

The Musical and Literary Organizations and their Leaders of Landisville and Vicinity.

In preparing this, my fourth paper of original data on local historical research, I confess that it proved to be "up-hill" work, indeed; yet, from a mass of memories, much valuable matter has been brought forth; and if there are omissions of names or dates, the simple statement that the writer's present knowledge is lacking in the essential details should suffice.

An Old Meeting-House.

The oldest landmark existing to-day at Landisville having anything to do with the subject in hand is the Old Mennonite Meeting-house, built of logs, about the year 1790. This ancient edifice is in an excellent state of preservation, being occupied at present (and for many years past) by the sexton of the Old Mennonite congregation, Benjamin Brown, and standing directly in the rear of the regular brick structure, erected half a century later, in 1855.

In the old log meeting-house, during times of worship, were used the hymns then existing as printed in small German and English books. The singing was slow and sure, being announced in lines, and sonorously carried out in the various stanzas. For many years this unpretentious place, with its unpainted seats, sheltered a pious, plain-clothed people, who sang their hymns in good old-fashioned ways, not ashamed or afraid to dwell a little longer than seemed necessary on the original notes of some much-used metre.

There is no doubt whatever that some of the later musical talent of this locality, to some extent, was developed from this modest beginning, for not a few Mennonites of the present period are excellent singers, using



OLD MENNONITE MEETING HOUSE

Built 1790; size, 31x36 feet.

note-books of musical merit; and the aged Bishop Jacob N. Brubacher (of near Mount Joy) can yet be regularly heard in hymns of tuneful harmony at the brick building, close by the log house standing there fully one hundred and fifteen years.

How Landisville Came Into Existence.

In the spring of 1829, John Landis established a store (occupied lately by Frederick Metzger, deceased), and with his son, John C., who was a surveyor, laid out a village which they named "Centreville," from the fact that it was equa-distant from Lancaster and Mt. Joy. About 1832 John Landis applied for a postoffice, and the department in granting this request took the liberty of renaming the place "Landisville," as there already

existed a Centreville office in Centre county.

The Minnichs also had much to do with the original start of this settlement. Jacob Minnich, in 1798, erected the first house in the eastern part of the place, and in 1808 built a two-story hotel on the north side of the old Harrisburg pike.

Among those who attended John Beck's brilliant Academy for Boys at Lititz were John C. Landis (from 1823 to 1825), grandfather of the writer, who accomplished much for the village which he later laid out; having taken charge of his father's store, serving as postmaster, doing scrivenering and surveying, and conducting a small marble yard, etc. He died in 1854, aged forty-six years, in the very acme of his usefulness.

The Old Public School.

Prior to 1830 some of the children of the neighborhood received their education from traveling pedagogues of the Yankee type, blunt but wise wielders of the whip and goose-quill pen.

The old log meeting-house was used for a while as a school, when the first public school building was erected between the present brick meeting-house of the Old Mennonites and the Bethel Church on the hill. This public school building nurtured some of the singers and musicians that afterward distinguished Landisville; and my father frequently, during his life, referred to his pleasant experiences there. One of the characteristic songs of that period was "I Love to Go to Public School."

The old public school building was torn down in the early seventies. Evidences of the stone foundations are yet to be seen on the hill, in what is now the north side of the Old Menno-

nite churchyard. Since the schoolhouse was removed, two graded, brick buildings on the opposite side of the street were erected and used for school purposes; and even these buildings may soon be replaced by a large and more modern structure.

Noted Teachers Prior to 1860.

L. M. Hobbs was among the ablest early instructors in Landisville's first public school. He taught the pupils many practical things by his own progressive methods. Mr. Hobbs afterward started an academy at Millersville, which, I am informed, became the nucleus of the noted Normal School, first of its kind in the Keystone State, and of which he was its early steward.

Daniel S. Bare (now deceased), at one time a saddler of East Petersburg, and later a steward at the Millersville Normal School, taught a singing school at Landisville about 1850, making it one of the first schools of this kind at that place. A daughter of his became the wife of Israel S. Clare, the historian.

