

Introduction and Progress of Methodism in Southeastern Indiana

By ALLEN WILEY

(Concluded)

No. XXXI

1829-30.—Madison district, Allen Wiley; Madison station, James L. Thompson; Madison circuit, Michael S. Taylor and George Randal; Lawrenceburg, Nehemiah B. Griffith and Richard S. Robinson; White Water, James Havens, sup. and Lorenzo D. Smith; Wayne, Robert Burns and Wesley Wood; Connersville, Amos Sparks; Rushville, Joseph Tarkington and William Evans; Fall Creek, Asa Beck; Indianapolis, Thomas S. Hitt; Franklin, Richard Hargrave; Vernon, John Kerns; Charlestown district, John Strange; Charlestown circuit, John W. M'Reynolds and James Scott; Corydon, Aaron Wood and William Shanks, sup.; Salem, Stith M. Otwell and John Van Cleve; Paoli, Daniel Anderson and Samuel Brenton.

Wiley had a pleasant year on the Madison district, as there was prosperity on nearly every charge.

Thompson, the preacher in the Madison station, was well received except for the weight of his family, which was heavy to that charge in that day. There was some prosperity and success, the increase being eighteen. There is nothing of much interest to record this year in connection with this charge, except a very popular and good meeting held by the side of the meeting-house under a plank cover. This meeting was attended by several brethren not of the district. George C. Light, then of the Kentucky conference, was there and preached acceptably; but being quite unwell, he was not able to equal himself under other circumstances. Strange was there after a considerable absence from his old friends among whom he had lived and labored four years. He enjoyed the meet-

ing and the society of his friends very much. Ruter was there in feeble health, but was able to preach once and enjoy the meeting and society of his former flock. On Monday, we had a love-feast in the church, which has seldom been exceeded in deep and powerful religious excitement. Doubtless the glorified spirit of Strange remembers the enjoyment which it had in the body that morning; for it was only something less than the enjoyment of disembodied spirits. Some of the brethren named never met on earth again.

Michael S. Taylor, the preacher in charge of Madison circuit, was a most amiable man and a good preacher of medium talents. He commenced traveling in Kentucky in the fall of 1825, where he traveled three years and was transferred to the Indiana conference and appointed to Salem circuit with John Hogan. He traveled four years in Indiana and was then transferred from the Indiana to the Illinois conference and placed on the Wabash district, where he traveled nearly two years and died, and left the world in peace. He was one of the delegates of his conference in the general conference of 1836. His talents had more of usefulness in them than of show; and such was the kindness of his spirit, that he was beloved by all who knew him; and such was his industry that he had great success in almost all the charges where he traveled. The reader will find an account of him in the second volume of the *Minutes*, page 661. That account gives him one year more as a traveling preacher than it should, unless he was employed by a presiding elder before his name appears in the *Minutes*. His colleague had located two years before, and had some difficulties, and was a most unhappy man, who concluded he was out of his place in local life. The quarterly conference removed a suspension under which he had been placed, and recommended him for readmission in the traveling connection, and he was received, and did well on the circuit that year, where the people were kind to him; for they gave him a good horse to use instead of the poor thing with which he went to the circuit. That horse died, and they gave another. These brethren had prosperity; for there was an increase of eighty-four members. There was a good camp meeting at the last quarterly meeting on the ground mentioned last year. There

was also an extra camp meeting between Allensville and Patriot, at a place called the Bark Works (so called because large quantities of oak bark had once been prepared there for exportation to Europe), which was a glorious meeting. After this year, the circuit will be known as Vevay circuit; for after Madison was made a station, the circuit had no kind of connection with it and it was thought best to call it after a post town within its bounds. So far as I had any influence with the bishops presiding, I procured the change of the names of all the circuits named after sections of country, and had them called after post towns within their bounds.

Griffith and Robinson, who were on the Lawrenceburg circuit, have both been mentioned before. Robinson, who had been employed most of the preceding year, had now been admitted on trial by the conference. These brethren were attentive to the work only when the affliction of Griffith's family made it necessary, in his judgment, to stay at home. The reappointment of this brother had an unfortunate effect in one part of the circuit. The society on North Tanner's creek became prejudiced against him, because he had been favorable to a local preacher against whom they had strong prejudice; and perhaps not without cause. The consequence was, many of the old and substantial members withdrew and joined the Protestant Methodists, and took with them a good stone church, which by neglect had not been deeded to our church and the right of soil was in one of the seceding brethren. I have no doubt that if we had gone to law we could have held the church, or have recovered the value of it; but we loved peace, and never contended about it. Some of these friends are gone to rest, and some are yet living; and I am told are pious and doing well. I loved them dearly and I love them still but I thought then, and think yet, there was not sufficient cause for the course which they pursued; for if Griffith even had erred, it was an error in judgment, and not in heart. The success this year was not equal to the success of the former year, but there was a good increase of one hundred and ten. This year, also, the last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting, where we had Charles M. Holliday and Moses Clamper from Kentucky, and Robert O. Spencer from Ohio to help us.

When James Havens was appointed to the White Water circuit, he was in feeble health, and on the supernumerary list. His health continued to decline, and he discharged so much blood in spitting, that it was thought he would never recover; and he became much depressed in his feelings, and had finally to give up the regular work, and only serve the circuit occasionally. Elijah Barwick, a local preacher living in Brookville, supplied Havens' lack of service a part of the time. Smith, the junior preacher, was a very timid but rather a talented young man. Such was his timidity and fear of having to preach before his seniors, that he did not attend the second quarterly meeting. This was his first year as a probationer. Through Haven's bad health, and Smith's timidity and want of resolution, the appointments were not well attended, and the work rather languished, and the circuit declined in its membership sixteen. The circuit, however, remained as healthy and stable as could be expected under the circumstances. The last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting about five miles from Brookville, on the ground where we are to have a camp meeting this year, including the fifth Saturday and Sunday of August. Here there have been camp meetings (many of them glorious ones) for seventeen years almost every year. This year our lease expires, and I suppose the holy place, where hundreds have been converted, will become common ground.

Robert Burns was now in his second year on the Wayne circuit, and had for his colleague Wesley Wood, who had been received on trial by the Ohio conference, and the bishop transferred him to us, and at our conference he was appointed to this circuit. Wesley was the brother of Aaron and Enoch G. Wood, and well known in Indiana. Wesley was a lovely youth, of a good and improvable mind. He had not a good voice for preaching; but it was improving. He was two years in the work, at the end of which he sickened, and lingered awhile, and died. He received an appointment for a third year, but he was never able to go to it. Had he lived he would have made a man of some eminence; for he was very pious and studious. He had not much energy in the beginning of his ministry, but he was on the increase in that important qualifica-

tion, to insure success in the ministry. How inscrutable are the ways of divine Providence! Here is a young man of much promise, who falls by death just as he begins to give clear evidence of usefulness. O, Wesley, I did love thee, and hope to meet thee in a world of life and of joy. These brethren passed well on the circuit, and they had some success; but the increase was so small, being only twenty-six. The last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting near Mt. Zion meeting-house, on Green's Fork of White Water, near the north line of Wayne county.

Amos Sparks was received the second time on trial by the Ohio conference, and was transferred to the Illinois conference, and appointed to the charge of Connersville circuit. Sparks was a very illiterate man, but he had a good degree of native talent, and much zeal, and was, to some extent, popular and useful, and had success in his ministry. If he had had a good education, and entered the traveling ranks when young, he would have made a powerful man. He traveled until the fall of 1835, when the conference located him; and he has been a much more unhappy man, than if he had never traveled. O, my brethren, never encourage a man who is too old to learn watchmaking or any other business to become a traveling preacher; for such can never succeed in the whole work of a traveling minister. I employed Hunter, mentioned last year in connection with Burns, to travel with Sparks. He was a very moderate preacher at that day as it regards intellectual preaching, but he was a good man, who meant well, and could declaim to some advantage. At the close of the year he was received on trial and continued to travel until 1838, when he died. He traveled somewhat extensively in Indiana and Illinois, and was several times two years on the same circuit, which is proof that the people were pleased with him. The reader will find a more full account of him in the *Minutes*, printed at Cincinnati, for the year 1839, page 104. These brethren had good times of refreshing, and the circuit increased eighty-four. The last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting, held near John Cones', in the east end of the present Milroy circuit. O, what times of glory used to be on that ground.

Joseph Tarkington, the preacher in charge of Rushville circuit, commenced traveling in the summer of 1825. His first circuit was Patoka where the reader will remember James L. Thompson sat on the fallen tree and held his horse in the rainy night, with the wolves howling around him. The circuit then included more than four counties in the forks of the Ohio and the Wabash. The present Evansville district, full as it is of charges, had but little more territory than this circuit then covered. Look here, boys, and see a young man who received sixty-two and a half cents at the first quarterly meeting, and only fourteen dollars in the whole year, partly money and partly clothing, and who had to stop in the woods among the brush to mend his own clothes. His senior preacher was the excellent Garner, who had to go more than one hundred miles from his family to the nearest part of the circuit, and then received twenty-eight dollars for the support of himself, and wife, and several children. Tarkington is still in the work, and with medium preaching talents has been able to sustain himself well in all the charges where he has labored, whether circuits, or stations, or district. The secret of his great acceptability and usefulness is to be found in his faithful pastoral work, in which he greatly delights; and he must have a very sluggish and lukewarm helper, if he does not make him a good pastor. His colleague this year on Rushville was William Evans, mentioned before in connection with Wayne and Connersville circuits. These brethren were young and vigorous, and traveled this heavy, muddy circuit with industry and the Head of the Church gave them favor in the eyes of the people, and success in their work; and the circuit increased one hundred and fourteen. The last quarterly meeting was an excellent camp meeting, at which many souls were converted and reclaimed.

Asa Beck had a year of prosperity on Fall Creek circuit, where there was an increase of one hundred and twenty in the membership. The last quarterly meeting was a camp meeting about four miles below Pendleton, on the east side of the creek, which was attended with considerable success. James Havens and old brother Morrow were at this meeting and preached successfully. The night after this meeting closed, the writer was taken sick, and had weeks of suffering.

I have before mentioned the great ingathering which Armstrong had in Indianapolis. Many of these new members were unconverted at the end of the year, and needed just such a kind pastor as they found in Thomas S. Hitt. This brother was in feeble health, and not able to make such an impression on the public mind as Armstrong had done before him, but the church was decidedly in a healthy state, and much good was done. According to the *Minutes* there was apparently a decrease of one hundred and thirty-three, but this was only in appearance; for all the country appointments, south of the town, were detached the preceding fall, and formed a part of Franklin circuit. What the real decrease or increase in the station was cannot now be known. The station, at the close of this year, numbered only one hundred and seventy. Hereafter we shall be able to see the rise or decline of the town.

At the conference in the fall of 1839, there was a new circuit formed out of the appointments which had been in connection with the Indianapolis station, and the north and west part of Columbus circuit. This circuit extended from near Indianapolis southwest to Martinsville, the county town of Morgan county, thence east nearly to Edinburg, thence north by the way of Franklin, the county town of Johnson county to the place of beginning, embracing all the settled parts in the center of the triangle. Much of the country was new and muddy. Although Martinsville was a county town, and was then the largest town, and had the largest society, yet as Franklin bore the name of the venerable American sage, Franklin, the circuit was named after that town.

Richard Hargrave, the preacher, had been on the superannuated list and had been nearly dead with the dyspepsy, and was not yet entirely well. The appointing power fully believed that sending him to that new wooden country, where there would be no call for strong, labored metaphysical sermons, would greatly tend to the restoration of his health and the good of the Church; hence, he was appointed to the Franklin circuit, with good will to him, and the cause of religion. The expectations of his friends were not disappointed; for his health was much improved and he is yet able to do effective service in the ministry. O, ye dyspeptics, instead of wishing city stations, pray the superintendents to send you to the fron-

tiers, even if it be to Brown mission, if you wish to get clear of disease, and the blues at the same time. We are greatly in want of houses to accomodate our people in this new work. In the month of March, at the second quarterly meeting, the friends fixed a sheet or blanket on poles to cover my naked head, while the people sat round about on timbers hauled in the street of Martinsville for the purpose of building a house. They, of course, had on their coverings for their heads, as there was no shade for them. Behold the preacher and his hearers in the open street in the month of March, but the weather was pleasant for the time of the year. The last quarterly meeting was a camp meeting in a new settlement, near the south part of the circuit. The people were few and poor, but they had prepared their camp ground in the best style, and it was a grief to me that I could not serve them; for sickness put it out of my power to labor any at the meeting. I was not able to hear any of the preaching of the Sabbath, when Hargrave preached one of his most able sermons, after telling his congregation that it had cost him fourteen month's study. He styled it the divinity of the Christian religion. All the official service which the elder could render was to open the quarterly conference, and call a brother to the chair, and then lie in bed, scorched with fever, and hear whether things were done right. Since that time he has laid flat on his back on the floor with the chill of the ague, and held quarterly conference. O, how much he suffered this year in traveling, and holding meetings, and taking medicine, and shaking with chills, and scorching with fevers; but Providence sustained him.

As I do not know how many members were taken from Indianapolis station, and Columbus circuit, I do not know what was the increase on Franklin circuit this year. In the fall, the number was five hundred and thirty-nine, so that this was a good, full, one preacher circuit.

This year, Vernon circuit was made a part of Madison, and Columbus a part of Charlestown district, so that I now pass over Columbus circuit and notice it when I come to Charlestown district, so far as I notice that district in these sketches. John Kerns, who was noticed last year as the amiable boy

with Havens on Rushville, was now the preacher on Vernon circuit. John was well received by the people, and he had some prosperity on the circuit; for there was an increase of twenty-six. This seems to be a small increase, but those who know the amount of ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, and downright vile slander and persecution Methodism had to contend with in this country, will say this was doing well. "Tell it not in Gath, and publish it not in the streets of Askelon," how Methodism was treated by professors of religion, lest infidels and devils rejoice. But, thank God, we see a better day, although our cause is too feeble there yet. The last quarterly meeting was a camp meeting, held near the road from Madison to Vernon, about ten or eleven miles from the former place. What kind of a meeting it was, I cannot say with any certainty; for all that I was able to do was to hold quarterly conferences and administer the sacrament. I think the meeting was a good one. At this meeting, John C. Smith was licensed to preach and recommended to conference. The apparent increase on the Madison district this year was nine hundred and sixty-two; but as a part of Columbus circuit was embraced in Franklin circuit, the increase was not really so much.

The popular Strange remained on the Charlestown district, but his health was still on the decline, and he labored in much pain; but there was not much abatement in his labors.

John W. M'Reynolds and James Scott were both returned to Charlestown circuit, which was some evidence that the people were pleased with them; for the appointing power does not send preachers to circuits where it is known that there are strong objections to them. Although there was a decrease the past year of one hundred and ninety-six, and this year of sixty-three, the people did not blame the preacher with it, as is too often the case when the church seems to wane.

This or the preceding year, I know not which, perhaps both, witnessed in this circuit the painful and injurious controversy on church government, which then agitated the Methodist Episcopal church. The consequence was a great loss of piety to all concerned, especially to those who finally seceded. How many did so, I know not; but there were among

them men of great moral worth, who were doubtless honest, but mistaken men. Among them was Cornelius Riddle, the popular local preacher who traveled the Madison circuit the year before. This step greatly lessened his popularity and usefulness. How he has enjoyed himself since, I do not know; for although I have visited him since, and lodged at his house, neither of us, in the slightest degree, alluded to the unfortunate secession. There were others of my warm personal friends among the seceders, whom I sincerely love and pity; for they must see, and if they do not, others do, that radicalism, as the schism is commonly called, is a failure in Clark's Grant.

