and Charles Wesley; so that the millions of Methodists now on earth and in heaven would never have been known as a religious denomination; but who realizes the connection of these millions with the mind and heart of the mother of their founders? Though none realize this connection of the excellent ministry of the man, whom I am endeavoring to portray, with modern, western Methodism.

Notwithstanding literary and intelligent, but Calvinistic and prejudiced New England was slow to receive Methodism, yet such an apostolic man as Jesse Lee could not labor in vain, even in New England especially when he had truth on his side; so that "the land of steady habits" could not withstand the blaze of Gospel day. The doctrines of a general atonement, and the sincere tender of salvation to all men, are so Godlike, that they cannot be rejected by the thinking and inquiring, unless the prejudice of education present a barrier, as it did in that country. Had New England been visited with the truths of Methodism at an earlier day, and had she cordially embraced them Unitarianism and Universalism would not well-nigh have dismantled her glory, as has been the case in many of her strongholds, civil, literary and religious. Some of the early achievements of Methodism in that country were among eminent and talented families. Among those families one was by the name of Langdon, and three of them became preachers who came to the west. I had a partial acquaintance with John, who died some years since: a short notice of him appeared in the *Western Christian Advocate* written by his son-in-law, Brother Reeder, of the Ohio conference. Oliver, another preacher, I never knew; but from all I have heard, he was a man of talents. My acquaintance with Solomon last-

ed several years; and as no notice was taken of him in the *Minutes*, because he had located before his death, and as we then had no *Advocates* in which to hand down the memory of our local brethren, I deem it proper to notice, in these numbers, a man of the standing and worth of Solomon Langdon.

Where, in New England, and at what time he was born, I am not informed; and I do not deem these matters of much importance. I find him admitted on trial into the traveling connection in 1800, and appointed to Warren and Greenwich; in 1801 to Provincetown; in 1802, Vershire; and in 1803, Landaff. In 1804, I find him among the supernumerary preachers, but cannot find him appointed to any work, neither can I find when he was ordained elder. In 1805, he located. The next information in the *Minutes* is in the fall of 1807, when he was appointed to Muskingum and Little Kanawha; in 1808, to Marietta; and 1809, to Cincinnati. In the fall of 1810, he was placed on the Miami district partly in Ohio and partly in Indiana, where he remained three years; and in the fall of 1813 he located again.

After his location, he and others formed a partnership, and entered into the mercantile business, which he pursued until 1817, when he died with a very short sickness. When I first heard of his death, it shocked me very much; for I was much attached to the man; but on a moment's reflection it struck me that he was taken away from the evil to come; for I was confident that no man ought to sell goods, however lawful and honorable it may be, who had not more family charge than he had, and who possessed such noble talents to serve the church. I was told that when his wife, just before he died, asked him, with great anxiety, what his prospects were, he informed her, that there was a way cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to pass over, and gave her to understand that that way would avail for him. I trust he has been the last twenty-eight years in the paradise of God.

According to the *Minutes*, he traveled four years or more in New England, three in Ohio, and three in Ohio and Indiana, ten or more in all. I say ten or more for I suppose he traveled in 1804, but where I have no information.

Solomon Langdon was a tall, noble man in appearance. He was a man of great gravity and dignity in all his ministrations, whether in prayer preaching, exhortation, administering ordinances, or presiding in quarterly meeting conferences. In the social circle, he was very cheerful and sweet spirited, but still grave, and always calculated to recommend religion. I have been told, that when he was with a few confidential social friends, in the perfect undress of confidence, he was somewhat facetious, but never given to that levity which is sinful and destructive to piety. Surely if angels could weep, it would be to see a professed minister of the weeping and suffering Jesus using such phrases and telling such ludicrous anecdotes as will fill the hearts of the company with levity, and their mouths with obstreperous laughter. Such a course as this could not be pursued by the thoughtful and prayerful Solomon Langdon.

In leading the devotions of the family or the multitude, he was very gifted and impressive. As a preacher, he was far above mediocrity. His texts were always such as would lead him to investigate the great leading doctrines of the Gospel, the genuine and deep experience of Christianity and the duties of our holy religion. His sermons were well studied and systematically arranged, but delivered in that free and easy extemporaneous style which prevented them from being stiff and dry. They were so lucid that they would penetrate the understanding of every man who would listen to him, and his solemn and impressive manner almost always fixed the attention of the most listless in his audience. Such was the unction which attended his preaching, that all the thoughtful felt as if they would be wiser and better; but it was seldom that there was any jumping, or shouting, or even loud weeping among the people when he preached; but their tears would rise and flow as the most gentle shower, on a still and soft day, when you would have to look out at the door or window to know that the rain was falling. When he administered the ordinances, you would think of Jesus and his apostles, and almost think you were attending a primitive baptism, or sacrament, such was the impressive solemnity of his spirit. For his manner of presiding in quarterly conferences, I will refer

the reader to a former number, in which mention is made of a camp meeting held near Four Mile creek in 1811. Ah, lovely man! He ought not to have located until compelled to it by the hand of death; for he had no family but an interesting wife, who is now the widow of Dr. Bishop, and who still lives in Cincinnati. Her business habits were such that she could have sustained herself with ease in those days in which Methodist preachers could hardly live at all, if they had families, and had no means of their own. I have always supposed he might have lived many years longer, if he had remained in the regular work for which he was so admirably fitted; but of this we can have no certain knowledge.

Langdon was a very fit successor for the excellent Sale; for although there was hardly anything in which they were similar, except their good sense and piety, they were both men well calculated to give stability and perpetuity to the young and tender plant of Methodism just being reared in this now populous, fertile, and Methodistic country.

Eternity alone will unfold how much good Langdon's mild and Christian spirit did the church, when war began to drench the land in human gore, and to deluge it with rapine, fraud, profanity, and Sabbath-breaking. He fully believed the United States were justifiable in going to war (1812); but he did not believe her people ought to become incarnate devils, in order that they might defend their right; hence, he did all he could by prayer, preaching, and exhortation, to keep up a mild and Christian spirit in the land; and great was his success, for bad as many were, they would have been worse without such salutary restraints as these.

Brookville, Ia., December 12, 1845.

No. XII

Moses Crume was a native of Virginia. He was awakened and converted in Shenandoah county, Virginia, in 1785. I think it probable that he was born and reared in that part of the state; for I have heard him tell of his trembling under the thundering preaching of my grandfather Wiley, who was a Baptist preacher in the adjoining county, Frederick. Some-

time between his conversion and 1793, he moved to Kentucky; for his first license to preach, as a local preacher, is dated Nelson county, Kentucky, in the year last named. He lived some years in that state; for I think I read in *Asbury's Journal*, that he ordained him deacon in one of his tours in Kentucky. Sometime before 1806, but I know not how long, he moved to Butler county, Ohio, and settled on Cotton Run, seven or eight miles northwest from Hamilton. He remained a respectable local preacher, and labored much and extensively until the fall of 1808, when he was received on trial into the traveling connection, and appointed to White Water circuit, according to the *Minutes*, with Hector Sandford; but I know he did not travel White Water that year, but a young man by the name of Saint Clair, who was appointed to Cincinnati. I suppose, as I have stated in a former number, that the bishop, or presiding elder, changed him and Saint Clair immediately after the conference. In the fall of 1809, he was appointed to Cincinnati, with Solomon Langdon, and a young man by the name of Nelson in charge of White Water; but after Nelson had gone one round, he was removed, and Crume came in his place, and remained the remainder of that year and the next, when he left and went to Mad river and Xenia. In 1812, he was placed on Oxford circuit, a part of the old White Water circuit. The next year, he was sent to Lawrenceburg circuit, which was also a part of White Water circuit when he and Thompson traveled it four years before. His appointment in 1814 was Union, and the next year Mad river again. In 1816 and 1817, he was presiding elder on Miami district; and in 1818, he went to Lebanon district. In the course of this year, he had a very severe and protracted time of sickness, which brought him near the gates of death. This sickness left him much prostrated; so that the conference in 1819 superannuated him. His health having improved he was sent to Miami circuit in the fall of 1820. This circuit embraced all the country between the two Miamies, except Cincinnati, twenty-five miles back from the Ohio river. The next year, he was sent to Oxford again; and in 1822, he was sent as a supernumerary to Greenville, a new and large circuit, which closed his regular itinerant life; for the next fall he

was superannuated, and so remained more than sixteen years, until his death in 1839. Although his death was somewhat sudden and painful, he was prepared for it, and willing to go at his Master's bidding. From the preceding statements it will be seen, that Moses Crume traveled over the country from Madison, in Indiana on the southwest to or above Urbana on the northeast, and to or beyond the Little Miami on the east, and to the then frontier settlements in Indiana on the west, being a region more than one hundred and fifty miles long, and nearly one hundred broad, when much of the country was new and comparatively a wilderness, consequently his privations and sufferings were many. He left a good home and farm on which he could have made a fortune for himself and family, to receive the small pittance which was then paid Methodist preachers, which would not pay the extra repairs on his farm, in consequence of his absence. But had not he and others made the sacrifices, and endured the privations which they did, we of the present day would not have had the comparatively pleasant fields which we are now called to cultivate; for other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors. Crume was a man of great personal dignity, being large and portly, with a most grave and benevolent countenance. So far as we can form an opinion of men's appearance from their portraits, I should judge from all I have seen of General Washington, that our brother greatly resembled him in person and features; and he was not unlike him in the good qualities of the heart; and if circumstances had required, he would not have been much inferior to him in firmness and courage; but it is presumed he did not possess the copious understanding and very correct and superior judgment which characterized the General, though there were but few who surpassed Crume in these important endowments. He was never a very popular preacher; but his want of popularity was not owing to any deficiency in the head or heart but to a want of energy in his voice and delivery. Many of his sermons were very phlegmatic in their delivery, but always sound and good in their matter. Most persons know what a drawback the defects named are to really good sermons. Hence, with the multitude, this man never passed for his real

worth. Even the truly intelligent sometimes underrated him. When the beloved Bigelow and the writer traveled Lawrenceburg circuit, in 1816 and 1817, Crume was our presiding elder. His worth was known to the writer from long acquaintance, but not so with Bigelow who had only seen him at conferences, and knew but little of the man; consequently, he judged his attainments merely by his pulpit performances; and the conclusion was, the presiding elder was hardly a medium man. The next two years Bigelow was on Oxford circuit, in which Crume lived, and Bigelow and his family lived in a part of Crume's house, which gave Bigelow an ample opportunity to form an intimate acquaintance; so that he was prepared to judge more correctly concerning the man's mind and acquisitions. The result was, that Bigelow was convinced that Crume was a very superior man. His statement to me was (to the best of my recollection), in the following words:

I have been greatly mistaken in brother Crume, and have underrated him very much. I can start no question in theology, however new and abstruse to myself and others, but I find Crume has thoroughly studied it, and appears to be perfectly at home in it; and I am fully satisfied he is the most able divine in the Ohio conference; and it is the greatest cross to me to preach before him of any man in the world.

Every man who knew Bigelow, and his capability of judging correctly, will know what estimate to place on his honest declaration. It should be recollected that circumstances had much to do in making our pioneer fathers what they were, in many respects. They found the country in the hands of others, who had given the public mind a wrong bias on many points of doctrine, and who were disposed to maintain their previous occupancy of the public mind by all the means in their power. Hence, the necessity of accurate knowledge on the part of Methodist preachers, that they might be able to compete with their avowed and untiring antagonists. The country did not abound in books of all sorts as now; and the consequence was, the Bible had to be studied with a diligence and earnestness seldom known, it is to be feared, in the present day. When I first knew Crume, he carried Canno's marginal Bible, which had been the property of William Burke, and was full of pen marks from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, pointing out the important passages

which had a bearing on the most important points of Bible theology. Four years since, I saw a Bible which had been the property of Jesse Lee, which was marked in the same way. These statements will enable the young men of the present age to learn how it was, that with not the fiftieth part of the helps now enjoyed, our fathers became such giants in divinity. Many of them not only read, studied, and marked their Bibles, but they did these things on their knees in the woods, in humble prayer to almighty God that he would, by His Spirit, teach them knowledge in His word and ways. Crume was one of the best textuaries I ever knew; and he informed me that he remembered the Scriptures more accurately from what he read before he was seven years old than from all his subsequent reading. I have stated the manner in which Crume, Burke, Lee, and others read and studied their Bibles; and they had immediate and daily use for all they learned; for almost every man they met was ready to war on Methodism. It is not to be supposed that such praying Bible students as those men were, could be foiled by any Protean forms of subtle error. No, no, but error had to quail before them, until their doctrines had become the general doctrines of the land; and the present prospect is, that all antagonistic doctrine will yield to them, and even their usages have gained an ascendancy in the public mind, which it will be hard to displace. Some modern reformers have undertaken not only to reform other churches, but also the religion of the Bible. They have been zealous in forming many congregations, and in building many good churches, but they will have to reform themselves into good orthodox Christians, or Methodism will do this work for them, if we possess the Bible knowledge and zeal which our fathers had.

I might give many particular and interesting traits in the characters of Crume and others; but the nature of my undertaking will permit nothing more than a few generalities in most cases. In all the relations of life, this brother was amiable and kind. As a husband, he was a pattern of dignified and affectionate kindness. There was none of that sick sentimentality about him which some exhibit; but all that was possessed and properly manifested by him. As a father he

was kind and indulgent, to a degree perhaps somewhat faulty; but his children revered and respected him greatly. As an aged minister, he was most condescending and kind to his junior brethren in the ministry. The writer is under more obligation to be grateful to this man than to all other men living or dead, his own father excepted, and even he is not an exception as far as religion is concerned. Crume received him into church, gave him his first license to exhort, had him made circuit steward, was preacher in charge when he was licensed to preach and procured his reception and election to orders, and was his kind presiding elder the ensuing two years. Such was his timidity and backwardness, that if he had not fallen into the hands of this kind man, now with God, he doubts whether he would ever have been anything more than an obscure, private member of the church, and perhaps not even that. In view of all these facts, if his heart should ever cease to cherish fond recollections of his friend and early guide, let his right hand forget its cunning. Many others could say that Moses Crume was to them a tender father and kind guide in the way to heaven. Everything in Methodism—doctrine, discipline, or usage, was most sacredly loved and cherished by him. He loved his brethren with a pure heart fervently, and endeavored to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. It is presumed he seldom, or never, had a difficulty with any man on his own account, in his life; but a sense of official obligation compelled him to come in painful collision sometimes with men who were trying to prostrate his beloved church. In those cases where the interests of the church were concerned, whether he were preacher in charge of a circuit, or presiding elder, he knew no man, high or low, but was firmly at his post to defend what he believed to be the cause of God, against all encroachments, whether open or insidious. Hence, the refractory, or the innovating, never liked him, nor gave him the praise due to his talents and fidelity. Under God Methodism in southwest Ohio and southeast Indiana owes him much, and is under a heavy debt of gratitude to him. May she not forget this.

Although most of the early Methodist preachers of the west were from the older parts of the country, many of the early seals to their ministry were called to the holy work of urging forward the benign and heavenly cause of human salvation. Many of these early converts being young men, who were inured to the climate and habits of the west, were well fitted for this western frontier work. If I am correctly informed even Jacob Young, now among the very old and venerable men of the Ohio conference was converted in Kentucky, as was Oglesby and others.

The one, however, that I now wish to bring before the public, is Samuel H. Thompson of a respectable family that had moved from Pennsylvania and settled in the lower part of Kentucky. In the very flower of youth and vigor of manhood, he became an itinerant preacher, being received by the Western conference in the fall of 1809, and appointed to White Water circuit, described in some preceding numbers of this series. His connection with the itinerancy was about thirty-two and a half years. His first circuit embraced a small portion of Ohio. His other fields were in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Eleven years he traveled circuits, and they generally large ones. Thirteen years he was on districts, some of them very large; one in particular, embracing all the settled part of Illinois and a large share of Indiana. Reader, just think of a district extending from the Mississippi at St. Louis to the Falls of Ohio! Three years in stations: one a missionary; one an agent for a seminary; three years and upward superannuated. One year in Kentucky; three in Tennessee; four in Missouri; twenty and upward in Illinois, but sometimes embracing large portions of Indiana, which were in the Illinois district. If any man will take the *Minutes* and trace out his fields of labor, as I have done, he will see that this man covered as much ground as almost any one, except the superintendents, in his travels. The superintendents, however, pass transiently over the ground, but do not remain to cultivate it, as Brother Thompson did. I do not make this statement to intimate that the superintendents have light work compared with many other,

but to show that their labors are not harder than were the labors of this brother. Behold him in 1809 and 1810, a young man, with rosy cheeks, and perhaps a sad heart, leaving father, mother, and home, and traveling up the west side of the Great Miami, nearly or quite as far north as where the National Road now is, then across to the White Water country northwest of the present town or city of Richmond, then down the East Fork to Brookville, thence down the main river to the Big Bottom and Lawrenceburg, then down among the hills and creeks nearly to where Vevay now is, and up again to the place of beginning, and you will see he was not a young man living at ease, and seeking pleasure. Then go with him to Tennessee and Kentucky for four years; then bound with him over the father of waters to the frontiers of Missouri, as early as 1814 and 1815, in time of war, when the Indian's scalping-knife and tomahawk were in active use; then go with him to Illinois, where it is no difficult matter to freeze a man and even a horse to death, in the winter time, in the extended and bleak prairies; and follow him four years to all the settled parts of that territory, and much of Indiana; then back again to Missouri; and then to Illinois again; and you will not say he was wanting in untiring zeal, energy, and perseverance. To pursue such a course as this for more than thirty-two years, except when bad health rendered it impossible, proves that his heart was in the work.