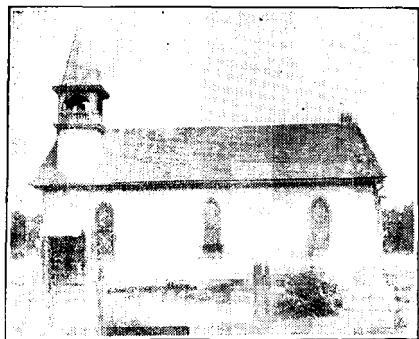
William D. Reitzel, of Salunga, was one of the best teachers in the old public school at Landisville. He was a man of fine musical and literary attainments, and did much then and afterwards for the all-around education of the young men of East Hempfield. He also taught school in the old building at one time standing near his home in Salunga.

Along with the advent of the public schools, debating societies were formed, fostered and popularized. Some of these existed in Landisville about 1840 to 1845, as recalled by Samuel L. Hartman, who informs me, also, that Prof. Kemerer, an itinerant schoolmaster, taught juvenile classes with the rudiments of music in many

portions of this city and county. Mr. Hartman's sister, Anna E., thus became interested in voice culture; afterward a student at Millersville and one of the two first lady graduates from the Normal School. Miss Hartman subsequently was first assistant teacher of the Girls' High School, Lancaster, and among the branches taught was music.

The Bethel Church of God.

Prominent among those who organized the Bethel congregation of the Church of God, about 1840 (founded by John Winebrenner), at Landisville, were Jacob H. Hershey, of Rohrerstown (father of Andrew H. Hershey, of The New Era; John C. Landis, father of the late Israel C. Landis), and others. In 1843 a frame house of worship was erected.



BETHEL CHURCH.

Built 1843; size, 28x43 feet.

A great many revivals have since been held there, and through the musical influence of this old church-home, probably as much as any one source, Landisville became known as

a field for musical and literary effort. Of this early period I possess my grandmother's hymnbook of "Evangelical Music," with notes, dated, 1841; also two other small leather-covered "Revival Hymn Books," bearing dates of 1841 and 1845, respectively; these latter were carried by Grandfather John C. Landis (who was especially fond of church music), and he frequently entertained Elder Winebrenner, of Harrisburg, at his home.

The Bethel Church was remodeled to its present appearance during the winter of 1877-78, and somewhat enlarged and considerably improved during the pastorate of Rev. F. L. Nicodemus.

The present minister is Rev. Harvey S. Hershey, being one of the several young men who have entered the ministry from Landisville within recent years. The others are Rev. Peter H. Hershey, one time stationed at Harrisburg, and Rev. F. K. Baker, now professor of theology in Findlay College, Ohio; besides Miss Viola Hershey, a missionary in India; and Rev. Chas. F. Reitzel, Salunga, now located at Mt. Joy.

The Reformed Mennonites first held their services in the old Bethel Church at Landisville, until they erected the present brick structure of their own, east of the village, in 1869.

During the fall of 1843 were culminated the Millerite exercises in the encampment on Jacob Gamber's farm, south of Landisville, a minute account of which was given in one of my previous papers. At that place religious revivals came to their highest pitch, with full use of the many hymns suited to such occasions.

Landisville's First Brass Band.

A number of the young men who had been previously active in musical

and literary circles of the vicinity organized the "Mechanicks' Band of Landisville," on September 4, 1858, with these officers: W. D. Reitzel, President; E. D. Golden, Vice President; Em'l Newcomer, Secretary; J. B. Kern, Treasurer. Twelve members composed the full band: W. D. Reitzel, G. W. Sener, Emanuel Newcomer, C. H. Newcomer, Jacob Souders, J. B. Kern, J. J. Golden, E. D. Golden, I. C. Landis, Solomon Seamer, Reuben Pickel and Daniel Kern. Three other names appeared on the roll of membership: Joseph Musselman, Daniel M. Brown and Christian H. Mayer.

The band first met in an old log building, since torn down, then occupied as a cooper establishment and shoe shop combined; John B. Kern, one of the members, being the shoemaker. This building adjoined the present residences of Ed. Kline and Mrs. Dissinger, on the south side of Main street in the east end. Afterward the band had its quarters on the second story of a new building erected by Israel C. Landis as a restaurant, on the north side of the same street, a little farther west from the first location. This building is at present owned by Mr. Minnich.