I have more than once said that if this circuit had been divided when it was fourteen hundred and forty-one in number, it would not have shrunk as it did; but we were slow to learn the true method of the Church's influence and usefulness, by so multiplying charges as to bring more persons into active operation in the cause of religion. Formerly there was great reluctance to divide circuits for four reasons:

1st. For fear the preachers would not have enough to do.

2nd. For fear we could not find sufficiency of preachers for the charges.

3rd. For fear the preachers could not get a competent support.

4th Because the official members, who had long been associated in the same quarterly conference, were unwilling to part. If all our work were to be done on horseback, or in the act of preaching and meeting class, as many seem to suppose, there might have been some ground for the first reason. This mistaken view had well nigh ruined most of us; and I fear the mass of the old and middle-aged preachers, and some of the young ones, too, will have to die off, before we have a good body of pastors and Sunday school men, and men who will care for and attend to all the benevolent and literary interest of the Church.

The second reason is a kind of infidel one, and seems to say that God has not the "residue of the spirit" and could not supply the church with a sufficient number of competent men to do the work which he has ordained, and commanded to be done.

The third reason has no foundation in fact. Virgil says in his *Bucolics*:

Praise a large farm, but till a small one. A Roman gentleman had two daughters and a vineyard. On the marriage of one of his daughters, he gave her one-third of his vineyard and bestowed the same amount of culture on the remaining two thirds as he had done on the whole; and the consequence was, there was no diminution of the vintage. On the marriage of his second daughter, he gave her another third, and then bestowed the same culture on the remaining third, and his vintage was equally abundant.

What man of observation is not convinced that every acre of tillable land in the western country could be made to double or triple its present yield by proper management. These remarks will apply to moral soil as well as to that which is natural. Away with theories and plausible reasons, and let facts speak for themselves. Formerly men starved on large circuits and districts when they had no means of their own for support, now they are supported on small ones if they do their whole duty; and if they do this, they will find plenty of work to keep them busy. The best support which I ever received in my life on a district, was last year and the year before, when the district was small, and I was able to mingle with the people at other times beside the quarterly meetings, and I worked as hard as when my charge was much larger. The fourth reason is so childish that it should not weigh anything. I have a head and heart to prize and feel friendship, but it must be a sickly sentimentalism which will not let friends part when duty and usefulness require them to do so. If the church ever does her duty, no man must have so much work to do that he will become discouraged, and do less than he otherwise would.

My once pleasant colleague, Aaron Wood, was in charge of Corydon circuit, and had for his helper William Shanks, supernumerary. How well the preachers were received and how well they attended to their work I have no means of knowing, only as honest Methodist preachers I suppose they did their duty. This was not a prosperous year to the circuit; for there was a decrease of eighty, which was within nine of the increase of last year. This is the last year that the Cory-

don circuit includes the flourishing town of New Albany; for at the conference in the fall of 1830, it was made a station.

Otwell and Van Cleve have both been mentioned at some length, so that I need say nothing here. They were good men and good preachers, but Salem circuit appears not to have prospered under their ministry; for there was a decrease of forty-three in its membership. Ah, these unfortunate fluctuations!

Daniel Anderson was returned to the charge of Paoli circuit, and had for his colleague, Samuel Brenton, the exhorter mentioned last year as sent from Indianapolis to travel a part of the year on Madison circuit. Brenton was now received on trial, and continued to travel with acceptance until the fall of 1833, when he located, and so remained eight years, until the fall of 1841, when he again entered the work, and is now doing well as a member of the North Indiana conference. While local he studied and practiced law in Hendricks and neighboring counties. Twice or thrice he represented the county named in the lower house of the state legislature. His prospects for wealth and fame were very fair; but what are wealth and fame to a minister of the Gospel, who feels he is called of God to be instrumental in saving souls, and spreading the Redeemer's kingdom in the world? The worldly wise would have said, "Brenton, continue your law practice, and make money;" but God and good men said, "Desist, and enter the vineyard of the Lord;" and he obeyed.

Columbus circuit was now in the Charleston district, with two capable preachers on it, Elsbury and Johnson. Elsbury was received on trial by the Illinois conference in the fall of 1829, and continued to travel until the fall of 1834, when he located. He became a successful physician, and lived several years in Pendleton, on Fall Creek. He moved somewhere west, but I now know nothing about him. He was a good man and a good preacher, but there was a precipitancy of words and actions in him which often injured his usefulness. This year he visited some of his people when he first came on the circuit as a stranger somewhat in disguise, in order that he might find out their religious habits at home. When they asked his name, he would say Isaac N., which was true as far as it

went, but leaving out the latter part. When they found they had been practiced upon and trifled with by their preacher, they were hurt and did not receive him kindly. This conduct, with some unguarded expressions, which were misrepresented, rendered him nearly useless on the circuit. In these numbers, I have had occasion to mention the virtues and faults of many good men, not with a view to flatter or injure them, but as an incitement and warning to others. When Paul writes to the Galatians, he does not spare the faults of Peter. Surely the faults of others should be lasting admonitions to us, that we may shun them. This brother deeply lamented the indiscretions of this year.

Johnson I have before mentioned as a very tame preacher; and owing to the state of things on the circuit this year, I presume he was more than ordinarily tame, so that between the precipitancy and unguardedness of the one, and the languor of the other, the people were not well suited, and they let their preachers well nigh starve.

There is apparently a decrease of four hundred and twelve on the circuit this year, but there was not that amount of decrease in reality; for, as I have before said, when Franklin circuit was formed a part of Columbus was included in it. I suppose, however, that there was a large decrease on this circuit.

This was not a prosperous year to that part of Charlestown district which falls within my proposed bounds. All the five circuits noticed decreased in their membership, and some of them largely. The apparent decrease in all was six hundred and fifty-two. The decrease, however, was less to the amount of members which were taken from Columbus and embraced in Franklin circuit, and that amount we cannot ascertain. Taking the whole field which I have traveled over in both districts, there was an increase of only three hundred and ten. A sad view, considering how many good and sincere men were engaged in the work day and night. Some had to be expelled, because of disorderly walk, and some withdrew to form a new church of doubtful utility. Others withdrew to join other denominations, and others moved to new and distant parts of the land. A goodly number left earth

for heaven, so that they were not really lost to us, but experienced what every good minister labors for, the transmission of souls from a world of sin and sorrow to a heaven of joy and rest, with God and angels.

ALLEN WILEY

Brookville, Ia., July 3, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, Sept. 25, 1846.

No. XXXII

1830-31.—This year, a part of the Madison and a part of the Charlestown districts were formed into a new district, called Indianapolis; and that part of the work which I notice, was supplied in the following manner:

Madison district, Allen Wiley; Madison station, Benjamin C. Stevenson; Vevay circuit, Joseph Tarkington and George Randall; Lawrenceburg, John W. M'Reynolds and Alfred W. Arrington; White Water, Michael S. Taylor, and Isaac Kimball; Wayne, Asa Beek and Richard S. Robinson; Connersville, Ancil Beach and Wesley Wood; Rushville, Amos Sparks and John C. Smith; Vernon, John Kerns; Fort Wayne mission, Nehemiah B. Griffith; Indianapolis district, James Armstrong; Indianapolis station, Calvin W. Ruter; Corydon circuit, William Moore and Henry S. Talbott; Paoli, John T. Johnson and William S. Crissey; Columbus, to be supplied.

This was a prosperous year on the Madison district; but the office of presiding elder began to be irksome to the presiding elder, and has so continued ever since; and he sustains it from a sense of duty, and not as a matter of choice.

The Madison station being somewhat feeble in membership and wishing to build a new and large church, greatly desired to have a single man; and the bishop complied with the wish of the people, and sent them Benjamin C. Stevenson, who had been three years in the work; but he and his charge were entire strangers. His religious education was Presbyterian; but when he was awakened and converted, he joined the Methodist Episcopal church. Whether he became re-

ligious in Kentucky or at Greencastle, Ia., from whence he started to travel, I do not know. His first circuit was Carlisle, on the Wabash, between Vincennes and Terre Haute. His third field was Galena mission, he being the first missionary sent to that then distant and wild region. His fourth year was Madison, where he was acceptable and useful. At the ensuing conference, he was appointed to Indianapolis station, and he returned to Madison, where he had married the widow Goode near the close of the year, to prepare for a removal to the charge to which he had been appointed; but a deep cold, which he had taken before conference, ended in a settled fever, which terminated his life just eight weeks from the time of his marriage. Never shall I forget my surprise and grief, when John H. Taylor and Mordecai Brooks came to my house, in the night, to request me to preach his funeral sermon the next day; which I did in the Presbyterian church, which was larger than ours. Week-day as it was, there never had been so large a procession before in Madison. I have before said I had become weary of the presiding elder's office; and I had fixed on this brother, in my mind, as a good successor, when he should become a little older in the ministry. Stevenson was every way a lovely and dignified man, and above mediocrity for one of his age in the work. We never had lost a young man, my own son excepted, that caused me so much grief, as Benjamin C. Stevenson. One so talented, so dignified, so useful, to be suddenly cut down, seemed so strange that my poor heart could hardly be reconciled to this dispensation of divine Providence. Had he lived and been faithful, he would have been a man of much eminence; but God is wise and good, and knew what was best for him, and we should submit with resignation, which I think I do; but my heart is mournful and sad, while I write, though he died nearly fifteen years ago. This was a good year for the station, but the increase was only nineteen. The church, however, was greatly improved, and the arrangement for building the new church much advanced. I am not sure, but I think the building was inclosed, but not ready for occupancy till the next summer.

The former Madison circuit was now called Vevay, on which Tarkington and Randall were well received, and la-

bored with acceptability and success until spring, when Randall brought charges against one of the members in the circuit, who was acquitted; and this acquittal so displeased Randall, that he left the work and went to farming, which he has followed ever since. I hope he will yet see the folly of his strong prejudices and join the church, and try to die in peace with God and man.

After Randall left, I placed Elijah Whitten on the circuit. Whitten was then a warm exhorter, living at Aurora, where the society was unwilling to recommend him for license to preach, as he was young in the work of public teaching. Elijah was exceedingly zealous and was useful on the circuit. He was employed the next year by the elder on Connersville and Wayne circuits, where he had success; and at the close of the year he was recommended and received on trial, and is still in the work. I have not heard him preach for many years, but I am informed he has made great improvement in ministerial gifts. This was a glorious year for Vevay circuit especially at the camp meetings. The last quarterly meeting was a camp meeting, held between three and four miles from Madison. This meeting, as a whole was the best I ever saw. The meeting lasted eight days, and there was no necessity of reproving man, woman, or child, from beginning to end as a divine influence seemed to pervade the whole encampment all the time the meeting lasted; for persons would come on the ground in the intervals of public service, and without any visible agency, they would be melted into tears. We had no splendid preaching, as we sometimes hear a certain kind of talented preaching now called, but plain, simple truth was mighty through God's Spirit to awaken and convert. This was the last camp meeting attended by Benjamin C. Stevenson, where he preached profitably. On a moderate estimate, one hundred or more souls passed from darkness into light, and were made happy in a Savior's love; and about one hundred and thirty presented themselves as applicants for the privileges of the church. Many of our friends in Madison encamped on the ground and shared largely in the glories of the meeting, and many of the citizens who did not encamp were greatly benefitted by the meeting. A boarding tent,

owned by a decent family of colored people, was of great utility to the meeting. The regulations of the tent, owned were good; for the eating hours were the same as those of the tenters and every thing was as orderly as in any city hotel. Here the young gentlemen and ladies, from the town, obtained their meals at a moderate price, and were not a burden to their neighbors who had tents, as they would have been if they had done as many have done in a later day, who go to camp meetings to sponge and be waited on. Whenever I pass that ground, now in a farm, I think of the many souls in glory now, who were fed and feasted here, and of many more who are still on the way. And are we to have no more such meetings for the want of laws to protect them? Remember this, ye friends of good order, when you go to the ballot box.

There was another camp meeting for this circuit held near the Bark Works, mentioned before, which was also a blessed meeting, where much good was done. At this meeting, the friends of good order had to tie a drunken rowdy, who has since been a member of the Indiana legislature. The increase on the circuit this year was two hundred and thirty-six and the old members were much improved in their piety. The preachers on this circuit found an excellent helper for the work in the person of James Jones, who had been a zealous and successful traveling preacher, but who was now in local life, without any loss of zeal and industry, which cannot be affirmed of many preachers who have located. Jones afterward joined the traveling connection and still remains in it a laborious and useful preacher.

M'Reynolds, who was in charge of Lawrenceburg circuit, has been mentioned before. He had for his colleague an extraordinary young man in many respects. A young man so intellectual I have never known, but he was a very child in common sense. His memory was good—such, that he could memorize eight or ten pages in an afternoon; and by reviewing the next morning, the matter became his permanently. He was an eloquent man, and sometimes a powerful and successful preacher. Had he possessed deep piety and stability, he would now have been the brightest star in the western

country; but alas! he was wanting in both. The next year, while on Vevay circuit, he became an infidel, and left the work. While on my way home from a distant part of the districts, I called to see him, and found him good-natured and social, but avowedly infidel in his sentiments. He told me that the Universalists had tried to prevail on him to join them; but he refused telling them that they were not honest, because they did not believe the Bible any more than he did, and that their professions of belief in it was only to serve a purpose, by giving them influence with the public. He told me that he intended to make his living by writing. I asked him what he intended to write? And he replied, "Novels and poetry." He visited several places where he had preached with great popularity, and delivered infidel lectures; but he who had charmed and astonished, and enraptured thousands, was now so shorn of his strength that he could make no impression on the public mind; and even his eloquence was gone and he could not interest any kind of an audience. He went southwest to a remote part of Arkansas, where he married, and professed to be reclaimed, and was restored to the ministry, and did well for a season; but he fell again and became a lawyer and politician; and the last I heard of him he was a desperado. A few years since, I saw a poetical production of his, which, for wit and sarcasm cannot be easily excelled. To see such a mind as his a mere football for the devil to play with, does beggar and pour contempt upon poor human nature beyond anything which I have known. It would be a great gratification to me to have one more interview with him; and sometimes I feel willing to walk all night in the mud, if I could see him; for I should hope to do him some good. His penitent letter to me after his first fall, was most feeling. O Alfred, Alfred, come back, come back, and walk in the good and the right way!

Although a goodly number were awakened and converted, especially in the Big Bottom, there was a decrease of one hundred and twenty on Lawrenceburg circuit.

Michael S. Taylor, the preacher in charge of White Water circuit, has been mentioned before. His colleague, Isaac Kimball, had been recommended from Ohio, and was received on

trial at the conference which met in Vincennes in the fall of 1830. Isaac was a pious, well-meaning but rather weak-minded man; but he was useful to some extent, and passed pretty well on the circuit. He traveled a few years, and located, and the last I heard of him, the Millerite mania had taken such fast hold of him, that he was bereft of reason. I do not mean that he was a maniac in the common acceptation of that term, but that like all other zealous Millerites, he was stark mad about the world ending soon; and if so, I would say before the Gospel has done much for it; for in view of the small amount of Christianity in the world at the present and former times, if the world should now end, the Gospel is a failure. I hope Isaac's derangement will end, and he will yet see many days with a sound mind in a sound body. Taylor and Kimball labored in perfect harmony, and they had glorious times in almost all parts of the circuit especially about Brookville and at a camp meeting about five miles from the town, where Arrington preached some of his most popular powerful, and successful sermons. Under his Sabbath sermon, some of the old, steady members, who were seldom excited, shouted aloud, as if they had been new converts. The increase on the circuit was one hundred and ninety-five.

