



John McU Wilson

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REMINISCENCES OF JOHN McMILLAN WILSON.*

BY HIS BROTHER, ARCHIBALD WILSON.

“Those who undertake to write histories do not, I presume, take that trouble on one and the same account, but for many reasons, and those such as are very different, one from another; for some of them apply themselves to this part of learning, to show their great skill in composition, and that they may therein acquire a reputation for speaking finely. Others of them there are who write histories in order to gratify those that happen to be concerned in them; and, on that account, have spared no pains, but rather have gone beyond their own abilities in the performance. But others there are who, of necessity, and by force, are driven to write history, because they were concerned in the facts, and so cannot excuse themselves from committing them to writing, for the advantage of posterity. Nay, there are not a few who are induced to draw their historical facts out of darkness into light, and to produce them for the benefit of the public, on account of the great importance of the facts themselves with which they have been concerned.”

So wrote Josephus, the able and skillful warrior, the zealous priest, the faithful and impartial historian, as a prelude to his valuable history of his country and his nation.

Now, of these several reasons, *borrowed* for collecting a few items of interest towards preparing the following brief biography of one long since dead, the first one given the writer will modestly disown. The second reason must be left to the judgment of those who may yet live, and who may have been connected or concerned with events to be outlined in this brief sketch. Of the third supposed plea the writer is not, per force, constrained to write save that, if the memory of one, now long since passed from the stage of human action, is worthy of being perpetuated

* LIBERTY, Ind., August 13, 1886.

MR. W. B. PALMER—

Respected and very dear sir:—Agreeable to request, I have, though in a very imperfect manner, prepared a sketch of my brother, J. McM. Wilson, the manuscript of which, together with a few other documents you may deem

on history's page, he is of necessity the one to assume the task, as perhaps the last one living from whose memory can be evolved this imperfect and brief memoir.

of some trivial interest, I herewith send. In sending you this crude sketch, my first attempt at authorship, I humbly ask not only yourself, but the entire membership of the honorable Fraternity you represent, that its many defects may be charitably passed over. In the first place, I have had to draw on memory to a great extent for facts. Perhaps, in following the thread of my brother's career, I have thrown in too much that is puerile and trashy; perhaps there is too much of a vein of sentiment for a plain biography; but, in this last, having been intimate with all the companions of his earlier years, I have, naturally, followed him (and them) in feeling as well as fact. Perhaps I have given too much prominence to times long past, to the portrayal of the old ancestral tree; but in this I have thought it proper to point back to the "rock from which he was hewn." Many other things have been introduced in the course of the narrative simply for the sake of expansion. When looking over the life of John McMillan Wilson, it was one, after all, so uniform and uneventful that, epitomized, it could only be summed up thus: He was born—he lived—he died. I send it for your acceptance with a great feeling of trepidation, knowing that it must pass under the highest criticism of our country. For the imperfections that pervade my production throughout, I must plead many excuses. First, I am poor in this world's favors, and have had but few opportunities for mental improvement, except as snatched from the fleeting hours. With the man of Nazareth, through life I have followed a hard, laborious, unremunerating pursuit, and, like Him, have grown poorer and poorer. Deficient scholarship unfits me from being a brilliant writer. In compiling this sketch I have taken the career of my brother and followed it along its actual course, however uninteresting it may be. No other chain of statement could have been the *truth*. The narrative simply sets forth his antecedents, his childhood and youth, surroundings, school and college life, experiences, struggles, trials and triumphs, and that is all that can be recorded. This we have imperfectly done. My brother's character and disposition are familiar to many yet living, and to them this brief memoir will add no new light. With them, the writer is assured that his memory will ever remain green. Two manuscripts of addresses by my brother herewith sent. The larger one I think I recognize as the one delivered on his graduation day. The smaller one was prepared for a similar occasion at Xenia some time after his leaving there, and entering the university at Oxford. They may have some passing interest to the Fraternity you are connected with. Perhaps it has an historical department—a suitable place of deposit for such old documents. If they remain in present hands, they are safe; but, *in time*, vandalism will do its work. There are, also, a few manuscript sermons here which I will dispose of in like manner. They may be of some interest to some in the undefined future. A copy of an address delivered before the society of Phi Delta Theta, at Miami University, June 29, 1853, by the Rev. E. P. Humphrey, D. D., of Louisville, Ky., is a masterly effort. I have two copies, and send one with this.

To sum up, I do not see any other outline to have followed in this narrative. Some things connected with his later years, I have barely hinted at, which the mantle of oblivion must be thrown over. Those that labored to throw a blight over a life which promised much in its opening, have gone to their reward. I could not have recorded anything otherwise, with Pilate, "Ἐχέينو τὸ ὄποιον ἔγραψα ἔγραψα."

Hoping that our acquaintance, rather singularly formed, may be the precursor of a lasting friendship between us, I remain, as ever, yours,

ARCHIBALD WILSON.

As to the fourth reason supposed by our illustrious author, its appropriateness to this, an effort to "draw a few historic facts out of darkness into light," by the portrayal of the life and times of one who endeavored to act well his part on life's stage, must be adjudged by all those who were co-actors with him, and who yet remain to finish their part in life's drama.

John McMillan Wilson, the subject of this sketch, was born in Union County, Indiana, September 10, 1825.

This date carries us far back into the "back woods" era in the peopling and development of eastern Indiana. Sixty years ago but little had been done by the hardy pioneers in the section named towards subduing the primeval forest. Six decades ago, the tide of immigration to this part of our now populous and wealthy State had but begun. But with the advent of those sturdy settlers from the older States, soon came the sound of the woodman's axe, the crack of the hunter's trusty rifle, and the song and the whistle of the merry plowman, to break primeval silence. Those were days when hand joined to hand, and heart to heart, and shoulder to shoulder, in the onerous undertaking of subduing the forests and bringing the wilderness to be fruitful fields. The men and women of that age, who composed the original element in the formation of society in the county we speak of, were of sterling type. We revere their memory, now that they have all passed away, while we live to enjoy the blessings, the fruits of their life-struggles.

We call to mind the names of some of the more prominent among the settlers of the eastern part of the county. The Rideours, from Maryland, have always been the leading financiers of Union County; next, the Keffer and the Millers, from Virginia, conspicuous in the field, in the mechanical arts, or in the sphere of traffic. South Carolina was represented by the Elliotts and McDills, and also the McMillans, of which latter family we will speak more anon. The Hamiltons, to be mentioned somewhat conspicuously in the course of this narrative, as among the ancestry of our subject, though originally from Scotland, were early settlers in Union County from the Palmetto State.