Considering the influence made at that time and since felt, at Landisville, I will record in detail a slight history of its membership. The famous Kevinski, of Lancaster, was its teacher. The professor's father soon after coming to that city, in 1837, established a brass band, "which gained a wide reputation for fine music." He organized many brass bands, of which he served as director. My father stated that J. B. Kevinski, however, was the teacher of the Landisville Band. The latter did excellent teaching in Lancaster's public schools, passing away Thanksgiving Day, 1905.

Biography of the Band's Members.

W. D. Reitzel, referred to previously, leader of the Landisville Band, was a natural musician, full of vigor and enthusiasm. He afterward became a Captain in the Civil War, and was well-known as a forceful debater and polished speech-maker. His literary genius, too, was strongly developed. In his early life he wrote acceptably for the press, both in prose and poetry. He died at Salunga some years since, in a political campaign, when he all but reached the Legislature. One of his sons, Quintin O., immediately fell into line for this office, and won the place easily. The Reitzel children have inherited the father's pleasing proclivities.

George W. Sener, a leading cornetist, was a carpenter by trade. He now resides in Philadelphia. Emanuel Newcomer, another band member, lives at Columbia.

Christian H. Newcomer, who played the second B flat, has lived continuously at Landisville, and became known for his enterprise in establishing and keeping the Railroad Crossing Hotel, opposite the station. A number of years ago he enlarged this building, and now manages the place as a temperance boarding house and store. His only son, Morris, conducts a mammoth department store in Knoxville, Tenn., which is constantly growing. Mr. Newcomer takes a great interest in the present Bethel congregation.

Jacob Souders became an expert carpenter and contractor in after years, and built some fine houses at Rohrerstown. Both he and his eldest son, Gabriel, are yet engaged in carpentry at Lancaster.

John B. Kern carried on shoemaking, besides being postmaster at Landisville for many years. He was skilled

in his line. The shoe business is at present conducted by his son, John M., in a remodeled building, since the father's demise, some years ago.

Both J. J. and E. D. Golden removed to Iowa many years since. The latter was a carpenter. I think one of the Golden's is now deceased.

Israel C. Landis, the last Secretary¹ of the Mechanics' Band, was its tenor drummer. This finely-preserved drum is now in my possession. The drum sticks have some handiwork in German silver, done by John Mose, then employed in Landisville. My father was very fond of band and marching music; he always beat his drum with precision and spirit. I owe much to his honest enthusiasm and modest willingness to aid in making our homelife more than a mere aim for money; much, indeed, for his truthful versions of oldtime happenings, which I have in part recorded in various publications. Now that he is mingled with the silent majority (having died suddenly on May 13th last, while engaged to the very last at his life-long occupation of general merchandising), need it be stated that his loss is keenly felt by me in every sense.

Solomon Seamer, another band member, lives at Kinderhook, West Hempfield township. Reuben Pickel, who played a bass horn, lived at the extreme eastern end of Landisville for many years. He was a tobacco buyer and is now deceased.

Daniel Kern was a carpenter and carpet weaver, with a shop near Mr. Pickel's home. Many of the good old home-made carpets were woven by Mr. Kern at his place, where the writer often observed him move his shuttles back and forth in mystic motion, knit-

¹Mr. Landis' permanent certificate of honorary membership is now in the possession of his son.

ting together the fascinating stripes of "chain" around well-sewed carpet rags. He has also gone to his rest.

Joseph Musselman is yet a carpenter at Landisville. He worthily manages the campmeeting grove; besides being a modest worker with his wife in the spiritual interests of the Bethel Church.

Christian H. Mayer resides at Lancaster; and of Daniel M. Brown, an associate member of this band, I have failed to get his after record.

The Mechanics' Band terminated its career, after having had a flourishing existence, in 1863, caused by the Civil War taking some of its ablest members to the front. The Mountville Band purchased the band wagon from the Landisville people, and some of its instruments, and since then Mountville has had its band organization. Silver Spring, close by, also early had a band, and it, too, has continued its active life.

My father possessed the minutes of the old Landisville Band, yet within the past year I have been unable to find them, and these interesting records are probably destroyed. This band was the forerunner and stimulus to the present one, of which I shall treat further on.

Sketch of a Model Teacher.