Brother Thompson was not what is generally understood by the phrase, a great or strong preacher. His sermons did not exhibit a great profundity of thought or laborious research; but they were not wanting in good, common sense; and were calculated to accomplish the object of preaching, the conversion of souls. His great aim was to produce present impressions, which might result in the awakening and salvation of his hearers and he seldom failed to accomplish his design. When I first knew him in 1809 and 1810, he was subject to great extremes of feeling. Sometimes he would become so gloomy and discouraged, that he could hardly preach at all. At other times, he would have great enlargement of soul; and then he would preach with animation and

success. I suppose he never traveled any field of labor without leaving more or less souls converted to God. He had an endless store of anecdotes, which he used to great advantage and with much success. So much did he abound in relating these, that sometimes some of his brethren would say humorously, the latter heads of his sermons were all tales, playing on the sound of the word tale. Such was his aptness for that kind of preaching, and its success in doing good, that I think he was justified in pursuing it. As a general rule, I think such a course should be shunned on many accounts. To me there is one reason all-sufficient against such a course, and that is, I doubt the verity of ninety-nine out of the hundred of the anecdotes which we read in books, or hear orally, for they are almost all apocryphal.

Perhaps no minister has died in these western regions, who had more spiritual children gone before him, to welcome him into everlasting habitations, or to follow after him than Samuel H. Thompson. He was successful, because he aimed and labored in direct reference to that end. The conversion of souls was the beginning, middle and end, with him, in all he did. Popularity was not a prominent object with him; but such was his affability and kindness, that popularity followed him wherever he went. It was not merely with the superficial crowd that he was popular, but with the high as well as the low. When his health failed, such was the regard all parties had for him that they united in recommending him to the national executive for an appointment to the land office, which was in his section of the state; and he obtained the appointment, when it was distinctly known, that he differed in his political views and preferences from a large majority of the people of his state, and the administration which gave him the appointment. Indeed, hardly any man would have sought the place, if he knew that Brother Thompson wanted it. I name this fact to show how he stood with the public where he had been long well known. He was also popular with the members of his conference, by whom he was often elected as one of their delegates to the General conference. This popularity was the more remarkable on account of

its being general and long continued, notwithstanding he not unfrequently ran across the feelings of his brethren in the earnestness of debate. He was a man who had a high sense of honor and propriety, which made him sometimes painfully sensitive; and being very impulsive, he would wound the feelings of his best friends when excited; but such was the kindness of his heart and conciliatory manner, that all unpleasant feelings would soon pass away; for all believed him to be an honest man,

who bore anger like the flint bears fire, which, being much enforced, shows a hasty spark, and straight is cold again;

and all honest men would rather be rebuked by an honest man than be flattered and praised by a knave or one suspected to be such.

How well he understood the economy and *Discipline* of the church, and how able and judicious he was in his administration, I have no other means of knowing than what may be inferred from the length of time he filled the most important offices to which the appointing power could promote him. Methodism in Illinois received much of its character from him; and although he is now dead, his influence is yet felt, and will be for many years to come. In searching the *Minutes* to trace Brother Thompson's travels, I learned a fact which I had not before noticed in the history of Thomas Hellums, before noticed in these numbers. Hellums was readmitted into the traveling connection in 1818, and appointed to Shoal creek, as Brother Thompson's colleague; but the next fall he located again.

If our people generally had the *Minutes*, I need not have said so much about Brother Thompson as I have, as there is an interesting account of him in the *Minutes* for the year 1843. I would refer the reader to that account for some things which I have omitted. I feel a more lively interest in this brother, because he was on the circuit when I joined the church, and held the love feast when I was converted; but a local preacher by the name of David Penwell was engaged in prayer at the close of the meeting when the blessing came.

Penwell was powerfully awakened in New Jersey while walking alone in the high road. As quick as lightning these words, "Ye know not the time", rushed through his mind and heart with a thrilling energy and for three weeks he walked the earth in the utmost terror; for it seemed to him in the anguish caused by a sense of guilt, that the earth had but a thin crust, and all beneath was a fiery hell, and that every step he must plunge into it. At the end of the time named, God pardoned his sins, and powerfully converted him, and he became a local preacher of respectable talents, and more than ordinary success. When I knew him, he was a man of poor health, and many ups and downs in his feelings, and of many changes in his religious views. In his better days, he was popular and useful, and successful in winning souls. Had his health been good, and had he entered the regular work, he would have been a bright star which would not have been eclipsed, as he often was. His brethren and his own conscience urged him to itinerate; but more than once he engaged in extensive worldly arrangements, that he might have a plausible excuse to present to his own mind, and others, for not traveling; but such arrangements turned out disastrously. His after instability may be traced to his wilful neglect of a known duty. Once he became unconnected with the church by removing to a new place and not handing in his certificate. Coming on the circuit within the bounds of which he lived, I went to see him, and he was glad to see me; but I perceived he was in perfect torture. I conversed with him much, but could make no impression on him. When I started, being determined to visit him no more, he went to show me a path leading to my appointment; and when we parted I said to him, "I pray God you may never have any peace, day or night, until you return to God." These words, as he afterward told me, never left him, until he was reclaimed, and joined the church, and he again became useful. Some years after, he joined the Baptist church, and became a preacher among them, but was not very useful. The last I heard of him, he lived in the northern part of Indiana; and as there was no Baptist church in his vicinity, he had placed

himself under the watch-care of the United Brethren. I simply mention these facts to show how a lovely, talented, and useful man, by stifling the convictions of his own mind, and resisting a sense of duty, may become an unsettled, unhappy, and useless man. Had David Penwell done his duty perhaps thousands of souls, who are now lost, might have been saved, and been stars in his crown. Whether he is in this world or the other, in heaven or hell, I know not. If he should see these lines, I wish him to know that one yet lives who remembers him kindly and wishes him well in time and eternity.

When I am at this kind of work, I will mention another local preacher of early day in this country, who was a man of worth, by the name of James Benefiel. He was zealous and useful. He once lived in the Mad river country, where he was well nigh overturned by the reveries of Swedenborgianism. The reader will say, that is rather a poor recommendation of him. If he were the only man who had been bewildered by the sublime nonsense of that nondescript thing, it would be well. He, however, escaped the fowler's snare; and, I think, was licensed in that country to preach. When I knew him first he lived on the Dry Fork of White Water, and used to come occasionally to our preaching place at R. Manwarring's before mentioned, to preach. At that day, he was a strong, zealous man whose preaching was useful to the community in the awakening of sinners, and the edification of the infant societies. I afterward knew him in Wayne county, Indiana, when I traveled what was then called White Water circuit. He was not then able to preach with so much vigor; but he was greatly increased in piety, and was still useful. Subsequently he moved to Putnam county, Indiana, where he died some years since, if I am rightly informed. He was a most excellent man of God. I suppose there are but few now who knew anything about him; for he was poor, and had not the means to go far from home, to form an extensive acquaintance; but God and angels knew him and will have him in perpetual remembrance as will those who were saved by his instrumentality, and they were somewhat numerous.

In the next number I will resume the narrative of events, until another cluster of brethren of worth, who are dead, pass before us, and I shall turn aside to notice them.

Brookville, Ia., December 15, 1845.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, January 30, 1846.

No. XIII

At the close of the tenth number, I merely refer to the withering effects of the high-pressure operations of the previous year. I wish to say a little more on that subject, without reference to any time or place in particular.

The shrinkage after our great revivals has been, to me, a matter of painful observation for many years. Take the western country in general, so far as I am acquainted with it, and there are very many thousands who are from Europe, the eastern states, or native residents of the west, that were once connected with the Methodist Episcopal church, or some other branch of the Methodist family, as probationers or members, who have now no connection with it, or any other Christian church. I would think the persons in this condition would number nearly or quite, half as many as our present membership. This is a most unfortunate and unhappy class of persons. Many of them are hardened and wicked to an alarming degree. Some of them are found even among the irreligious, mischievous, and demoralizing Universalist preachers of the day. It is believed, however, that the larger part of these have sprung from regions and communities where the people have been taught to believe that "God, for his own glory has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." To believe that the God of holiness, justice, and truth, predestinated the fall of man, and consequently his subsequent wickedness, and then only provided a limited atonement, or which amounts to the same thing, only intended a limited extension of the saving benefits of a general atonement, to a select part of mankind who enjoy the influences of sovereign grace, is so revolting to the mind that dares to think freely,

and the heart which feels an expansive benevolence, that many, without stopping to inquire whether there are more rational views of theology, run headlong into the unscriptural belief, that God has also predestinated the ultimate holiness and happiness of all mankind. Many others of these unchurched people are desponding, unstable souls, in whom everybody has lost confidence, and they have lost confidence in themselves and everybody else. The Scriptures and matters of fact, ascertained by careful observation, will prove that such persons are generally worse than if they had never had any connection with the church. We may excuse ourselves by saying they might have been faithful to the end, and thereby have avoided the unhappy results of their course. But this excuse does not mend the matter; for such persons are really and permanently injured in their character and moral feelings, and in their future and eternal destiny. The church is, also, injured in her character and influence; for thinking men will conclude, that there must be some defect in her economy or administration, or she would take better care of the persons who join her. He must be dull indeed, who does not know that for the same persons to join and leave the church frequently tends to make her common and contemptible in the eyes of the public. I have viewed these things till, with an aching heart I have been tempted to think, in some cases, what is called a revival is a matter to be deplored; and I have earnestly inquired in my own mind, is there no remedy for evils which succeed and sometimes seem to grow out of, a good thing? I believe there is; but it can only be found in the combined prudence and piety of that class of preachers called revivalists and their successors. Whenever the proselytes in a revival much exceed the number of sound conversions, and the number of church members who are hungering and thirsting for that measure of righteousness which will fully sanctify their souls, we have reason to fear such revival will be attended and succeeded with a distressing and calamitous blight. In such case, the superintendents of the meetings should cease their strong efforts to proselyte, and should direct their particular attention

to the work of grace in the souls of the people. The preaching, at such times, should be of the most solid and instructing kind; and the young converts should be most kindly but rigidly disciplined in all the duties of religion, both personal and relative. There is some degree of religious hilarity that is a frequent attendant of religious excitement, which may be harmless in a small measure, but which easily runs into that kind of levity which is destructive of piety. Many, in this way, commence their backsliding in the neighborhood of the altar, when they are not dreaming of any such thing. Very much, also, depends on the kind of preachers and leaders, who have the after watch-care of the persons that are brought into the church. If those preachers and leaders are negligent in visiting, in a friendly manner, the persons under their care, many of them will suffer much loss in their souls, and will be discouraged, and will finally return to the world and sin, and lose all the grace which they ever had, and become miserable apostates. In view of all the unhappy results which have been mentioned, and which are not half what might be named, should we not all take heed that we be not guilty of mischief to the church and the souls of men?

At the conference held in autumn of 1812, the White Water circuit was divided and that part of it east of Brookville was called Oxford circuit. This division became necessary because of the increase of members and the increase of new preaching places in almost all parts of the circuit, but more particularly in the western part. The Twelve Mile Purchase, mentioned in my first number, as a fertile tract of land, embracing the West Fork of White Water and its tributaries, was now rapidly settling, notwithstanding the danger from the Indians. The people would form settlements somewhat compact on the principal streams, and build blockhouses to which they might resort in case of danger, which was usually discovered by spies on the frontier, who would detect Indian signs, and would warn the settlers of danger. Sometimes, however, the Indians would elude discovery, and kill families, or parts of families, on the extreme frontier.

The zealous, eloquent, popular, and successful John Strange was sent this year to the Brookville circuit, which then began at the new, but flourishing town of Brookville, in the forks of White Water, and went up the East Fork above Salisbury, the then county town of Wayne county, and west into the Twelve Mile Purchase, and down among the new settlements, on the water courses, to the place of beginning. The circuit embraced much of the present Franklin county, the whole of Union county, the settled parts of Wayne county, and perhaps a part of Fayette county. The preacher used to travel from block-house to block-house, with his gun on his shoulder, to defend himself, if he should be attacked by the Indians. When I traveled the same country, with some additions, eight years afterward, I found many of the people still retaining a lively remembrance of that zealous man, and his labors. One sister mentioned, in a most feeling and impressive manner, the hymn which he sung in the block-house where she was, when none of the people had been killed by the Indians during his absence. The hymn begins :

And are we yet alive, etc.

Under such circumstances who would not be impressed with such a hymn? Brother Strange labored faithfully on his wilderness circuit, and doubtless was the instrument of many awakenings and conversions; but the untoward circumstances by which he was surrounded, prevented him from having much increase. As we have no means of knowing how many members remained after Oxford circuit was taken off, I cannot tell whether he had an increase or a decrease. Being in Oxford circuit, I knew less about the interesting meetings in White Water circuit, at that time, than in former years when the same preacher, or preachers, went round the whole work, from whom I could learn the state of things; hence, the meagre account of the doings in Strange's charge this year. I might say much about the gifts and usefulness of that popular preacher, in this place; but as I intend to give an account of him somewhat in detail, I shall say no more at the present.

The members returned this year were eight hundred and forty-seven. But this must be a mistake, as the numbers

agree with the returns of the preceding year, before the division of the circuit. The number the next year, it will be seen from the *Minutes*, was only three hundred and one. It is my impression that Strange did not go to conference that year, but paid his mother the last visit which he ever made her. Hence, in making up the *Minutes*, it became necessary to guess at the numbers, and they were put down at what they were the year before, without any deduction for those set off to Oxford circuit.

Moses Crume was sent to that part of the circuit called Oxford, being partly in Indiana and partly in Ohio. He had not much visible success, so far as adding members was concerned, but he did good in trying to methodize and discipline the scores of raw material which the earthquakes and the very awakening preaching of old brother Robert Finley had been the means of gathering into the church. But the spirit of war, and the reaction which often succeeds a great ingathering, made the year one of painful labor with but little apparent fruit. There was much good done, however, in taking care of the tender lambs of the flock.

In the latter part of the summer, or the beginning of the fall, there was a good camp meeting on Indian creek, in the edge of Ohio, at which there were many conversions. There was one case of much interest, which should be a lesson of admonition to all who read this account. A very gay young lady was most powerfully awakened; and after a long and hard struggle, she was most happily converted at a very late hour at night. Next morning, all her gay ornaments were gone; and she was seen a meek, modest, plain, and most happy young woman. She joined the church, and remained very pious for sometime; but by degrees, she began to resume her ornaments and gaiety; and, in exact proportion, she began to decline in her religious enjoyment and to lose a relish for class meetings; and, in the course of the next year she left us, and joined the Baptist church. She had been baptized by immersion by Crume, and the church which she joined recognized the validity of her baptism, and did not rebaptize her. What finally became of her, I know not; but I fear she lost

all her piety. Whether her spiritual decline was the cause of her endeavors to find enjoyment in useless ornaments, or whether her indulgence in such ornaments was the cause of her spiritual decline, who can tell? Perhaps there was a reciprocal influence in the case.

The number of members reported this year was four hundred and eleven. Whether this number was an increase or decrease, is now unknown, as there is no means by which we can learn how many fell to the Oxford part of the division.

This year the Lawrenceburg circuit was extended down the Ohio river to Madison, the county town of Jefferson county. The accounts which I have are somewhat at variance, one stating that Walter Griffith preached there in 1811, or 1812, and another that William Dixon was the first preacher who preached stately in the new town. The town was laid out in 1810; and in 1811 the first court in Jefferson county was held there; and Elijah Sparks, whose character is given before was in attendance as a lawyer; and after attending to the business of his profession through the week, he gave notice, on Saturday evening that if the people would attend the next day, he would preach to them in the house occupied as the courthouse. Several of the oldest citizens say this was the first Methodist sermon ever preached in the town, and the first of any kind preached in a house; but they say there had been a few sermons preached in the woods by Baptist ministers. It is said Sparks attempted to form a class; but in this, he failed; or, if he succeeded at the time, the class was subsequently dissolved; for it is said there was no permanent class until John Strange traveled there in 1814 and 1815; but I am inclined to believe this statement is a mistake. Prior to 1812 and 1813, Indian creek, in the now county of Switzerland, had been the lower part of Lawrenceburg circuit. Between this and Madison, there was then a large scope of wilderness country, which was deemed dangerous to travel on account of the Indians. I well remember Brother Crume expressing his doubts to me whether it was Brother Dixon's duty to run the risk of traveling that wilderness to Madison. Whether the preacher then went into what is now the south-

east part of Ripley county, known then as Buchanan's station, I am not informed; but I presume he did; for, when I first became acquainted with that settlement in 1816, there was a society regularly organized, which had been of some year's standing. If the preacher went there, his exposure was still the greater, as that place was still more frontier. I do not know whether there was any preaching between the preaching place near where Vevay now is and Madison, on Indiana Kentucky creek; but I should judge not; for there was only a small society there when Bigelow and the writer first preached there in the fall of 1816.