John Wilson, Senior, the father of the subject of this sketch, came to Union County, Indiana, about the year 1823. He was originally from the north of Ireland, near the city of Newry, in the county of Armagh; but, with the spirit of enterprise that animates the Old Countryman, he, with three sisters and a younger brother, came to the United States, determined to seek a fortune in the western world. The family landed in the city of New York some time in the latter part of the year 1807. Here the sisters remained permanently. The younger brother, James, entered the United States Navy, but did not live long to serve his adopted country as a marine. John Wilson remained

in New York city till the close of the war of 1812, his occupation being principally coverlette weaving, and occasionally spending at farming a short period among the farmers, up the Hudson river.

About the year 1812 he contracted marriage with a lady from Scotland, a Miss Margaret Clyde. To this union there was born one child, James, now living in the State of Iowa, and quite an old man. From New York, John Wilson came west, to the city of Pittsburg. There, soon after coming, he was deprived by death of his companion, and his child left motherless at the age of two years. But, eventually tiring of the despondency and uncertainties of city life, he once more embarked with his earthly all, with his little boy, then about seven years of age, to seek a home still farther West.

Coming to Cincinnati, with his household goods in a skiff (there were no floating palaces in those days), the two, by the aid of kind friends, soon found their way to the borders of Indiana, in the neighborhood where begins the history of the subject of this narrative. In 1824, John Wilson contracted a second marriage, in the family of Rowley McMillan, recently from South Carolina. To this second marriage there were four children, John McMillan Wilson being the eldest. Of these four, but one is living.

In the year 1823, John Wilson purchased the farm, the old homestead and birth-place of these four children. Here he lived, through all the hardships and trials of farm life, till near the close of his own laborious life, and died at the age of 85 years. The mother survived him about 18 years. Here we leave the immediate parentage of him who is to be the leading character in this memoir, as reference to them will be briefly made, perhaps, further on. They appear now as integral parts in the formation of the community, which, we think, had much to do in giving the character of Mr. Wilson a proper bias in his early and after life.

It is, perhaps, worth while to notice here two distinct classes that formed quite an important element in the population of Union County, quite distinct in character and principle, but in some respects bearing a strong affinity to one another—the Quakers, or Friends, known everywhere for their intelligence, virtue, honesty and sobriety. These people contributed much in their peculiar sphere to make an intelligent community.

The other class, the Dunkards, or German Baptists, having settled in considerable numbers in Union County, at an early day, immigrating hither from Pennsylvania and Virginia, and bringing with them their plain, simple and industrious habits and principles, in time became quite an element of strength and honor to the county, and, by their industry and economy, soon

made the wilderness before them to blossom as the rose. These two classes, or branches of the Christian Church, became an integral part of the community at an early day. The Dunkards, mainly from Pennsylvania, and the Friends, from the Old North State, considered with leading families herein especially mentioned, certainly were important factors in the general welfare of the country wherein they had settled.

These brief references to the intellectual and moral status of the community in which our subject was born and brought up are made, because we think they were not without a decided influence in the formation of his character, on the principle that we naturally assimilate to our surroundings. Much, also, in his make up may be credited to an ancestry traceable back to times long past in the annals of the mother country, Scotland. Much, we say, he derived in many leading traits as a natural inheritance. The Wilson stock, not very numerous in this country,* are of Scottish descent. The Hamiltons, referred to on a previous page, are also traceable to the same Highland home. Tradition hath it, but the reference is now lost, and it is now retained only as oral tradition, that the Hamiltons, through the maternal line, are derived from Robert the Bruce, the companion-in-arms of Sir William Wallace in a heroic, but unsuccessful, struggle for the independence of their native Scotland. But, coming down through the mists of fable, to a period of more authentic history, we find the Hamiltons prominent, earnest and active in the public affairs of the age they lived in. Sir Robert Hamilton† comes conspicuously on the pages of his country's history in the period intervening between what is called the Restoration (about A. D. 1679), and the Revolution Settlement, 1688 or 1689.

Mr. Hamilton espoused the cause of the persecuted Presbyterians, in Scotland, in their striving for what they felt to be their rights and privileges, as against the encroachments of asserted kingly power and prerogative. While believing honestly the kingly office to be of divine right, those worthies contended through fire and sword for the integrity of the compact between king and subject, the rights of conscience in their religious convictions, as pledged by various settlements and parliamentary enactments, with all that was involved in the ancient Scot's coronation oath. Into and through this long and bitter strife, the spirit of which Macauley calls the struggle between prerogative and privilege, Mr. Hamilton entered with all the enthusiasm of his ardent temperament and deep conviction of right and duty, choosing rather to suffer affliction, persecution, and death itself,

* There are but fourteen of the entire race living, including infants, in this country.

† Of Preston. We locate our ancestry in the County of Lanark. Our name is perpetuated in the name of a town of some note.

if called upon, than to defile the conscience by a sinful compliance with what he and his fellow-sufferers deemed the defections of the age. In this transition period from feudalism, mediæval ignorance and semi-barbarism, these were the men, far in the advance of their age, to guard and nurse the germ of civil and religious liberty. Loyal to the crown and faithful to the compact, yet quick to perceive the insidious advances of kingly and priestly despotism, they "angered oppression in every gale, and snuffed the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze."* Mr. Hamilton went over to Holland after the rising in arms and defeat at Bothwelbridge, by the persecuted Presbyterians of Scotland, in which affair he had taken an active part. While abroad, Mr. Hamilton ably represented his suffering brethren at home, in securing for them the sympathy and material aid of the good people of Holland, and of others throughout the Continent. Shortly after his expatriation, Mr. Hamilton's estate was confiscated and himself sentenced to death, whenever taken, for his participation in the skirmish at Bothwel, and for other acts; yet did he esteem a steadfast adherence to the cause he made as his life-work the greatest of his riches, and took joyfully to the spoiling of his worldly goods, choosing rather to suffer affliction in a righteous cause, with all the reproaches that followed, than to purchase ease and pleasure by the sacrifice of principle. Mr. Hamilton remained abroad till the accession of William and Mary to the throne of England, which happy event put an end to the period of persecution for conscience sake, and brought relief to the people of Scotland, who had suffered so much, particularly during the short reign of James the Second. Mr. Hamilton wrote much during his exile to his suffering brethren at home. He was a very prolix writer. A vein of deep piety and a constant expression of a firm, unwavering faith ran through his letters. There are many of them preserved in an old work published in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1780, entitled, "Faithful Contendings Displayed"—perhaps not now extant in this country. See the same quoted frequently by Macauley, in his valuable history. An old writer thus speaks of Mr. Hamilton:

"He was of such constancy of life and manners, that it might be truly said of him which was said of the Emperor Marcus Antonius, '*In omni vita sui similis, nec ulla unquam in re mutatus fuit. Ilque vera fuit vir bonus nec fictum aut simulatum quicquam habuit.*'"

Mr. Hamilton died October 21, 1701, at the age of 51 years.

