

JOHN WINEBRENNER

Founder of the Churches of God of
North America

1797-1860

THE WINEBRENNER HOMESTEAD

"Among the prosperous German farmers of Glade Valley, Frederick County, Maryland, was Philip Winebrenner, whose farm of some two hundred acres was located about eight miles from the town of Frederick. It was on this farm, occupied by Philip Winebrenner and his wife, Eve C. Winebrenner, that John Winebrenner, their third son, was born March 27, 1797. In 1810, when John was thirteen years of age, the family moved into a newly-finished and substantial stone farm house, and it was here that he spent the days of his youth. His birth-place, a log house, soon disappeared; but this stone house, with a frame addition built later, still stands in an excellent state of preservation." End of quote, Churches of God; S. G. Yahn, D. D.

Today this lovely homestead is still in the Winebrenner family. It is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ephraim Zimmerman, Walkersville, Md. Mrs. Zimmerman is a grand-niece of John Winebrenner. The farm has been leased to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Garst.

Though the interior of the home is kept in excellent repair, very little change has taken place. It is still interesting to notice the strap hinges on the front door.

The original Dutch doors have been removed for the conveniences of modern living. A new entrance leading directly from Route 194 has been made to the homestead. The original road which John Winebrenner trod from his home to his school and church is traveled only for farm use today.

The home that we are viewing today was well made of enduring materials, as was the material that fell from his lips—The Word of God.

August, 1963

Kathryn B. Corbin

JOHN WINEBRENNER

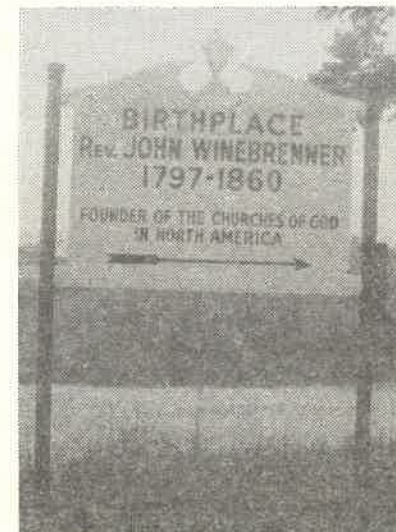
JOHN WINEBRENNER received his early education in the country school house across the road from the Glades German Reformed Church about a mile from his home. He later attended an academy in Frederick, Maryland, and enrolled at Dickinson College, Carlisle, Penna. In 1817 he went to Philadelphia to live with and received a theological training under the Rev. Samuel Helffenstein, Pastor of the Race St. German Reformed Church in that city.

Upon his graduation from seminary in 1820 Winebrenner was elected pastor of the four churches on the Harrisburg, Penna., Reformed Church charge. Once settled in Harrisburg, he threw himself into the work of the ministry. He established a Sunday School within a month after assuming the pastorate and within a year the cornerstone of a new church was laid. In 1822, he published the first of many works, *A Compendium of the Heidelberg Catechism*.

However, some of Winebrenner's revivalistic measures and certain



**Winebrenner Homestead — boyhood home of
John Winebrenner**



**Homestead Sign — located at the lane of the Winebrenner
Homestead on Maryland Rt. #194. Dedicated August 11, 1963.**

of his innovations in the parish (Sunday Schools were regarded with suspicion in some quarters) led to conflicts between Winebrenner and the Harrisburg Church vestry. These conflicts were resolved for all practical purposes on a Sunday morning in March of 1823 when Winebrenner, with a majority of his congregation, was locked out of the Harrisburg Church by the vestry.

Winebrenner's relationship with the German Reformed Church deteriorated over the next few years and by 1828 had altogether ceased. In the meantime Winebrenner's views on the nature of the Church were rapidly changing. In 1825, his congregation in Harrisburg (made up largely of those who, with Winebrenner, had been locked out of the German Reformed Church) was known as the "Church of God," the New Testament name for the Church. By 1829, Winebrenner had adopted, also on scriptural grounds, baptism by immersion and the ordinance of feet washing.

From 1830 on, Winebrenner was engaged in pastoral and evangelistic work. He made his home in Harrisburg, but frequent trips west acquainted him with the spread of the Church of God into Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. He also spent a considerable time in Maryland, preaching and visiting with relatives and friends in Frederick County.

For several years, Winebrenner was editor of the Church of God paper, *THE GOSPEL PUBLISHER*, which later became *THE CHURCH ADVOCATE*. Among his other interests, he also operated a printing concern in Harrisburg, which, together with books and pamphlets he authored (in English and German), provided a source of income.

In 1822, Winebrenner was married to Charlotte Reutter of Harrisburg. She died in 1834 and he married again in 1837 to Mary Hamilton Mitchell, also of Harrisburg.

From the date of the organization of the first Church in Harrisburg in 1825, Winebrenner maintained a continuing concern over the development of the Church. He was elected the first President of the General Eldership of the Church of God in Pittsburgh, in 1845, and until his death was generally considered to be the theologian of the Church of God movement.