The amiable and meek William Dixon was the preacher this year on the Lawrenceburg circuit. He was a very faithful man, and, as we have seen, enlarged the circuit at great peril, and much increase of labor. If we were to form our estimate of his labors and usefulness from the return of members on the *Minutes*, we should form incorrect conclusions. In the previous year, the earthquakes and the indefatigable Griffith and the zealous Sparks, and others, had been the means of swelling the membership to four hundred and eighty-nine, in a county mostly new and sparsely settled. The alarm of war had now driven many to block-houses and some had entered the service of the country as volunteers; and many, who seemed to start fair, when the earthquakes ceased, and a spirit of war had seized them, returned again to the world. I attended a camp meeting toward the close of Dixon's year, on the camp ground near Scoggins', (before mentioned) in the Big Bottom, where I saw Dixon, the first time. I well remember an exhortation, which he delivered with many tears, as he expected to leave his charge soon for another field of labor. The winter had been hard, and the ice in the many streams in the circuit had been troublesome; but notwithstanding all the difficulties, he called on the people to witness that he had attended all his appointments, and tried to do his whole duty. In thus reviewing the past year, he urged, in a most pathetic manner, the people to fidelity. Perhaps few men were ever more beloved in Lawrenceburg circuit, than was William Dixon; but uncontrollable times and circumstances rendered

his labors measurably unsuccessful in the conversion of souls, which was a great grief to him.

By turning to the *Minutes*, it will be found that the number of members returned this year was three hundred and nineteen, being a decrease of one hundred and seventy, which was a very great decrease in one year, but the causes mentioned will account for it.

I wish to say a few words in this connection, in reference to William Dixon. Where and when he was born and educated I have no knowledge; but I find him admitted on trial by the Western conference in the fall of 1811, and appointed to Letart Falls circuit; but his name in connection with the circuit is spelled Nixon. In the fall of 1812 he was sent to Lawrenceburg circuit, where I have just described his labors. Mr. Waggoner, the oldest settler in Madison, mentions him as an interesting young man, who waked up quite an interest among the people. In the fall of 1813, he was ordained a deacon, and appointed to Zanesville circuit; and in 1814 his appointment was Hinkstone, Kentucky. In 1815 he was ordained elder, and sent to the Cincinnati station; and the next year to Steubenville, which was a very heavy circuit, of more than a thousand members. His appointments, in 1817, was Union circuit, embracing Lebanon, Dayton, and Xenia, and the intermediate country. Here he became acquainted with the lady whom he afterward made his companion for life. In 1818, he was appointed to Strait creek; and in 1819 he was elected a delegate to General conference; and appointed to Miami circuit, which was then large, embracing all the country between the Miamies for a number of miles back from the river, with the exception of Cincinnati. It is said he conducted himself with great propriety and dignity at General conference, and gave evidence of some talent as a speaker. Sometime in the year which he spent on Miami circuit, he married; and at the conference in 1820 he located and settled in the Miami country above Lebanon, where he lived many years, much respected as a good and useful local minister.

Sometime between 1835 and 1838, he moved to the Shawnee Prairie, in Fountain county, in the Wabash valley. There,

also, he was a very popular and useful local preacher. When I traveled Crawfordsville district in 1837 and 1838, I was at his house, and found him in possession of much landed estate, heartily sick of his wealth, which he acquired by his marriage. He told me, in the honesty of his heart that all he wanted of this world was a small farm, which he could till with his own hands, and be free from worldly cares and anxieties, that he might have time to read and improve his mind, and do good. He was, in an eminent degree, a meek and lowly man. Perhaps few men have hearts so well filled with love for everything good as had William Dixon. When I knew him last, he was going in the vale of years; but he preached with the zeal and energy of his youth. He was one of the very few traveling preachers, who are not injured in their piety and feelings by their retirement from the itinerant ranks to local life. That he was as useful in a located relation as he would have been in the traveling connection, I dare not affirm; but if there are any who are so, he was one of the number. I am not acquainted with the particulars of his death, which occurred since I left that country. The reader by glancing at the appointments which this brother filled in the nine years which he traveled, must be aware that he was a man of some note in his day. Doubtless, this sweet spirited and useful man rests in the paradise of God.

Brookville, Ia., December 25, 1845.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, February 20, 1845.

No. XIV

The time is come to take leave of a name endeared by many fond recollections of past and pleasing associations; I mean the venerable name of the Western conference. Indeed, this should have been done in the last number, but it was omitted inadvertently. In doing this it may not be amiss to retrospect a little and compare the past with the present.

Up to the year 1800 the conferences were known by numbers, and the places of meeting, and not by proper names, as at present. In the year named, the third conference in num-

ber met on the first Friday in April, at Dunworth, Holston. Whether Holston was a section of country, and Dunworth a meetinghouse, or town, I know not; for I cannot find Dunworth in *Brook's Universal Gazette*; hence, I suppose it was a meetinghouse. I suppose, however, the conference was on the waters of the Holston river. In 1801, I find a conference called Kentucky, which met twice in the same year; the first time at Holston, on the 1st of May; and the second time on the 1st of October, at Ebenezer in Tennessee. I suppose Ebenezer was the name of a meetinghouse. After this, the conference was called the Western conference until the General conference in 1812, when it was divided into the Ohio and Tennessee conferences.

For ten years, the Western conference embraced all the Mississippi valley (except the Monongahela district in the Baltimore conference), inhabited by civilized man. The scattered settlements had to be much secluded, and greatly hardened in sin, if the pioneer Methodist preachers did not find them out, and make a religious impression on them. The name of this widespread and maternal conference being lost in the Ohio and Tennessee conferences, was succeeded by a large family of conferences, being fifteen in number and part of the sixteenth. For the one, we now have Ohio, Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi, Kentucky, Illinois, Holston, a part of Pittsburg, Indiana, Arkansas, Michigan, North Ohio, Memphis, Rock River, North Indiana, and Iowa. Some of these are in regions which were wholly unsettled by civilized man in the lifetime of the holy mother of them all.

When we look over the vast valley of the Mississippi in 1812, and see about one hundred and fifty traveling, and perhaps three hundred local preachers, to cultivate it, so far as our denomination is concerned, and behold only about thirty thousand members, and then reflect that we now have in the same valley more than seventeen hundred traveling and upward of four thousand local preachers, many of whom are men of the first talents in the nation, and that our membership in the valley numbers more than four hundred and fifty thousand, we must say, the Lord of hosts is with us; and if we remain humble, pious, and laborious, he will still be with

us, and permit us to see things more glorious than we have ever seen. O, God, keep us thine for ever and ever.

In the fall of 1813, David Sharp, a young man just received on trial, was sent to White Water circuit, John Strange to Oxford, and Moses Crume to Lawrenceburg. These brethren were all devoted men, and labored hard to promote the work of God; but had not much fruit of all their toils. Their want of success was the result of several causes. The fell spirit of war was now raging in its most malignant form; and, as two of the circuits were on the frontier, they suffered much in their religious prosperity by the unsettled state of things. The reaction which succeeded the great ingathering in the time of the earthquakes (before mentioned), and the powerful labors of Finley and Griffith, and their zealous helpers among the local preachers, was another great drawback on the prosperity of the church this year. The *Minutes* show a decrease of four hundred and eleven members on the three circuits from the fall of 1813 to the fall of 1814. Oxford, which was not then a frontier circuit, decreased only six members in the year Strange traveled it, so that I feel authorized to say, the war, and its concomitants, were the great causes of the decline in the church. It is true, Oxford circuit had a most excellent pastor in the person of Moses Crume the year before Strange traveled it. Crume was the same good pastor on Lawrenceburg circuit, but it decreased nearly one hundred under his administration this year. Whether there was an increase or decrease, of White Water circuit this year, I have no means of knowing, as the report of the numbers the preceding year was greatly erroneous from the cause mentioned in the last number, I suppose, however, there was a falling off.

Perhaps there is no human transactions on this earth performed with so much of the fear of God, and purity of motive, and regard to the welfare of the preachers and people, as the appointments made by the bishops and the presiding elders in the Methodist Episcopal Church. I know that brethren, who have not had just such appointments as they and their friends have wished, have had their doubts that all things were not just right in the appointments; but the day

of eternity will convince them that, in most cases, they were mistaken, and the appointing power was generally right. The most afflicting appointment which I ever received, and which was dark to me the whole year, was made light by the events of the next, and succeeding years. These appointments are generally made with most excellent judgment, as well as purity of intention. It would, however, be folly to claim for them infallible correctness, as they are made by fallible men, who are liable to mistake, with all their honesty of intention. It has always seemed to me, that there was a mistake in appointing the young, timid, inexperienced, but good David Sharp, to the charge of a frontier circuit, as the successor of the talented, energetic, and uncommonly popular John Strange. Doubtless, Sharp did the best he could in the circumstances of the case, but it was putting him to uncalled for trials, unless it was unavoidable. I know but little about the state of the work in Sharp's field this year. There was a camp meeting in the eastern part of the circuit, in the vicinity of Charles Waddle, mentioned in a former number, as having formed, in conjunction with his wife, and a few other families, a class in 1807, sometime before they had a preacher. The meeting was attended by Strange, and Joshua Holland, a most excellent local preacher who lived in the Ohio part of Oxford circuit. Joseph Williams, the third traveling preacher in the White Water country, was also in attendance.

The meeting moved heavily, and very little good seemed to be accomplished, until an advanced period of the meeting, when Williams preached one of his most terrific exhortations, made up, almost exclusively, of hell fire and damnation, or in other words, of the awful punishment of the wicked in a future world. The discourse was delivered with so much feeling and energy that consternation seized the thoughtless multitude, who quailed before the terrors of the Lord. When Williams ended, Holland arose to exhort, his whole soul being melted with sympathy for the wicked, many of whom were his relatives. With burning zeal for God's cause, he poured forth an exhortation at first general in its character, but such was the intensity of his feelings, that he soon began to call on his nephews and other relatives, to yield to God and

seek salvation when the mighty power of God was manifest among the multitude, and many bowed before a throne of grace and many and glorious were the triumphs of the Redeemer's kingdom that Sabbath afternoon and evening. In the midst of the excitement one man and his family were under the necessity of going home, but he was most anxious to have his children baptized before he went and Waddle (as he recently informed Hays) went and called Strange, and procured water, and went with the family into the woods, not far from the camp ground, so as not to attract the attention of the crowd about the altar, and Strange baptized the children there under the cover of a tree, in the woods; and surely that omnipresent Being who sees and hears, and knows all things in the universe, could bless the penitent seekers on the camp ground, and take the children, who were dedicated to him in the woods into covenant relation to himself at the same time.

Shortly after the White Water camp meeting there was another held for Oxford circuit on the premises of Brother Holland, the local preacher mentioned before. The meeting was conducted by Strange, as it was not a quarterly meeting, and the presiding elder was not in attendance. William Lambdin, who was then stationed in Cincinnati, was there, and preached some interesting sermons. Joseph Oglesby, who traveled Mad river circuit that year, and was passing south, I think, to Kentucky, stopped a few hours on Monday, and preached a most interesting sermon from Jeremiah xxxviii, 20; and as he had been the first traveling preacher who had preached in that region, and had formed the first circuit west of the Great Miami, his sermon produced a most excellent impression on the congregation. The meeting was only medium in its utility and success, as it was a very rainy time, and the services were much interrupted. There were no general revivals on Oxford circuit that year; but there was as much prosperity as could be expected, in the state of the country and the church at that time; for the old leaven of backsliding and apostasy after the great revival in 1812, was not yet all purged out. There were some interesting quarterly meetings that year, which tended much to the edifying of the church.

I was at some of Crume's meetings on Lawrenceburg circuit, but I do not know much about the circuit generally that year. The meetings which I attended were generally good ones, especially a quarterly meeting in the Big Bottom, at Scoggin's, mentioned before in connection with some good camp meetings on his land. Whether Crume went as far down the river as Madison, I do not know; but I am inclined to think he did not; as the few documents which I have from there, make no mention of him as one of the early preachers in that town; and from the information which I have, it would seem that Strange had to begin anew, the next year, to reorganize a society in that town. Whether it was during this, or former years, that Crume embraced a part of Kentucky in his field of labor, I do not know. Brother White, of Oxford, informs me, that on one of Crume's visits to Kentucky, a band of ruffians attempted to mob him, and he was compelled to make his escape on foot and leave his horse, which he finally lost. If Crume ever mentioned this circumstance to me, it has wholly escaped my recollection or I would have introduced it in its appropriate place in the notice which I have taken of him and his work. The circuit, as I have already mentioned, decreased much this year; but the fault was not in the preachers, traveling or local; but in the unpropitious and vexatious times. The presiding elder, this year, was the talented and most excellent Samuel Parker, for the Miami district still embraced the three circuits, the history of which is being detailed.

The reader has discovered that I have endeavored to give an account somewhat in detail of the most prominent early Methodist preachers, who traveled in this country, who are deceased; but whether I shall do so in reference to Samuel Parker, I cannot say. If I do not, it will not be for want of inclination on my part, or of worth on his part; but from a want of ability to do justice to the memory of so much excellence. Who could properly portray that wonderful man of God? New Jersey was his natal state, where he was born in 1774; and at the age of fourteen, was awakened and converted, and, in a short time, joined the then despised Methodists. At one period of his life, he lived near, or at, Uniontown, in

western Pennsylvania, where he felt exercised on the subject of preaching. To escape such exercises, he procured a knapsack to hold his clothes, and started to the wilds of Kentucky, and stopped near Newcastle, Henry county, Kentucky, and boarded a year or two with Hugh Cull, now of Wayne county, Indiana. Here he was in the midst of a most pious and zealous society, not much calculated to erase his impressions from his mind; so that after many hard struggles, he consented to be a preacher; and his first effort was up to mediocrity; for it was made under the full impression, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." He was licensed in 1800, and remained a local preacher four years, for he was received on trial in the fall of 1804. He traveled numerous and extensive fields, until the latter end of 1819, when he died in great peace in the state of Mississippi, to which the bishop had transferred him, to superintend the young but interesting plant of Methodism in that rising country.

He was rather a tall, slim, awkward, man in appearance, with large blue eyes, with an enormous big Roman nose; and, when he preached, the inside of his upper lip protruded ungracefully. He had a long chin, which he used in the winter time to hold up the blanket which he used for comfort; in the centre of which he had a hole cut and well bound, to prevent it from tearing, and which was just large enough to let his small head through, when he would hang the fore part of the bound hole on his chin, and bid defiance to wind and rain. If his bed covering, or frequently his pallet covering, was scant at quarterly meetings, his blanket answered him another valuable purpose for additional covering.

Reader, do you want to know why I mention pallets at quarterly meetings? I will tell you. Churches, we had none in those days, but our quarterly meetings were at private houses, which were usually crowded by strangers from a distance. When the time for repose arrived, usually all the beds were surrendered to the sisterhood, and we men would pile down on the floor sometimes by the dozen, with our feet to the fire, with a few bed covers over and under us, and sleep under Heaven's guardian care, and arise in the morning, prayerful, thankful, and happy. Well, I have told you how

ill-looking Parker was, but there was another face to the man, conferred by his virtues; for had he been a profane drunken knave he would have been all ugliness. The time for service arrives, and now behold the homely, awkward man arise and place his chair before him for his pulpit and hand-board, and begin to read his hymn in rather a careless manner, and you would wonder how such soft and charming intonations could come out of so homely a mouth; then to hear him sing, "Ere you were aware, your soul would make you like the chariots of Aminadab," Song vi, 12, if you have any taste for vocal music, you would feel regret when the hymn was ended; but this regret would not last long; for when he bowed before the Lord, he would pour forth the pious aspirations of a devout heart, with such eloquence and pathos, that heaven and earth seemed in juxtaposition. I have heard many gifted and pious prayers, but such as I sometimes heard from Parker, I have never heard from any other human being. An able and observing jurist of Indiana has been heard to say, when he hears a minister sing in a superior manner, he never expects to hear a strong sermon after the singing. This declaration may be true, very true, as a general rule, but general rules have their exceptions; and if he had heard Parker sing, and then preach, he would have said: "Well, my rule, though generally true, has failed for once, at least."