The Wilsons appear on the stage of public life, contemporary with the Hamiltons, during the troublous period referred to.

* Professor Morse.

Mr. James Wilson appears, in the annals of the time, in various capacities, as a writer, a correspondent, and as a commissioner to Holland and elsewhere, in behalf of the faithful and earnest men at home.

Mr. William Wilson, a careful and impartial annalist, nearly a century later, collected and has transmitted to us from twelve different accounts of the times and men of the age above briefly referred to, that were written by men who were officers in the Scot's army, and otherwise identified with the events of that age, much of our information. From these annals we have drawn much here recorded. The Wilsons and the Hamiltons became related by marriage nearly two centuries ago, and this inter-relationship has continued to our day. At the return of a more peaceful era, these two families appear less prominent, and but little is known of them in the quiet monotony of more peaceful days. A little more than a century ago, a Hamilton (the great grandfather of our subject), appears again, true to the pugnacity of the race, on the Moor at Culloden, against the invasion of a scion of the hated house of Stuart. (With the Hamilton, it is ever the same, whether at Pentland, or the skirmish at Drumellog, the engagement at Bothwell, or the encounter at Airmoss, "resistance to tyrants is obedience to God.")

On the field of Culloden perished the last hope of a race noted for nothing but tyranny and perfidy, and with it has passed away an age which, with all its attainments in civilization, in knowledge, in humanity, was still darkened by the receding shadows of a mediæval barbarism.* From Scotland our stern Presbyterian ancestry passed over to the north of Ireland, but at what date is not known.

The Hamiltons mainly settled down to the quiet pursuits of husbandry, in the county of Donnegal; some of them with the Wilsons in Armagh. This part of the Emerald Isle, being in a great measure peopled by the thrifty, enterprising and persistent Scotch, was a congenial field for the development, growth and application of those principles our forefathers had contended for across the channel.

*As an illustration of this remark, an incident connected with that famed battle-field has been transmitted to us, which, perhaps, never appeared on the page of history. Great grandfather Hamilton related that, after the action at Culloden a detail of ten men from each company in the regiment to which he belonged, was made by lot, whose grim duty was to pass over the field and end the sufferings of the wounded by the aid of the friendly (?) musket ball. In this horrid treatment, friend and foe were served alike. This incident is now stated on the *third* relation only from the event. Great grandfather Hamilton related it to Father Wilson, his grand-son, when a lad about eight years of age. He repeated it to the writer about thirty-six years ago. This illustrates how traditions are often preserved intact through long stretches or periods of time—in this case 141 years.

At an early day in the history of our own Republic, the Hamiltons, the McMillans, and others of Presbyterian ancestry, came across the sea, and located themselves in Chester and Abbeville districts, in South Carolina. In these two districts, principally Chester, quite a cluster of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian element amassed itself, and continued for many years as a nucleus, or rallying point, for those of kindred faith and convictions, as they, from time to time, came across the water. We may assume that the noble old commonwealth derived much of its moral and political stamina from the accession to her population of such material. South Carolina also afforded a refuge for the Huguenot, fleeing for a place of safety and repose from the fires of persecution, consequent upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz, in the year 1685. These people, coming to her shores at such an early day, contributed much to make up a desirable element in the formation of the commonwealth. Dr. Ramsey, a historian of some note, gives, in a history of South Carolina, a list of names of some of these original settlers—too long a list to be given here—from which have sprung some of the most illustrious of her citizens. To the influence of the conscientious Huguenot and the stern, inflexible Scotch covenanter, South Carolina owes much in shaping for her a noble position among the States. Between the years 1810 and 1818 quite a large body of the Scotch-Irish people left that sunny clime for the then far north-west, and settled chiefly in south-western Ohio, and in the bordering State of Indiana. Among these we find the Hamiltons, true to their indomitable nature, seeking newer and more extended fields for action. Here have they made their mark in the country's progress, and from here have they dispersed themselves in various places throughout the west.

Rowley McMillan, the maternal grandfather of the subject of this memoir, came from the county of Tyrone, Ireland, about the year 1775. He settled in Abbeville district, South Carolina, near a place named Long Cane (Pendleton), as a small farmer, and continued there many years, an active citizen of his adopted State and country. There quite a large family, in time, gathered around him, he, in the meantime, serving a term in the war for Independence. On the return of peace, he returned to his family and home in Abbeville. Here, at Pendleton, he passed the years in the quiet monotony of home-life, till about the year 1803,*

* An old dingy paper, and brown with age, thus certifies to the good standing of the McMillan family :

State of South Carolina, } We the subscribers, do hereby certify unto all
 Pendleton District, { whome it may concern, That Rowley McMillan,
 and Mary his wife, hath lived in this neighborhood for a number of years, and
 have always maintained an honest, reputable "character," and are good

when he removed to East Tennessee. In this, then new and rising State, he found himself and family a comfortable home for many years. Having been disabled for active out-door life from a wound received in the engagement at Cowpens, in the Revolutionary War, he turned his attention to teaching, in which profession he excelled as a strict disciplinarian and an able and efficient expounder. In this pursuit, Grandfather McMillan spent the summers and winters of his later years, till incapacitated by old age. While engaged in this honorable and useful employment in the mountainous region of East Tennessee, these qualities of the schoolmaster often came into requisition. While many of those young mountaineers, who were placed under him to receive the rudiments of a common school education, arose to honorable stations in after life, it often required a firm hand to curb their turbulent spirits.* *En passant*, it may be said, that those were days of crude methods in the art of "teaching the young idea how to shoot." The teacher's outfit being the indispensable quickener of dull intellects, the long switch, the ruler, with a flattened piece of lead attached, for ruling paper (and which served also as a smaller instrument of torture), a few small books (spelling and readers,) not excepting the inevitable pen-knife and the big bunch of goose quills, the making of pens from them being an indispensable acquirement, but *now*,—

" No longer need the poet's pen
From wing of goose be plundered,
Nor quill to write the hero's might,
From Jove's own Eagle sundered."

We have gold pens, steel pens, fountain pens, gutta percha pens, and pencils, indelible and otherwise, in every style of finish and fineness, which would have delighted and amazed our pen-

citizens, and have raised a very sober family of children, and as such we can recommend them when they left us.

Given under our hands the 1st day of November, 1803.

John Willson J. P.,
Robert Anderson,
John Hallum,

Bazzle Hallum
William Gunn.

(Verbatim.)