Beek and Robinson, who have both been noticed, had good times on Wayne circuit, and the increase was one hundred and eighty. The last quarterly meeting was held on a new camp ground a little north of the National Road, between Richmond and Centreville. James Havens and William Holman of Kentucky helped us much at this meeting. I had little or no enjoyment at this meeting, because I felt that I and Robinson ought to have been at Fort Wayne, where there was a door open, and we had left a good prospect to do good, such a one perhaps as was never afterward realized there.

Beach, the preacher in charge of Connersville circuit, was a man of some year's standing as a member of the church, but young in the ministry, who had just been received on trial. He was zealous, and so remains to this day; for he is yet in the work, being a member of the North Indiana conference. He is a man of only medium preaching talents, but his diligence and zeal have made him successful beyond many others. His

travels in Indiana have been extensive. His colleague, the amiable Wesley Wood, has been noticed before. These brethren labored with acceptability and some success; for they had an increase of forty-six. The last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting, near an old deserted meeting-house called Hopewell, which has been superseded by the erection of a good new meeting-house lately. This neighborhood was once the best one for Methodism in all that section of country; but two brothers, who were local preachers, set up for themselves, and drew away disciples after them, to the great injury of the cause of God. The society is now doing well, and is a part of Milroy circuit.

Amos Sparks, the senior preacher on Rushville circuit, has been noticed before. He had for the junior preacher, John C. Smith. John was of Baptist parentage, who trained him in a religious way. Edwin Ray, the first year he was in Madison, was the instrument of John's awakening, when he and his mother and sister, now the wife of John Kerns, and perhaps some other members of the family joined the Methodist Episcopal church. Smith had been recently licenced to preach, and was now admitted on trial. His education was better than most of our young men had at that day, and he was a very acceptable preacher from the beginning of his ministry. This heavy circuit was a great trial to his feeble constitution, but he sustained the labor beyond expectation. This brother, as I have before said, charges with acceptability and success. These brethren had a year of success for they had an increase of one hundred and ninety-eight. This was Kern's second year on Vernon circuit, which was extended south, so as to embrace several appointments on the upper end of Charlestown circuit. These appointments only remained one year in connection with Vernon circuit, as Charlestown circuit was divided the next year; and the upper part called Lexington, which embraced these appointments. The Vernon circuit being now a heavy one, I employed Lewis Hurlbut to help Kerns. Brother Hurlbut being somewhat advanced in life before he commenced preaching, and having a heavy voice, and being zealous, he could not well endure the labor of preaching so frequently as he had to preach on this

circuit, so that he nearly broke down. After preaching a few years as a local preacher, and becoming inured to the work of public speaking, he joined the traveling connection, and has now been a number of years a laborious and successful traveling preacher. These brethren had good times, and the *Minutes* report an increase of one hundred and seventy-five, but the increase was not so much; for, as I have said before, a part of Charlestown circuit was included in this number. The last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting, near to where the present town of New Marion stands on the Michigan road.

As Fort Wayne is out of my prescribed limits, I merely mention it this year, to show when we commenced operations in that then new country. Griffith, the missionary, had some success, and returned fifteen members. Early in autumn, the presiding elder and Richard S. Robinson visited the mission, and held a most interesting meeting in the Masonic Hall; for there was no church in the town. The elder preached in the daytime, and Robinson at night, for several days in succession; and on Sunday every Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist in the congregation, came to the sacrament. Among the latter were two widowed sisters, who were well educated and intelligent half-blood Indians. If the preachers had not been called by official relations to other parts of the work, and could have remained a few days longer, religion would have taken such a hold of the community as it did not for many years. I felt a strong impulse to stay and let the camp meeting in Wayne county be managed without me and Robinson; and Griffith told me afterwards that if we had staid, he believed nearly the whole town would have surrendered. I have never thought about our leaving when we did without regret.

All the charges in the district had a handsome increase, except Lawrenceburg, so that the apparent net increase was nine hundred and twenty-eight, but we must deduct for the members received from Charleston circuit, so that the net increase was between seven and eight hundred, perhaps quite eight hundred. In this account, I do not include the numbers in Fort Wayne, as that is out of my proposed limits, and I only mention it incidentally, as a part of the Madison district.

James Armstrong, frequently mentioned before, was placed on the newly formed Indianapolis district. The writer now having no connection with this work, cannot be expected to give so full and detailed accounts as he formerly did. As nearly all his statements are made from personal knowledge where he traveled himself, no considerate man can expect him to give full accounts of the work to which he is a stranger, only from information picked up years ago incidentally and kept in his memory; for all the documentary information which he has received could be contained in one closely written sheet, except a few communications from Madison, a small part of which only was of use to him. Most of the writer's information which he has received, came after his accounts of the places from whence it was received were printed. Surely brethren cannot expect him to insert their accounts received out of due season. Should a revisal of his numbers ever be called for, these after accounts might be of use.

Evans and Bonner seem to have had a prosperous year on Fall Creek for the increase was one hundred and twenty-five; but I presume their support was very limited, as they both had families; and our new circuits did not support their preachers well in those days. Indeed, the old ones did not yield a good support.

Thomas S. Hitt remained a second year in the Indianapolis station, where he succeeded well, and had an increase of eighty-five.

Scott had some prosperity on the Franklin circuit, as there was an increase of thirty-seven on the circuit. So far as I know, the presiding elder, and preachers, and people, in the Indianapolis district co-operated harmoniously in the good old ways of the Lord, and they had peace in all their borders. The three charges in this district which fall in my limits, all had prosperity, and the whole increase was two hundred and forty-seven.

Strange remained on the Charlestown district, and continued useful; but his health was rapidly declining; and had he desisted from labor then or at an earlier period, he might possibly have recovered; but his avowed purpose was, never to stop while he could put his leg over the back of the horse, so

as to get in the saddle. This resolution was maintained to the last.

James L. Thompson was sent alone to the Charlestown district, which had been curtailed some by taking off the upper end; but still it was too large for any one man to do the work required, to make the circuit prosperous. Whether the elder employed any one to assist Thompson I have forgotten, if ever I knew. Thompson went to the circuit depressed in his feelings, as it would any other man, with a tender heart who loves his family. The circuit did not prosper, and there is an apparent decrease of two hundred and sixty-three, but there was not really so large a decrease; for, as I have before said, a part of the members were attached to Vernon circuit. There was, however, doubtless a considerable decrease, as we should expect with one man on so large a circuit with so many members.

This year, New Albany was made a station, and Calvin W. Ruter appointed to it. I do not know at what time this town was laid out, but I think about 1811 or 1812, or perhaps earlier. At first it settled rather slowly, if I have been rightly informed, or perhaps it settled as fast at first and subsequently declined, as did most of our towns of that day. It is now the largest town in Indiana. At what time the first society was formed, I cannot say positively; but a letter from F. A. Hester gives the best information I have. If the account is incorrect, others must correct it. I will give an extract from that letter.

Brother Shrader informed me, that in the spring of 1818, he was sent, by the presiding elder, from Vincennes, to take the place of John Cord on the Silver Creek circuit, Cord being permitted to leave on account of his loss by fire. In the summer of this year he preached, he thinks, the first Methodist sermon in Jeffersonville and New Albany; and in these new towns formed the first classes (of this he has greater confidence in reference to the latter). Some of the members in the latter place, were Grace and wife, Sleede and wife, Mrs. Bowman, and Mrs. Beach. Of the members in the latter place, were Downey and wife, Beeler and wife, the widow Ruff and two daughters and James Scott, whom he licensed to exhort. The names of the others he has forgotten. In New Albany, the preaching place this year was a tavern belonging to Mrs. Ruff, in which he administered the Lord's supper the first time, he thinks, it was ever administered in the town. While Cord was on the

circuit, a revival began which spread, under Shrader, over almost the whole circuit. In the fall of this year, the circuit was divided at the instance of brother Shrader, of which were constituted the Silver Creek and Indian Creek circuits.

I thank brother Hester for his information, and would have been glad to have had it months ago, as I could have then used some other information contained in his letter to advantage, while giving some account of brother Shrader. I have before stated, that Shrader and Everhart were appointed to Indian Creek in the fall of 1819, one year having intervened since Shrader had traveled a part of the year on Silver Creek. In a short time Everhart left, and Shrader had to do all the work. This year he preached in a small frame meeting-house in New Albany which the people had built the previous year. The following year the circuit, or at least a part of it, was called Corydon, and Shrader appointed to it. During both of these years, the good work prospered on the circuit generally, and in New Albany particularly. My informant says, Shrader is yet in good health, and generally preaches twice every Sabbath, and frequently on the week-days. I will just say of the persons named in the above extract, sister Sleede, brother and sister Downey, and old sister Beeler, are all who are now known to the writer as being alive. The first time he preached in Jeffersonville, in the fall of 1825, he preached the funeral sermon of brother Grace, the first named in the list. Sister Grace may be living; but the widow Ruff and her daughters I never knew, unless they were married and bore other names when I was stationed at New Albany in 1836-7. I should have excepted Scott, who is a superannuated preacher in the North Indiana conference.

How many members Ruter found in the town when it was made a station, I do not know. He had a prosperous year, and returned two hundred and eighty-two, which was only two less than Madison had, which had been a station six years. New Albany soon outgrew Madison in its membership, and still keeps in the advance. Both are flourishing towns, and the societies have room to prosper.

William Moore, the preacher in charge of Corydon circuit, has been mentioned before. He had for his colleague a plain

young man, who was pious and devoted, and had been one year in the work. He traveled four years, and then located, and so remained until the fall of 1840, when he was readmitted, and traveled a part of two years, and was superannuated one, and died. I had very little personal knowledge of brother Decker; but from all I can learn, he was an excellent man. In the *Minutes* for 1844-45, page 587, will be found an interesting account of this brother. That account, however, has three considerable mistakes. The first is in giving him two years more as a traveling preacher than was the fact, by placing the conference in New Albany, at which he located in in 1834, instead of 1832. The second in placing him on Boonville circuit, when it should have been Newburg. The third in placing him on Brunville circuit in 1842, when it should have been Bruceville. I suppose the latter to be a typographical error. What amount of prosperity attended the labors of these brethren on Corydon, I do not know. The *Minutes* show a decrease of one hundred and one, but there was not that decrease; for the members which were in New Albany, when it was constituted a station, are to be deducted from this circuit, after which I presume there will be a good increase.

Both the preachers on Salem circuit are new men in this part of the work.

Ashael L. Risley was received on trial in the fall of 1827, and continued to travel until the fall of 1839, so that he was twelve years in the work, except one year superannuated, one supernumerary, and one local. The second time he located, he remained local three years, when he again joined the traveling connection, and still continues in the work. This brother, though not so energetic in his preaching as some ministers, became an intelligent man; and when I knew him in the Wabash country in the summer of 1841, he was an excellent man, and an able and useful preacher, and was sorry that he had located.

Dr. Talbott was received on trial this year, and was young in the ministry. I presume in his beginning he had not so much zeal and energy as now, but he gave proof of his sincerity by relinquishing a good practice as a physician, and

placing himself and family in the dependent condition of a traveling preacher, when support was not half so good as it is at present. He gradually improved in talents, zeal, and usefulness and has sustained himself well, and has now been nearly nine years filling the important office of presiding elder in the Indiana conference. These brethren had not a very prosperous year, for there was a decrease of one hundred and twelve on Salem circuit. Since writing the account of Charlestown circuit, it seems to me, but it is like a dream that Risley spent a part of this year on that circuit, and Dr. Oglesby was employed to fill his place on Salem circuit. I am sure Risley was at one of our quarterly meetings in Madison, and I think he came from Charlestown.

John T. Johnson, the preacher in charge of Paoli circuit, has been before us several times, and need not be noticed farther. His colleague, William S. Crissey, was received on trial this year, and I believe he is yet in the traveling connection; and was in the fall of 1844 a superannuated preacher of the Illinois conference. This brother traveled mostly in Illinois, so that I know but little of him; but judging from all I do know, he has been a worthy minister. Paoli circuit decreased twenty-nine, being the third year that it was on the decline, and we shall find that it declined the next year; and should I continue these accounts we shall find it declining for sometime to come.

I find Columbus circuit left to be supplied this year, but by whom it was supplied I do not know; but rather think by Nathan Fairchild who has lived within its bounds many years, except two years when he traveled. Nathan is an excellent man; and had it not been for the weight of his family, and the great danger of a premature failure from his great zeal, he would have made a very valuable man in the traveling ranks. He cannot preach like some ministers, but he can exhort to great advantage, and is useful wherever he labors. I find the circuit had an increase of one hundred and seven.

In the six charges which we have noticed in the Charlestown district there is apparently a decrease of one hundred and sixteen, but I suppose that many, or more, were detached from Charlestown circuit and united to Vernon, so

that there was very little variation in the numbers this year and last. The three last years have not been prosperous to this part of the work.

Taking the whole ground over which we have traveled this year, the increase was one thousand and forty-nine, which was doing pretty well in this old part of the state, from which hundreds of members moved every year, to find new homes far in the west and northwest, besides those who left us to go to their final home in heaven.

ALLEN WILEY

Brookville, Ia., August 5, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, October 2, 1846.

No. XXXIII

1831-32.—Madison district, Allen Wiley; Madison station, Thomas S. Hitt; Vevay circuit, John T. Johnson and Alfred W. Arrington; Lawrenceburg, Joseph Oglesby and John C. Smith; White Water, John W. M'Reynolds and William M. Daily; Wayne, Joseph Tarkington and James T. Robe; New Castle, Ancil Beach; Connersville, Asa Beek; Greensburg, Isaac Kimball and Josiah H. Hill; Mississineway, Robert Burns; Indianapolis district, John Strange; Fall Creek, Nathan Fairchild; Rushville, Charles Bonner and Cornelius Swank; Indianapolis station, Benjamin C. Stevenson; Franklin, Eli P. Farmer; Columbus, Amos Sparks; Charlestown district, William Shanks, Charlestown Circuit, William Moore and Daniel M. Murphy; Lexington, John Kerns; New Albany station, Calvin W. Ruter; Corydon, John Miller and Anthony F. Thompson; Salem, Michael S. Taylor and George M. Beswick; Paoli, Thomas Davis.

It will be perceived that there were more divisions of circuits this year than formerly, as several new ones will appear in our account. It will be perceived, also, that there was considerable shifting of circuits from one district to another to equalize the work.

This was Wiley's fourth year on the Madison district, and it was to him a year of hard work; and a few days after the close of the year a time of painful family bereavement.

Thomas S. Hitt was a good pastor in the Madison station; but there was a decrease in the membership of thirty-four. This year, our friends left their little old meetin'-house, which had well nigh ruined them by causing them to lose from their congregation many valuable citizens who would now have been members of our church. The church now found itself pleasantly situated in its new, large house, now called Wesley Chapel. The gallery part of the house was not quite finished, but it answered well for the then congregation. Many of the living did well in the erection of this house; but one who is dead devoted more time, and perhaps contributed more means than any other; and the church in Madison will long owe a debt of gratitude to the precious memory of William Robinson, whose body, with the bodies of several members of his family, now sleeps about one mile and a half from Madison, near the old road to Canaan. A more kind-hearted and honorable, and gentlemanly Christian man than he was does not live. He was a native of oppressed Ireland and he had all the quick sensibility of his countrymen, which was sometimes exhibited in excited feeling; but it might be said of him,

He bore anger as the flint bears fire, which being much enforced shows a hasty spark, and straight is cold again.