I remember hearing him preach two sermons in the winter of 1813 and 1814 at a quarterly meeting at Scoggin's in the Big Bottom, on the first chapter, latter part of the fourth verse of Solomon's Song. On Saturday, the words were, "The upright love thee," and on Sunday, the words were, "We will remember thy love." I have since heard the most able and popular divines in the nation, but a description of the good man's love to God, and of God's love to man, equal to the description which I then heard, I have not been privileged to hear since, and indeed I never expect to hear anything this side the throne of God which will surpass it. I could give from memory, sketches of some of the sermons which he preached the year he was among us, but they would compare so poorly with the originals, that I would be ashamed of them, and I will not attempt to give them. Perhaps the best

sermon which I ever heard him preach was in the house where I was converted. The text was the words of the Psalmist: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," Psalm lxxxix, 15. After briefly referring to the silver trumpets, as described in the tenth chapter of Numbers, he considered the text as embodying the offer of salvation to mankind in the Gospel scheme. I do not remember whether he divided his discourse in a formal manner or not, but the plan of the discourse, though I think, unannounced in the beginning, was: 1. The joyful sound. 2. The knowledge of the sound. 3. The blessedness consequent upon that knowledge. O, it was the very vestibule of heaven to be present, and hear his peroration. According to the custom of that time, which was to have two sermons at the middle of the day, Strange arose to preach after him; but with all his eloquence and popularity, he was far behind him. He tried hard; and we were all anxious, that our circuit preacher should preach as well as the presiding elder; but he could not do it. Those who knew Strange, are aware what admirable tact he had to extricate himself when he was embarrassed, and how he usually succeeded; but all his efforts were unavailing at that time. He, however, had the good sense to make short metre of his performance, and let the people go home full of the glorious truths which they had heard from Parker. If the reader will look into the bound *Minutes*, volume first, page 358, he will find an interesting and true account (so far as it goes), of this extraordinary man. A more mild, kind-hearted and affectionate man than he, Heaven has seldom given to this world of sin and sorrow. He served his generation nineteen years in the ministry much of the time in feeble health. It is no wonder that Methodism became beautiful and strong, when the great head of the general church raised up such men as Parker to plant and water this nursling of his providence and grace. It was a mysterious Providence which removed him to the then sickly Mississippi; and one more mysterious which removed him from labor in the midst of his mental vigor and great usefulness. I presume he had less regret at his removal from earth than any other human being; for he was rich in grace and ripe for glory.

Since I gave an account of old Brother Finley's labors in the White Water valley and contiguous parts, I have been informed by brethren in Wayne county, that he had a colleague a part of the year, in the person of a young brother, Robert Ray, who was among the first converts to the Lord, and to Methodism, in the Indian creek region, northwest of Hamilton, Ohio. His educational prejudices were in favor of the Baptist church. He was a very devout young man, of good intellectual powers, and would have made a very useful man, if Providence had permitted; but for many years, the state of his health was such, that he could say with Baxter, in the words of an earlier writer, "I scarcely knew that I lived but by the pains I suffered." After a few months' trial in the itinerant field, under the direction of the presiding elder, he found his health inadequate to the heavy labor and desisted from the work and married Miss Mildred Watts (mentioned in a former number), and entered into secular employments, and never arrived to that mental elevation, of which he was capable, if he could have given himself wholly to God and his work.

He lived a number of years in the southwest part of Dearborn county, Indiana, where he labored somewhat extensively as a local preacher with some acceptability and usefulness; but in consequence of his feebleness and worldly cares, and some peculiar and sore trials, he was not so sprightly, and popular, and useful, as his friends expected he would be. The first time I saw him was at a camp meeting, when his pale face, and languid frame and countenance, seemed to indicate that he was more fit to be an inhabitant of another world than this. I remember having assisted him at a meeting about six miles east of Brookville in the winter of 1812, when the earth was shaking, and sinners weeping and praying. I was not then aware that he was filling appointments regularly on the circuit, or I should have connected him in my account with his colleague. I once heard William Holman, now of the Kentucky conference, speak incidentally in a sermon, of his early religious impressions as being produced by the labors of a pale, hollow-eyed man, whom I presume was Robert Ray. He died five or six years since, when the writer furnished a short

obituary of him for the *Western Christian Advocate*. Since his death his excellent widow and most of his family have moved to Vermillion county, Illinois, and settled near Danville in that state.

How the early instruments of God's blessed work in this country are dropping off! A few more years and there will not be one of them left to tell us anything about those early days. Last week I paid a visit to Hugh Cull and his family. He is largely upward of seventy, and his voice is tremulous, but he loves to talk about "the days of other years." I suppose I shall see this pioneer no more this side of the grave. Peace to him in his old age, in death, and to all eternity.

Brookville, Ia., January 8, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, March 6, 1846.

No. XV

The fall of 1814 found John Sale again returned to the Miami district, and William Hunt appointed to White Water circuit, John Somerville to Oxford, and John Strange to Lawrenceburg. At the first quarterly meeting for Oxford circuit, which was held at Manwarring's, a few miles above Harrison, Sale united the White Water and Oxford circuits together, so that Somerville and Hunt traveled both circuits, which gave the people greater variety.

Somerville was a lame Irish tailor; he was a man of good common sense, and some acquirements, but was regarded as having more talents than he really possessed. He was a very grave and religious man, and successful in his labors. He had a most singular mind in one respect. He was ever prone to spiritualize and allegorize the plain historical facts in the Bible. I remember hearing him preach once from 2 Kings ii, 11, "And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." He introduced all sorts of divine and gracious operations into his sermon on this text; but before he had done he converted his whirlwind into a most dreadful whirlpool which was carrying the wicked to hell in numerous crowds. At another time, he said, the word Gospel meant good news, and then analyzing

the word news into its elements, he made the letters stand for the initials of north, east, west, and south, and by this process proved the universality of the atonement, and that God would send the Gospel into the four quarters of the world. Perhaps the reader is ready to say, the man was a solemn trifler in the things of God. Do not conclude so hastily, my brother; for a more devout, sincere, and zealous man, and orthodox divine than Somerville, was not easy to be found. How it was that a mind so sound and intelligent, could take such freaks of allegorizing, I know not; but I hope he has outlived them; for I learn from the *Minutes*, he is yet living as a member of the Pittsburg conference, but is superannuated. May the Lord bless him in his old age, for he was useful with us.

Hunt was a young man from Kentucky of respectable family connections. He had just been received on trial, when he was sent to the charge of the White Water circuit. He was a most grave, devoted young man, whose success in winning souls was more than ordinary. His whole soul was in the work, and he bid fair to be a man of great eminence; and he doubtless would have been a man of much popularity and usefulness, if he had not made some mistakes. The first mistake, and the foundation of all the rest was his premature marriage, which took place before he had fully established his ministerial character. He married a most excellent woman, who became unhealthy, in consequence of which he could not regularly attend his work, and he became embarrassed in many ways. She died and went to rest, and he married again, and became disconnected from the church; but was subsequently united to it again, and so remained for many years, and was, to some extent, useful; but had many ups and downs in his eventful life. I believe he is now at the head of a small band, in Randolph county, Indiana, who call themselves Republican Methodists. I have known him long and well and think, while he is blameworthy, he is also to be much pitied. We may say of ministers, what Dawes says of females, in his oration on female education, if a minister chance to swerve from the strictest rules of virtue,

Ruin ensues, and endless shame;
And one false step for ever blasts his fame:
In vain his loss he may deplore—
In vain look back to what he was before;
He sets like stars that fall to rise no more.

I love and pity the man, and wish him well in time and eternity. I do not mention these facts to afflict Hunt and his friends, who are among my best friends, but to warn my junior brethren in the ministry in single life, not to be in a hurry to encumber themselves and the church with the care of a family.

When Somerville and Hunt came on the circuits, the bitter controversy (before named) concerning Pelagianism had not yet ended. This controversy might have been named as one of the causes of the decline in the two previous years. To show the reader the spirit of the times, I will mention one fact. A worthy brother who lived in my vicinity was recommended to the quarterly meeting conference for license to preach. Some thought he was too strong a believer in human depravity; and a considerable majority of those who had signed his recommendation for license to preach, were prevailed on to sign a remonstrance against their own recommendation, so that when the brother arrived at the quarterly meeting he was informed by the presiding officer that he never admitted applications for license until the last quarterly meeting; and if this were not the case, he held a remonstrance against giving him license signed by many of the persons whose names were to his recommendation. Somerville and Hunt were both decidedly orthodox on this subject; so that after a few rounds the struggle subsided, and a gracious revival commenced in many parts of the two circuits which they traveled.

The war was now drawing to a close, and the people had rest on the frontiers; and the government land was being purchased, not for the madness of speculation, but to be cleared and tilled by the honest occupants; so that the country was rapidly filling up with industrious settlers, who were willing to hear the Gospel; and these zealous men willingly denied themselves and gladly followed them into the wilderness, so

as to preach Jesus to them. Hitherto the settlements had been almost exclusively on the water courses; but now much of the good upland between the numerous streams of the White Water valley began to settle, so as to give more uniformity and compactness to the country. By the industrious men then on the work, many of these new settlements were visited, and small but flourishing societies were formed. By reference to the *Minutes*, it will be found that there was an increase on the White Water circuit this year of one hundred and eighty-nine, and on Oxford of one hundred and seventy-two, making in all on these two joined circuits, three hundred and sixty-one, and these were mostly new members, soundly converted to God.

Lawrenceburg circuit had suffered more of a falling off than any other part of the work; but now the country began to improve in all its borders, and the zealous Strange was found at his post in every part of his work, from Ory's (where he used to preach occasionally), between White Water and its tributary, called the Dry Fork, down to Madison, and as far from the Ohio river as there were any settlements. At this time Vevay was a new, but most flourishing town, and Strange commenced preaching in it, and formed a small society; but, alas! the materials, in the main, were of a most unsuitable kind to give reputation and stability to Methodism. If the proprietor of the town had taken a broad and correct view of things, and invited moral and religious persons to settle in the town by generous offers, and if he had gone so far as to build a good meeting-house at his own expense, and if the first members of the church had been of the right kind, Vevay this day, would have been the flourishing city, and Madison the small town; for when I first knew Vevay and Madison, in the winter of 1815, the former had much more enterprise and many more inhabitants than the latter; but the first inhabitants of Madison encouraged religion, while those of Vevay did not; and now Madison, with a surrounding country less improved, is a city; while Vevay, with a better surrounding country, is only a moderate town. So much for not understanding the fact, that the best way for a town, or country, to flourish, is to fear God, and promote religion.

The society in Madison went through many vicissitudes in early days. After carefully reading all the documents furnished me last fall by Judge Taylor, although they have some discrepancies in them, I think I may say, Elijah Sparks did form a class in 1811; and although the first settler there thinks Dixon was the first regular traveling preacher who preached in the place, he is probably mistaken as he did not belong to the society; and that Walter Griffith went there a few of his latter rounds on the circuit, and resuscitated the society formed by Sparks, which consisted of six or seven members for several years. During Dixon's year, the society still remained, but was small. In a former number, I say, I would incline to believe that Griffith preached there, were it not for documents which affirm that Dixon was the first regular preacher. When I wrote that, I had only read the statements of one man and his wife, who, I suppose, did not hear Griffith. I have supposed in the last number, that Crume did not go to Madison in the perilous times, when he rode Lawrenceburg circuit, and that the society became disorganized, while they were without a pastor.

When Strange went to Madison in the fall of 1814, he revived or reorganized the society, which had only six or eight members then. In the following winter, there was a quarterly meeting in the town, when the holy sacrament was administered by Sale, the presiding elder, which was the first time that ever the sufferings and death of the Savior were commemorated in that way in the place. It is said, there were six or seven preachers at this meeting, which was a large number for the newness of the country. Three of them were traveling preachers, Sale, Strange, and William M'Mahan, who then traveled Shelby circuit in Kentucky. Sale and Strange are dead, and M'Mahan now belongs to the Memphis conference. He preached at Madison occasionally in 1812, when he traveled Silver Creek circuits. The society in Madison increased considerably this year, as did many others; for the ebbing of the circuit now ceased, and the good work began to advance again. About this time, some Methodist families settled about eleven miles northeast of Madison, and were formed into a class, and had preaching, which was a great

accommodation to them; for they had to go to Madison to hear the word and enjoy class, when they first came to the neighborhood, now called Canaan. The class at Buchanan's station, before named, was again revived, and was built up in the good ways of the Lord. The increase this year on the circuit was eighty-six.

Perhaps the reader wishes to know why I do not give some account of the Methodist meeting-houses in these extended circuits. The reason is, there were none, or nearly none, of which to give any account. In 1811, there was a small log meeting-house built on Clear creek, east of Salisbury, the then county town of Wayne county, Indiana. But the town has gone to desolation, and become a farm, since the county seat has been removed to Centreville. This meeting-house was never well finished, and after the court-house was built in Salisbury, the preaching was removed there, and the meeting-house was suffered to go to desolation. This was the first Methodist meeting-house in the whole White Water valley. It should have been preserved as a memento of former years. Three or four years afterward, there was another small log meeting-house built a few miles from the former, which was called Cain's meeting-house, and was about three miles west of north from where the city of Richmond now stands. About the same time (whether before or after, my information does not determine), there was another log meeting-house, built in the southern part of the same country, called Doddridge's meeting-house, being so named after a most estimable family, who had settled there from western Virginia. Both these houses were standing and in use, when I rode White Water circuit in 1818 and 1819. They were small and had but few windows, and a fire-place and chimney in one end. When I used to preach in them in cold weather, and the people would collect around the fire, so as to sit with their backs to me, I would have been glad to see the chimney fall down in the midst of the sermon, so that the people would have been induced to get stoves. Do not think, reader, that I would have been willing to see the chimneys fall on the people. They were outside chimneys, and would have injured nobody in their fall. Cain's meeting-house has gone to decay, and there is none in its

place. Doddridge's has been superseded by a good and spacious brick house. About 1819, there was another meeting-house, built of logs, on the waters of Lee's creek, a branch of the Dry Fork. This house was in Ohio and belonged to Oxford circuit. In 1820, there was another log house built about four miles from Brookville, near the road to Connersville. I suppose the entire church property in the whole White Water valley up to 1830, belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, was not worth one thousand dollars. What a change in this particular! Now our church property in the valley must be worth sixty or seventy thousand dollars at a very moderate estimation. Perhaps it is worth nearly one hundred thousand. Lawrenceburg circuit, with all its wealth, had no meeting-house until the fall of 1815. At the quarterly meeting in the winter, when Sale and others were at Madison, they stayed with Mr. M'Intire, who had become largely interested in the town by purchasing the property of one of the proprietors. Sometime during the meeting the subject of building a church was named, and it was resolved to build the next summer. Mr. M'Intire had lived in Cincinnati before he came to Madison, and had contributed largely in helping to build a house of worship for the Presbyterians, for whom he had strong predilection. In the spring, he went to Cincinnati and called on his friends, whom he had assisted, requesting them to assist him in turn to build a house in the town of his residence. With what he received from Cincinnati, and what he gave himself, and what the Methodists and those who were friendly to them contributed, they were able to rear and inclose a neat brick church, which was sufficiently large for the population at that time. The church was not ready for occupancy before Strange left the circuit for conference; so that his successor, David Sharp, was the first traveling preacher who preached in it, and dedicated it to the service of almighty God, although it was unseated, unplastered, and had no pulpit, and it remained in that state for several years. When I first preached in Madison in the latter part of 1816, I preached in the dwelling houses during the winter. I suppose this meeting-house was the first one built of bricks which the Methodists ever had in Indiana. There

were meeting-houses built earlier than those which I have mentioned, in Clark's grant, which will be noticed when I come to speak of that part of the work; but these were log houses with their chimneys. It may seem strange to the people of the present day, that we did so long without houses of worship; but this is easy of explanation. The country was new, and very few persons had settled permanently, so that there might be a flourishing class in a particular neighborhood, and in a short time the members would be gone, and others who were not Methodists would occupy their places. The country being sparsely settled, the congregations were not large as they are now, so that, except at quartely meetings, a private house would hold the people conveniently. Most of the people were in moderate circumstances, and being new beginners in a new country, they had but little time or means to spare in building churches. Sometimes, instead of occupying the dwelling houses, which were suitable for the accommodation of the people, and in the county towns, the court-houses were almost uniformly used as churches for public worship.

The force of habit had such an influence on the preachers who were accustomed to preach in private dwellings, that they did not urge the people to build churches; for they did not much desire to leave the dwelling houses, and go to meeting houses. I have mentioned the force of habit, and its influence, and I feel it to this day; for I can have more true religious enjoyment in standing behind a split-bottomed chair, on the week day, in a private house, and preaching to twenty-five or thirty simple hearted people, who fear and love God (if they will not chew and spit tobacco over the floor and furniture), than in preaching to hundreds in the best church this side of heaven.