* The writer treasures up an old pen-knife, a relic from one of the battle fields on which, with those young hot-spurs, the old warrior school-master was oft engaged. Sam Houston, somewhat noted in after-life, with a squad of young bloods attempted, on a Christmas occasion, to extort the customary treat. Failing by the usual ruse, "barring out" "our army of occupation," they resolved on making a sortie, and bringing the grave question to the issue of battle. *The old veteran corps* fell back for defence to a tree, and stood—with blade in hand—"a living wall"—"impregnable," "while Sam's bold heroes held their ground, point for attack was nowhere found." Quailing finally "before th' unbroken line," the invincibles withdrew—in good order—the subsidy given up, and never afterwards demanded. The practice of enforcing treats from that time on went into disuse. This was, perhaps, the only occasion in which the Hero of Horse Shoe Bend and San Jacinto ever *backed*.

men of a past age. In the primitive days of which we have been speaking, the curriculum in those back-woods seats of learning was not very comprehensive. Reading, writing, and cyphering, and a smattering of grammar summed up the course. Of the old text books then in use for young beginners, there was the New England Primer, beginning with the alphabet, continuing with words of one syllable, short poetic pieces for reading lessons, as, "In Adam's fall, we sinned all," "The idle fool is whipped at school," etc, including the shorter catechism, a portion of which was usually repeated by the older scholars as a closing exercise of school. For the next grade, Webster's old spelling book; then came in course, Cocker's or Pike's arithmetic, and Lindly Murray's English Grammar. For a glossary of the English tongue, there were in use Entick's and Manton's dictionaries,—old works, containing many words now obsolete. For readers there were several by old authors, mainly selections from the Bible—the secret source, we think, of the stern virtue of "our grandfathers' days." For those that would dip into other ancient lore, there were "Æsop's Fables."

This old schoolmaster—of the *old school*—came to Union County, Indiana, about the year 1818, and continued in his favorite profession for some years after coming hither, but on the old crude plan. An old "Article of Agreement is here copied, an old relic, showing the progress that has been made towards perfection in our common school system in sixty years :

"We, the subscribers, do promise to pay to Rowley McMillan Senr., the sums annexed to our Names, for, and in consideration of twelve month's labour, to Be employed in teaching such scholars as shall attend at the school house near Harmon Shook's cabin, in Reading, *Wrighting*, and Arithmatick, to commence from the tenth day of Febuary,* in the year of our Lord, 1823. N. B. I will attend good hours, 5 days in each week, and teach at two Dollars for each schollar per Quarter, to be paid in Linnen Cloth, yard wide, at 50 cents per yard. Labouring work at 50 cents per day, or corn, 25 cents per Bushel. One Quarter dollar from each schollar to be paid in money every three months. I will Board myself. The employers to keep the school in wood during the term—my wages paid Quarterly

	\$ c	\$ c
Henry Blose, one scholar	8 00	William Coe 1½ scholars 18 00† John A. White 2 scholars 16 00"
Thomas Redick, 1 scholar	8 00	
— McQuoid scholar —	—	

John McMillan Wilson, being a favorite grandchild, became a protégé of his grandfather, Rowley McMillan, at the age of

* The r left out.

† This is copied verbatim, but here is a higher rate.

three or four years, an important circumstance in giving shape and direction to his career in after life. On the old school master's knee, in the cozy chimney corner, he first acquired a knowledge of the English alphabet, and how to use it, and also other rudiments of an education, so that at an early age he was an expert reader, and quite proficient in the first principles of mathematics. In this latter branch of knowledge he excelled as by intuition. From this small, quiet, primary department, we find the young scholar then transferred to the old log school house but a few rods distant from the old cabin home. Here was his first experience in "going to school." This old "temple of learning," built by the united labor of the old pioneer settlers, and supported by private enterprise, was then presided over by an eccentric character named John Miller, and who, from his peculiar traits, and from the place of his nativity, was known in his day as "Old Scotch Miller." This old pedagogue, a scholar of rare attainments, possessing a mind well stored, and a teacher of more than ordinary abilities, especially when difficult and abstruse lessons and problems were to be inculcated by a vigorous application of the long birch rod, was a very eccentric character. An exile from his native Scotland, he brought with himself to the wilds of America all the peculiarities of the Scottish race. A dear lover of the national beverage, a good supply of which he always kept during school term in a convenient hiding place near the old school house (and it was ever observable that the blows from the long whip were always in exact ratio to the number of visits to the hollow tree during school hours). Besides other nicknames, significant of the peculiarities of our *Magester Domminie*, the goaded pupils added the sobriquet "Old Cyclops," but with this difference, that the central orb was placed in the back of his head, so swift was he upon occasion to whirl on his toes to apply the lash to the hapless delinquent. The hasty, fiery and impetuous temper of this old schoolmaster is somewhat peculiar to the natives of the "Land o' Cakes;" and oftentimes may be esteemed as one of the virtues of the race. Firm and unwavering in their convictions, and fearless in their adherence to them, when the hour of strife comes, the hardy Scot ne'er stops to reckon the odds.

" Tak a Scotchman frae his hill,
Clap in his cheek a highland gill—
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow."

But laying aside this little piece of pleasantry, indulged in at the expense of our long departed hero, with all encomiums on his fellow countrymen, we return to the subject of this brief memoir. Under the instruction of this, his first regular teacher at school, the future Alumnus of "Old Miami" made very fair

progress. The usual course in Arithmetic, his favorite study, was soon mastered, and also other branches of learning, as then taught in the neighboring schools. The thirst for knowledge, partly inherent, and partly stimulated by the interest and supervision of the aged grandfather, his foster-guardian, made the ascent of the pathway to knowledge easy and delightful. The years of his boyhood, thus passed quietly along, caring for and enjoying the sweets of home with the aged grandparent and his two maiden daughters, the two canny housekeepers in the humble homestead, devoting his days and years to the cultivation and management of the little farm, and the more important cultivation of his mind in the acquirement of useful knowledge. To these three persons, to whose care and guardianship Mr. Wilson was committed in early life, was he deeply indebted for the proper bias in the formation of his deep religious character, next to the grace of God—to them for the early imbibing of those principles, both ecclesiastic and civil, to which he adhered so pertinaciously through life. Access to large and costly libraries was not, forty or fifty years ago, a neighborhood privilege, but the supply of mental pabulum within the reach of our student, though not extensive, was of a superior grade. His books in home hours were his constant companions; the first of these was the Book of books, the reading of which, morning and evening, was the daily practice. Next, for corresponding reading, the works of such old authors and divines as the Erskines of the old country, Owens, Baxter, Henry's Commentary, Harvey's Meditations, Paradise Lost, etc. For secular reading, Rollins' Ancient History, Goldsmith's England, the elementary histories of Greece and Rome, Gibbon's Rise and Fall, etc. This enumeration constituted what we might call the home study. With the aged grandfather he continued to make his home till his faithful old guardian and counsellor reached extreme old age, when the faithful old teacher and stern old patriot—

“ Taught half by reason, half by mere decay.