The real home musical and literary meetings of Landisville and Salunga were developed to a high degree in the personality of one man, yet living, who resides at the latter place, in the meridian of his many joyful, useful years. That A. B. Kreider has done very much for the musical and literary circles of East and West Hempfield townships no one can question. Starting at school teaching, in Oak Grove, he kept this school from 1864 to 1869. His natural aptness for music led

him to improve himself during all spare hours he could snatch from his work. From 1869 to 1871 he next taught at Airy Vale; and then, in the fall of 1872, when the present Maple Grove school house was built, his real destiny assumed shape.

Here, at this house, the writer spent three thrifty and delightful years under the tutelage of this preceptor. There were no organs or pianos in the public schools of the locality in those days, but Mr. Kreider possessed a melodeon, which was the means of making many public entertainments successful. This melodeon was gotten in 1864 from Mr. Steinhauser, and is yet possessed by Mr. Kreider, although no longer in use.

This teacher was the McCaskey of his time and place, tirelessly training the young with all he knew; and, in music, happily tuning his vocal chords with the fork he ever held in hand. Study became a pleasure under his own spirited, willing service and direction. He was the best-booked student of his pupils, discerning their character as from an open page; and more than one has since achieved prominence in similar pursuits.

Prior to 1870 Mr. Kreider organized a "Home Circle," which held fascinating meetings of song and literary features at various prominent homes in the neighborhood.

In 1871 he organized a literary society at Salunga and kept this in existence until the close of his teaching, eighteen years after, in Maple Grove School. He also had a music class for the same length of time, besides successfully leading in singing on many occasions at the Bethel Church and assisting during the Landisville camp-meeting. He yet directs the music at Salunga M. E. Church, with the help of Fred. E. Jaessing, organist, who has been with him since 1880.

The Temperance Movement.

Through the influence of Mr. Kreider, J. H. Hoofstiter, of Sterling, Ill., (formerly of Salunga), gave five successive lectures on temperance at Maple Grove School, in the early seventies, and this was the direct cause of an unusual outbreak in the great temperance work accomplished at Salunga, resulting in the formation of the Landisville and Salunga Temperance Society, which had an active existence for some years.

In 1882 the Union Temperance Society was organized and held its meetings in the Landisville Bethel Church. Rev. G. W. Fraser was one of its active officers. This society kept up its spirit until the summer of 1886.

At present the Woman's C. T. U. is represented at Landisville and Salunga by Miss Lillie Hershey, President (a most zealous worker), and Mrs. Mary C. Trout, Corresponding Secretary. This union meets monthly at the homes of its members.

Other Teachers of Music.

Luriston B. Herr taught a successful singing school in the school house at Centreville, where a number of ladies and gentlemen attended in 1877; he also taught singing at various times near Landisville, East Petersburg, Manheim and other nearby towns. He is now recognized in a business way as L. B. Herr, stationer, Lancaster city.

From about 1882 to 1885 Barton Sharp conducted music in the Landisville schools at various times, being a popular young leader and school teacher. He is now in the railway mail service.

In 1884 the Salunga Singing Class² was in its busy days. An extended

²From the Landisville Vigil, March 10, 1884.

programme covering two evenings, March 28 and 29 of that year, was well rendered, the proceeds being given to the Landisville and Salunga Library Association.

In 1886 a small musical club, known as the Landisville Orchestra, had a brief lease of life.

Professor Keeney, a gifted vocal musical leader, from Manheim, taught a singing class at Rohrerstown, and also at the Independence School, below Bamford, during several terms, some years ago, in school months.

Yet others being interested in music at Landisville since then have been Rev. Peter Hershey, at the Old Mennonite Sunday-school, in the latter eighties; and Rev. Hiram Kauffman leads the Old Mennonite Singing School of the present period; Bishop Jacob N. Brubacher and Amos Greider, of the same church, being devotees of sacred music. David B. and Dalvin D. Sanders have done a great deal for music in the Bethel Church, together with Miss Lillie Hershey, and others.

Pianos and Recitals.

Since about 1876 organs have been introduced in many homes of the vicinity, and for the past dozen years pianos have partly taken the place of organs, owing to classical instruction by skilled teachers being obtainable. 'Twas only a few months since when the schools of East Petersburg and Landisville were presented with pianos in a newspaper contest, from programmes rendered of a high order, assisted by the noted Madame Schlisman and Miss Mary Bowman. Piano recitals have likewise been given at homes of students, a fine one being presented last June by the pupils of Miss Mary E. Shenck, at the residence of Mrs. Jacob M. Trout.