And then, after preaching, to meet the class, as they are seated in the good brother's house, which is for the time being God's own house and heaven's gate, is most delightful, and is the very next thing to heaven itself. There is much complaint these days, that the preachers do not meet class after preaching; and it strikes me there are many reasons for this, one of the principal of which is, that after the most

of the people have retired to detain twelve or fifteen persons in a house which will hold half as many hundreds, is enough to freeze their hearts, and make the class a dull concern. Perhaps this may not seem so to those who are used to it, as it does to me, who have been used to the private house.

There was one great advantage, however, arising from our tardiness to build churches, especially in the towns; for although we had some inconveniences in getting along in the school-houses and court-houses, yet if we had built in an early day the houses must have been small, and this would have done us a very great injury in the end; we would have cleaved to our little old houses, until we would have lost the more intelligent and refined part of our congregations; for such people will not go to church when they have to push like rude swine in a close pen to get a seat.

At this very day, many of the best families in Madison would have been our hearers, and many of them our members, if we had not remained in our little old church so long. It used to make my heart ache, when I was presiding elder there, to see one gentleman after another arise and leave to make room for a lady, who had no seat; when I would have to preach to a congregation three-fourths of whom were females. I am willing to believe the ladies are the better part of this lower creation; but I do not think it is Heaven's will that they should compose the chief part of our worshipping assemblies; but if they do come, and there is not room for all, the gentleman should give them the preference, if they do not come too late. For the want of room, many excellent families ceased to come to Methodist meetings; and now they are worthy and influential members of other churches, and are doing well; but I would much rather we had them churched among us; for I am fully persuaded we could do a better part by them, with all the means of Methodism, than other churches can do.

I could name several Methodist churches in Indiana, that, if a fire or wind from God should lay them in ruins, I should feel like keeping a day of thanksgiving; for if they stand much longer, I fear others will come and take away our place and nation. O, brethren, tear down the little old churches in the outskirts of the towns, and erect noble, but plain buildings in

the centre of population, and live and pray as Christians ought, and God will double your numbers and means in a very few years, perhaps in a few months. You should aim at nothing less than the conversion of the entire population; and to this end you must have houses that will hold the people.

Brookville, Ind., January 21, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, March 27, 1846.

No. XVI

John Sale was returned to the Miami district in the autumn of 1815, and Daniel Fraley was appointed to the White Water circuit, Benjamin Lawrence to Oxford, and David Sharp to Lawrenceburg. How the work prospered on the White Water circuit I know not (for I had removed in the preceding year from the White Water country to Switzerland county), but from what I could learn three years afterward, when I traveled the same circuit, it was not a year of much prosperity. The preacher, Brother Fraley, was a good man, but not very successful when he traveled the White Water circuit, which was partly owing to his purpose to marry and locate at the ensuing conference. Whenever a preacher comes to the conclusion to locate, he had better do so at once; for I have never known a man receive an appointment, with a purpose to locate the next year, who was of much use to the church during his last year. His heart is local, and not in the work, consequently he does the work of the Lord in a lukewarm way; much more so than a local preacher who expects to remain local. How many members were gained or lost this year is not known, as Brother Fraley did not go to conference; and I presume there was no return made, for the *Minutes* report precisely the same number which was reported the preceding year, which is the custom when the numbers have to be guessed at.

Where Daniel Fraley was born and educated I have no knowledge; but I find him received on trial by the Western conference in the fall of 1810, and appointed to Illinois territory. In 1811 he was sent to Cold Water, which, I presume,

was in the then Missouri territory; and in 1812, to the Madison circuit in the Salt River district in Kentucky; and in 1813, Salt River circuit in the same district. At the close of this year (1814), he was ordained elder, and appointed to Pickaway circuit in the Ohio conference; and in 1815, he received his last appointment to White Water circuit, Indiana, where he married in the course of the year, and located in the fall of 1816. He lived several years in Salisbury and Centreville, and labored as a local preacher with as much acceptability and usefulness as is common to men who retire from the work, and enter into business life. I always found Brother Fraley a pleasant man and a good Christian. Some years since he moved to the northwest and died. I have no information concerning his latter days and death, but I presume they were peaceful; for he was a good man. He was a man of medium talents, and judging from the returns of members on the circuits which he traveled, I should conclude he was a man of some success in his Master's cause. I trust he now rests with God, in the society of many whom he was the instrument of saving by his ministry.

Benjamin Lawrence came from New Jersey in 1813, if I mistake not, as a local preacher. He was popular and useful while he continued local. He was received on trial by the Ohio conference in the fall of 1815, and appointed to the charge of Oxford circuit, in which he resided. He was a man of ordinary talents and information, but he was wonderfully blessed in his labors. Crowds attended his ministry, and many of them were awakened and converted, so that the circuit had an increase of one hundred and forty-seven, which, with the increase of the former year, swelled the circuit to seven hundred and twenty. This was doing well in that day. What new places were taken into the circuit I know not, as I had removed from it to Lawrenceburg circuit, where Brother Sharp was the preacher.

Brother Sharp commenced his work on the circuit in the right spirit, and was well received; for he was a very amiable man, whose main fault was being a little too full of humor and anecdote, but in these things he was not extravagant. At the first quarterly meeting, Joseph Oglesby, who had settled

in Vevay with a view to the practice of medicine, but which he had not yet commenced, proposed to Rev. John Sale, the presiding elder, to travel through the winter. His long service and popular talents induced Brother Sale to comply with his proposal, and Sharp was sent to some circuit in Ohio until spring, when Oglesby retired from the work, and Sharp returned to the circuit. Sharp was a young man of a good mind, but not a very animated preacher, and, of course, not very successful, so that the circuit declined in numbers, and the *Minutes* report twelve less than the preceding year. Sharp traveled several circuits in Ohio and Indiana, and in 1819 was appointed presiding elder of the Illinois district, where he remained three years, when he was appointed to the Missouri district, where he remained two years, and was then appointed to Granville circuit in the Ohio district, Ohio conference, in the fall of 1824; and when the Pittsburg conference was organized he fell in its bounds, where he has remained ever since. He was, and I trust is yet, a man of sterling worth. Having moved into a part of the work where the country was new and the settlements sparse, I have no cheering accounts to give of good and successful camp meetings for this and the preceding year. I presume they had such meetings in the White Water and Oxford circuits, but not in Lawrenceburg. I wish to say a few words on camp meetings and I might as well do it now as in a future number.

The reader of these numbers has seen, and will yet see, if I am permitted to proceed with my account of God's work, that no human being can correctly estimate the amount of good which this country has realized from camp meetings. Perhaps nearly one-half of the members of the Methodist Episcopal church are the fruits of camp meetings, directly or remotely; and it makes my heart sad to think that the time has nearly come, when we must give up our camp meetings, and cease to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences in this country, under the constitution of the United States, and near the middle of the nineteenth century. I may be asked, how can this be in this republic, where the constitution and laws secure this right to every man? I will answer this plainly and fairly. Since the country has become

more densely populated, there are more persons who go to such meetings merely for recreation, than in former days; in consequence of which, hucksters find it a more profitable business to attend these meetings than formerly; hence, they increase in numbers and daring. I have myself seen as many as fourteen huckster wagons at one camp meeting, and perhaps one-fourth as many boys, and lads, and young men, and even middle-aged, and old men about them, as were on the camp ground to attend religious service. Many of these young, and even middle-aged persons, never came on the camp ground, unless it was to interrupt the quiet of the meeting. While they are about these wagons, they learn to run, jump, wrestle, play, yell, swear, talk vulgar, and in some instances, gamble on the Lord's day. Perhaps, in some instances, there is more mischief done to the morals of the youth of the land about these wagons, than there is religious good effected on the camp ground. Now, although the preachers and their people are not to blame for the evil done, yet in view of the fact that we see the mischief is done, in consequence of the coming together of such crowds of heedless sinners, we and other denominations will have to give up our popular meetings in the woods. I will ask any man who has any judgment and conscience if this is fair? Does our going to the grove to worship God, give a set of rude, covetous persons a right to annoy us, and demoralize our children, and the children of the community in general?

Is there no hope for us? I fear not. It is true, our brethren in Ohio and some other states have obtained redress by the legislatures after a long struggle, in which all sorts of slang and slander were poured out in the halls of legislation, and elsewhere, against camp meetings. It is also true, the friends of good order did obtain, with much difficulty, the passage of a good law to protect religious meetings in Indiana; but then, either by accident or otherwise, the penalty to the law never found its way into the statute-book; and when the laws were revised, instead of re-enacting the penalty of the law, the whole of it went by the board. Since this bungling legislation we are much more annoyed than before, because hucksters and their friends construe this whole matter

as an expression of the legislature and their constituents, in their favor, and that they are now encouraged by high authority in their vile oppression of the moral and religious part of the community.

I suppose there are one hundred thousand persons in the different churches in Indiana, and more than that number of their friends and adherents who do not belong to any church, who are in the habit, occasionally, of holding camp meetings or associations in the woods. Is it just that one-fourth of the entire population of Indiana should be oppressed, and deprived of their natural and constitutional rights by a few hundreds of low, vile, and vulgar hucksters? Every man will say no.

Why then cannot these two hundred thousand or more of the very best citizens of the state be protected? Reader, I will tell you; and I will do this more in deep sorrow than in anger. Some of the members of both houses of the legislature are profane swearers and what do profane swearing law-makers care about the youth of the land learning to swear, while hanging about huckster wagons? Some of them are habitual Sabbath-breakers, and what do they care about boys and lads learning to profane the Lord's day in the vicinity of a religious assembly? Some of them if fame tells the truth are lewd, and what concern is it to them if their own sons and others learn vulgarity on the holy day of the Lord? Some of them are habitual or occasional drunkards, and what do they care about boys and lads learning to get drunk on the Sabbath, on the whisky usually smuggled among the cakes, beer, and cider of hucksters? Some of them are gamblers, if report is true, and what do they care about boys and lads learning to gamble on the Sabbath in the vicinity of hucksters' wagons? Well, but some of them you will say, are good religious men who belong to the different churches, who will surely use their influence to secure to all their constitutional rights and privileges. I have known more cases than one, where men have passed for Methodists at home, and when they have gone to Indianapolis, they have attended a low, vile thing, called a theatre. I have heard of two Methodists rooming together the whole session and just before its close, by mere accident, they learned that

they were members of the same church. I suppose that our members are as good as the members of other churches; and now what have we to hope in favor of good morals from men who are ashamed of their religion when they go abroad? There are many noble, high-minded men in our legislature who are disposed to do right; but their hands are tied by the shackles of party, so that they cannot do what they would without injury to themselves, as they think. Here is an honorable Whig or Democrat, who sees all the evils of which I complain; and is disposed to remove them; but he wishes to be elected again, and he does not know who may be his competitor. He may be some low, vulgar Whig or Democrat, as the case may be, whose only merit is, that he has more lungs than brains, and a better throat than heart, who hallooed louder for Clay and Frelinghuysen, or Polk and Dallas, than anyone else, and by consequence he must have the nomination. If he obtained it, the other knows he will not hesitate to take the law, and the journals of the house, to the illiterate swearing drunkards of the county, and make them believe their liberties are in jeopardy for the church and state are about to be united; and as proof of the fact see this law to protect religious assemblies, by which the honest baker, and brewer, and distiller, are prohibited from their natural rights to go to a camp meeting or association, and make all the money they can. I have not set down aught in malice. I might have made a much darker picture and kept in the bounds of sober truth.

Now, I ask, what hope is there for Methodist, United Brethren, Cumberland Presbyterian, New School or Old School Presbyterian camp meetings, or Baptist associations? There is no hope but with the people themselves. If the two hundred thousand of the salt of Indiana would let it be known, that they will be imposed upon no longer, the deed is done, and our rights are secure. Just let the Whigs and Democrats who are friends to order, inform their respective parties that if either party bring out men who are immoral and countenance immorality they will not support them; but that they will support the good men, irrespective of their party; and it will soon be seen what will be the result. I know a drunken, worthless vagrant who is not worth enough to bury him with

decency and who has never contributed five dollars to the support of the government, weighs as much at the ballot-box as the most moral and useful man, who has paid his hundreds, and perhaps thousands, to sustain the laws and government of the state. This evil cannot be altered; but let the friends of order speak out, and those who countenance and abet the vicious will soon find their level while the cause of virtue will gain strength every day.

Do you intend, says one, to coerce men to religion and morality by statute law? No; for none but fools ever dreamed of making men religious by force; but I do propose to restrain men by statute law, from coercing others to give up their constitutional rights, and their liberty of conscience. If our meetings were protected from the nuisances named, we would have many more who would go to our camp meetings, to stay on the ground, and the meetings would be much more interesting. Now many are afraid to go for fear they will be overburdened with their friends and acquaintances, who have not made provision for themselves; and many youngsters go, depending on the hucksters, who would make arrangements to encamp with respectable families, where their morals would be safe, were it not for the abominations of which I complain.

I know some will tauntingly say, keep in your churches, and you will have none of this difficulty. This is not certain; for I have known wagons to go with cakes and melons to sell on the Sabbath at or near a common quarterly meeting. But where are the churches, or the means to build them, which will hold the population in many parts of our state? For many years, except when I have been in stations, I have had to preach to a promiscuous crowd in the woods when there is to be but one sermon; but where there is a regular camp meeting, it is the most delightful place to preach in the world. There is no man in Indiana who has had the same amount of experience in this matter as myself, so that I am prepared to state what I do know, and to complain of what I and my people have suffered. Must I say to our beloved camp meetings, where thousands have been saved, and where thousands more might be saved, farewell, a long farewell to the delightful scenes of my best days, because statesmen wish to banish

you that they may secure the votes of the drunken rabble? If it must be so, they have got the last vote which they will ever get from me, or my friends, so far as I can honorably and religiously influence them. If angels in heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect, could be sorry, and weep, it would be to know that these instrumentalities, which have been the means of saving thousands upon thousands all over the United States, and in Indiana in particular, must cease. Many a godly father and mother have died with cheerfulness, believing that the wonderful camp meeting influence would yet be the means of saving their children, who were unconverted at the time of their death. Shall they be disappointed? I fear they will.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, April 27, 1846.

No. XVII

Reader, I propose in this number to conduct you away from the three circuits which we have traveled so long, and survey Clark's Grant awhile. As early as 1799, Nathan Robertson, a worthy member of the Methodist Episcopal church, moved from Kentucky and settled near one branch of Silver Creek, three or four miles north of where Charlestown, the county town of Clark county now stands. About the same time, or shortly after, two brothers by the name of Samuel and William Bullock settled in the vicinity of Fourteen Mile creek; so-called, I presume, because it enters into the Ohio about fourteen miles above the Falls. When the Bullocks came to the Grant, I presume they were Methodists, but from whence they came I do not remember, but I think they told me, twenty years ago, from Kentucky. Father Robertson and the two Bullocks, with their wives and a few others, formed the nucleus of the first Methodist society in the Grant. When Brother Robertson talked of moving to the Indiana territory, his friends endeavored to dissuade him from doing so, but the preacher on the circuit said:

Go, brother Robertson, and the Lord will bless you, and make you the means of raising up a Church in the wilderness.

Although Robertson was a man of no literature, he was a man of good, strong common sense and great moral worth. Some of his sons must then have been grown, and perhaps heads of families. Whether any of his children were then members of church, I do not know, but if they were not at the time, nearly or quite all joined at subsequent periods and were among the excellent of the earth and the church. Most of his grandchildren (who are very numerous) have been worthy members, nearly from the time they were old enough to know the Lord. One of his grandsons informs me, that as early as 1801, Benjamin Lakin and Samuel Parker visited the Grant at his grandfather's request. This could only have been a transient visit, as Lakin was then on Limestone circuit, named after a town of that name (now Maysville), and Parker was then a local preacher living near Newcastle, Henry county, Kentucky. These brethren did not attempt to form societies; as this is said to have been done by a local preacher who lived on the Kentucky side of the river, whose name was John Bate, or Bates. Whether the first society was formed before the visit of the two brethren named, I cannot say.

The first society was formed on the east side of Fourteen Mile creek in what was formerly known as Gassaway's settlement, but now better known as the neighborhood of Salem meeting-house. At what time the house was built I am not informed, but it was probably the second house of worship built in the Grant by the Methodists. Whether James Beggs, who was a prominent member of the territorial legislature, had then settled in the Grant and formed a part of the society, I have not learned. The second society was formed in Robertson's settlement, where the first Methodist meeting-houses were built in Indiana, in the fall of 1807.

When I began to preach in this house and Salem meeting-house in 1825, they appeared to me of nearly equal ages. The third society was formed back of the present town of Utica, in what was called Jacob's settlement, nine or ten miles above the Falls. Here was held the first camp meeting which was ever held in Indiana, while William Burke was on the Kentucky district, perhaps as early as 1806, or 1807. The fourth society was formed in Jeffersonville, which was once the coun-

ty town of Clark county. At what time these latter societies were formed, and whether by Bates or the traveling preachers, my informant does not say. These four societies which were all that were on the north side of the river, made a part of Salt River circuit until the fall of 1807.