When he died, the church lost a pillar, his family a wise head and a warm heart, and the community a worthy citizen. Lovely man, I would say more about him, if I had room in these numbers.

Johnson and Arrington were well received on Vevay circuit, and were doing well until Arrington turned infidel, being partially deranged by meta-physics, which he afterward advised young preachers not to study much; for when he found himself ruined, he thought on this subject as the venerable James Quinn, of the Ohio conference, whom I once heard pray, most fervently, at an annual conference, and in the most impassioned part of his prayer he cried out at the top of his voice, "Lord, save us from metaphysical froth, from philo-

sophical chaff." After Arrington left the circuit, I employed Benjamin Tivis to travel with Johnson. Tivis had formerly traveled in Kentucky, but was now local. Next to Arrington, Tivis had the best memory, especially in the Bible, of any man whom I have known. I once heard him preach a long, able sermon at a camp meeting, on the divinity of Christ which consisted of literal, verbatim quotations from the Bible, giving book, chapter, and verse, with a very few short explanatory remarks interspersed among the quotations. Tivis is now Dr. Tivis, of Jefferson county, who has been once or more a member of the Indiana legislature. The last quarterly meeting was a middling good camp meeting, about the center of the circuit, as it then was. The increase of the membership on the circuit was fifty-three.

Joseph Oglesby, who was the first traveling preacher in the White Water country, and who had long been local, now returned to the traveling ranks, and was appointed to the charge of Lawranceburg circuit. I think, as I before said, that Strange had employed him a part of the preceding year on the Salem circuit. Oglesby and Smith were well received, and there was some prosperity on the circuit, especially at the close of the year. There was a camp meeting near the road from Wilmington to Manchester, on a high hill, north of North Hogan. The elder having finished his last round of quarterly meetings, attended this meeting, which was not a quarterly meeting. Here he was able to preach three times, which was the first he had been able to preach for some weeks, except once, as he had had a severe attack of the quinsy. He was now between sick and well, just in a situation to be peevish if he would yield to temptation. As he rode up the high hill to the camp ground he thought about his condition, and he resolved to be pleased with everything which was not sinful; and great was his peace and quiet of mind at that meeting. He mentions this fact for the admonition of himself and others; for if he had gone there in a fault-making spirit, he would have made himself and others unhappy, and mischief would have been the result. Daily, from the White Water circuit, was there, and preached with liberty, and the meeting was a glorious one, and much good was done. The next

week, Smith and the writer had a glorious meeting at Lawrenceburg, where much good was done, so that the year wound up with a blessed revival in that town. Richard S. Robinson, who was missionary that year at Fort Wayne, was at the Lawrenceburg meeting, and was a blessing to it, and enjoyed the society of the friends very much, with whom he had traveled two years before. Upon the whole, this was a good year to the circuit, and there was an increase of forty-four which was only one-third of the last year's decrease.

John W. M'Reynolds, the preacher in charge of White Water circuit, was well received and had for his colleague William M. Daily, who had been reared and educated in and near Brookville. At the time he was received on trial he lived in Indianapolis where he had been teaching school and preaching acceptably as a local preacher. As he was recommended from Armstrong's district, he claimed William, and had him placed on Covington circuit, on the Wabash; and he was read out for that circuit. William concluded that the Wabash climate would not agree with his health, and he refused to go; and Bishop Roberts, in his good nature, permitted Armstrong and Wiley to make a change, but told us we would hurt feelings and do harm. Well, this was one of the errors of Armstrong and Wiley: "for it is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth," especially if he be a traveling preacher; but the sympathies of Wiley for a slender, feeble stripling, yet in his teens overcame his better judgment, and made him have a hand in error. William was zealous and talented for one of his age, and his youth and youthful appearance made him acceptable to the people, although he had been partly raised in Brookville, the principal town in the circuit. As Hitt, of the Madison station, was a delegate to the General conference, the elder placed Daily in charge of that station in the absence of the pastor, after admonishing him, by letter, that he was too young for such a place, and that nothing but the necessity of the case induced him to take that course, as the older men could not be spared from their own charges. Now I would let any station do two months with what occasional preaching it could get, rather than place any person so young as William then was in a charge so important as Madi-

son was at that time. I have lived long enough to see that almost all young men who are placed prematurely in stations, sustain a very great injury in many ways. The labors of M'Reynolds and Daily were blessed in the awakening and conversion of many souls, and the circuit prospered, and there was an increase of one hundred and thirty-six.

Tarkington, the preacher in charge of Wayne circuit, has come before us several times, and I need not add anything more concerning him. His colleague, James T. Robe, had just been received on trial without much experience or theological knowledge, or much zeal and energy in his performances, and I deemed it expedient to change him and Whitten, whom I had employed to travel with Beek on Connersville circuit. Robe was very loth to be changed, but the change had a good effect on him, as it waked his mental powers to greater zeal and energy. If the practice were general to change all dull men often, and let them know that the people wish it to be so, it would rouse them to more effort, or drive them from the field where others would work better. This brother traveled several years without much eminence or success, and then located, and I believe he now lives in the north part of Indiana or in Michigan. How he passes as a local preacher, I know not.

This year, on Wayne circuit was a good one; and there were many glorious conversions. The last quarterly meeting was a heavenly camp meeting, on the camp ground at Doddridge's meeting-house. In the summer of this year there was a singular exercise among the people on this circuit. Many of them, when they would become happy at meeting would commence laughing aloud and continue doing so for hours. Once the laughing commenced, the persons so exercised could no more stop it than they could stop the wind. So divided were the people in their views of this thing, that I felt it to be my duty to introduce it in a sermon at the close of a camp meeting, with the view to prevent the laughers and their opposers from being tempted at each other. I advised those who laughed not to invite the exercise, and those who were not so exercised not to doubt the sincerity of their brethren; for involuntary when once commenced. Brother Whitten, who was

in the stand behind me, and who had felt some of the symptoms in the former part of the sermon was well nigh thrown into the "jerks" of a former day, by resisting his emotions. Brother McReynolds, of the White Water circuit, told me that his exercise was once in Kentucky, and that his sister, now sister M'Bride of New Albany, laughed all day and all night when she was converted. I neither approve nor condemn this mysterious thing. Doubtless Heaven had some purpose to accomplish in sending or permitting this exercise; but what this purpose was I know not, unless it was to convince skeptics that there is an invisible agency which acts on the human mind, and by that means on human nerves, and tendons. After a few months the thing subsided, and I have known nothing of it for years.

The *Minutes* show a decrease of one hundred and sixteen on Wayne circuit this year, but there was not really a decrease; for that part of the circuit which was in Randolph county, was united to that part of Connersville circuit which was in Henry county, and formed the new Newcastle circuit, which now appears in the *Minutes* for the first time. I presume there was a handsome increase, but to what amount I do not know, as I do not know how many went into the Newcastle circuit. I think it was this year that our meeting-house in Centreville was much enlarged; but in this I may be mistaken. That house is now owned by the Cumberland Presbyterians and our people have a noble brick meeting-house, with a basement story.

Beach, who was mentioned last year in connection with Connersville circuit, was sent to the Newcastle circuit. He was successful, but to what extent I do not know; for I do not know how many members were taken from Wayne and Connersville circuits to form this new one. He returned to the fall conference six hundred and sixty-two members. The last quarterly meeting was a good camp meeting, held near where Huntsville now is. I was not able to preach at this meeting, as I had a severe attack of the quinsy, which came on me at Winchester, after my return from the Mississineway, where I fell sick on my way to the Fort Wayne mission, to which I had started and desired to reach more than any place

this side heaven; but I had to give up the journey. I talked a little at this meeting, perhaps with more effect than I could have had, if I had been well; for I have heard that some souls were awakened.

I find in the *Minutes* a Mississineway charge, with Robert Burns on it, who returned thirty-two members in the fall; but I have no kind of recollection of being at any quarterly meeting in this work. As Burns was a supernumerary that year, it strikes me that he was sent to the new settlements on the Mississineway river, below that part of it which was in Newcastle circuit, to see if any thing could be done toward forming a circuit, not expecting the presiding elder to attend any quarterly meeting in it. The next year it was left to be supplied, and the following year it was made a mission, and connected with the Northwestern district, on which James Armstrong was placed, and Freeman Farnsworth on the Mission. I suppose Marion circuit now embraces the work traveled this year by Robert Burns. This was a hard field for a feeble man.

Beek and Whitten the first part of the year, and Robe the last part, had a prosperous time on Connersville circuit. The *Minutes* show a decrease of two hundred and thirty, but this apparent decrease was caused by the formation of the Newcastle circuit, which embraced much of the north part of Connersville circuit. The last quarterly meeting was a camp meeting, a few miles from Connersville, on a new camp ground, called Poplar Grove, where several camp meetings were held. I was still unable to preach at this meeting, in consequence of my quinsy. I talked a little on Sabbath, after which the ulceration broke in my throat. On Sabbath I would have been willing to part with my good horse worth seventy-five dollars, if I could have preached. What poor things we are; for had I been well, I should probably have been loth to preach.

Isaac Kimball, the preacher in charge of Greensburg circuit, has been before noticed. His colleague, Hill, was a poor, vain, silly young man, who said his father was a rich man, living in Huntsville, Alabama, who had banished him for joining the Methodist Episcopal church. He said his father had become partly reconciled to him; and as proof of the fact, he

showed a draft purporting to be drawn by his father on some bank or mercantile house in Cincinnati; but every person who saw it, believed it to be in his own handwriting. He left Greensburg, and what has become of him I know not. How he could spend a year on Greencastle circuit, and then be continued on trial another year, is a mystery to me; for it seems to me, that every man of discernment must have seen that he was a poor, silly, youth, who had no claim to veracity. After Hill left, I employed David Stiver on the circuit. Stiver was received on trial at the ensuing conference and traveled several years, and filled some important stations in the church, being two years presiding elder on the Centreville district. He located in the fall of 1842, and now lives near Madison. The Greensburg circuit was the south part of the former mammoth Rushville circuit. What was the prosperity or adversity of the circuit I do not know; for I do not know how many of the members fell to Greensburg in the division. The return in the fall was five hundred and fifty-five. Kimball, although a good man, had not the art to manage a circuit well, but I think there was no decrease this year.

The summary of this district will show an increase of more than five hundred; and I had the pleasure to leave the district in a peaceful and healthy state at the close of my four years' labor on it. This healthy state was not so much owing to my own labors, as to the labors of the many excellent men who helped me in the extended field which we had cultivated.

This year there was formed a new district, called Crawfordsville, in which Armstrong lived, and to which he was appointed, so that there had to be a new elder sent to the Indianapolis district. After much consultation, Strange, although really unable for any work was sent to it. Strange doubted himself whether he could endure the labor; but while he was able to go the thought of being without work was more terrible to him than death. I shall never forget the earnest manner in which he said to me in private, "You know my situation and my wishes, and I beseech you not to oppress me by depriving me of work," meaning he did not wish to be superannuated. His health so failed before the close of the year, that the circuits had to do without their elder a part of the time.

Charles Bonner, noticed before, was placed in charge of Rushville circuit, from which Greensburg had been taken. Swank, his colleague, had just been received on trial. He was a diffident young man, of moderate talents at that time, but of an improvable mind and studious habits, so that he finally became a preacher of respectable talents. He continued to travel until the fall of 1844, when he located, and now lives in Montgomery county, Indiana, from which he started. I suppose these brethren had a prosperous year; for after taking off some hundreds to Greensburg circuit, Rushville reported only one hundred and ninety-seven of a decrease.

Nathan Fairchild was received on trial, and appointed to Fall Creek circuit, where he was well received, and had some success; for there was an increase of thirty-four on the circuit. Fairchild traveled two years, when the conference, out of pity and his family discontinued him—pity to him, because he was breaking himself down—pity to his family, because they were not supported and educated.

Benjamin C. Stevenson was appointed to the Indianapolis station and as I before said went to Madison to prepare for a remove to Indianapolis; but instead of that, in a short time, he removed to another world. James Havens stands on the *Minutes* this year as supernumerary, but was not appointed to any work. After consultation with the official members, Strange concluded to place Havens in the now destitute Indianapolis station, where he sustained himself far beyond the expectation of the people, who would not have been willing to receive him for their preacher at the time conference met. This year so endeared him to the church, that few men have so strong a hold on the affections of the old members as he. There was a decrease of forty-five in the station this year, mostly, I presume, by removals.

Eli P. Farmer, who was appointed to Franklin circuit had been a great sinner, and was fond of personal collisions with men, as his uncommon muscular strength made him superior to two ordinary men. The grace of God, however, made the lion a lamb; but he is only such when grace has the strong ascendancy; for when he becomes excited, the lion is partly visible, and is hard to restrain. After his conversion, Eli felt

called to the ministry, and commenced traveling in the summer of 1825, and continued to travel until the fall of 1833, when he located. Subsequently, he joined the traveling connection and traveled two years and located again. Since his location he has served three years in the senate of Indiana, being elected by two counties, which had an overwhelming majority on the side of politics to which Farmer was opposed. Eli never read much, and could never preach much; but he had great faith and an untiring zeal, and could exhort with much power. In the days of his greatest success when he would go to a circuit, he would pray most fervently for a definite number of souls to be added to his charge, varying that number in his mind until his faith would rest satisfied; or, to use his own words, "until he could touch the Lord by faith." When his mind became settled, he banished all doubts and misgivings, and went cheerfully to work, fully expecting to have success up to, or over the settled number. At one time he went into a small town on White River, where the people were all opposed to the Methodists and Methodist preaching; but his faith was strong, and he told them they might as well surrender at once, for he was confident that the Lord would give him the town.

They raged for a season, and he preached, or rather exhorted, until awakenings commenced, and the whole town, or nearly so, joined church, and became religious. I think his standard of increase on Franklin circuit was four hundred, but he overwent that number eighty-four; for the *Minutes* report an increase of four hundred and eighty-four. The reader must be aware that any man who gathers in so many hundreds of raw material must leave his successor some disciples who are hard cases, who will be hard to Methodize. Farmer is yet living, and I hope he will do well; but I fear for him, as I do for every man who is greatly eccentric; for such men seldom get to their graves in honor; and the reason is, eccentric minds are not well balanced minds. With all Eli's eccentricities, I love him dearly, and should be much grieved if he were to fall.

Amos Sparks, who was sent to Columbus circuit, has been noticed before. As Columbus was not very contiguous to my

part of the work I do not know much about the circuit this year. I find an increase of twenty-one.

The precise increase in that part of the Indianapolis district which falls in my prescribed limits, cannot be accurately ascertained in consequence of the division of Rushville circuit; but as nigh as I can ascertain, it was between seven and eight hundred. This was doing well in a new country.

William Shanks, noticed several times before, was Strange's successor on the Charlestown district, where he remained four years acceptable to the preachers and people. Shanks is now, and has been many years, a superannuated member of the Indiana conference. He has been a reputable member of both houses of the Indiana legislature.

William Moore, the preacher in charge of the Charlestown circuit died this year. I refer the reader to a former number for a more full account of this brother. His colleague, Daniel M. Murphy, had traveled one year on the Wabash before he came to this circuit. Murphy was a learned Irishman, who had only a few sermons, which he is supposed to have picked up from other men, but he once told brother Havens he could make more. He was unrefined in his conversation. This was the last year of his traveling, and what has become of him I do not know. It is to be feared that he was an unprincipled man. Moore's death, and Murphy's worthlessness, were heavy drawbacks on the circuit. The *Minutes* report a decrease of three hundred and ninety-five, but there was not that amount of decrease; for the Lexington circuit was formed this year out of Charlestown circuit, and that part of Vernon circuit which had been detached from Charlestown the preceding year.