The Famous Camp Ground.

Landisville in recent times has possibly become more popularly known by its sheltering the annual Methodist campmeeting than from any other single source. ³About 1870 the Landisville Campmeeting Association was formed, and a tract of ideal, virgin woodland, lying close to the south side of the village, was bought from Dr. Andrew Kauffman. This grove was tastefully fitted up, and since improved with convenient and handsome cottages and suitable buildings for spiritual worship. It has been the scene of wonderful religious revivals, and has had most stirring musical exercises.

Well do I recall the sweet songs of Professor Kirkpatrick and Doctor Sweeney, two composers and leaders of more than ordinary merit. The singing at Landisville campmeeting in the latter seventies and early eighties was of a magnifying, soul-stirring order, with nothing since to quite duplicate it, although Dr. J. L. Withrow, Miss Lizzie Sharp and others have accomplished splendid results for the camp song services. I predict great popularity for the future of this continuous yearly campmeeting, since it now has three railroad inlets—the Pennsylvania Railroad, Reading and Columbia Railroad and the new Conestoga Traction line directly in front of the famous grounds.

The Church of God also held campmeetings on these same grounds, later in the season, during 1885 and 1886. This church now owns its own campwoods at Central Manor, and its annual services are growing in interest.

³From "Sketch of Camp-Meetings," in "The Landis Family of Lancaster County," 1888.

Methodist Music Books.

The music books introduced each year at the Landisville campmeeting have been a great aid and constant comfort to many attending there. The Sunday-schools of the neighborhood were also provided and inspired by an almost annual change of music books.

"Pure Gold" was among the best-known singing books used in 1873 at Salunga. Through Mr. Kreider's tactful teaching I can remember, and sing most of these songs to-day. Among other books frequently used in singing schools and the campmeeting during the seventies were: "Song Treasury," by J. H. Kurzenknabe; "Brightest and Best," "Every Sabbath," "Sunshine," "Starry Crown," etc.

Later Bands of Music.

Directly after the Centennial era a brass band was organized at the zinc works, Bamfordville, of which Chas. Bamford's son, a full-fledged Englishman, was a conspicuous member. Frank Watson, of Landisville, and William Clegg, a cornetist, belonged to this band, which enlivened the mining settlement for a few seasons.

On November 1, 1889, the Landisville Cornet Band came into being, with the following members: W. H. Kern, B. G. Kern, M. D. Kern, L. H. Mease, Henry Harry, W. J. Hoffman, M. M. Frank, R. P. Swarr, Henry Souders, Milton Root, D. W. Baker, D. S. Martin, Philip Dattisman, Harry Dattisman, Edwin Barto, E. C. Diffenderfer, Al. G. Dissinger, H. J. Dissinger, C. H. Long and William Seifert.

The band for three years had its quarters over Jacob Rutt's cigar factory (since removed), near the pike at the Reading Railroad, and for the next four years in Breneiser's carpenter shop. The band was chartered May 1, 1891. For several years

this band held largely-attended fairs for weeks at a time, some of these being in the basement of what is now Ezra Miller's grain warehouse. About twelve years since, through the liberality of R. P. Swarr and others, a lot of ground was secured in the centre of the town, and later a band hall was erected in November, 1899. This is now a place for general town meetings and entertainments. L. H. Mease is the secretary of the band. Several of the members are descended from some of those who made up the former "Mechanics' Band," viz.: Harry and Samuel Pickel, William, Byron and Milton Kern.

Village rivalry, to a certain extent, produced another excellent cornet band close by, at Salunga, which was organized in September, 1896, by H. K. Way, a talented musician, with sixteen members. The band was incorporated in 1903, with these charter members: H. K. Way, musical director and solo cornetist; Dallas Weidman, Oscar Way, John Aston, Albert Hiestand, Allen Keller, Arthur Diffenderfer, William Habecker, John Weidman, William Myers, Eugene Diffenderfer, and Frank Montooth.