John Winebrenner died on September 12, 1960, in Harrisburg.

The Churches of God in North America today number some 37,000 members in Elderships or Conferences in 14 states. Mission work is being done in India and East Pakistan. Educational institutions supported by the Church are Findlay College and Winebrenner Theological Seminary, both in Findlay, Ohio.

Professor Richard Kern
President-elect of Winebrenner Seminary

SEMI-CENTENNIAL SKETCH.

BIOGRAPHY

—OF—

ELDER JOHN WINEBRENNER

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HARRISBURG, PA.:
DR. GEORGE ROSS, 24 S. THIRD STREET.
1880.

Biography of Eld. John Winebrenner.

The distinguished minister and reformer, John Winebrenner, the third son of Philip and Eve C. Winebrenner, whose maiden name was Barrick, was born Saturday, March 25th, 1797, in Glade Valley, Woodsborough district, Frederick county, Maryland, about eight miles north-west of Frederick, and two miles from Walkersville.

The section of country is known as the Glades, the most fertile and wealthy part of the county, having within its limits fine farms, and very beautiful and picturesque scenery, affording the pleasing variety of mountain and valley, meadow, brook and woodland.

The parents of John Winebrenner were of German descent, and the German language was spoken by the family. His father was of limited education, with a strong mind, wonderfully retentive memory and great decision of character. His mother was a gentle, pious woman, of remarkably good mind, and more of Scotch than of German origin.

His father was a successful farmer. The farm which he owned, and on which John was born and raised, is a valuable homestead of about two hundred acres, owned and occupied at present by his nephew, Reverdy J. Winebrenner, whose present postoffice is Walkersville, but long ago Frederick was the nearest one.

The spacious stone farm house where he spent part of his youth, was built in 1810; but the old log house in which he was born, which stood about one hundred and fifty yards distant, has been torn down since, and the place where it formerly stood is now part of the meadow.

His father and mother were members of the German Reformed Church; lived to a ripe old age, and are buried in the Glades' Reformed Church graveyard, a country church about one mile from the farm on which the family lived. His father was born near Hanover, York county, Pa., December 4th, 1759, who, when a young man, moved to the farm in Maryland, where he died, December 11th, 1841. His mother was born June 1st, 1757, and died September 14th, 1831.

When a lad his inclination to be a minister was so intense that he often tried to preach to his comrades, and was sometimes heard making efforts to preach in a wood near his home. His religious turn of mind and reverence for God's sanctuary caused him, when attending worship at the Glades' church, to kneel down on the door step and pray before entering.

While working on his father's farm he was known to take his Bible with him and read it when he took the cattle to and from pasture. Owing to his ex-

treme fondness for books and study he was often found in the field reading, and his plow standing idle, much to the disgust of his industrious father.

Naturally studious and religiously inclined, the teachings and wise counsel of his very pious and foresighted mother, whose form and features he inherited, were wonderfully blessed in training him "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

He received his English and German education in a country school, within a stone's throw of the church, and about a mile from his home, called the Glades' school; then he was sent to a more advanced educational institution in Frederick, and afterwards to Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., where he obtained his classical instruction; but the college records do not show that he graduated. He went directly from college to Philadelphia, Pa., where he studied theology for three years, under instructions of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Helfenstein.

In boyhood he attended the services of the Glades' Reformed Church. He was baptized, in infancy, Sunday May 28th 1797, by Rev. John William Runkel, who was pastor of the church from 1784 till 1801. From that date till 1810 Rev. Daniel Wagner was his ministerial instructor, and Rev. Jonathan Helfenstein thereafter. In the *FATHERS OF THE REFORMED CHURCH* both Rev. J. W. Runkel and Rev. D. Wagner are mentioned as "eminently good, active in the ministry, and aiming, as much as possible, at immediate effect." Afterwards, in Philadelphia, under the preaching of his preceptor, Rev. Dr. Helfenstein, in the First Reformed Church, Race street, between

Third and Fourth streets, he was converted.

His conversion and religious experience are graphically given in his own language, copied from *TESTIMONY OF A HUNDRED WITNESSES*. "I was graciously brought to feel my obligations to God at an early age, and my mind was deeply exercised on the subject of my soul's salvation. These convictions, however, would sometimes wear off, and then be renewed again. Hence, I continued sinning and repenting for a number of years, till in the winter of 1817, when deep and pungent convictions laid hold of my guilty soul. Then, like Job, 'I abhorred myself,'—like Ephraim, 'I bemoaned myself,'—with the prodigal, I said, 'I will arise, and go to my Father,' and with the publican, I cried, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner.' And after 'chattering like a swallow,' and 'mourning as a dove,' for three or four weary months, my poor woe-fraught soul found redemption in Immanuel's blood, even the forgiveness of sins. It was on Easter Sabbath, April 6th 1817, in the city of Philadelphia, in the presence of a large congregation of worshipers, that Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness arose and shone upon my soul, 'with healing in his wings.' Truly, that was the happiest day of my life! My darkness was turned into day, and my sorrow into joy. Jesus became the joy of my heart, and the center of my affections. His people became lovely and precious in my sight; his word was my delight; in it I beheld new beauties and beauties. Sin, that dreadful monster, became more odious and hateful to my soul. Zion's welfare lay near my heart.