At the Kentucky conference, held at Holston, May 1, 1801, William M'Kendree was appointed to the Kentucky district, which then embraced Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee. One of the circuits was called Salt River and Shelby, which covered all the country contiguous to the falls of the Ohio, and to a great distance around. John Sale and William Marsh were sent to this circuit, but I have no information that they ever visited the Grant. At the Kentucky conference, which was from this time called the Western conference, held at Ebenezer, Tennessee, October 1st, of the same year, M'Kendree was returned to the district, which then extended as far south as Natchez. Hezekiah Harriman was sent to Salt River, from which Shelby was now separated. I have not learned that Harriman ever visited the four societies in the Grant.

The next fall, 1802, M'Kendree was again returned to the district, and Benjamin Lakin and Ralph Lotspeich were sent to Salt River circuit. These men came to the Grant and made it a part of their circuit, so that we may date the commencement of regular itinerant preaching in this region from the fall of 1802, or the spring of 1803; some three years before the regular preaching in the White Water country. Benjamin Lakin is yet living, a venerable and venerated superannuated preacher of the Ohio conference. It must now be nearly forty-seven years since he entered the work, for I find he was ordained deacon in 1801, but I have not found when he was received on trial. He traveled many circuits in Ohio and Kentucky, and was popular, useful and successful, while he was able to travel. Perhaps the reader may remember that I introduced him before, as producing a powerful impression at a quarterly meeting at M'Carty's on White Water. Lotspeich was a most holy, devoted and useful man. He traveled various fields of labor until the summer of 1813, when he finished his valuable labors and went to rest. The reader will find an

interesting account of this blessed man in the first volume of the bound *Minutes*, page 238.

At the Western conference held in the fall of 1803, M'Kendree was again returned to the Kentucky district, and Adjet M'Guire, who was received on trial at that conference, was sent to Salt River circuit. The few old members who then lived in the Grant still remember the man and his zealous preaching. He traveled five years, and was zealous and useful. After his location he still remained zealous and successful. I have previously mentioned him as among the popular and powerful preachers at several camp meetings which I attended. He was recommended for readmission into the Ohio conference in the summer of 1821, but failed in his application, from some local cause. He was probably somewhat disaffected toward the government and administration of the Methodist Episcopal church prior to this time, but he now became chafed in his feelings, and finally joined the Protestant Methodists, and traveled extensively and spent much of his time in bitterly abusing and shamefully misrepresenting the church which had taken him by the hand and made him of some note. If he has done any good since his alienation from his mother church and her children, I presume few have any knowledge of the fact.

M'Kendree was returned to the Kentucky district in the fall of 1804, and Benjamin Lakin and Peter Cartwright were sent to the Salt River circuit, and they are both well remembered in the Grant. This year was the beginning of Cartwright's itinerancy, which he has pursued ever since, in Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana and Illinois, and perhaps a part of Virginia. Take him as a whole, he is no ordinary man. His early literary opportunities were very limited, but with all his extended labors, he has become a man of considerable reading and research. He is a man of undaunted courage and untiring industry. He has long mingled in the councils of the church, in the General conferences, and has proved himself a man of good judgment, and a most firm friend to the church. In more than one important crisis, when the many were wrong he was right. He unites in himself what is not common, good, strong common sense and a world of wit. Of the latter he

has a redundancy, and uses it more freely than a grave minister of the Gospel should. I suppose that nothing but death will cure him of this habit. Last fall, a literary institution of his own state gave him the title of D. D., to which he is as much entitled as many a regular built scholar who has the title without half Dr. Cartwright's knowledge of theology. I have not seen him since he received his doctorate, but I suppose he appears about as he did before its reception. Although an old man, he has almost all the vigor and vivacity of youth. The Lord bless him forever.

In the fall of 1805, the charming M'Kendree went to another district, after having been in the Kentucky district three and a half years, and was succeeded by William Burke, then in the prime of life, and at the summit of his popularity. According to my information, he was the first presiding elder who labored this side the Ohio, in Indiana. I suppose none of the quarterly meetings were on this side of the river in M'Kendree's time, or he would have been at them, for he knew no obstruction on the way of duty. Asa Shinn, David Young and Moses Ashworth, were the preachers on Salt River circuit that year. Shinn was an elder, but Young and Ashworth had just been admitted. Shinn served the church many years in various fields of labor, some of them obscure, and some of them the most prominent and important in the nation. By dint of application he rose from rather an unpromising beginning to great eminence. His intense application and research were pursued with such ardor and perseverance, that his reason became dethroned at several periods in his life. He wrote two or three books which exhibited much thought, and one of them, written to unfold God's plan of human salvation, has some merit, but the one on the attributes of the Deity, is so full of conjecture and vague hypotheses, that it will go down to oblivion. When I read it, I was forcibly impressed with the thought, that a deranged man is not a safe divine. He was useful in his day, but he lessened his influence by joining the Protestant Methodists, where he had not scope for his superior talents, in his lucid intervals. Where he is now, and whether he is in a state of mental sanity or not, I am not informed.

David Young served the church many years, in different departments of the work, with much ability, popularity and usefulness. He finally became worn down, and had to take a superannuated relation to the Ohio conference, which he still sustains. He now lives in Zanesville, Ohio, venerable in age, appearance and talent, and will soon be numbered among those who were, but now are not. Moses Ashworth continued to travel until the fall of 1809, when he located, and what became of him I know not. When I come to speak of Silver Creek circuit, it will appear he was useful.

In the fall of 1806, William Burke was returned to the Kentucky district, and Frederick Hood was sent to Salt River circuit. Whether Hood ever came to the four appointments in the Grant my information does not say, but it says that Joseph Oglesby, who was on the Shelby circuit, supplied them a part of the year. I have endeavored to give an account in consecutive order, of persons, places, and things in the Grant, while it remained a small part of a circuit in Kentucky. The reader must be aware that I have no means by which to ascertain the increase or decrease of members from year to year, as the number in the Grant were kept in connection with a circuit over the river.

Brookville, Ia., January 16, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, April 10, 1846.

No. XVIII

In the fall of 1807, the appointments on the north of the Ohio river were separated from the Salt River circuit, and called the Silver Creek circuit, and remained a part of the Kentucky district, to which William Burke was returned, and Moses Ashworth was appointed to the new circuit. Ashworth commenced his work by enlarging the circuit, by visiting and taking in many and distant places. A local preacher by the name of Chitwood, who settled about ten miles west of Madison, on what they there call White river, being a branch of the Muscatatock, told me some years ago that he moved to that vicinity the last day of 1807, and that Ashworth preached at night, and formed a society. This society continued to

grow from year to year; for when I commenced traveling in that part of the country in 1825, I found a large society in the neighborhood, and a log meeting-house which was beginning to decay. He also formed another society a number of miles farther down the same stream, some three or four miles west of where the town of Paris is now built. A son and son-in-law of old Brother Robertson, the Methodist pioneer of the Grant, had settled there and invited the preacher to visit them, which he did, and formed a small society which has continued to flourish until the present day. When I first knew this society they had an old log meeting-house which had become too small for the densely populated region, and they have superseded the old meeting-house with a new and large brick house, still retaining the name of Mt. Pisgah. How many intermediate societies between these upper ones and Jeffersonville were formed, I have not learned. In the winter of this year, there was a gracious revival on the circuit, which was greatly aided by the labors of James Garner, a local preacher, who had moved from Kentucky in 1806, and settled in the Grant. Garner was a man possessing a very large amount of common sense; and although his literature was very limited, he was a man of extensive reading and research. He possessed, in an eminent degree, a mechanical genius, which rendered him very useful in a new country. His piety was deep; and for straight-forward honesty, there was no man in any age or country who was his superior. Although he had been dead several years when I traveled Charlestown circuit, I found his great moral worth had embalmed him in the memories and affections of the people. He was a great lover and encourager of the traveling preachers; hence, he joined most cordially with Ashworth, to spread and sustain the blessed revival in the new circuit.

The return of members for Silver Creek at the close of its first year's separate existence, was one hundred and eighty-eight. From this return, it seems that Methodism did not increase as fast here as in the White Water country, for the same fall the return for White Water was three hundred and fifty-two, although the last named circuit was later in obtaining preaching than the Grant. It is true, the Silver Creek

circuit was a much less territory and perhaps it had fewer inhabitants. At the conference in the fall of 1808, there was formed a district called Indiana, embracing Missouri, Illinois and Indiana, with Samuel Parker for presiding elder, and Josiah Crawford on Silver Creek circuit. What new societies were formed this year, or what weal or woe attended different societies, I am not informed; but I find the number in the circuit increased from one hundred and eighty-eight to two hundred and thirty-five, being an increase of forty-seven. Of Josiah Crawford I know nothing, only that he was received on trial in the fall of 1807, and located in 1812. Parker I have before noticed. In the fall of 1809, Silver Creek circuit was placed in the Green River district, with William Burke on the district, and Sela Paine on the circuit. As I said in a former number, I never knew Paine, and can say nothing of his talents and general usefulness. I find, however, that he was useful this year; for the circuit, at the close of his year, numbered three hundred and ninety-seven, being an increase of one hundred and sixty-two, which was doing well in so sparse a population as was most of the circuit.

At the conference in 1810, William Burke was continued on the Green River district, and Isaac Lindsey was sent to the Silver Creek circuit, and my correspondent says Gabriel Woodfill was also in the circuit. From some cause this was an unsuccessful year for the circuit, for it fell down from three hundred and ninety-seven to three hundred and eighty-one, being a decrease of sixteen, when we should have expected a good increase with two good preachers on it. Isaac Lindsey I never knew, but I find from the *Minutes* he was received in 1808, and located in 1816, so that he traveled eight years. With Woodfill I was well acquainted at a subsequent period. He was converted, I think, in the Red Stone country, and came to Kentucky among the first Methodists in the state. He was a man of a very superior mind and body. Most of his life he was a local preacher, and among the most useful of that worthy order. He was received on trial once, but desisted from the regular work, as he had a family to provide for and the amount preachers then received would not support a family. Whenever a preacher failed, or one was wanting on the

work, he was ready to go when he could leave home. Often he has filled vacancies and traveled on foot until his feet have been badly blistered. Shortly after I first knew him, in the spring of 1816, he moved to Jefferson county, Indiana, about four miles from Madison, where he lived to a good old age, and died respected by all who knew him.

At the conference in 1811, the Green River district lost its name and was called Salt River, with James Ward for presiding elder. William M'Mahan was received on trial this year, and appointed to Silver Creek circuit, when war and rumors of war filled the land. I say war, because the Tippecanoe battle was fought that fall. Many of the men from the Grant and the surrounding country were in that battle, and more noble and brave men than they were are not to be found anywhere. This battle produced excitement everywhere in the western country; and, as much of Silver Creek circuit was frontier, the people were much alarmed, and built block-houses and forts in many parts of the country, so that the preacher had to take his gun and go from station to station, to preach to the people of his charge and their fellow citizens. The reader must conclude that this state of things was calculated to blast the prospects of religion, as matter of fact has proved that, however the danger of war many humble the few and lead them to repent and reform, it hardens the many, and makes them more profane, and wicked and presumptuous than before. In this case, however, Providence provided a strong counteraction in the shaking of the earth that fall and winter. M'Mahan was young and zealous, eloquent and resolute, and the people received him everywhere gladly as a messenger from God, and great was his success; for the circuit rose from three hundred and eighty-one members to five hundred and fifty-five, being an increase of one hundred and seventy-four. Besides serving his own charge, rendered difficult by the circumstances of the times, he preached occasionally to the people of Madison with much acceptability, and to their edification. This man now belongs to the Memphis conference, and is somewhat advanced in age, but is still in the itinerant work. He was local a few years.

In the fall of 1812, James Ward was returned to the Salt River district, and Thomas Nelson appointed to Silver Creek circuit. This year there was a very great decrease in the circuit; for Nelson returned only three hundred and forty-one, being a decrease of two hundred and fourteen, which was about two-fifths of the whole. Doubtless the reaction after the earth ceased to shake, and the horrid war spirit, will account for the great and sorrowful falling off which we have to record. I never knew Nelson, although he went one round on the White Water circuit in the fall of 1809, but from all I ever heard of him, he was a good and useful man; and as for the presiding elder, the world has never produced a superior for untiring zeal and energy. He is now an old man, and not able to labor much; but thousands have been the seals to his ministry. His preaching talents, in an intellectual point of view, are moderate; but if he is the best doctor who cures most patients, and saves most lives, James Ward has been among the best preachers. With such men as these in the work, the shrinkage could not be their fault, but it must have been their grief.

At the conference in 1813, Charles Holliday was appointed to the charge of Salt River district, and Charles Harrison, who had just been received on trial, was sent to the charge of Silver Creek circuit. Harrison, of whom I know nothing, for I do not find his name on the *Minutes* after this year, had much success; for there was an increase of one hundred and fifty-nine members, for the circuit now numbered four hundred and fifty, being one hundred and fifty-five less than when M'Mahan left it two years before.

Such is the broad space which Charles Holliday has filled in the many departments of the work where he has been placed, that I must leave it to his brethren of the Illinois conference to speak of him after his decease, which cannot be far in the future. Whether on a circuit or district, or in the book agency, his praise is in all the church. The fall of 1814 found Charles Holliday again on the Salt Creek circuit. Ruark was received on trial in the Ohio or Pittsburg conference. We were several years fellow-members of the Ohio conference, but as we were never in contiguous fields of labor I know but

little about him. He was successful on the circuit this year, for he returned five hundred and sixty-six, being an increase of one hundred and sixteen, so that the circuit now numbered eleven more than it did three years before.

Charles Holliday was again returned to Salt River district in the fall of 1815, and Joseph Kinkaid was sent to Silver Creek. How much prosperity there was this year on Silver Creek, I do not know. The number reported was five hundred and eight, which was a decrease of fifty-eight; but there was a circuit organized in 1815 called Blue River, which I should judge took some preaching places and members from Silver Creek this year. I know not that it was the fact, but I suppose that some years before this time the Silver Creek preachers crossed the knobs, a range of very broken land west of Silver Creek, and formed societies in Washington and Harrison counties. I do not know whether Washington county was then organized, but the territory was there, and being settled, so that the people needed preaching. It is not to be supposed that the venerable Dennis Pennington, who settled in what is now Harrison county, before such a county was organized, would do without preaching; for although he figured in the early territorial legislature, he was a decided Methodist; and the Grant was the nearest place for him to find a preacher of his own order.

I have not been able to find in the *Minutes* when or where Joseph Kinkaid was admitted on trial, or when he graduated to deacon's or elder's orders. The first account which I have found of him on the *Minutes*, places him on the Zanesville circuit in the fall of 1814, and marked as an elder. The next year he was sent to Silver Creek circuit, where he married a respectable lady, the daughter of a popular and useful local preacher named Cornelius Ruddle, and at the close of the year located. He was readmitted into the Missouri conference in the fall of 1821, and appointed to Blue River circuit, but at the close of the year again he located. His health, which was feeble when he located, continued to decline, and he did not live long as a local preacher, for he died March 17th, 1823. From what I could learn from his friends, he was a man of great firmness and resolution. As to the grade of his talents,

and aptness for usefulness, I have no information. The reader will find a short account of him in the first volume of the bound *Minutes*, page 425. From this account we learn that his end was peaceful and happy.

In the fall of 1815, James Simmons was sent to Blue River circuit, which was then a part of Salt River district. I suppose the circuit had been formed the spring and summer preceding by some preacher, under the direction of the presiding elder, as there was no such circuit in the fall of 1814. The circuit is reported to have had one hundred and ninety-five members. The circuit, according to the usage of that day, received its name from a small river which runs through Washington county, and perhaps a part of Harrison county also, and finds its way to the Ohio river at the now town of Leavenworth. This circuit embraced Corydon, the county town of Harrison county. It was for several years the seat of government for the Indiana territory. Here the convention met in the summer of 1816, who formed the constitution of Indiana. It remained the seat of government several years after Indiana became a state. The Blue River circuit must have covered much territory; and it retained its name many years.

I suppose that New Albany being then a new town, was embraced in this circuit. This supposition, however, may not be correct. Will some brother, who is well acquainted with the subject, give us an account of Methodism in that flourishing and interesting city? Subsequently, a part of this circuit was lost in that of Salem and others.

Of James Simmons I know nothing, only that he was received on trial by the Ohio conference in the fall of 1815, and continued to travel in Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, until the fall of 1819, when he located. He was successful on this new circuit, for it increased from one hundred and ninety-five to two hundred and sixty, being an increase of sixty-five.

The reader must be aware that with only one short communication and the bound *Minutes*, as my only sources of early information, I must present a very meagre account of this interesting field up to near the time when I became per-

sonally acquainted with it. I cannot tread with that firm step on unknown ground, and detail and exhibit interesting events, as I can in that part of the work where I have had personal knowledge from the beginning. I again express the wish, that some man on the ground, who can have access to the original sources of information which is so much desired, would undertake to give it to the public. A few more years, and the thrilling incidents of the past will have gone down to perpetual oblivion until the judgment day, for the remaining fathers will have fallen asleep as most of their associates have done already.