Then welcomed death and calmly passed away,”

having reached the age of 101 years, his death occurring September 8th, 1843. In reaching this event in the course of our narrative, the death of the honored and beloved grandfather, we have passed over a period of about ten years as containing but little worthy of note, save that they were spent in physical development, and the quiet and steady accretion of a fund of general knowledge. Having lightly tasted, our student now determined to drink more deeply at the “ Perian Spring,” and to that end he began to dip at the fountain of classic lore. In this, now the highest object of his ambition, Mr. Wilson was much aided and encouraged by the friendship of the pastor of the church of which he had become a member early in life, the

Rev. Gavin McMillan. This honored and worthy old minister, a man of deep and extensive learning, was an immigrant to South-western Ohio from South Carolina at an early day—not strictly a native of that old commonwealth, for he was born on mid-ocean—and it is a mooted point whether under the British flag, or the stars and stripes). Suffice it to say that he received a thorough education in the South, and came to the place of his future labors at an early day—the exact date the writer cannot now give. He was settled, however, as pastor over a small congregation of Reformed Presbyterians in Preble County, Ohio, known as Beech Woods. Here he continued to labor in the ministry till the close of his life. Some time about the year 1843* Mr. McMillan, becoming interested in behalf of a few young men within the circle of his acquaintance, conceived the plan of opening a small school for the purpose of giving them (and all others that would embrace the opportunity) lessons in Latin, Greek, mathematics, etc. This little school he carried on somewhat on the boarding-school plan; and those young beginners in the higher branches, under his hospitable roof, were made to feel *at home*. Though that little seat of learning, in a retired place on his farm, once a tenant house, may seem as small beginnings, yet those may yet live who can look back to it with a feeling of pride. Here, between those young students, attachments and friendships were formed which retained them fast in fraternal bonds, even when separated to go forth to other places in pursuit of knowledge, or to engage in their life's work. Among those who attended there for instruction we remember the names of Rev. Robert Gray, and a younger brother, the former an honored minister in the United Presbyterian Church; the latter returned to the pursuits of the farm. Mr. George Swan, of the Presbyterian Church, a life-long minister in her communion; a Mr. Nathan Brown, druggist, formerly of Oxford, Ohio; Mr. James Renwick McMillan, eldest son of the worthy teacher, and John McMillan Wilson, the subject of this narrative. As with Damon and Pythias, a friendship of the most sincere, ardent, and indissoluble nature sprang between the two last mentioned, which lasted through all the vicissitudes and mutations of their college life; and through young Mr. McMillan's influence Mr. Wilson was induced, in course of time, to accompany his friend to Xenia, Green County, Ohio, to enter the academy there, then under the management of the Rev. Hugh McMillan, a younger brother of the former teacher, and a man of rare merit. His entrance into the academy at Xenia was about the year 1845. In this institution, as in the more humble but not less efficient school of the elder McMillan, our two students, Mr. Wilson and

* This date is not certain.

his inseparable companion and fellow-student, Mr. James R. McMillan, made commendable progress. Attention to school and the acquirement of a classical course had now become the absorbing thought and purpose with Mr. Wilson, yet did not he sever his connection with the old home, but returned at intervals in vacation to look after the affairs of the little farm whereon he had been reared, and also the welfare of the two maiden aunts who had been good counsellors and instructors to him in childhood, and who had now measurably become a care. One of these, about the beginning of the year 1845, was removed by death, in her 66th year. This event, though causing a slight disturbance in the course of his plans, but paved the way for closer attention to his school career. Shaping, therefore, his home affairs to changed circumstances, he returned to the academy with his friend, J. R. McMillan, buoyant with hope. The writer remembers the many long horse-back rides in accompanying him to his school, over a beautiful and picturesque stretch of country (these were before the days of railways), his pleasant chats by the way, his admiration of the ever-changing scenery, and his sudden outbursts of rapture, as some more striking picture of the landscape would pass in review. Mr. Wilson was an ardent, enthusiastic lover of Nature. But little escaped his eye in his journeyings hither and thither, that was beautiful in the grand panorama of created being—the distant hill-top in bold outline—the “towering ranks of trees”—“the bubbling brook”—“that delicate forest flower with scented breath and look so like a smile”—these were ever to him as “feasts of reason,” as oft we rode or walked together—the ever-changing landscape—the mild autumnal days—the sunlight’s glow through the tinted foliage—the spicy odors floating upon the idle zephyr—these would ever and anon call forth from him this rapturous flow of soul: “Who can paint like Nature?”

“Can imagination boast amid his gay creation
Hues like these? And can he mix them with that matchless skill.
And lay them on so delicately fine, and lose them
In each other as appears in every bud that blows.”*

At the academy at Xenia, in the pursuit of their studies, all went smoothly and pleasantly along with our students, Mr. Wilson and his inseparable companion, Mr. J. R. McMillan. Mr. Robert Gray also accompanied these, his two former school-mates, from the *wilds* of Indiana, to further pursue his studies at the same institution. Xenia and the surrounding country was, at that time, famed for the high standard of intelligence, morals and refinement of its population, and, as yet, has lost none of its ancient prestige. Xenia, at that time a small inland-town,

* Thompson’s Spring.

among the first in the State of Ohio to enjoy the advantages of a railway, was then looking up and looking forward to its greater future. It is now a little city of no mean pretensions, full of life and modern enterprise. From an infusion of an element of a high order in the make-up of the population, at an early day in its history, Green County, Ohio, has ever been a favored spot, many of its early settlers being from the same old parent hive, South Carolina. The McMillans, among whom was conspicuous the Rev. Professor Hugh McMillan, Mr. Daniel McMillan, the oldest of four brothers, a successful farmer, Mr. James C. McMillan, merchant, true types of the gentleman and the Christian; and many others of like character we could name, were they with whom our aspirants for literary fame were privileged to associate. In the home of Mr. J. C. McMillan, or Mr. Wilson found for himself, during a good part of his school life at Xenia, a congenial place of abode, and a friendship from his worthy host which remained "a constant flowing quantity," an unbroken chain, throughout his after years, and through many adverse circumstances. But, college life and school associations must, sooner or later, be broken up, and so it was, in due time, with our young men. Many a pleasant hour had passed—in their studio, in the recitation room, in their frequent evening walks, at the quiet ingleside, around the festal board. The sweet associations and acquaintances formed must, in time, all be given up, or remembered only as pleasant dreams of the past.