John Kerns was the preacher on Lexington circuit, which was formed this year, and which should have been formed years before. What success Kerns had this year, I have no means to ascertain; for I do not know how many members he received from Charlestown and Vernon circuits. The return, at the close of the year, was four hundred and forty-nine.

Vernon circuit now formed a part of the Charlestown district and Isaac N. Elsberry, mentioned before, was the preacher. I suppose Elsberry did well this year; for the cir-

cuit reports only ninety-four of a decrease, and there must have been more than that amount taken off and attached to the Lexington circuit, so that there must have been an increase on the Vernon circuit. Taking the Charlestown, Lexington, and Vernon circuits together, there was a decrease of forty-eight; but where to place the decrease, I cannot tell.

This was the second year for Calvin W. Ruter in the New Albany station, where he passed well, and managed the Church with prudence in a somewhat stormy time. There was a decrease of six in the station this year.

The first Indiana conference met in the fall of this year in this station in the month of October. As the General conference in the spring of this year, made the state of Indiana a separate conference, the bishops appointed the time and place both for the first meeting of the conference, after consulting the delegates of the Illinois conference, who lived in Indiana, as to the best place.

John Miller, noticed before, was the preacher in charge of the Corydon circuit and had for his colleague Anthony F. Thompson, who had been two years in the work, but not attending conference, I think, in consequence of sickness, he was not received into full connection this year. The next year he was received and ordained deacon, and received his appointment to Terre Haute circuit; but in about three weeks a stroke of paralysis disabled him from preaching and in the following May he died. The writer preached his funeral sermon, in connection with the funeral sermon of John Strange in Madison, in the fall of 1833. Thompson was brother to Samuel H. Thompson, formerly of the Illinois conference, and of James L. Thompson, now of the North Indiana conference, and of John H. Thompson, now secretary of state for Indiana. He was a young man of promise, who fell in the prime of life. There is a short account of him in the second volume of the *Minutes*, page 277. From some cause, Miller and Thompson had not much success in their work; for the report, at the end of the year, was a decrease of one hundred and eighty-three, which was a large shrinkage. Perhaps some of the appointments might have been joined to some other charges.

The amiable Michael S. Taylor was again sent to the Salem circuit and had for his colleague, George M. Beswick, now of

the North Indiana conference. This was Beswick's first year in the work. What was the grade of his talents, and the amount of his usefulness then, I do not know; but he continued to grow gradually, until he has arrived to a very respectable standing with his brethren and the public. He has been the last eight years a presiding elder, mostly in the Wabash country; but at present on the Centreville district. How much success these brethren had, I do not know. The *Minutes* report the same number as was reported last year. If Taylor had not been at conference, I should suspect some mistake.

Thomas Davis, noticed before, was appointed to Paoli circuit, but he did not continue on the circuit until the close of the year, and who finished the balance of the year, is unknown to me. There was a decrease of seven on the circuit.

Owing to the changes of circuits from one district to another, it is hard to make an accurate summary of this district this year, but according to the best estimate which I can make, there was a decrease of between two and three hundred.

The general summary of this year will show an increase of eleven hundred and fifty-five in the twenty charges which I have noticed.

I have now brought down these sketches to the fall of 1832, when Indiana became a separate conference. A few biographical numbers remain, in which I wish to give a more full account of some of the excellent men who were prominent actors in the work. That some will blame me for mentioning their faults, I do not doubt; but if I do write, it must be the truth. That others, who are on good terms with themselves, and are fond of flattery, will be as much displeased, because they are not lauded up to what they think their due, I fully believe. I, however, have a full consciousness that I have not designed to blame any man, unless it be for his or other's good, and that I have not designedly withheld merited praise from any man. That brethren might have made these numbers more interesting by furnishing me with documents in due time, I have felt from the beginning. I have before stated, that this year's account would probably close these annals; and I now say the same, unless the public should wish their continuation, and brethren will permit me to write the truth without murmuring.

Should I write no more, except the notices of worthy and prominent brethren, which are partly promised, I would be glad if some brother or brethren would continue the accounts to the present time. Had I known in the beginning that the work would have enlarged as it has, I doubt whether I should ever have made a beginning; but I do not now regret that I did commence; for I have received many testimonials that these sketches have been read with interest by many. It is true I have now and then heard of a sarcastic slur being thrown out in quarters where I would not have expected it, but that should deter no man from doing some good.

Although the labor has been intense to my mind and body, in the intervals of full duty on a heavy district, yet I have had the pleasure the last nine months of living over most of my past life, and I have learned what a vast store-house the human memory is; for most of the matter which I have written has been drawn from a memory which I have deemed a poor one, and that matters might have been swelled to five times its present amount (and then what a large amount remains untouched), if I were to continue the accounts fourteen years longer, so as to reach the present day.

ALLEN WILEY

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, October 9, 1846.

No. XXXIV

John Strange was the son of a Methodist local preacher, who was lost on a wilderness journey, and died in the woods, and the place where his bones lie is not known with any certainty to this day. This event occurred when John was quite young. Whether he died by sickness, or starvation, or was killed and devoured by wild beasts, is equally unknown. Whether he was the Obadiah Strange, whose name appears on the *Minutes* three successive years, beginning with 1796, I have not been able to ascertain; for if John ever said anything to me about the travels of his father, I have forgotten

it, and have not received the information from his few surviving relatives who know anything about this matter. The religious views and habits of John's step-father are unknown to me. I suppose he was a man of some humor; for I have heard John say, when he would miss an opportunity of obtaining advantages, the old gentleman would say, "Ah, John, when it rains soup, you have no spoon." From all that I have been able to learn, his mother was a very devout and uniformly religious woman, who did what she could to impress the minds of her children with the importance and necessity of religion. Her endeavors made a good impression on the hearts of her two sons, with whom I have been acquainted. James, the elder of the brothers, has been for many years a steady member of the church in Parke county, Indiana, where he still lives respected by all who know him. He was at one time a judge in his county.

The very buoyant feelings of John made him wild and frolicsome in his youth; but the early religious impressions of his younger days were only suppressed, not obliterated, so that a combination of favorable circumstances revived them, and he was soundly and powerfully converted to God by the operations of the Holy Spirit. When he was quite a young man, hardly grown, he left Virginia, the state in which he was born, November 15th, 1789. Having left the home of his youth for a new and rather frontier part of Ohio, and made his home with a local preacher named Smith, who, I think, afterward left the Methodist Episcopal church, and joined some branch of seceders from her pale. At that time, Smith and his wife were devout people and were kind and useful to Strange. Here loneliness and separation from his wild associates gave him time to think on the past means of grace which he had enjoyed and neglected, and the few religious helps which he now enjoyed were better relished and more esteemed than they had been while at home, and he became deeply convinced of his sinfulness, and awakened to a sense of his lost condition, and he sought the Lord with great earnestness. I have often heard him say in lovefeast and in preaching, that he was lying stretched out full length, flat on his back, I think on the ground, when God pardoned his

sins, and regenerated his soul, and filled him with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and gave him a clear, Scriptural evidence of his acceptance with his heavenly Father.

What length of time intervened between Strange's conversion and his conviction that the Head of the Church had called him to preach, I do not know. I suppose, however, that it was not long for he commenced exercising his gifts in public shortly after he knew the Lord by a happy experience of his love. Sometime in 1810, in his twenty-first year, he commenced his itinerant career, being employed by James Quinn, who was then presiding elder on the Muskingum district. While so employed, his horse failed, and he took his Bible in one pocket and his hymn book in the other, and went on foot round his circuit. I have heard him say that the fatigue of walking, and his hard ministerial labor, made him very humble, and he never enjoyed himself better. One day he preached until he fainted with exhaustion, and when he came to himself nearly all the people were shouting, and he was as happy as he could be in the body, and thought of nothing but laboring as hard as he could and going home to heaven in a few months. The Western conference met at New Chapel, Shelby county, Kentucky, November 1, 1810, when he was received on trial, being a few days under twenty-one years old. In the account of him in the bound *Minutes*, written by myself, there is a mistake of one year; for I was misled by the caption of the *Minutes* which says for 1811, but the Western conference met in 1810. His first appointment was to Wells' Creek, Muskingum district, with James Quinn for his presiding elder, for whom he always cherished the most respectful opinion and the kindest feelings. At one time there was some small abatement of that opinion and those feelings. I mean in the time of the Pelagian controversy in the Methodist Episcopal church in the west, mentioned in former numbers. Brother Quinn was a strong advocate for the total depravity of human nature, and brother Strange's associates at the time being a little inclining the other way, he was tempted to think his old friend was a little ultra on that subject; but he lived to see the day, when his views of human depravity were much stronger than they were in the days of the controversy. He

was successful in his first charge; for there was an increase of one hundred and forty-nine in the circuit which must then have been comparatively a frontier work. His next appointment was with William Burke, on the Cincinnati circuit, with the excellent Solomon Langdon for presiding elder. On this circuit, there was an increase of one hundred and eleven, which was probably owing chiefly to his labors; for although old men are good for counsel and to manage affairs of the church, they are not usually very successful in revival influence. His next field was White Water circuit, on the frontiers of Indiana, in the time of the war, where I have before noticed his labors and perils, when he had to carry his gun from block-house to block-house. As I have before noticed his labors in different parts of Indiana, I shall, in this sketch, only notice his labors in Ohio. In the fall of 1815, he was appointed to White Oak circuit, east of the Little Miami, where there was a considerable decrease. In the fall of 1816, he was returned to the same circuit, where there was a farther decrease. Before he entered on the work of this year, he visited Lawrenceburg to enjoy for a few days the society of his friends with whom he had labored two years before. Here he had a severe and protracted fever, which threatened his life. After this sickness he never had that fair skin and healthy appearance which he had before. An incident occurred toward the latter part of his sickness, which showed his deadness to the world, and his trust in divine Providence. The horses which he and his wife rode, got out of the stable and strayed off. Brother Dunn's family with whom he stayed, and other friends, after making an unsuccessful search for the horses seemed quite uneasy about them. He said in a mildly chiding way, "Why are you so uneasy about the horses? All the horses in the world belong to the Lord, and he will give me just as many as I need." I will mention another subsequent period, when I was in company with him. His horse had escaped and strayed away; but he seemed perfectly calm, and he borrowed another animal to go home, and to his work. Some person said, "Brother Strange, are you going without your horse?" He replied, "There are hundreds of persons here who can hunt a horse as well as I can, who cannot preach

one word; and I shall go to my work." From White Oak he went to Mad River circuit as junior preacher, John Sale, mentioned often before, being in charge; and he was continued on the circuit the next year. So far as I know, nothing of note occurred in these two years. From the summer of 1819 until sometime in 1821, he was on Union circuit, which then embraced Lebanon, Dayton, Xenia, and all the intermediate country. Sometime in the latter year James B. Finley went to the Indian mission, on Sandusky, leaving the Lebanon district without a presiding elder, when the bishop sent Strange to the district. In the fall of 1821, Finley was continued on the mission, and Strange on the district. What amount of success he had on the district the year and upwards he was on it, I do not know; but from his known popularity he was doubtless well received by the people. In the fall of 1822, Finley was returned to the district, and Strange appointed to Milford circuit. Being on a contiguous circuit, I met him frequently this year, and know something of the state of his mind which was rather gloomy from two causes. His health was bad, and his removal from the eldership, which he had not sought, caused him to have a time of much depression of spirit. He was tempted to think some of his brethren dealt unkindly with him. As might be expected, under such circumstances, there was a decrease, but not a very large one. In the fall of 1823, he was placed on the Miami district partly in Ohio and partly in Indiana, where he passed well, and was useful. The district remained in its then form only one year, as the General conference made the line between Ohio and Indiana the dividing line between the Ohio and the Illinois conferences, and Strange preferred going to Indiana, where he remained all his days, and where his labors have been detailed in former numbers. In the spring or summer of 1832 his health became so bad that he became unable to preach. He was so feeble in April, that he was not able to go to the General conference to which he had been elected at the preceding annual conference. He was not able to attend the first Indiana conference, which met in New Albany in October, 1832, when he was placed on the superannuated list, to be no more effective; for he died on the 2d of December in peace, and with an assurance of future happiness; and his body now sleeps lonely and

silently in the old grave-yard near Indianapolis, where he lived at the time of his death, and where he left his widow and orphans. Never shall I forget the feelings which I had in 1833, when brother Wilkins and myself went and set up his grave-stone. Everything seemed so calm and quiet that the place appeared a desirable retreat from the cares, anxieties, labors, pains, and disappointments of life.

Having detailed the labors of this brother, which were something over twenty-two years from the time he was employed by the venerable Quinn, I would now portray the man if I could; but this I must do imperfectly.

In his person, he was tall and slender, but remarkably erect, even on horseback (and he seldom traveled any other way), only in his feeble state in his latter years, when he sat with his back and shoulders rather crooked. His neck was long and slender, which will in part account for his wonderful voice. Prior to his sickness at Lawrenceburg, he was very fair skinned, with black hair and blue eyes. His features and countenance were very agreeable; and cheerfulness was generally depicted in his face. I once heard Dr. Ruter (who had heard most of the eminent speakers east and west) say Strange had decidedly the best voice he ever heard. He could elevate it without much effort, so as to be heard distinctly twenty or thirty rods, and retain all its music. He could sing, or pray, or preach any length of time he pleased without becoming in the least degree hoarse. Such was the attraction of his voice and manner, that when he would ascend the stand at a camp meeting, many, who were scattered through the surrounding woods, have been known to run with speed to get on the camp ground to hear him. He knew nothing about the rudiments of singing as a science, but he could sing better without science than most men could with it. He sang the hymn, beginning:

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?

one afternoon in the old stone church in Cincinnati, when the conference met there in the summer of 1819, with a new chorus to it, in such a manner that none who were present will forget it, I presume, while life and memory last. The same may be said of his first public prayer at Charlestown,

when the conference met there in 1825. He was conscious of the power of his voice; for he once said to me, when he was flighty with fever, "Brother Wiley, when I was well I could throw all the strength of my whole body in my mouth; I mean in my voice."

I have stated that he was powerfully converted; and during his whole life his religious feelings were of an excited kind, except when he was feeble and somewhat pensive. I do not know that he ever professed the blessing of perfect love in a distinct manner, unless he did so in his last protracted illness; but he had deep communion with God, and strong consolations.

His education was by no means systematic and thorough; but he was a good reader, and read, and studied, and labored hard to improve himself, in everything calculated to make him useful. Perhaps he labored with more diligence to improve himself in language than anything else. One of the books which he carried in his saddle-bags, when I first knew him, was Walker's octavo dictionary, which he studied closely. This will account for his almost endless store of words to express the conceptions of his mind. His great attention to choice words sometimes made his style too florid and inflated to suit the gravity, simplicity, and dignity of the pulpit. He could not be regarded as a close and profound thinker, yet he well understood the orthodox doctrines of the Bible, and was able to preach them to the edification of thousands, who were the delighted attendants on his ministry.