Brookville, Ia., January 24, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, May 1, 1846.

No. XIX

In the spring of 1816, the General conference constituted the Missouri annual conference, embracing Missouri, Illinois, and the larger part of Indiana, so that these sketches will embrace parts of two conferences for many years to come.

At the Ohio conference, which met in Louisville, Kentucky, in September, 1816, Moses Crume was appointed to the Miami district and Benjamin Lawrence to White Water circuit, and William Hunt to Oxford, and Russel Bigelow to Lawrenceburg. In the same fall Samuel H. Thompson was appointed to the Illinois district, in the Missouri conference. The district embraced the territory of Illinois and that part of the state of Indiana which was included in the conference last named. Silver Creek and Blue River circuits were in Thompson's work, to the former of which Joseph Pownal was sent, and John Cord, of precious memory, to the latter.

As before intimated in a former number, I suppose White Water circuit was rather languid in its religious state; but Lawrence was then vigorous and zealous, and he commenced his work spiritedly and his labors were attended with their usual success. I suppose the work now extended farther north in Wayne county, than I have before mentioned. Perhaps it extended into Randolph county. What new places were taken in, and what particular vicinities were blessed

with special revivals, I cannot tell. The circuit arose from four hundred and ninety members to six hundred and seventy-four, being an increase of one hundred and eighty-four. This was a large increase for a country, most of which was comparatively new. I suppose the work was more general than local; for revivals under Brother Lawrence's labors were not like a tornado and land flood which sweep everything before them, but like the gentle fertilizing shower which makes everything flourish and grow delightfully. His sermons were short and calm, and generally allegorical, but they touched the hearts of the hearers, and they were persuaded to be religious, and they could hardly tell why, only that they ought to do so.

William Hunt went on Oxford circuit favorably known to the people, as but one year had intervened since he and John Somerville had traveled there with so much popularity and success. He would probably have been as popular and successful as formerly, if his way had not been obstructed by family affliction. I am not sure, however, but another thing might have rendered him less useful. The conference had refused to elect him to deacons' orders when he was received into full connection, as a punishment for his early marriage, which rather soured his feelings, so that he might not have been as useful as formerly. At what time in the year his excellent wife became afflicted, I do not know; but such was the severity and length of her affliction, that after a few efforts to fill his appointments, which were distant from the place of her residence at her father's, he had to surrender the circuit, and the presiding elder placed John C. Brook, the junior preacher on Union circuit, on Oxford. How useful Brother Brook was, I cannot say; but any circuit, under similar circumstances, is not likely to do well. The circuit began to retrograde, and instead of an increase which might have been looked for under favorable circumstances, there was a falling off of one hundred and thirty-two members; for the circuit decreased from seven hundred and twenty-four to five hundred and ninety-two. I would be glad if I were in possession of interesting facts in connection with these two circuits which would inter-

est the reader, but I have them not, and he can as well guess at them as I can.

By an examination of the *Minutes*, at the close of Griffith's second year on the Lawrenceburg circuit, it will be found that there were returned four hundred and eighty-nine members. At the close of the next year there were three hundred and nineteen, and the next year two hundred and ninety-three, so that this circuit did not recover its decline during the time of the war, and prosper as did White Water and Oxford; but this year its captivity was turned. The good providence of God sent the meek, the kind, the zealous Bigelow to labor on it in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. He had nothing prepossessing in his person or manner; but the grace of God was with him. Hitherto he had been junior preacher, but now he was in charge and alone, on a four weeks' circuit, covering much ground, extending from opposite New Trenton, eleven miles below Brookville, down to Madison. The consequence was, that he was anxious to have some person to travel with him; and he used all the arguments and persuasion of which he was capable, to prevail on the writer to travel through the winter, if no longer. There were many difficulties in the way. He was poor, and had a wife and five children, and had settled in the wild woods, two miles from where any person lived, about fifteen or sixteen months before. He stated many objections, and among others expressed a doubt whether his wife would be willing, under present circumstances, for him to go. Bigelow asked him whether he would go, if his wife would consent. Thinking himself safe on that condition, he answered yes. When they arrived at the house (for they were traveling alone in the woods), Bigelow proposed the matter to the writer's wife, who, unexpectedly to him, gave her consent. He then had no excuse, and commenced preparing as fast as he could for the work; and, with the approbation of the presiding elder, commenced to itinerate on the first day of December, 1816. The understanding was, that it was to be for three months only. Bigelow and he were as much united as ever were David and Jonathan, and gave themselves to God and his work, and God blessed their joint labors, though Bigelow was the soul of the concern. There was a

gracious budding in almost all parts of the circuit. As the three months were drawing to a close, these words, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables," passed through the writer's mind day and night; and he finally consented to travel until the end of the year.

The same thoughts still impressed his mind toward the time of conference, and at the last quarterly meeting he consented to let the quarterly meeting conference recommend him to the Ohio conference, and he was received on trial in the summer of 1817, and the three months' campaign has now lasted more than twenty-nine years; and he now sees no end to it until death sounds a retreat. Could he have foreseen all its cares, and privations and labors, he could never have begun; but he does not repent, though he has sometimes repented that he ever started. Being on the circuit he can give details from his personal knowledge, which are interesting to him, and he hopes to the reader.

There were several new places taken into the circuit this year. There lived opposite the mouth of the Kentucky river a man named George Ash, who had been taken prisoner by the Indians when he was a boy. He had become an Indian in everything but the skin and hair. After the Indians made peace with the whites, at the close of Wayne's campaign, he came to see his friends in Kentucky, and finally married a white wife, and settled on a valuable tract of land donated to him by the government at the request of the Indians. In the winter or spring of this year, Samuel Bellamy, a local preacher, who had once traveled some, moved to Indiana and rented land of Ash. He obtained Ash's consent to have preaching at his house, and then hunted Bigelow up, and invited him to preach at Ash's, which he did willingly, and soon formed a society. The Lord blessed the labors of the preachers, and great was the revival that year in that vicinity. A large society was raised up which lasted several years, but by removals and other causes it dwindled away.

I deem it proper to digress a little, to give the reader the substance of a conversation which I once had with Ash, after he had become truly religious. I had been preaching on a subject which led me to speak of the union existing between

Christ and Christians, and illustrated that union by the union of the vine and its branches. Ash told me that when he was among the Indians their religious teachers, when in the act of teaching, used a piece of wood which was carved in the form of a large human heart, with a number of smaller hearts adhering to it. The larger one the teacher would say represents our elder brother, and the smaller ones myself and my hearers. Ash seemed to think that they had, either from tradition or some other means, some notion of Christ and his people, thus emblematically represented. He also related the following details. Every spring the Indians have a rigid time of fasting and prayer. There was one infidel Indian, who would not pray, but the others made him fast. He used to tell them the Great Spirit cared nothing about their praying. The old grave Indians told him they could convince him of his mistake. One morning they took him out in the woods and took Ash along to wait on them. They then formed themselves into a circle, and commenced praying simultaneously, and at a signal which they had before explained to Ash, he went round the circle and loosed their belts, so that whatever of clothing they had on fell off, and at the same time he placed a small portion of tobacco of a kind which they deem very precious on the palms of their hands, which they held up for that purpose, and they then prayed more earnestly. The infidel Indian, who had been careless and indifferent all at once sprang up and fell as a dead man. Ash ran to him to help him up, but the other Indians told him to let the fallen man alone, who lay in a state of insensibility, with his tongue extended out of his mouth, and he remained in that state until next morning, when he came to himself, and he then stated that he had seen the world of spirits, where the wicked are in a state of dreadful torment. He had been a very drunken Indian, but it was three years before he drank any more. He also renounced his infidelity. Now, if this statement be true, and I have no reason to doubt Ash's word, who dare say that God did not convert that Indian's soul in answer to the sincere prayers of the benighted sons of the forest?

The writer's own house also became a preaching place; and although he and his family were on the night of the 8th

of July under a beech tree, two miles from any habitation, in the course of this year there was a society of near forty raised up, of the new-comers and of those who lived a few miles distant in the older settlement. One night, when there was an appointment at his house for Bigelow to preach, the people collected so as to fill the house, and under the first prayer the people began to scream for mercy so that the preaching had to be dispensed with, and mourners be invited; and great was the work of the Lord that night.

Another new place, where there was a glorious revival, was Allensville, a new village in the northern part of Switzerland county. The writer had preached there a few times the preceding year, and the word had some affect, but there was nothing of special note that was visible. One day the text was, "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous," etc. In the exposition of the text, it was remarked that when the Scriptures ascribe eyes and ears and hands and other bodily parts to the Deity they were to be understood not literally, but as expressive of attributes and operations of the Deity. There was present an intelligent lady who had been a confirmed deist for many years, who had supposed that Christians believed all such expressions were to be understood as physically descriptive of God and she had always regarded with contempt such a petty and local god, as the expressions seemed to intimate the God of the Bible to be. She began to think more seriously about the Bible and its doctrines than she had formerly done. Shortly afterwards she was riding alone in the woods, and a limb fell from a tree which came very near striking her, and in her fright she exclaimed, Lord Jesus; this alarmed her the more to think that she should invoke a name in which she had no confidence, and for which she had no respect. In the winter or spring she went to hear Bigelow preach and the Lord powerfully converted her soul, after which the power and goodness of God were displayed in a wonderful manner all over the neighborhood.

In the fall or winter there moved into the vicinity of Buchanan's station, mentioned already, a man by the name of John Richey, who had been a local preacher in Kentucky, but who had become unconnected with the church, and was in

a desperately fallen state. He came to hear the writer preach and remained after meeting and entered into conversation about his condition. He stated that he had not heard a traveling preacher preach for some years and had not read one chapter in the Bible for three years; that it tortured him beyond endurance to read the Bible. Two weeks after, when Bigelow came round, he joined the church and in a short time was reclaimed, and was made class-leader, then exhorter, and then local preacher. He was among the most popular and useful local preachers in the whole land, and many souls were brought to the knowledge of the truth by his instrumentality. Unfortunately, his popularity procured him the office of county agent for Ripley county, for which he was wholly unsuitable. He involved himself and his securities, and injured his usefulness for the remainder of his life. He remained a local preacher until his death; but the evening of his days was cloudy. O, that the people would let good and useful men remain where they may be good and useful all their days.

Perhaps few circuits ever had so many good, zealous, and successful local preachers, as Lawrenceburg had that year, for Bigelow seemed to have infused his very soul into them. There was one near Lawrenceburg, by the name of Hall, who was very useful; but he afterward believed that a part of his family were bewitched and parts of other families were in the same condition; and down went his usefulness. There was another near the Rising Sun, named Jenkins, who was exceedingly successful. He and Hall moved away, and I know not what has become of them. Bellamy, before named, was a blessing to the parts where he lived. William Stevens, now of the Pittsburg conference, who had been prominent in the most important stations in New England, settled at Hardinsburg as a merchant, and was useful; for he was a very talented and powerful preacher in those days. He had once enjoyed the blessing of perfect love, and although he was now somewhat shorn of his strength he used to preach the doctrine with power. There were several other useful local preachers, but I have not room nor time to portray them all in these numbers.

There were two successful camp meetings on the circuit this year. The first one was held in the bottom of Crooked creek, in the rear of Madison, not more than one-half mile from the centre of the town. It began on Friday, and moved heavily the first day. The preachers who preached on that day seemed embarrassed. He who makes this statement will never forget his up-hill performance. On Saturday, the 11 o'clock appointment was reserved for Thomas Hellums, the second White Water preacher, who was expected at the meeting. The writer who had been preaching some years from a sense of duty, had never felt a desire to preach in all his life, but as 11 o'clock began to be near at hand, he felt, for the first time in his life, some desire to preach; and just a few minutes before the time for preaching, as Hellums had not come, Bigelow said to him, "You will have to preach," which was not then unwelcome news. He asked Bigelow where to find this passage: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death." Bigelow immediately named the chapter and verse, and God filled his mind and heart with matter, and he preached with uncommon liberty and success for him. How many souls were awakened, he and others will never know until the day of eternity. Twelve or fifteen came to the altar, and conversions commenced and continued to the end of the meeting; for just before the meeting was dismissed, Sister James Cowden, now living in Madison, was powerfully converted. Who preached on the Sabbath at the several hours is not recollected. The writer was not one of them; for it was several days before he felt as if he could preach any more. The closing sermon on Monday morning was preached by Bigelow with uncommon ability and power.

This meeting, in its results, was most glorious. The preachers had to leave immediately to attend to their regular work, but the revival continued by day and by night for weeks. Part of the time all regular business was suspended. The people were converted in the church and private houses, and even in the streets. Many happy souls are safely landed who were the fruits of that meeting. When the preachers came on the next year, they found most of the young men in the town con-

verted and in the church, and many old ones, too; for Dr. Oglesby, and Richey and others, had kept up regular meetings. O, what power and glory did rest on the people for months! This work spread in different directions, so that scores upon scores were saved by means of this, the first camp meeting in that part of Indiana.

The other camp meeting was on a hill side, near to where an old Brother Milburn lived, on or near South Hogan. If the reader should ever travel from Wilmington to Aurora, when he is about three-quarters of a mile from the former town, if he will look down to the right he will see an old log house where Milburn used to live, and where the meetings for that region were held for many years. About thirty or forty rods west from that house is the sacred spot where the camp ground was on which the camp meeting was held, and where R. Bigelow closed his official labors for Lawrenceburg circuit on Monday morning, when it was hard to determine whether he seemed more on earth or in heaven. This meeting was not equal to the Madison meeting in some respects, but it is presumed there were as many conversions as at the other. It was closed with a march and a farewell by shaking hands. Such a time of weeping at parting I never saw. I knew one who wept his eyes and heart sore, and had all his sorrow for nothing; for he was sent back to the circuit the next year. He was cautious of such closes ever since, for a burned child dreads the fire. The circuit, in general, was in a most flourishing state, and rose from two hundred and ninety-three to six hundred, being an increase of three hundred and seven. Indeed, it rose to more than that, but Bigelow humorously observed, we will throw in the balance for good count.

In the spring of the year, Bigelow married. Whether he made such a bargain as Mr. Wesley did, that he was not to travel one mile less nor preach one sermon less, I do not know; but I do know he never lost one appointment in consequence of his marriage. He left his wife at her father's, above the Little Miami, and only saw her two or three times in the course of the summer.

Joseph Pownal, who was sent to Silver Creek circuit, was an excellent young man, who had been two years in the work.

He was a strict disciplinarian, and a good preacher. Whether he enlarged his circuit or not, I cannot say; but I discover from the *Minutes*, he had a good work on his circuit. A goodly number of his people were at camp meeting at Madison, and shared largely in its saving influences. The circuit rose from five hundred and eighty to seven hundred and seventeen, which was an increase of two hundred and nine. Silver Creek circuit was then one of the most delightful in Indiana, and used to abound in good and successful camp meetings, and had more good meeting-houses, at that day, than all Indiana beside. I cannot, however, give the details of this year's progress.

The same fall, 1816, John Cord, of precious memory, was sent to the comparatively new Blue River circuit. This circuit was large, and much of it sparsely settled. Cord was much blessed of the Lord in his labors; and those who knew him could expect nothing less, for he was among the most holy and faithful men of modern day. The circuit increased from two hundred and sixty to four hundred and forty, which was an increase of one hundred and eighty. John Cord was received on trial by the Western conference in the fall of 1811; and with the exception of 1819, and 1820, when he located in consequence of a loss by fire, he traveled until the fall of 1826, when he was superannuated. His travels were in Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, and Indiana. Perhaps, at some times, a part of his work was in Illinois. I remember seeing him at Bloomington in the fall of 1826, when his face was pale, and his former uncommonly strong frame was emaciated, so that he seemed to be almost gone; but, O, how joyful was his soul while, with heavenly shouts and tears of joy, he came up into the pulpit and took Bishops Roberts and Soule into his bony arms. He died happy the next spring, and his worthy widow and children yet live in Bloomington. May Heaven protect them.

Brookville, January 27, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, May 8, 1846.

No. XX

The fall of 1817 found Moses Crume on Miami district, William Hunt on White Water circuit, Russel Bigelow and Samuel Brown on Oxford, Samuel West and Allen Wiley on Lawrenceburg, Samuel H. Thompson on the Illinois district, and John Cord on the Silver Creek circuit, and Othniel Talbert on Blue River.

Hunt was much hindered this year, also, by the protracted illness of his good wife, who was safely landed in a world of health toward the close of the year. Poor Hunt was almost swallowed up with grief for the loss of his beloved Matilda. The year was not one of much prosperity on the circuit, but Hunt did his duty so far as family affliction would permit, and the circuit was left in a healthy state. There was a decrease of twelve members, which could not be regarded as a declension under all the circumstances. Hunt had a colleague a part of this year in the person of James T. Wells, who was a good man and very conscientious, but his conscience was of that troublesome kind which was a great inconvenience to himself and all persons with whom he had much connection or intercourse. Upon the whole, he was not much calculated to advance the work. This good but singular brother will appear before us again.