" Oh! days remembered well, remembered all!
 The bitter sweet, the honey and the gall,
 Those woodland rambles in the silent night,
 Those trees so shady, and the moon so bright;
 That pleasant valley by the cedar closed;
 That rustic seat where we at last reposed.
 And then the hopes that came and then were gone,
 Swift as the clouds beneath the moon passed on."

Our trio of students have now left the pleasant associations around Xenia, and the year 1847* found the two fast friends, J. R. McMillan and J. McM. Wilson, at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, where they entered as Sophomores.

Some intervals of Mr. Wilson's time were spent in and near Oxford, in teaching in the common schools, about this period, but the times so spent were but brief; and, to these intervals, exact dates cannot now be given. The entrée at college was to our friends as the turning of a new leaf in life. Now began the formation of new acquaintances, associations and friendships, ties that were to continue unbroken through life. Attachments formed during that period we denominate our school days, are seldom

* This date is, with the writer, uncertain.

broken off or forgotten. To the student, his college days are halcyon days, as memory carries him back to them again, and he loves to think them over amid life's busy, and sometimes trying, scenes; he loves to talk them over, as now and then, in after life, he meets the college *chum*; it may be in foreign lands, in the forum, in the legislative halls, upon the crested wave, or on the tented field. There is a *fraternal* feeling in the breast of the student, unknown in life's common walks. An old author* says:

"Knowledge has a tendency to unite the hearts of all who are engaged in its pursuit; it forms a BOND of union among its votaries more firm and permanent than that which unites princes and statesmen."

These reflections applied with force to the subject of our narrative. A man of warm and generous impulses, desiring but few associates whom he would admit to close fellowship, but to such he maintained an undying friendship. During those years that passed till his graduation, memory recalls but little to break the monotony of college life, beyond the occasional excitement occasioned by some mischievous student's prank. These incidents are, however, inseparable from a student's career. To be concerned in at least one "college scrape," must be considered as belonging to the *inevitable*. But, in these affairs, Mr. Wilson was always an unwilling participator. We call to mind a rather serious outbreak among the students at Miami University during the winter of 1846 or 1847, arising from some trivial difference between a few young men and the faculty, which affair passed into the history of the time as the "Great Snow Rebellion." The students, having taken possession of the corridors of the main building, and barricading all entrances with huge balls of snow, cord wood, and whatever else came to hand, maintained a complete lockout for several days. The insurrection was, however, finally quelled, forty or fifty students summarily expelled, and order restored. In this, perhaps the greatest disturbance ever occurring in "Old Miami," Mr. Wilson was concerned, but escaped the discipline of the authorities.

Passing over a year or two, as containing but little worthy of note, we come to the year 1848. But the reminiscences of that year are brief. It was a campaign year, and political excitement ran high, the election resulting in the choice of General Zachary Taylor as Chief Magistrate. In this campaign, Mr. Wilson took some interest (on the stump), in favor of Mr. Van Buren and the free soil movement; but the field of politics was not to his taste, and he soon abandoned it, and returned to his *old love*, the domain of literature. During the latter part of this year,

* Dr. Thomas Dick.

the idea of organizing a Greek Fraternity was thought of and deliberated upon, Mr. Wilson and his friend, now the Rev. Robert Morrison, of Aurora Springs, Mo., being the originators of the project. In this, three or four others united, and the result was the formation of the Phi Delta Theta, a Fraternity which, from that small beginning, has, at the present day, grown to enormous proportions.

The opening of the year 1849 found Mr. Wilson still at the University, in the last year of his collegiate course. In the early part of the year 1849, Mr. Wilson was called upon to mourn the death of his early friend and fellow-student, Mr. James Renwick McMillan. This promising young man, also in his seniority at the University, had a large circle of warm and devoted friends, both at college and around his home, and his early death was deeply deplored by all who knew him, when just upon the threshold of a brilliant career in life. Mr. McMillan possessed mental and social qualities of a high order, and to be known was simply to be loved. In his death, no one felt the loss of a congenial friend more than did his most intimate companion, class-mate and room-mate, Mr. Wilson. Among a mass of old papers, left in possession of the writer by Mr. Wilson, the following is found, in pencil :

“At a meeting of the students of Miami University, held in the Eurodelphian Hall, April 9, 1849, A. W. Rogers being called to the chair, and John W. Lindley chosen secretary, the object of the meeting being stated, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted :

“WHEREAS, In the mysterious providence of God, our beloved fellow-student, James Renwick McMillan, has been removed from us by death. Therefore,

“*Resolved*, That in the decease of Mr. McMillan, we recognize the loss of one whose studious habits, mental endowments, modest deportment and unpretending piety, furnished many pledges of future usefulness to the world and the church.

“2d. That in consideration of his many qualities as a friend, a scholar, and a gentleman, we will ever cherish a high regard for his name and character.

“3d. That we sympathize with his bereaved friends in the irreparable loss of one so much beloved and respected by all who knew him.

“4th. That a copy of these resolutions be sent to his father, the Rev. Gavin McMillan, also to the ‘Banner of the Covenant,’ the ‘Presbyterian of the West,’ and the ‘Xenia Torchlight,’ for publication.

(Signed) J. McM. WILSON, }
R. MORRISON, } Committee of Publication.”
GEO. CRAVEN, }

Mr. McMillan being thus early called away, ere finishing his course at the University, the number of candidates for collegiate honors being reduced to seven, the time passed on with them and neared the day when they must leave college, to enter upon the more active and stern duties of the after life.

The remainder of the senior class were J. B. Combes, Thomas C. Hearne, Robert Morrison, Jas. N. Swan, John J. Tiffany, Charles Waterman and J. McM. Wilson. The usual time of commencement soon came, and our young men acquitted themselves with honor. The pathway to knowledge, sometimes thorny and difficult, they have now traversed. Its most rugged steeps have been surmounted, and the prizes for diligence and perseverance are now to be conferred.

Now must be the affectionate leave-taking from their cherished *alma mater*, as she bestows upon them appropriate testimonials of her high regard, bidding them with her warmest benediction to "accept these memorials of my attachment, for right nobly do you deserve them."* Now must they each one bid adieu to her venerable halls, her pleasant walks and shady groves, that spacious campus, with all its "sylvan scenes, and hill and dale," and turn their faces homeward, for there *is* a home-longing amid all earthly pursuits and entanglements, a home-feeling that instinctively lures even the *collegiate* to his old, familiar, boyhood haunts.