The present membership consists of twenty men, as follows: H. K. Way, director and clarionetist; Dallas Weidman, solo B flat cornet; Oscar Way, E flat cornet; Allen Way, first cornet; John Way, baritone; William Way, E flat bass; Edgar Diffenderfer, E flat bass; Allen Keller, second trombone; Arthur Diffenderfer, first slide-trombone; Frank Montooth, third trombone; Albert Hiestand, baritone; Henry Hiestand, solo alto; Charles Myers, second alto; William Habecker, third alto; Frank While, fourth alto; Harry Musselman, bass drum; Edgar Way, snare drum.

Mr. Way, the director, is a fine clar-

ionetist and cornetist, and gives instructions on brass and reed instruments. He taught three of his sons music in their early days, making up quite a musical family.

Rohrerstown also had a brass band, organized about 1894. Its first fairs were among the most successful ever held in these parts. This band was located in Stehman's warehouse (which building was afterward consumed by fire), and the musical organization continued its career about four or five years, when it disbanded.

Prominent Educators Since 1865.

In addition to the public school teachers already mentioned, dwelling more particularly on their literary ability, may be noted the following:

A. Haldeman, recognized as "Abe," taught several schools in East and West Hempfield townships, from about 1865 to 1880, or for a quarter of a century. He instructed the Lake Mill School, south of Landisville, at one time. He belonged rather to the old Yankee style of pedagogues, understood his vocation and was a decidedly strict disciplinarian. Many there are who remember his vigorous work. Mr. Haldeman, like Captain Reitzel, was a man of commanding presence and a fine speech-maker during political campaigns. He now resides on a farm in another part of the county.

H. G. Newcomer, of Rohrerstown, is another long-time teacher, having served in that capacity since the war for even a greater period than Mr. Haldeman. He was one of the last teachers I can remember as making goose-quill pens, in 1868; and my first home-made copy-book was written by these flexible reminders of earlier days. He was a firm believer in merit and rewarded his pupils accordingly. His teaching produced

good results. He resides on Woods street, Rohrerstown, at the present writing.

A. R. Stamy taught the Oak Grove School, northeast of Landisville, in the seventies, doing effective work; and later became identified with Lancaster's schools, being at present well known as the principal of the Lemon street school.

Prof. John H. Shenck, one of Mr. Kreider's ablest common school pupils at Salunga, in 1872-'73, early entered the teaching arena and had schools in different parts of the Hempfields; afterward becoming principal of the Manheim schools, and later of the Marietta public schools. He has been an intelligent, exemplary instructor.

Miss M. Kate Swartley (Mrs. Smith) very acceptably taught the Landisville Primary School for a number of years close to 1880. She was a lady of refined literary ability.

Morris Metzger, of Centreville, was a popular teacher of this period. He has been continuously in the teaching harness, and is now a professor in the public schools in the upper end of the county.

Phares W. Baker became an active teacher in the early eighties, and taught at Rohrerstown and Landisville for more than a decade of years. He was at the same time identified with literary societies and school interests generally. He is now located in Landisville, carrying on an extensive tobacco packing business.

H. L. Fenstermacher, of Rohrerstown, began teaching in 1887; thus continuing for twelve years; he was a close tactician in his calling, and did effective teaching in nearby townships. He is now in the railway mail service.

List of Literary Societies.

The earliest literary societies at Landisville were known as debating

clubs or lyceums. These were organized early in the public school history and known to exist from about 1840. Landisville's first public school sheltered some of these debating societies prior to the war; and their influence in making public speakers and useful citizens can yet be recalled by the oldest settlers.

After the Civil War, Mr. Kreider's efforts to develop literary efforts bore fruit, as heretofore recorded, at Salunga, particularly, from about 1871 to 1889, with the holding of a constant chain of special exercises and entertainments.

East Petersburg developed a flourishing literary society about 1879-81. Some prominent present-day people put forth their initial speaking efforts at these well-attended meetings, among the number participating being Hon. D.W. Graybill, Herman Graybill, the Gochenaurs and others, of East Petersburg; A. S. Hershey, Esq., and C. G. Bassler, Esq., members of the Bar at Lancaster.

The Landisville Literary Society.

The most energetic and widely-advertised organization in the Hempfields proved to be the Landisville Literary Society, which existed from the winter of 1881 to the spring of 1884. It met every Friday evening, and always drew crowded houses in the Secondary school building. This society had a large number of intelligent, enthusiastic members, and numerous special-featured entertainments were the outcome.