The leading traits of his mind were imagination and feeling. Sometimes his imagination would soar and tower until his hearers would be carried up, up, until they would be giddy, and hardly know where they were, and then for want of a finished education, and good mental training, and correct taste, he would drop them all at once, and stun them by the fall. Sometimes he would employ metaphoric representations with wonderful effect. Once he was preaching on the love of God, and compared it to an ocean, and then he endeavored to sound it with a line. After he had been letting down his line he became most impassioned, and cried out at the top of his shrill voice, "More line! More line!" and the effect was to

enrapture and convulse the whole congregation on the camp ground, while they seemed lost in wonder and adoration at the unfathomable depths of God's love to a lost world.

With all the astonishing power of his eloquence, he might have been more successful, if it had not been for some great defects in his sermons. Sometimes, in his most glowing and impassioned strains, when the whole audience was greatly moved, he would stoop to queer and witty sayings, which had no dignity in them, and which would fill the minds and hearts of the hearers with levity, so that the man of true taste would be ready to exclaim, "There is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous." These witty sayings, however, seemed to be so spontaneous and natural to brother Strange, that they did not produce that disgust which they would do in a man who seems to labor hard to be witty. I mention these things as a warning to others, that they may not tread on dangerous ground; for wit does not belong to the gravity and dignity of the Gospel of the weeping Jesus. This brother's industry, as a preacher, was uncommon. He loved to preach; and as a proof of it, I will just say, that in the stormy month of March he preached thirty times, when he was on the Madison district, when in feeble health. This was a pretty fair specimen of the man when in health. Had not the God of heaven given him such a wonderful voice, his feeble frame could not have endured such hard labor; and as it was, he went beyond his strength and induced disease, and brought on premature death; for he was only forty-four years old when he died. He regretted his excessive labors in his latter days, but then they could not be recalled.

The church has lost few men who were more fully devoted to her interests, and more intent on doing his duty. His marriage, like some other young ministers' was rather premature, having taken place at the close of his second year, or the beginning of the third. The marriage, in itself, was a good one; for he married the daughter of a good local preacher, who had trained his children in the ways of religion and Methodism from their infancy. His wife was always willing to conform to the circumstances which surrounded her as the wife of a traveling preacher. The preachers and the preachers' wives

of the present day know nothing of the privations of the days which are gone by. The former cheerful sister Strange is now the cheerful wife of John H. Thompson, secretary of state for Indiana. When brother Strange was first married, he felt a disposition to go home from distant appointments on the circuit, which would take him away from his people and his work; but he said to himself this will never do, and he resolved that his early marriage should not injure his usefulness, and he kept his resolution as long as he lived. He had a kind heart, and loved his wife and children; but I have heard him say when he lived in Madison, that if he had been gone a month, and was descending the big hill in the rear of the town, and if he were convinced that duty so required he would cheerfully turn back and remain another month in active work without any regrets. Perhaps there are few men over whom duty has so strong control, as to use the same language that he did. At one time in his life he had the misfortune to have a colleague, whom he greatly admired, who was exceedingly volatile, and much given to jesting and romance. To some extent he imbibed the spirit and aped the manners of his senior brother; but he happily recovered himself, to a great degree, from this great evil and became a man of becoming gravity, but never gloomy when in health. He was always witty, but he did not seem to hunt for wit, but it came uncalled for. On one occasion he had been baptizing some persons near Vernon by immersion, and as he came out of the water, a man in the company who held that mode so tenaciously as to exclude all other modes said, with great emphasis, "Ye must be born of the water," meaning ye must be immersed, when Strange said partly in pleasant humor and partly in sarcasm, "Then you will be the son of a creek," meaning that, in that case, the creek must be the mother.

With few exceptions, he was the darling of the preachers, traveling and local, as well as of the people when he was on districts. I say with few exceptions, but there were some, for when he did reprove, it was sometimes with uncalled for severity, and on some occasions with unfortunate and invidious comparisons. Once, at a camp meeting, he reproved some rude fellows with great severity and said he was glad he lived

in Jefferson and not in Ripley county, as these ruffians belonged to the latter county; but unfortunately for him the ruffians had come from Jefferson county, and misbehaved in Ripley. The people in and out of the church in Ripley were so displeased, that they did not want him any more for their minister. From this fact, we should learn not to make invidious comparison between different parts of the country in our bounds, for the people everywhere are jealous of the honor of their country.

I have said he was an intense student at an early period of his ministry, and he so continued as long as he was able to read and study; but there was a great change in the matter of his reading. In his latter years he read only a few books, except the Bible, and these few were mostly the lives of great and good men, that he might learn from them how to live piously, and how to die peacefully. These lessons he did learn well, for when death came he was prepared to go in peace and with resignation.

I have said he was dead to this world, and perhaps he was so to a fault; for he made little or no arrangement for his family to have a home when he should be taken away from them, and this was to him a matter of regret when he was near his end; but as he had always trusted in Providence, the Lord provided for the widow and orphans, for a number of the preachers who had greatly loved him, made collections and bought the widow a home in Indianapolis where she lived comfortably in her widowhood, until she obtained a protector for herself and children in the person of her present kind husband.

In conclusion, I may say, such was the vivid impressions made on the minds of many that few men have lived so long in the memories and hearts of the people of Indiana as John Strange. At the conference after his death, the writer of this sketch, at the request of the conference, preached a funeral discourse to present to the preachers and people the excellencies of the deceased brother. The text was, "Be thou faithful unto death; and I will give thee a crown of life." This text was truly exemplified in the life of our brother; for he was faithful in his endeavors to obtain all the knowledge and

grace which were requisite to make him a good and useful man, and then he was faithful in using his acquirements in promoting the welfare of his fellow-beings.

Such was the popularity of Strange, that it is not to be wondered at that some of his admirers among the young preachers should be led insensibly to ape him; but the attempt was an utter failure. The most utter disgust which I ever witnessed at a very good sermon was an attempt, as the people thought, to imitate their former elder. Hundreds of the people retired to their tents in great dissatisfaction, and many of them next day said, "We are willing to have Strange in person, but to have him second-hand we are not willing." From this fact all should learn not to pattern after any man's voice and manner; for they will be like David when he had Saul's armor on, it will not fit.

ALLEN WILEY

Brookville, Ia., October 1, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, October 16, 1846.

No. XXXV

The prominent part acted by James Armstrong in the progress of Methodism in Indiana demands for him a more detailed notice than I have presented in former numbers. Ireland was the country of his nativity, where he was born in 1787 or 1788. His parents came to America while James was but a child. He early became a wild, rude boy, and his pious mother would follow him to the theatre, in Philadelphia, and take him home much against his inclination. I have heard him say that such were his wild and reckless habits that when he was awakened and wanted to join the church, there was great hesitancy about receiving him on trial; but one worthy old brother said he would go the boy's security, and the church concluded to give him a fair trial. This was when he was about seventeen years old. The account of him in the *Minutes*, volume second, page 344, says he was licensed to preach in Baltimore in 1812, but I am sure that account is very incor-

rect, or my memory is greatly at fault in remembering his statements to me. That account will make him twenty-four or five years old when he began to preach, and will make him to have been a church member seven or eight years. It is my firm conviction, from his own statements, that he married while quite young in Philadelphia, and that he began to preach before he was married; for he once told me and others, that he was in the pulpit preaching when she, who was afterward his wife, and is now his widow, came into the congregation, and to use his own words borrowed from the romance, "Thinks I to myself, my heart bumped so that I determined to get married and have done with that trouble." He went into business in Baltimore and kept a shoe store or shop. He was a remarkably fast workman, but he did not prosper in his business, and that is not to be wondered at; for his zeal and popularity led him to neglect his business to attend popular and camp meetings far and near, in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and perhaps some other states; and this he did for years in succession. He could not have been a very strong and talented sermonizer in that day; but for exhortation, and ability in managing religious meetings in times of excitement, few, if any, excelled him. After being unfortunate in business, he removed to the west in 1821, and settled in New Albany, Indiana; and in the fall of the same year he joined the Missouri conference on probation, and was appointed to Charlestown circuit, where he traveled two years, as related in former numbers. One of those years, if I am not mistaken, he had for a colleague Samuel Hull, now a local preacher living near Honey Creek, below Terre Haute. Hull was employed by the presiding elder and afterward joined the traveling connection, and traveled a few years and located. If it had not escaped my recollection, I would have mentioned these facts in their proper place. I have before stated that his success on this circuit was very great, especially the first year, when there was an increase of more than three hundred. At the end of the second year, he was ordained elder (for he was a deacon when he commenced traveling) and appointed to Bloomington circuit, where he had great success; for the circuit arose from four hundred and one to six hundred and five,

being an increase of two hundred and four in what was then a new country. At the close of this year he was placed on the Indiana district, as the successor of the devout and talented Beauchamp. The district then went from near Madison on the Ohio River, and Bloomington between the White River and the Vermillion over the Wabash, down to the extreme southwest point of Indiana. If any man will look on a good map of Indiana, and consider the state of the roads and of the country in general in 1824, he will say Armstrong had "hard times and plenty of them." He, however, moved with rapidity and zeal through his extensive field. At the close of his first year, the district was curtailed on the west, and extended no more on the Wabash, unless Crawfordsville circuit extended to it, so as to embrace Covington, Attica, and Lafayette, and parts farther up the river; for Crawfordsville circuit was now the northern limit of the district. On this district he labored with zeal and success for four years at the end of which time he was placed at Indianapolis, as I have before stated. The next year he was on Crawfordsville circuit, which was then a large and heavy field, and he became somewhat discouraged; but he had an increase of more than fifty members, among whom may be numbered Dr. Caughill, a local deacon, who now lives in the western part of Ohio, and lived last winter in Boston, Indiana. The following year he was appointed to the Crawfordsville district, which then embraced all the Wabash country north of Parke county, Indiana, and Paris, Illinois, except Mississineway and Fort Wayne. The district embraced the Iroquois and South Bend missions on the north and Indianapolis station and contiguous circuits on the south. In 1832, Indiana was made a separate conference, and there was formed a missionary district in north Indiana, and he was placed on it. The next year the district was enlarged on the south and east, and called the Northwestern district, and he was appointed to it. The district embraced a considerable scope of country in the southwest part of Michigan as that part was separated from the eastern part of the state by a wilderness, and was hard to reach from that part. Near the close of this year he finished his labors and sufferings, for he died at his own home near Laporte, in Laporte county, Ia.,

September 12th, 1834, being forty-seven or forty-eight years old and thirteen years a traveling preacher, according to the account in the *Minutes*; but as I have good reason to suppose that account incorrect, I suppose he was a preacher between twenty-five and thirty years. I have never been informed about his state of mind during his sickness by any person who was with him, but I have been told he did not talk much while he was sick, but what he did say gave his friends to understand that he was reconciled to die.

Brother Armstrong had a very sprightly mind, which was capable of much improvement. He was also a man of considerable and various reading, so that he was capable of being an able preacher. He had, however, but little system in his literary pursuits. He had a memory to retain almost all he read, but he did not properly digest the abundant matter which he read over in his cursory way. He had, however, but little system in his literary pursuits. He had made himself well acquainted with the operations and history of the church to which he belonged, and was prepared to entertain his hearers with an endless account of statistics, and with an exhaustless store of anecdotes. He usually studied his sermons well, and in his introduction and plan presented a good frame-work; and the intelligent hearer would promise himself a real intellectual feast, for the early part of his sermons would authorize him to expect such a feast; but as almost all his preaching was aimed for present effect, he would suffer himself to become excited, and then system and arrangement were thrown to the winds, and he would follow his impulses whithersoever they would drive him. In this case, what the hearer lost in intellectual enjoyment he had made up to him in a flow of impassioned feeling. Sometimes, however, he would restrain his impetuosity and preach sermons of much ability, especially when he saw a necessity to defend any doctrine and usage of the church; for he loved the church, her doctrines and usages most intensely, and he was ready to defend them at all times.

When I first became acquainted with him, our constitutional biases and our views on many things were so very different that we were not much enjoyment to each other; but after a better acquaintance it was otherwise.

There was an apparent precipitancy about him in his connection with the affairs of the church that a man of settled plans of operations could not approve. His failings in these things were the result of his ardent desire to advance what he deemed the cause of God, and the best interests of souls. At quarterly and camp meetings he did not usually preach much, but he would tax his brethren to the utmost of their talents and strength and then he would manage the work in the altar to a great advantage, and in this way he would breathe a living soul into the dry bones; for it was not easy for a dry preacher to be dry when associated with Armstrong. That he was the instrument of bringing many superficial Christians and unstable souls into the church, none who knew his manner of operation can doubt; but he was also the instrument of bringing many valuable men into the fold who have adorned their profession for many years, and many of them are safely landed and will be stars in his crown in the day of his rejoicing. He was not so eloquent and popular as some men in the ministry, but he had more seals to his ministry than most men, and he was not wanting in eloquence and popularity, especially the latter.

During the most of this brother's life if he and his family had food and raiment for the present time he seemed contented, and appeared to have no anxieties about the future for himself and family. The year he was stationed at Indianapolis, I went with him to one of his country appointments, and on our return we had a long and serious conversation about the prospects of our families if we should be called away, when I urged upon him the impropriety of making no provision for his family after his decease. He rode along some time in silence and thoughtfulness, and I saw the conversation made an impression on his mind, and shortly after he made a purchase of land in the Wabash country, and moved his family to it, while he finished his year at Indianapolis. When the men went from Indiana to what was called the Black Hawk war, he went with them, but I do not know in what capacity, for he was neither volunteer nor chaplain; but I suppose he went to gratify his curiosity. He left the General conference a short time before its close, and hurried home, and stayed but a short time, and started on this appar-

ently wild trip, but which proved to his family a trip under the direction of Divine Providence. In this excursion he saw the excellency of north Indiana; and when he came home he sold his land in the Wabash country, and made a purchase near Laporte, and made some improvement on the land, and then sold it at an advance, and purchased another tract of land still more valuable, at a moderate price; for such was the estimation in which he was held by the community that no person would bid against him, so that he obtained it at government price. This land made a good home for his widow and children, where they lived a number of years in comfort. Although the widow was reared in the city, and had no knowledge of agriculture, yet when she was left alone she turned her attention to this subject, so as to plan matters well, and made a good living. She has now moved to Greencastle, for the purpose of educating her children.

In his person, Armstrong was neat and tidy. He had a dark, heavy eyebrow, and was rather dark-skinned. He was about medium in his stature, and well formed, and had the appearance of great muscular power. When he walked, his step was quick and sprightly; but he was not so strong in body as his appearance would seem to indicate. For many years he wore a wax plaster on his breast. Sometimes he was a little singular in his dressing, for I have known him in what I would deem pleasant September weather, wear flannel next his flesh, and over that his linen, then two or three handkerchiefs round his neck, a warm vest lined with flannel, flannel drawers, and cassinet pantaloons, a good cloth coat, two pair of yarn socks, a strong pair of boots and overshoes, a handkerchief round his head and ears under his hat, and over the whole a camlet cloak. Such was his dress when we left Edwardsville in the fall of 1829, when some of us were oppressed with the heat with our ordinary clothing. He, however, anticipated a heavy rain-storm which came on us before we arrived at home. In the settled cold weather in the winter, he did not wear so much clothing, as he did not deem himself in so much danger as to health.

In his social intercourse with his friends, he was most cheerful and full of innocent humor. While I write, I seem to see him in the circle of his friends, and his whole soul and

body seem full of animation and enjoyment, and then before they part how fervently he prays that God may bless them.