Oxford circuit was favored with a very great amount of talent this year. I have before mentioned the talented Bigelow; and I hope before I am done with these sketches to portray him more fully, so that I need say no more about him at the present. Samuel Brown was a man of great mental peculiarities, which made him less useful than he otherwise would have been. He was a man of much reading, and had as good and critical knowledge of the English language as any man with whom I have ever been acquainted. Notwithstanding the defects of his judgment in many things, he was an able preacher, and could speak and write with much elegance and taste. The great and little were so equally blended in him, that it was hard to determine whether he was a man of a sound mind or not. He was admitted on trial in 1812, and traveled ten years, and was in some places and some part of

the time useful. He became embarrassed in pecuniary matters, and located with a view to pay his debts, but his want of financial skill still involved him more and more. He moved to Iowa, where he joined the Protestant Methodists. I believe he is now in Kentucky or Indiana, poor and embarrassed; I pity him, for I believe he has a better heart than head. The circuit prospered with these two strong theologians on it. It increased from five hundred and ninety-two to seven hundred and eight, being an increase of one hundred and sixteen.

The Lawrenceburg circuit was in a prosperous state when West and Wiley were sent to it, and the gracious work still continued. Neither of the preachers was what might be called a revival preacher; but the wonderful impetus given to the work under Bigelow's labors lasted all the next year. The local preachers still labored as before, and were successful. The circuit was extended north this year by the addition of a new preaching place on the Flats, nine miles southwest from Brookville. The place was then known as Price's settlement, now as Franklin meeting-house, where there is a large and flourishing society. This was a prosperous year for Lawrenceburg, as there came several valuable members from other places and settled there. Some of the substantial citizens joined the church, some of who are still living and holding on in the good way; but all the old members, except three or four, are gone to other parts of the land, or another world. What was then known as the Greenbrier Ridge, now as Manchester, began to be settled by several enterprising families from the state of Maine, among whom was David Plummer, a local preacher, who, while his health was good, preached more and with more acceptability than most local preachers, and this he did for many years. Perhaps three-fourths of the expense in building the Manchester church was borne by him. I do not think there was regular preaching established there this year, but the foundation was being laid for the large and flourishing society which is now in that region.

A small society was also formed at George Smith's, on the Ridge, between Hogan and Laughery, near where the present Mt. Tabor meeting-house now stands. The small society then formed was the beginning of the present large one. There

was an effort made to establish a society on Laughery, near the southwest part of Dearborn county; but the effort was a failure. This stream, or the people on it, seemed to bid defiance to all attempts to evangelize it, until a few years past; and even now it is only partially spotted with religious societies.

There were two good camp meetings on the former camp grounds on the circuit this year. When, however, we say they were good, I could not be understood to say they would compare with the former meetings. There was much more preaching talent at those meetings than the former; but there was not the same zeal in the preachers or people. The circuit rose this year from six hundred to nine hundred and five; but the increase was not the best part of the work. West, although rather a phlegmatic preacher, was a very superior divine, and his sermons were well adapted to inform the judgment, and confirm the heart. I know such preachers as he are not in high repute with some, but this merely proves the morbid sentimentality of the public mind, and not the correctness of that mind. His most amiable wife, Rebecca, was also a great blessing where she mingled with the people. She has been safely landed on the peaceful shores of a better world some years. By the direction of the presiding elder, the circuit was returned as two circuits, the lower end being called Madison.

Silver Creek circuit was favored this year with the labors of John Cord. We may say of him as Luke says of Barnabas:

He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith; and much people was added to the Lord.

Cord was a dark-skinned, homely man, whose voice and manner were everything but graceful and attracting; but with all the disadvantages named, his amiableness, his piety, his goodness of heart, gave him access to every person who had not the heart of a demon. The Lord blessed the labors of Cord; and the circuit increased from seven hundred and seventeen to eight hundred and forty-eight, being an increase of one hundred and thirty-one. I know nothing of the places which were especially favored with revivals, and what special means were used to promote the good cause.

I find Othniel Talbert received on trial by the Missouri conference, and placed on the Blue River circuit. The increase on the circuit was only ten. I suppose the brother named in the *Minutes* to be a worthy local preacher, who now lives about fifteen miles northeast of Greencastle. With this Brother Talbert I am acquainted, and it strikes me he did not go to the appointment, or if he did go he either left before the year ended, or at the close of the year retired from the work; and as I have before said, when a man intends to retire at the end of the year he had better do it at once, unless he is merely employed by the elder for a given time.

My little personal knowledge of the country and the work makes me almost sorry that I have crossed the Knobs. I did it mainly that I might have a chance to warm my heart, in writing a few things about the blessed John Cord; but if I had looked a little farther in the *Minutes*, I might have noticed him, and kept in my intended bounds. My work is so enlarging, that I have not room to say much about him at last. Having crossed this wonderful rise (called the Knobs) to a table land which inclines westward, I may continue brief notices of the work in that part of the state. I would be glad if brethren would furnish me the necessary information.

In the summer of 1818, there was a new arrangement of some parts of this work, for a part of the Miami district was detached and placed in what was called Lebanon district, with Moses Crume on it, and William Hunt on a new circuit, partly in Indiana and partly in Ohio, called Greencastle, after a town, and, I think, fort of that name. Allen Wiley and Zechariah Connell were the preachers for White Water circuit; John Sale was on the Miami district; and Russel Bigelow for Oxford. The presiding elder employed Moses Hinkle (now of the Kentucky conference) to travel a part of the year with Bigelow. Benjamin Lawrence was sent to Lawrence circuit, and John P. Kent to Madison; and in the course of the year, Sale employed Robert Delap (now of the Rock River conference) to travel with Kent.

Jesse Haile was on the Illinois district, and David Sharp on the Silver Creek circuit, and William Mavity on Indian Creek, and John (it should have been Joseph) Pownal on Blue

River. Hunt began his work with a gloomy mind and heavy heart, but with what success I cannot say, although we were contiguous. Sometime in the fall or beginning of winter, he married his former wife's sister. As this was then a new thing to most of the people, it raised the most wonderful excitement among the people which I ever witnessed. Some thought it incest, while others doubted. Crume, the presiding elder, thought it unscriptural, and summoned a committee to investigate the case, but the committee failed to attend, so that there was no official expression about the matter. Hunt was induced to retire from the circuit in the spring. After his retirement, Crume took Connell from White Water to supply the place. What prosperity was on the circuit is unknown to me; for as it was a new circuit, with a few old appointments, the increase does not appear on the *Minutes*. At the end of the year, the number was one hundred and fifty-four.

Wiley started to his circuit early in September, and traveled a blind trace mostly through the wilderness. Night overtook him about fifteen miles before he reached Brookville, when he was a number of miles from any house. He had stopped to feed his beast at a lonely house, and fearing he might have to stay in the woods he begged some corn dodger, or had brought some from home, for he remembers having some to eat at night. When night came on, he held his beast and let her eat peavine awhile, and then placed himself between the projecting roots of a large standing elm, with his big coat on, and his bridle fastened around his wrist; and in consequence of great fatigue, he was soon sleeping soundly, and would have rested well the forepart of the night, if the animal had not moved his hand frequently and waked him. The reader will say, why did you not hitch her and sleep better? He was afraid something might scare her and make her break loose, and from her known habits, he could not catch her in the wilderness; but such was his confidence in her, that if she should scare, he could speak softly to her, and she would not hurt him. Toward morning he became very much chilled, having been heated by exertion in the day, and resting on the

ground at night. The result was, a weakness in the small of the back, which is yet troublesome at times.

He commenced his work at a good camp meeting near Doddridge's meeting-house, where he and his pleasant colleague met. They commenced their work in good spirits, finding their circuit among the best in the land. They made their circuit a five weeks' one, preaching about thirty-two or three regular sermons in a twenty-nine days beside some extra ones. I have said the circuit was a good one, by which I mean the members were pious in the main, and they embodied more intelligence than most circuits.

There were several superior local preachers in the circuit. Joshua Holland, before named, was a great lover of the traveling preachers, and did all he could to make them acceptable and useful. Holland still lives, in age and feebleness. Thomas Silvey was another popular and successful man in the work. Silvey has been dead several years. Charles Hardy was another very grave and sweet-spirited man. He was admitted on trial in 1786, about three years before the writer was born. He traveled six years, part of the time being presiding elder. This brother still lives, and preaches some, and is yet fond of riding on horseback. To see him and talk with him, seems to lead one back to another age. It is now full sixty years or more since he began to warn sinners with much success. How many spiritual sons and daughters must he have in glory. He will soon arise and go and meet them. There were some new places taken into the circuit in the beginning of the year. One was Dr. Dunham's, near where Liberty, the county town of Union county, now is; but there was no Union county then organized. Another new place was Connersville, the county town of Fayette county; but I am not sure that Fayette county was then organized. Joshua Harlan, who had once been a Methodist, but who was then a confirmed Universalist, opened his house for preaching, and he and his family used the preachers well. The preacher in charge having to go fifty miles to see his family where he could stay two days and two pieces of days in the winter, and four days in the summer, was not able to enlarge the work much more, as there were more than thirty sermons to preach each round.

The White Water country had nearly as many Arians, commonly called Newlights, as Methodists in it, so that the senior preacher in his second sermon commenced the controversy on the subject of Arianism, and had more or less of it in almost every sermon which he preached the whole year. He was careful not to indulge in bitterness of spirit or in railing expressions, but to use the strongest arguments of which he was capable, and he verily believes God helped him; and to the praise of God's grace be it spoken, that error began to wane rapidly, and now is hardly known to exist in the White Water Valley. Wiley and Connell spent six months together in most pleasant union, and formed attachments which it is hoped will never end. When Connell was removed to Greenville, Benjamin T. Crouch (now of Kentucky conference), who then lived in Brookville, was licensed and placed on the circuit in the place of Connell. Benjamin (the son of my right hand) was lovely, and his elder brother loved him as a darling son. O, that he were as formerly!

There had been so much imposition on the families in the vicinities of camp meetings, that the people were unwilling to have any at the close of the year, which was an affliction to the preachers. Three weeks before the close of the year, Wiley had a two days' meeting four miles from Brookville in the barn of Thomas Smith, the son-in-law of the memorable Benjamin Abbott. At this meeting he consulted with Smith, Father Hardy, and others, about having a camp meeting. He was met with the formidable objection of oppression, which would be more than ordinary at the present, as the grain must of necessity be in the shock in the field. He told them all he wanted of them, was to select a camp ground and prepare it, which they consented to do, on the land of Charles Collet, about four or five miles above Brookville, on the West river. He then wrote to Crouch to give out the camp meeting, and to tell all to come with their wagons, and grain, and hay, and feed troughs and watering buckets, for we did not intend to feed man, woman, or child, horse, ox or ass, and I gave out the meeting in the same way. We met on the ground at the time, and all, except a few from a contiguous circuit, and the preachers, of whom we had plenty, were provided for. There were

a few other exceptions in the persons of a few young men, who were in the habit of going to camp meetings, far and near, to sponge. Wiley went round to all the tent holders, and earnestly begged them not to give these vagrants anything to eat. The request was complied with, and they stayed, and starved, sometime, but finally sloped. There was no interruption about the meeting, and the Lord worked gloriously, and many souls were converted. On Monday forenoon the altar was cleared, and all who professed to be converted at the meeting were invited in, and there was a goodly number of them, and it was ascertained that some who had professed religion had left. The altar was then cleared again, and all who wished to join the church were invited into it, when more than thirty came and took their seats.

All these exercises were calm and deliberate, for there was no singing allowed. The preacher in charge wrote the names of the persons on notes of admission which he had prepared, directing the holders to present them to the several class-leaders, when they went home, which nearly all did. The fruit of this meeting spread all round, and there were most glorious times when the next preachers came on the circuit. The writer still thinks camp meetings should be held in that way, and then we need not care when nor where we hold them, if there be a sufficiency of water for the use of man and beast. We had Crume, and Lawrence and Brown from a distance to help us, and our own preachers, so that all passed off well. The meeting was immediately at the close of harvest. The circuit increased this year from six hundred and sixty-two to eight hundred and forty-five, after making allowance for those detached to Greenville circuit, if any were detached; and I think there were a few societies.

Bigelow had not so much success on Oxford this year as on the former, unless some of his societies were also thrown into Greenville circuit, which I think was probably done. I stated that the presiding elder employed Moses Hinkle to travel part of the year, with Bigelow, but I was mistaken; for it was the preceding year. What became of Brown that part of the year, I do not know. When I say Bigelow was not so successful as he had been, I do not wish the reader to under-

stand that there was any falling off in his industry and popularity. He preached several times in Brookville that year with great acceptability. The increase in his charge was only two, unless some were taken off to Greenville, as has been conjectured. The people, however, were built up in knowledge and holiness.

Lawrence had most glorious times on Lawrenceburg circuit this year. The work widened and deepened in every direction and he returned five hundred and seventy-one on his part of the old circuit. What the actual increase was, I do not know; for I do not remember how many fell to his part of the circuit. Kent also had most glorious times on the Madison part of the circuit. The Ohio conference then met in August, so that he had time to hold a camp meeting in the fall after he went to the circuit. The meeting was on the old ground, and was a good and successful meeting. He and Delap were well received, and had prosperity in nearly all parts of the circuit. They wound up the year with a camp meeting on Indian creek, about three or four miles from Vevay. This meeting was well attended, and was attended with success.

It would have been better, if the preachers and people had not imbibed the spirit of the Corinthians; when one said, I am for Paul, and another for Apollos. One of the preachers was understood to preach against shouting, and another preached in favor of it, in direct opposition to the former preacher, who, however, was misunderstood. There was a preacher there from Kentucky, who was the most extravagant man for pulpit drollery I ever knew. I regarded him as a profaner of sacred things; and I then thought, and yet think, such preachers are a curse to the church and the world. The return for this year was seven hundred and fifty-two. What the true increase was cannot be ascertained; for as, in the case of the Lawrenceburg part of the circuit, so of the Madison part, I do not know what number fell to it. Take the two circuits together, and the return one thousand three hundred and three, which makes an increase of three hundred and ninety-eight.

Kent was an amiable young man, and calculated to be useful in winning souls. He had not much profundity or origi-

nality of thought but made a good use of what he knew. I presume he has made much improvement since that day. He now belongs to the Genesee conference. Delap was a warm-hearted man, who did much good. He was rather fond of singing the doggerel trash of the times, which is superseding our excellent hymns. He was received on trial in the summer of 1819 by the Ohio conference. He traveled many circuits in different parts of the country, and was superannuated many years. I see from the *Minutes* of 1844, he had an appointment in the Rock River conference. If the Judge should say in the final judgment:

Roberts, what account can you give for the hours, days, weeks, months, and even years, you have spent in smoking your pipe, to say nothing about the expense?

I think he will feel a little queer, and find, if saved at all, it is by fire.

What amount of prosperity Sharp had on Silver Creek, I do not know; but he was well received, and passed well with his people. The return of the circuit is far below what it was the preceding year. The report for this year is five hundred and sixty, being two hundred and eighty-eight less than the former year. This decrease may be accounted for without supposing there was actually any decrease. I find a new circuit called Indian Creek, with four hundred and eighty-six members. I suppose this circuit was formed out of Silver Creek and Blue River, and embraced Corydon and the country around it. I am strengthened in my supposition from the fact that the name of Indian Creek continues on the *Minutes* until there is a Corydon circuit, and then Indian Creek is lost. William Mavity was received on trial by the Missouri conference in the fall of 1818, and sent to Indian Creek. I have already given the number of members on the circuit. Whether there was an increase or decrease is unknown, as we do not know how many were taken from neighboring circuits. I find Mavity's name no more, until the fall of 1827, when he is again admitted on trial, and appointed to Booneville circuit. He continued to travel some years; but as I have not the second volume of the bound *Minutes* at hand to trace his travels,

I can say but little concerning him. I think he is dead; but whether he died in the traveling connection or the local, I cannot say. He was a zealous and useful man.

The pious Joseph Pownal had some prosperity on the Blue River circuit, for he reported five hundred and six members, which was an increase of fifty-six. If a part of that circuit was added to Indian Creek, as I have supposed, the increase was greater. Take the entire membership for Silver Creek, Indian Creek, and Blue River, and it amounts to fifteen hundred and fifty-two, being two hundred and fifty-four more than Silver Creek and Blue River had the year before. Take the entire field which we have traveled over in this number, and we have a membership of four thousand five hundred and forty-six, which amounts to nine hundred and fifty-five of an increase in the last year, commencing in the fall of 1818.

Brookville, Ia., January 28, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, May 15, 1846.

(To be continued.)