These exercises were planned on an elaborate scale for the period and place, and on different occasions the entire programme had to be repeated on successive evenings, to satisfy the demand of the attendants. The society owned its own organ and all nec-

essary stage curtains and paraphernalia, amounting to no small sum. Some of the special amateur plays rendered there occupied from one to one and a-half hours of time, being creditably executed from frequent rehearsals, mainly managed by J. H. Shenck.

Among the active participants in this society were: Miss Fannie S. Brubaker (deceased), the Misses Swartley, the Misses Gross, Miss Lillie Groff, Miss Florence S. Landis, Miss Fannie P. Long, Miss Barbara A. Hershey, and other local ladies; besides, Messrs. H. Linc. Nissley, S. A. Hershey, W. D. Reitzel (deceased), Jacob F. Landis (deceased), C. B. Harvey, Martin Peifer, the present historian, and a host of others.

When the Landisville Literary Society disbanded, in February, 1884, the Landisville and Salunga Library Association was formed, and from the proceeds of some of the old society's property standard literature was procured. The Salunga Singing Class purchased the organ in May of the same year.

Nearby Literary Circles.

At Rohrerstown, in October of 1884, the Harmony Literary Society was organized, and this, too, had an edifying existence for some winters, with prominent leaders at its head. Its first officers were: H. M. Mayer, President; M. N. Davis, Vice President; H. C. Brown, Treasurer; Miss Lizzie Bear, Secretary; Miss Devore, Editress; A. B. Bear, Critic; Miss Sarah Mauk, Musical Directress.

This society numbered John H. Shenck as one of its leading and most zealous members, he being its President early in 1885, during which time Hon. Amos H. Mylin and Hon. John M. Stehman were elected honorary

members of the Harmony Society. The latter's written acknowledgment stated: "To do work in composition gives the possessor thereof large influence not only on legislation, but in the transaction of ordinary business."

In 1884-5 the Excelsior Literary Society held interesting meetings at Salunga, at which Dr. B. E. Kendig delivered special lectures on hygiene and physical subjects. Among the leaders of this society were A. B. Kreider, the Messrs. Bruckart, A. R. Lehman, and Misses Annie Hertzler, Emma E. Peifer and Lillie Hershey.

The literary and musical organizations prior to 1890 were true to their intent and scope, and depended entirely for success on the genius and ability of their members' minds. After dinners or "feeds" were unknown; the stomach was not considered, and the young folks usually went home from evening exercises with bright heads and buoyant spirits, benefited by good company, regardless of social distinction.

In later years literary circles and societies have been organized nearly every school season. In November of 1905 the latest lyceum was organized at Rohrerstown, by permission of the East Hempfield School Board. Their meetings are held every two weeks, on Friday evenings, in the school room taught by B. H. Heller.

Spelling Bees.

Spelling matches were common at Landisville and vicinity long before the war, usually occurring during the afternoon sessions of public schools. Strong sides were chosen and the two long lines of bashful pupils and older scholars stood their ground gamely, trusting to their everyday knowledge for guidance.

In later years, from about 1870 to

the present time, these matches became known as "bees," and many unique and diversified programmes have been gotten up, stimulated by the offering of prizes, consisting somewhat of books and bric-a-brac. Usually there were and are from three to five classes suited to young and old, pupils and non-attendants. Owing to a study of the expected "test words," more than one person has captured almost a library of books by following up these progressive spelling bees. Landisville, Salunga, Rohrerstown and East Petersburg have held their full share of spelling bees.

District Institutes.

District Institutes were early in operation in East Hempfield, and since about 1885 have been an important factor in open discussions pertaining to the welfare of the public schools. Teachers and directors took active part in them.

I can recall a number of these debates at Landisville; some of the subjects being, "Recent School Legislation," "Resolved, That the present system of education in our public schools meets the requirements of the age," "Shall East Hempfield Have a High School?" etc. Varied programmes of musical and literary features are rendered at these educational institutes.

Printers From the Hempfields.

Benjamin Detwiler was an old-time printer, from Mountville, during the latter sixties. One of his characteristic traits was that he toured the country over to such an extent that he became known as "the great American traveler." He worked recently with the Harris Company of printers and lithographers, in Philadelphia.