Armstrong was a very witty man, and used his wit to great advantage in confounding self-conceited skeptics and opposers of religion. Whatever he did was done with all his might. Even his traveling was with great rapidity. He had for many years a brown horse which he called Levi. This horse was a wonderful traveler, and carried his owner sixty or seventy miles in a day more than once. He rode Levi fast, but he fed and nursed him well, so that he lasted eight years after I knew him. Whether Levi or his owner died first, I do not know. If the owner lived longer than Levi, I presume he wept when he parted with a faithful servant which had borne so heavy a share in the toils of his master. I should think but little of the goodness and piety of any man's heart who could part with such a horse without painful and deep emotion. What, to be carried thousands of miles in almost all parts of Indiana, and several parts of Illinois, and to Baltimore and back again, and to hundreds of appointments by so faithful a friend, and then part with him without feeling? Shame on the man that could do it. Such was not the heart of Armstrong.

The year Armstrong died, Locke and Griffith also died, and at the ensuing conference the sermon of Bishop Roberts, at the request of the conference, was devoted to honorable mention of the worthy dead. When the bishop came to speak of Armstrong, he called him "my friend James Armstrong," as there had been great intimacy between them. The friends now both sleep in death, the one near Laporte, the other in the University Square at Greencastle, whither he was brought nearly one hundred miles by an arrangement of the preachers of the Indiana conference, before it was divided, and where they have erected a monument of Indiana material. This monument will call the attention of many visitors in years to come, especially when Bishops Morris and Hamline shall have furnished a suitable inscription, and the workman shall have placed it on the monument with his chisel. This monument with the full size portrait of the bishop procured by the same preachers and placed in the University chapel, will long tell

what Bishop Roberts was in body and mind. On the same square, toward the southeast corner, there is another similar monument, erected by the contributions of the students, on which are engraved the names of all the students who have died while they were attending the University. O, what emotions this monument produced in my heart last July, while I read the names of several young men who died from home and among strangers, and the earthly prospects of themselves and their friends blighted.

Doubtless many hearts, in different parts of Indiana, will be excited while these lines, which imperfectly portray Armstrong, are read, as they will bring to mind the man who was made a blessing to hundreds of them. I wrote a sketch of this brother more than eleven years ago, but the copy which I had among my papers is lost, or I would have interwoven it into this number for republication, as it expresses some things more to my liking than this account does.

ALLEN WILEY

Brookville, Ia., October 1, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, October 23, 1846.

No. XXXVI

I believe Russel Bigelow was a native of some part of New England but when he was young his father moved to Canada, where he lived some years. Whether Russel was converted in Canada, or after his return to the United States, I do not know. A daughter of the Rev. John Langdon (mentioned in the early number of this series) told me that a Fourth of July address delivered by her father was the means of awakening him. If this be the fact, I suppose it must have been after his return to this country; for I suppose they would have no use for Fourth of July orations in Canada; but where he really lived, and when he was converted, I do not know, but I suppose he was quite young, for my understanding has always been that he became religious while he

was quite a boy. His parents were religious, and taught Russell the importance of religion.

While our brother was yet young, his father moved to Ohio, somewhere, I think, northeast of Urbana, but how far from that place I do not know, as I have no personal knowledge of the geography of that section of the country.

At what time he commenced preaching I am not informed, but he commenced traveling in the fall of 1814, which must have been in his twenty-second year, according to the account of him in the *Minutes*, volume second, page 404. His first appointment was to Hinkstone circuit in the central part of Kentucky. This year he was associated with two most excellent men; for he had the good and talented Samuel Parker for his presiding elder, and the amiable William Dixon for his senior preacher on the circuit. How he succeeded his first year is now unknown to me. The *Minutes* report a heavy decrease on the circuit and I infer it was not in consequence of any transfer of appointments in the same district; for there was a heavy decrease on the district. This proves that "the race is not always to the swift, and the battle to the strong." The mischievous effects of the war were not over, and this may account for the decrease. The second year of his itinerancy was with the good and useful Alexander Cummins on the Miami circuit, which embraced all the country between the two Miamis some twenty-five miles from the Ohio river. On this circuit there was an increase of nearly two hundred in the membership. As Cummins was in feeble health, it is presumed that Bigelow was the principal instrument of this increase.

The next three years he was in Lawrenceburg and Oxford circuits where his labors have been detailed. In the summer of 1819, he and old brother Robert Finley were appointed to Mad River circuit, where there was an increase of only ten in the membership. The next year the *Minutes* place him on the Columbia circuit, which I suppose to be a typographical error for Columbus, for in the place in the *Minutes* where the numbers are taken, the circuit is called Columbus, so that he was two years on the same circuit. In this year there was an increase of nearly one hundred. From all I have been able

to learn, he was very acceptable and popular the two years he was on the circuit. In the fall of 1822 he was appointed to White Water circuit where his labors have been detailed. The next year he was stationed at Cincinnati. This was a year of peculiar difficulty in that station, as the Radical controversy was in its zenith; but the mildness of his spirit saved him from falling under the indignation and resentment of those with whom he differed in opinion on church government, and whom he opposed with great firmness. There was a very small increase this year, and how could there be much when the pastors and leaders of the people were more given to debate than prayers and exhortations? Upon the whole, his appointment to the city was not the best for his enjoyment and usefulness; for his manner did not suit the taste of the city so well as some other places.

September, 1824, he was appointed to Union circuit, mentioned many times before as embracing Lebanon, Dayton, Xenia, and all the intermediate country. Here he had two colleagues, and they had good success; for they had an increase of two hundred and thirty-six.

In the fall of 1825 he was appointed to the Scioto district, which was then large in territory, embracing nine charges. Here he continued two years, and labored with great zeal, popularity, and success. In the fall of 1827 he was appointed to the Sandusky Indian mission. This appointment was to him a very unfortunate one. He had now been thirteen years a traveling preacher, and had wholly given himself to preaching and pastoral duties; but in the mission he had comparatively little ministerial work, but much hard, bodily labor, which did his constitution much and permanent harm. He wrote me that he was never the same man in mind and body after he left the mission. For years he had, in some small degree, suffered under internal derangement of the viscera and a consequent lethargy which was confirmed this year, and continued with him until death. At the close of the year on the mission, he was appointed to the Portland district, in the north of Ohio, where he continued four years. He wrote me that Methodism had not so firm a footing there in that day as it had in south Ohio and Indiana; but I presume it lost no

ground under the talents and powerful labors of the presiding elder. At the conference, at the close of his four years on the district, the preachers on the district met together, and purchased a valuable lever watch, which they presented him as a mark of their love and respect for him. I fancy I can see his meek countenance and flowing tears while he received this testimonial of his brethren's regard for him. In the fall of 1832 he was appointed to Columbus station, where he stayed two years, one as preacher on the circuit, and one on the station. The first year he was in the station he had fifty of an increase, and the second year fifty-two of a decrease. In the fall of 1834 he had the most severe cross to bear which he had ever borne, when his bad health made it necessary for him to receive a superannuated relation to the conference.

In the month of March, after he was superannuated, his health was so far restored as to be able to perform the duties of chaplain to the Ohio penitentiary. He entered on the duties of his important work with zeal and success, but in the summer he was soon hurried to the grave by a severe bowel complaint, of which he died on the first of July, 1835, in the forty-third year of his age.

The reader who has followed this account from year to year and from place to place must be aware that Russel Bigelow never had an easy appointment in his life, and if he had had such, it would not have been an easy one to him; for such was his zeal that he would have worked hard anywhere. His sermons were usually very long, and delivered with great rapidity, so that they contained much mental labor, and were most laborious in their delivery. For several years in the latter part of his life, he suffered very much in his body, and perhaps not much less in his mind. His bodily suffering and weakness produced a morbid sensitiveness which was the occasion of great torture to his mind. The last communication which I received from him was written sometime in 1834, if I remember correctly, and contained five or seven closely written pages of common paper, he described his mental and bodily suffering during several of the past years. If I had that communication, I would make several extracts from it, but I have it not; for I sent it and some others and a short notice of my

own to H. O. Sheldon, at his request, who, as he stated to me, was about preparing a life of brother Bigelow. Whether that life is in a course of preparation or is abandoned, I do not know. Had a judicious life been written at that time, it would have been read with great interest by many in the west.

Had I the power to wield a graphic pen, I would like to portray in this number, my friend as he was in body, mind and labors. He was a small man, and not handsome in form and features. I know not that he had ever had a stroke of paralysis; but it is a fact, that when he walked he went with a long step and a short one, and when he preached his mouth turned to one side ungracefully, and at almost all times his teeth were more visible on one side than the other. In his early days, when he became vehement in preaching, his eyes became fixed on the floor at an angle of about forty-five degrees from his feet; and I presume he never saw his congregation afterward until he was done. When in that attitude his words were poured forth just as fast as he could articulate them. I once heard my father say that he sat and amused himself to see how fast he could talk and not bite his tongue. His voice was rather unpleasant, and his gestures numerous and awkward, so that take him as a whole he was an ungraceful speaker. The first time I ever saw him was in the fall of 1816. He had been somewhat unwell at Madison, and Mrs. M'Intire insisted that he should wear a pair of strong overshoes, which made quite a noise when he walked over the puncheon floor in the brother's house where he preached, especially as his paces were unequal. He had on a pretty large hat, for his head required such, but the brim was narrow, and his little bottle-green coat had no buttons on it except such as were for use. He had rolled up his overcoat with his umbrella in the center which he carried in one hand, and his saddle-bags on the other arm; and his teeth showing plainly. If John Strange and David Sharp had not been to my cabin on their way from conference, and assured me that we had a good preacher, I should have felt much discouraged.

No man can describe Bigelow as he was when I first knew him, and for some years afterward, without describing his horse. The horse was a small black one, or rather dark brown,

whose name was Major. When he traveled briskly his gait was neither a walk, trot, pace, or gallop, but a little of all of them. No other horse could keep company with him in a trot or pace; for he went too fast for such gaits, and he did not go sufficiently fast for a brisk gallop, so that he would tire down almost any other horse in a few miles travel. Well, now let us mount the preacher on Major, and you behold a small, homely man, with a large head, and very blue or gray eyes, on the little horse, sitting humped up on the shoulders where the mane was all worn off close. The right hand held a cowhide, and the arm was extended at nearly a right angle with the body, and at every step of the horse the cowhide moved as if it would come with force in Major's flank; but, no, the tender heart of the rider could not do so cruel a deed. If the rider had used spurs, you would have felt uneasy, for you would have feared poor Major's sides would have felt them at every step, but in this you would have been mistaken, for they would have been stopped just before they came in contact with the horse. This I know to be the fact, for in the winter of 1817, Bigelow bought a pair of spurs, but he thought one was sufficient, and he gave the other to the writer, so that here two preachers were traveling with one pair of spurs; but they spurred their own boots and shoes and leggings more when they were walking than they did their horses when they were riding, and they threw them away. Well, you see Bigelow mounted, and the appointment is at twelve o'clock, for we never preached at any other hours unless it was on the Sabbath, or when we had two appointments on the same day. How this became the practice I do not know, unless it was because the rides were long and the people had no clocks or watches, but the lines of the land surveyed by the government ran north and south, and everybody could tell on a clear day when it was noon. The appointment is six or seven miles distant, and it is eleven o'clock, and you will fear the people will be kept waiting in painful suspense; but no, for Major and the rider are there at the time, and the latter in fine tune for an able and powerful sermon, and a glorious class meeting after sermon, for this was never omitted in those days, when men

worked hard every day all the year round; for they generally preached as many sermons, and held as many class meetings as there were days in the year. There was not so much pastoral visitation as is now required, or our circuits and stations would run down, and our children and people backslide.

Bigelow's mind was the reverse of his body, for it was of a superior cast. It was naturally quick in its perceptions, and at the same time could penetrate deep into matters the most profound, which is not common; for it is rare to find a man who has quickness of apprehension and profundity of thought. This combination of rare powers, with a tenacious memory, prepared him to read, or rather devour books with great facility. He, however, had no system of reading, but sometimes burdened his mind with "an undigested motley meal." This was one of his matters of lamentation in his last letter to me. He said if he had his time to go over again, with his then views, he would be a better and a more systematic scholar. Had he trained his mind to literary and scientific pursuits in his younger days, he would have been a rich scholar and a very scientific man; and with his theological reading, had it been better digested, he would have been one of the most able divines in the land. He was well read in all subjects which pertained to his peculiar duties, and had a very thorough knowledge of the Bible and its able commentators. That reading which did not tend directly to the knowledge and love of God, was not desired and pursued by him. Almost every sermon delivered by him was a rich body of divinity, and calculated to instruct the wise and the ignorant; and still he had a vast variety, so that he was new to the people whom he served for a succession of years. Perhaps his strong fort was polemic divinity, which was forced upon the Methodist preachers of that day. The brethren of the present age, who hardly ever hear their orthodoxy called in question, have no conception of what the preachers of a former age had to contend with in the early planting and establishment of Methodism in this country; but those times have passed by, thanks to God.

A man with a mind so sprightly and vigorous as Bigelow had, would have been in some danger of vanity, "for know-

ledge puffeth up," if his religious feelings had not been such as they were. Humility, meekness, love and zeal were so well blended in him that he was a most amiable and modest man. None but his most intimate friends knew how fervent were his secret devotions, and how deep his communion with God. In his day there were not many who made a profession of sanctification or perfect love, but I have no doubt but he enjoyed it at times for years; and had there been as many to join with him and strengthen his hands as there are now in a profession of that blessing he would have been a burning and shining witness that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. I know that in the years of his bodily and mental sufferings, he sometimes manifested a degree of sensitiveness and impatience which hardly seem compatible with such high attainments in religious experience; but there was more of infirmity in these things than of sinfulness, and God knew the strength of his temptations.

Russel Bigelow was what might be called emphatically an honorable man. Whoever knew him to be guilty of even the semblance of meanness? No, he was an open, frank man, who had no sinister designs. A man of his quick wit and native shrewdness could have used trick, and have managed intrigue with great adroitness; but such a thing as trick or intrigue, in connection with religious and church matters, or any other matters, never entered his head or heart, for he had too much of honorable feeling, apart from piety, to think of such a thing. The will of God was to him a sovereign rule, in all the transactions in which he was concerned. With all his kindness of feeling, he would not swerve from the path of duty to please the best friend in the world. "*Justitia fiat, si coelum ruat,*" let justice be done, though the heavens fall, was a maxim received and acted on literally by him at all times.

With his small and rather homely person, and the ungracefulness of his manner and voice, it would seem impossible for him ever to become a popular preacher; but the ability and energy of his sermons raised him above all his natural defects, and he became a popular preacher, and his popularity was not of an ephemeral character, produced by a few fortuitous circumstances, and a few happy efforts, but it was lasting as life itself.

Like Strange and Armstrong, Bigelow set lightly by the things of this world, and never tried to accumulate wealth; hence, when he approached the period of his end, he felt that he had not made that provision for his family which was desirable; but he trusted them to the care of his heavenly Father, whose kind providence has enabled the excellent and managing widow to maintain her family on the little farm, which the husband and father procured before his departure from earth.

If brother Thomson had not written so good an article for the *Repository* concerning him I would have entered more into detail concerning his preaching powers, and the characteristics of his sermons. His success in the ministry was very great, and there must be hundreds in heaven and on earth who were converted to God by his instrumentality. If the writer has done any good in the last thirty years, Bigelow has a large share in it, as he was chiefly instrumental in drawing him out into the work at the time of his commencement. This was a source of consolation to him in his decline of life, and he mentioned it to me very emphatically in his last communication to me.

I am not disposed to make invidious comparison between the past and the present, but it is evident to all who knew Russel Bigelow that there are few men among us now who possess so many excellences as he, and who are doing so much good as he did in his day.