"Home! 'tis a blessed name! and they who rove,
Careless or scornful of its pleasant bonds,
Nor gather round them those linked soul to soul,
By nature's fondest ties—
But dream they're happy."

Our young graduates, after many affectionate and hearty leave-takings and adieus to many dear friends, have hied them away to *their* homes, to speculate as to the grand future and its grander possibilities. The summit of the student's present ambition has been reached—he has got through college—and now he must consider his acquirements as a means rather than an end. The field for usefulness in life now lies before him, with all its various openings; and now the absorbing question is, what shall he do? what now will be his part in the great game of life? Into this period of unformed and unsettled purposes we now follow our subject, Mr. Wilson, and find him at *home*, under the paternal roof whence he had gone in early childhood, now giving his attention to his grandfather's patrimony, left to him (a little farm), and occasionally pouring over Blackstone and other works, with a purpose, half-formed, of sometime entering upon the practice of law. In this field he did not find that

* Words addressed to a senior class, by a fellow-student, on a former occasion, on delivery of diploma.

which was consonant to his bent of mind, and those commentaries were ere long laid aside. Teaching next, after a brief period of retirement on the farm, engaged his attention, and in the year 1850, he was installed in what was known as the Western Female Institute, Oxford, Ohio, as teacher (the old building is still used as a school edifice). But the school teacher is somewhat a Nomad, and the next year, 1851, he appears in the role of teacher at Bloomfield, Nelson County, Ky. Another year comes around, and this migratory disposition leads our teacher to Chattanooga, Tenn. But at neither place did he remain a long period. He returned home with settled purpose to seek another sphere in life, and a higher (?) plane on which to act his part. (But is there in all the world-wide range of human action, thought or purpose, a grander or loftier level than that of the teacher? Without him, humanity gravitates to barbarism; without him, the philosopher is but a mountebank; the astronomer an ignorant star-gazer; the chemist only defines and analyzes the mysterious qualities and uses of charms, and deals out to the ignorant his lotions and his potions for petty gain. The school-master goes forth, with the torch of truth and knowledge in his hand, and the mists and shadows of ignorance recede before him. The philosopher, the statesman, the artisan, the merchant, the student, must all look up to him with awe, for they are his workmanship. The school-master is the world's autocrat. He knows no superior. Kings and princes stand before him, and receive instruction from his lips. The teacher, especially the Christian teacher, is the "highest style of man." The Christian teacher, entering the realm of ethics, imparts to man the true conception of himself, his origin, his capabilities and responsibilities, and his final destiny). To reach this climax, this highest rank in this honored and honorable profession, did our teacher, Mr. Wilson, now aspire. He, therefore, entered the Theological Seminary, at Oxford, about the year 1853. This institution, carried on under the auspices of the Associate Reformed Church, and under the management of Rev. Dr. Joseph Claybaugh, afforded an excellent opening for young men devoting themselves to the ministry, both from its favorable surroundings and the high standard of its professorship. The precise date of Mr. Wilson's admittance there, as a theological student, cannot now be given. The appended brief certificate, found among his papers preserved, is the only clue as to date. It is given verbatim :

" A. R. THEOL. SEMINARY, OXFORD, OHIO.

"The superintendents, having attended at the close of the session of the Theol. Seminary, at this date, and heard the examination of the students in church history, translation, exegesis in Greek and Hebrew scriptures, systematic divinity and Homi-

letics, have judged that Mr. J. McM. Wilson has completed one year in the seminary, and has so progressed and given such evidence of proficiency as is entirely satisfactory for the time ; and we hereby recommend him to be received as a student of the second year by the Presbytery of the church to which he may apply.

“ JOHN N. PRESSLY, *Ch.*

“ *March 29, 1854.*”

In due course of time, and in due order, Mr. Wilson was received under the care of the Ohio Presbytery Reformed Presbyterian Church, of which he was a member, and continued to prosecute his studies closely. This preparatory course being finished in the seminary, and his trial efforts before the presbytery being satisfactory, he received license from its hands, and proceeded at once to enter upon what he felt to be now the great work of his life. From the appropriate duties of his chosen profession, Mr. Wilson permitted but little to divert him, and yet was not wholly oblivious to the passing events of the day, but identified himself with every movement of moment to help forward whatever he believed to be on the side of right. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, in the year 1854, opened and continued in the public mind a long and bitter agitation as to the future of these two rich portions of our country, which became national in its extent. In this great disturbing question Mr. Wilson was not an indifferent spectator as to its various phases and possible results. Among the many schemes of emigration and colonization then engrossing the public mind a project formed itself in his thoughts to gather a number of persons willing to cooperate in forming a colony in some favorable locality in Kansas, persons in the same ecclesiastical band, the primary object being church extension, and for himself, no doubt, an ultimate purpose of a permanent settlement in his profession. But this favorite idea did not mature. He next associated himself with Mr. Josiah Miller and Robert G. Elliott in an effort to establish a weekly newspaper within the territory of Kansas. In this enterprise Mr. Elliott and Mr. Miller, with all necessary outfits, went out to the territory, located at Lawrence, and the paper was soon in circulation. Mr. Wilson remained at home in Oxford, Ohio, to further the interests of the paper as best he could, consistent with attention to other duties devolving upon him. The paper, the *Kansas Free State*, though mild in its tone as a political paper, was short lived, the chaotic state of society at that time (1855), within the territory proved the undertaking to be premature. The long continued border strife, intensified by the agitation of the great political questions of the time, and which convulsed the entire country, did not present conditions favorable for insuring success in this and like enterprises. Mr. Elliott and