Amos Hoffman, of Rohrerstown, worked at printing with Wylie &

Griest, about 1865. He is now located in York. John Leib, of Mountville, was also employed with Wylie & Griest, in the latter sixties, afterward going to Philadelphia.

Andrew H. Hershey, of Rohrerstown, who started to learn the printing trade in March, 1869, with Wylie & Griest (the present Wickersham plant), Lancaster, became superintendent of the job department of The New Era when that paper was established, in 1877, and rapidly created more than a local reputation for printing of a superior nature. He is now one of the pushing proprietors of the well-established New Era, and is executing periodicals and books of a high order of typography and press-work for New York publishers.

Very few people nowadays know that Mountville was the home of a printing office, and Hon. Sam Matt Fridy has but recently refreshed my own memory as to the particulars. Daniel Weidler was the printer, and he published the Mountville News early in the seventies for probably a year. Mr. Weidler is now in Philadelphia.

Harry Weidler, brother of Daniel, of Mountville, was also a printer working with the Inquirer Printing and Publishing Company about 1878-80. He was a jobber, and now holds forth in the Quaker City.

Abraham Kessler, of Rohrerstown, learned his printing trade at the Lancaster Examiner office. He has since been with The New Era for over twenty years, and has regular employment there.

Amos H. Horting, of near East Petersburg, served an apprenticeship with the Inquirer Printing and Publishing Company in the latter seventies, and is now an expert jobber in Philadelphia, where he has his own thriving establishment.

The writer (then from Landisville) was among a-half dozen young men who graduated at the Inquirer Printing and Publishing Company's place in the fall of 1882. In April, 1883, he opened a printing office in his native town, keeping it three years; removed to Lancaster in 1885; was superintendent of the Inquirer printing department, South Queen street, two years; then established Pluck Art Printery, which has had a continuous existence.

Albert S. Newcomer, of Rohrerstown, served an apprenticeship with The New Era, and is at present employed there. George Strawbridge, of Rohrerstown, also became a printer at The New Era office, Lancaster; and Benjamin Mauk, of Rohrerstown, served his trade at the Examiner establishment, same city.

Writers for the Press.

Concluding this rather prosy paper, possibly some reference should be made to the writers for the press from the vicinity of Landisville, although a personal side seems unavoidable in the notation.

W. D. Reitzel, of Salunga, probably was among the earliest of such writers. He certainly contrived clever sketches about 1855 to 1865. Not all of these were published; and I have no doubt that some of his manuscripts are stored away, for his literary genius was given to periodic play prior to his position as Captain in the Civil War.

Miss Anna Uren, of the vicinity of Landisville, near Bamford, contributed a series of interesting sketches for the Sunbeam, a literary monthly journal issued at Lititz, in 1878.

My own experience in journalistic writing might well be left for some future chronicler. Briefly, it dates from essays and school compositions

afterward printed in the Keystone Amateur, a pet periodical, in 1877-78; and the Landisville Vigil, a professional publication, in 1883-85. Since then numerous news items were given to The Inquirer, The New Era, Morning News, and other Lancaster papers; besides articles and papers for the Wheel, New York; the Wheelman (magazine), Boston; American Art Printer, New York; and other kindred and technical journals. Bound works embrace "The Landis Family of Lancaster County, 1888; four volumes "Specimens of Pluck's Printing." 1889-92; and Pluck, a monthly magazine, lastly printed in 1898; besides historical sketches.

A number of other Landisville and Salunga ladies and gentlemen have been and are occasional contributors to the press, including since the Centennial year: J. H. Shenck, A. Swartley (deceased), J. Wesley Bruckart, S. McGirl, P. W. Baker, H. M. Hall, H. Linc. Nissley, Miss Lillie Hershey, Rev. Charles F. Reitzel, P. R. Shellenberger, Harry C. Greider, Ezra Miller, and others ad infinitum.

Would that I could name and herald them all! Landisville has, indeed, done herself "proud" in past and present musical and literary leadership and achievement. More anon.

Author: Landis, David Bachman, 1862-

Title: The musical and literary organizations and their leaders of
Landisville and vicinity / by D. B. Landis.

Primary Material: Book

Subject(s): Music--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County.
Landisville (Pa.)--Social life and customs.
Lancaster County (Pa.)--Biography.

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