Reader, these last three numbers have presented to you three men of rare talents and usefulness. The impress which they gave the church and the public was very great. Their praise was in all the churches within the bounds of their labors, and they have left an influence which yet has its operation on society. Hitherto, Providence and grace have provided for the wants of the Methodist Episcopal Church in a wonderful manner, and we hope will still provide.

One more short number, giving some account of some useful local preachers, and the writer and his readers may part forever in this kind of intercourse.

ALLEN WILEY

Brookville, Ia., October 2, 1846.

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

No. XXXVII

Having noticed in these numbers, somewhat in extenso, several eminent and useful men, I feel unwilling to pass over some others of less note, but who were useful in their day and deserve to be had in remembrance by the church.

Among the number who should be remembered, is John Morrow. His parents, Charles and Hannah, came from oppressed Ireland about the middle of the last century, and settled in the Redstone country, in western Pennsylvania, where John was born, May 24th, 1766, a little more than ten years before the declaration of American independence. From the newness of the country, and its contiguity to the Indians in the western frontiers, the family must have endured many hardships, and been exposed to many dangers during the Revolutionary war. At what time he moved from western to eastern Pennsylvania I have not learned, but when he became experimentally religious, such removal had taken place.

His parents were poor, and not able to give him much education. One of his sons (William) writes me that

his parents were in very low circumstances, and the loss of his mother, and the consequent introduction of a step-mother, prepared the way for a very severe raising in the later part of his minority. He has often been heard to say that at this period of his history, in the employ of a master, he was compelled to make his regular task of one hundred oak rails per day, in hard winter weather, subsisting on the coarsest kind of food and not enough to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and travel one mile to his work, dressed in a coarse shirt and tow trousers, and was glad to have a tolerable pair of moccasins, without stockings, his feet from the frost. He was thus thrown upon the cold charity of an avaricious world, without even the means of a common education. What he obtained, was consequently the result of self-improvement. His early religious sentiments were on the side of high-toned Presbyterian Calvinism, and he was a member of that church until the year 1797, when, according to a record remaining in an old family Bible (now in my possession), legibly written by his own hand, he was converted to God. I have often heard him say, that he was induced to go to a love-feast by a man by the name of Penwell, and that he entered the meeting with strong and bitter prejudices against Methodism. The speaking exercises had not proceeded far when he experienced great distress of soul. With his face upon his knees, and the tears gushing from his eyes, he repeated the following words in prayer until relief came from heaven

to his burdened soul. The words were, "Lord, have mercy upon me! What shall I do?" While thus praying, he experienced the blessed change, and simultaneously with it a complete and entire extinction of all his rigid Calvinism. This meeting was held in what was called Bryan's chapel, in the northeastern part of Pennsylvania. In a very early period of his religious history he was licensed to preach, and he was very punctual in filling his appointments. Being poor, and destitute of a horse to ride, he would walk twenty-five miles through storm and mud, such was his zeal at that period of his life. He received his first ordination at the hands of Bishop Asbury, and his second, which was eleven years afterward, at the hands of Bishop Roberts.

After he came to the west his occupation was that of school-teaching, which he understood well, and hundreds received the rudiments of their education from him. What he followed before he came west I am not informed, but I presume it was teaching. It was in the fall of 1823 that I first became acquainted with him in the Miami country, where he taught school, and I soon found he was a superior man as an expounder of God's word and its doctrines, but his ability was not properly appreciated by the multitude, for he was never popular to the amount of his real talents. He subsequently moved to Indiana, and was useful in the establishment of Methodism in the New Purchase, as the new country west of White Water was called. Brother Morrow's preaching was almost exclusively of a doctrinal cast, and was well calculated to confirm the church in the doctrines of truth, and to convince and recover those who were seduced by delusive errors. None but such as were contemporary with him are prepared to estimate his intrinsic worth: for none others know the difficulties with which the Methodist Church had to contend in his day. It is true that appalling errors now present themselves against the church, but they are not so formidable to the church in her strength, as the errors of that day were to the church in her infancy.

Brother Morrow became greatly increased in his religious feelings as age increased and his strength declined, and his preaching was much more experimental and spiritual, and it was obvious to his friends, and the brethren who knew him, that he was fast ripening for the mansions of bliss. He continued to preach and attend preaching when he was no longer

able to stand before his congregations. He remained calmly leaning on the everlasting arms, which had sustained him so many years amid the cares and anxieties incident to one in moderate circumstances, in rearing and educating a large family. He had the privilege to see his eleven children converted to God before he died. I believe all who are living are now members of the church in which they were reared. Two of them are ministers, one local and the other traveling.

Two of his children and the companion of his cares and labors went before him to the paradise of God. After the death of his wife he seemed more than ever dead to this world; and waited with calmness but with strong desire, to depart and be with Christ. For months before his death, he would often say he had a desire to go and be at rest in the rear of Bochim meeting-house, where his companion was sleeping. He lived to a good old age, being in his seventy-fourth year, when he died in peace, on the 4th of September, 1839; and his body now sleeps near Bochim meeting-house, in Franklin county, Indiana, about two miles above Laurel.

The experience of brother Morrow will show what a man of firmness and perseverance can do. The reader has been informed that he had no early opportunities, and he was a poor man all his days; but with all these disadvantages, he made himself a good English scholar and arithmetician, and very apt in imparting instruction to the numerous children and young persons committed to his care, and by whom they were taught the fundamental principles of a good education.

Few men were better read in theology than John Morrow, and few men were better prepared to discuss and defend the doctrines of the Gospel than he. He loved to preach, and was unhappy if he could not find an open door for his ministry. He was the warm friend of the government of the Methodist Episcopal church, and of the traveling preachers. Some of his happiest days were spent with brother Strange and others in making short excursions on districts. He was a ready scribe, and was a good secretary of quarterly conferences, when he would make his excursions with the presiding elders. His fair hand-writing appears in many of the old journals, if they have been preserved; but the little old warm-hearted

man is no more seen mingling in the deliberations and councils of his junior brethren many of whom have joined him in heaven!

In giving an account of Charles Hardy, I feel my incompetence to do justice to the man, and to exhibit, in a proper manner, so much moral worth as was possessed by him. He was born in North Carolina, June 25, 1765, so that he was nearly one year older than brother Morrow. Of his parentage and early education I know nothing, as he has not left any information on these matters; and all persons who could give the information have passed from this world. I suppose his mother was a very pious woman, as I have often heard him speak of her in love-feast, and of her house as a preaching-place in that early day. From his aged widow, I learn that he was converted in his natal state about 1784 or 1785, so that he was nineteen or twenty years old when he became a devoted and zealous Christian, and member of the Methodist Episcopal church. I suppose his convictions for sin were deep, and his conversion powerful, in consequence of which an ardent zeal and untiring energy characterized his whole ministry. As a general rule, those who are moderately convicted and converted in a calm way, are apt to be very tame men in the discharge of ministerial duties; but such as have felt in a strong manner, in the language of the Psalmist, the "pains of hell getting hold of them," and been suddenly and powerfully delivered from those pains, are more ardent in their ministrations. Judging the youth from what the old man was while I knew him, he was uncommonly retiring and modest, yet soon felt he must appear before the world as an ambassador for Christ. Doubtless he had to be thrust out into the work, or he would never have been a preacher, especially a traveling preacher; for it required no small amount of moral courage to be such sixty years ago, when there was but little honor and less of support to be obtained than now; and most of the preachers of the present day do not find a redundancy of such things. But with all the discouraging prospects before which he offered himself, and was received into the traveling connection on trial in 1786, which, I think, was the same year that Dr. Clarke was received in

England, and five years before the death of Mr. Wesley I suppose the conference by which he was received met in the spring; but of this there is some uncertainty, as the conferences were then known only by numbers, and not by names. His first appointment was to Halifax circuit. Whether this Halifax was in North Carolina or Virginia, I do not know; for there are counties of this name in both states. I suppose, however, his appointments were in the former state. In 1787, his appointment was Mecklenburg circuit. As Virginia and North Carolina have each a county of this name there is some uncertainty in which state he traveled this year also; but I suppose in North Carolina. On these circuits, especially the latter, he had much success in his ministry, and many souls were powerfully converted to God, who will be stars in the crown of this venerable brother. In 1788, he was received into full connection and ordained deacon, and appointed to Roanoke circuit. Here again there is some uncertainty about the region of his labors; for as Roanoke river is partly in Virginia and partly in North Carolina, I do not know whether the circuit named after it was in the former or latter state, or partly in both. He was appointed to Tar River circuit in North Carolina in 1789; and in 1790 he was ordained an elder, and appointed to a district. As the districts were not then named, on the *Minutes*, it is hard to designate the metes and bounds of his field of labor this year; but I suppose it was partly in each of the states before named. He remained on the district only one year, or perhaps less than a year. In 1791, he was appointed to New River circuit, where he was married in Wythe county, Virginia, March 6, 1791, four days after Wesley's death and about nine months before he located, in the early part of the following December; for in that day marriage and location were almost inseparably connected.

He then settled in Grayson county, Virginia, where he lived three years when he moved to Holston river, Washington county, Virginia, where he lived twelve years. He next moved to Ohio, in 1807, and lived, from June until December, near Bedloes station in the vicinity of Lebanon, Warren county. He then settled on the Great Miami, about thirteen

miles below Dayton, where he lived nine years. In the fall of 1816, he moved to Indiana, and settled three miles from Brookville, where he continued four years and a half, when he moved to Garrison creek, Fayette county, where he lived twelve years. He then went to his former residence near Brookville, and remained one year, when he came to the place where he finally ended his days, and remained there six years, and then removed to Decatur county, where he lived one year and a half, and then returned to his place east of White Water, where he lived five years, and then died in great peace, with a good prospect of future bliss. God granted him the privilege of closing his pilgrimage on Sabbath, July 5th, 1846, fifteen minutes before twelve o'clock, being eighty-one years and ten days old. The hour at which he died was one which had been occupied by him for many years in preaching the Gospel, and at which time he was usually about half through his sermons.

The reader, who has noticed his many removals, may think he was a fickle-minded man, but this was not the case; for few men ever had more stability and fixedness of purpose than Charles Hardy. His removals seemed to be Providential; for in almost every place where he lived, he proved a great blessing to his neighbors. I remember when I traveled White Water circuit in 1818-19, brother Hardy used to visit his neighbors on Sunday mornings to talk with them on the subject of religion, and he urged me to have an appointment at his house in the evening after preaching at the stated preaching place in the day time, and that evening was a blessed time; for an old man continued faithful a number of years, and then went home to rest; and the son, if in the land of the living, I trust is on his way. None who were not present on that occasion can form an estimate of brother Hardy's joy and rejoicing to witness the conversion of his neighbors, whose minds had been turned to the subject of religion by his Sabbath morning conversations, and prayers. Brother Shields, now of Connersville, told me that when he lived near brother Hardy, on Garrison creek, it was his custom to spend the Sabbath mornings, before starting to his appointments, in going to see the people at their homes, to talk with them on

the subject of religion and to pray with them, when permitted to do so. While this excellent man was a traveling preacher, he had many and glorious revivals under his ministry; and after his location he was instrumental in the awakening and conversion of many souls. This brother was not a man of superior talents, but his preaching exhibited a good, sound mind, somewhat improved. His preaching was of the plain, experimental, practical, and useful kind, and usually calculated to interest a congregation. The fall, wickedness and lost estate of man, his redemption by Christ, his conversion and holy living, his triumphant death and glorified state in heaven, formed the main outlines of his sermons; but these themes were so varied, that the people did not become tired with the sameness and want of variety, which we sometimes witness. Every person who heard him preach felt that he was listening to an honest man, who was not preaching for show, but for effect. I think it will be a moderate calculation to suppose that during his ministry of more than sixty years, he preached between six and seven thousand sermons, nearly all of which were preached with zeal and considerable effect. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of souls are now in glory, who will acknowledge him as the instrument of their salvation.

Brother Hardy was a very taciturn, quiet man, who lived in peace and union with his brethren and fellow-citizens. If he ever had any difficulty with any of them, it was unknown to me; and I was acquainted with him (and part of the time intimately) more than thirty years. With all his silence and gravity, he was not censorious of those who were more given to cheerful and innocent hilarity than he was. When I first knew him, his solemn gravity rather awed me, and made me feel in a constrained and embarrassed condition; but when I knew him better, I enjoyed his society very much. It was a pleasure to me to converse with him about the "days of other years." To converse with a man who had been a preacher more than three years before I was born, was a great privilege and one which I shall never enjoy again until I meet the fathers in another world. When I first traveled White Water circuit, there was another local preacher, who was an older man, and had been a preacher at an earlier

period than Brother Hardy. I refer to a Brother Wooster who was an Englishman by birth, and had the meek and quiet spirit of the early Wesleyan preachers. O, I used to love to sit still till near midnight to hear the good old man talk of the wonderful doings of the Lord in the days of his youth, when preachers were few in number, and preached at the risk of their lives. Those who know the intense application which I then bestowed on my books, must know that there was something charming in this man that could turn me from my studies so long; but I did love, and do yet love to hear old men talk, especially one who had been a traveling preacher at so early a day. I hope the reader will pardon this digression, while I say peace to the memory of Father Wooster, and pass on.

All who knew Charles Hardy regarded him as a father in our Israel and respected him as a man of singular integrity and piety. His word was sacred in the estimation of all. He was fond of sacred music, and for years taught many young persons the science of vocal music. His gravity prevented that abuse of a good thing, which is too often the concomitant of singing societies; I mean a spirit of levity and frivolity, which is often the means of great injury to the piety of young persons, and sometimes the cause of their total apostasy. Nothing can be more unpleasant to aged and thoughtful persons, than to hear the most solemn words which can drop from human lips succeeded by a giddy laugh. O, ye young singers be on your guard and shun levity and frivolity, that your good singing, may not be evil spoken of. Having contracted the habit of riding on horseback while young, on his extensive circuits, he retained a love for the saddle almost to his dying day. The last time I saw him, about one month before his death, he had rode several miles to quarterly meeting when he was hardly able to sit up during sermon. In person, this brother was small, but had a fine face, and most noble forehead; and if the likeness which we see of Joseph Beson had been drawn for him, it would not have differed much from what it is. For so small a man he had, in early life, a very powerful and commanding voice, but in his advanced age it was somewhat hoarse. Everything about his

person, and house, and farm, was neat and trim, while he was able to attend to them; and he trained his family to habits of precision in almost everything. He was the parent of eleven children, six of whom died before him, and have hailed him and bid him welcome to the happy spirit world. His heart was much set on the conversion of the world; hence, he had been a liberal contributor of late years to the funds of the missionary society; and he remembered the cause of missions when he was about to die, and he willed to the society fifty dollars, which will be paid in due time. How pleasing to see a man, who had labored in word and doctrine more than sixty years, contributing from the earnings of a long and industrious life, to spread that word which he could proclaim no more.

Take him all in all, he was a most excellent man, who has gone to his reward on high. On the first Sabbath in last October the writer preached a sermon at the small chapel near which he and several children are buried, from Revelation xiv, 13, designed to be commemorative of the excellencies of this good man. There are many more excellent local preachers living and dead, in the parts which I have endeavored to describe, whom I would be glad to mention honorably but I cannot do so without extending these numbers beyond any reasonable bounds.

And now, readers, having endeavored, for more than twelve months past, from time to time, to contribute something to your stock of historical information and pleasure, I bid you a friendly farewell at the present time, and perhaps forever.

ALLEN WILEY

New Albany, Ia., Nov. 18, 1846.

Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Friday, December 11, 1846.