Mr. Miller remained, however, in Kansas throughout the dark days of her history. Mr. Elliott still remains there as an honored, useful and worthy citizen. Mr. Miller, after filling various positions of honor and trust, died at Lawrence, Kan., in 1870. These projects, to which Mr. Wilson had partially turned his thoughts, proving abortive, he continued his itineracy as a licentiate in connection with the Reformed Presbyterian Church till, from a defect in the vocal organs, he was compelled, in a great measure, to abandon public speaking. But he could not long endure a life of inactivity. He therefore willingly accepted the position of Principal of the Morning Sun Academy, at Morning Sun, Preble County, Ohio. This position he held from 1856 to 1860, when, from a variety of causes, the academy was suspended. This unfavorable crisis in the affairs of the academy now remanded Mr. Wilson again to a life of inactivity. But at this juncture the position of managing editor of the *Banner of the Covenant*, a weekly religious newspaper, published at Philadelphia, Pa., being offered to him by its managing board, he readily accepted, and at once assumed control of the paper. But ere long began the great civil war, with all its demoralizing and disintegrating effects, and his connection with the paper for these, and other weighty reasons of a personal nature, was dissolved. After his return home on his severance from the affairs of the above-named paper, his employments were rather of a desultory nature. The war, with all its exciting questions and phases, was now the all-absorbing fact before the country, and into the current of its passing events Mr. Wilson was drawn, as were all others. He did not go to "the front" along with many of his acquaintances of more peaceful days, but gave his services to the State as a recruiting officer. In this, besides casual and brief periods spent in teaching, he passed the years from 1862 to 1865, making his home in the village of Fair Haven, Preble County, Ohio, with his sister and aged mother. The war finally closed and the survivors returned to their homes, the farmer to his plough, the mechanic to his workshop, the minister to his charge, and the scholar to his books; and peace with all its inestimable blessings returned to cheer the land. The year 1865 may be said to have terminated the public career of the one whose life we have attempted to delineate in the vicinage of his earlier years. Of a long train of unfortunate experiences of a personal nature which Mr. Wilson was called upon, in the providence of God, to pass through, which commenced in 1861 or 1862, which beclouded the remainder of his life, embittered his nature and saddened his heart, of his severance from the Church of which he had been a life-long member, his abandonment of the sacred calling, as well as other kindred pursuits, the writer will say but little. The events referred to are a part of the history of the community where they occurred. The

chief actors concerned have nearly all passed away, a righteous verdict was given at the bar of public opinion and our unfortunate friend was completely exonerated. He was convinced, however, that his usefulness in life around the home of his youth was at an end, and with a heart saddened and disgusted at the perversity of human nature, he disposed of his worldly possessions, and removed to Southern Illinois, determined amid new scenes and associations to begin life anew. But here it would seem that his evil star was still in the ascendant. Ill success in business and the animosity of those he often mistook for friends tended to deepen the shadows that flitted across his path. Isolated from kindred and separated from all the endearments of home, uncommunicative and morbidly distrustful of all human kind, his passage to the grave was sometimes indeed a thorny path. But he was not utterly forsaken. Friends rose up in his hours of deepest despondency; friends stood by him when friendship was most pressingly needed. Beneath that rough exterior were seen capabilities still for farther usefulness. He was introduced to the Blooming Loan and Trust Company as a person in whose integrity they could place implicit confidence. In the service of this company he embarked, and continued in the general capacity of traveling financial agent for about three years, from 1870 to 1873. His last return home was in June, 1873. Impelled by a presentiment that his aged mother was passing her last hours on earth, he dropped into the chamber of death and tarried just long enough to drop the tear of deep affection over her now unconscious form, then flitted away as he came. Thus there is a secret chord in the human breast, a link unbroken when every other tie is snapped, that binds it as with silken bonds to the home of the sainted mother.

* * " Her memory is the shrine
Of pleasing thoughts, soft as the scent of flowers,
Calm as on windless eve the sun's decline,
Sweet as the song of birds among the bowers."

When all other feelings and emotions were benumbed, this one remained undimmed and in all its native warmth in the breast of our friend—the undying love for the mother and the paternal home.

" Why in age
Do we revert so fondly to the walks
Of childhood, but that there the soul discerns
The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired,
Of her own native vigor; thence can hear
Reverberations and a choral song
Commingling with the incense that ascends,
Undaunted toward the imperishable heavens,
From her own lonely altar?"

From the death-bed of the aged mother, our eccentric friend returned to Illinois, to spend the remainder of *his* earthly career.

Of his movements after his return there, from his extreme reticence, but little is known. He seems to have severed his connection with the aforesaid Loan and Trust Co. about that time, perhaps on account of failing health. Around and in Centralia he had formed a small circle of friends, to whom it seems he was devotedly attached, and with them he was disposed to seek that consolation and happiness that only true friendship affords.

“ Celestial happiness when e'er she stoops
To visit earth, one shrine the Goddess finds,
And one alone, to make her sweet amends
For absent Heaven—the bosom of a friend
Where heart meets heart.” * * *

With our friend and brother, this was a truism.

From Centralia he removed to Benton, eighteen miles s.-s.-east of the former place, and made his home at the Benton House. His last adventure in business was giving his time, talent and energy to a project of connecting Benton with the main trunk line of the Illinois Central Railroad, by a short branch. This, and occasional pleading in justices' courts as a diversion, filled up the measure of his last days. He died at the Benton House, July 19, 1874. This information was communicated to his surviving relatives by a Mr. Henry Hudson, who seems to have been his death-bed companion and a true friend.

We have now traced the career of Mr. Wilson from his entrance into life, through many vicissitudes, to its close. The earthly pilgrimage with him, as with many others, was a constant succession of lights and shadows. These seemed with him to chase each other with strange persistence. The brightest days of earthly life were naturally the early days of youth. Life's rosy morn, with all its golden dreams, its buoyant hopes, and joyous expectations, were those passed with the aged grandfather in the humble cabin home. The picture of the

“ Whining school-boy with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,
Unwilling to school,”

was never his, but with bounding heart and step elastic, went he cheerfully to the tasks of the hour, were they the lessons at school or the labors around the home. 'Twas in the bitter after-life the shadows lapped athwart his path in all their sombrest hues. But in all that round of checkered experiences, from “life's sweet morn till close of day,” in every storm, through every gale, though oft hid with grief, oft plunged deep “neath vision wild and cheerless of despair,” there was the same clinging to the only hope. The soul's sheet-anchor that held him to his moorings safe, was the early training, the disciplines of the boyhood home, the memories of the old ancestral walls, and the lessons of a pious ancestry. * * Mr. Wilson

never married. A large collection of old returned letters preserved and left with the writer—a correspondence of too sacred a character ever to be scanned by mortal eye—reveal an episode in the life of our friend. He seems to have met with and formed an attachment to an estimable young lady, during his school days at Xenia, O., who was also a pupil at the academy. This acquaintance ripened into a love of the most ardent and romantic type. An engagement followed, which, it seems, was the intention of himself and lady-love to consummate as soon as finishing his course at college, retiring to the pursuits of the farm, and “the dear delights of home.”

But the Master willed it otherwise. Over a different pathway through life were his footsteps to be directed. The long and weary road, through many trials, griefs, bitter disappointments, losses and crosses, was that over which He, that sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, saw fit to lead him. The polishing process by the hands of the skillful artist is that which brings out the diamond's greater brilliancy. So, under the skill of the Great Lapidarian will be those more precious jewels made to shine, with added lustre, in the diadem of Him, the Master Workman, who with great price hath bought them, and who, when He comes to make up and gather in his jewels, will surely not o'erlook any of those so severely tried in the crucible of earthly affliction and found without a flaw.

Our friend's probation here was one of continued trial, toil, turmoil and bitter experiences. *“In Cælo quies est.”*