My bowels yearned for the salvation of sinners. I was in travail for my friends and kindred. I felt constrained to join with 'the Spirit and the bride,' and say to all, Come, O come to Jesus!

"The work of the ministry now became the uppermost desire of my heart. This desire, somehow, seemed like a pent up fire in my bones from youth up. In later years my mind became strongly impressed with the duty of preparing myself for the gospel ministry. I opened my mind to my parents, and requested them to have me educated with a view to that office. My mother readily consented, but my father strenuously opposed me. To divert my mind from this subject, and to induce me to abandon the idea of the ministry, he made various propositions. One was, to send me to Baltimore, and to have me become a merchant. Another was, to send me to Frederick city, to read law, or study medicine. Anything he seemed to think would be preferable to that of becoming a preacher of the gospel. However, none of these proposals had any claims for me, and the more I was opposed the stronger my inclinations and desires grew for the Christian ministry. I felt, and sometimes said, nothing, I believe, in all the world would give me permanent satisfaction and contentment but preaching the gospel. My father at last yielded to my wishes; sent me to school; had me educated, and assisted me far beyond what I expected. Thus the Lord, 'whose I am, and whom I serve,' opened my way, and enabled me to prepare for my high vocation."

In this manner, and with a wonderful combination of specially rare gifts,

this modest, humble, yet determined servant of God, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," was prepared for an active and aggressive warfare against sin.

The German Reformed charge at Harrisburg, Pa., having been without a pastor for several months, on the recommendation of Rev. Jonathan Helfenstein, of Frederick, Md., he was asked to preach for these congregations. Responding to their solicitations, he delivered his first religious discourse Sunday, February 28th, 1819, and revisited them Sunday May 21st, and November 28th, 1819. These sermons were preached in the old frame church building that then stood on South Third street, below Chestnut, on the corner of Cherry alley. As a result of these services the vestry of the church called a meeting, by printed notice, of the male members of the congregation, to assemble at the ringing of the court house bell (this was rung for all the churches, as none of them had bells at that time) on Thursday evening, December 16, 1819, for the purpose of calling a minister. At this meeting Rev. John Winebrenner, then a theological student in Philadelphia, was elected their future pastor. He received forty-three votes and his competitor, Rev. Lewis Mayer, D. D., five votes; but the call was made unanimous at the same meeting. This result was communicated to him by a letter dated December 27th, 1819, saying that he had been unanimously elected to take charge of the churches, four in number, namely: Harrisburg, Shoop's and Wenrick's in Dauphin county, and Salem's near Shiremanstown, in Cumber-

land county. They agreed to pay him *one thousand dollars* per annum, as follows:

Harrisburg, for preaching every two weeks, \$425; Wenrick's, for preaching once in four weeks, \$150; Shoop's, for preaching once in four weeks, \$150; Salem's, for preaching once in two weeks, \$275. He answered by letter dated January 28th, 1820, that he could not come to take charge of the congregations until he had completed his theological course, and until after the meeting of the next Synod, when he intended to offer himself as a candidate for examination.

Accordingly, on a call from the Harrisburg church and connected congregations, he was licensed and ordained to the office of the sacred ministry by the General Synod of the German Reformed Church, which convened in Zion's Church, at Hagerstown, Maryland, September, 24th, 1820. October 4th, of the same year, he sent his letter of acceptance to the above named charge. He preached his introductory sermon at Harrisburg, Pa., on Sunday, October 22d, 1820.

He was then a zealous young minister, brilliant of mind, a diligent student and a good, earnest Christian, fully forty years ahead of the times, and of many of the church members and professing Christians. He was in favor of revivals of religion, Sunday-schools and temperance; was strongly opposed to human slavery; preached in the pulpits of churches with so-called unordained ministers, and invited them to preach for his congregation and to assist him in his meetings; and besides preached vigorously against theatres,

balls, lotteries, gambling and horse racing. The vestry and a portion of the members of his churches were decidedly opposed to his course in these things. So that what is now considered commendable and perfectly orthodox, was made cause for strife and opposition.

Elder Winebrenner was married by Rev. James R. Reiley, Thursday, October 10th, 1822, to Charlotte M. Reutter, of Harrisburg. This relationship was blessed with three children, only one of which survived him.

As the congregations had been without a regular pastor for about one and a half years previously, diligent efforts were made to push forward the work of the Lord. As one of the measures to this end, a Sunday-school was organized November, —, 1820, of which he was the first president. Preliminary steps were also taken to build a new church edifice. Subscriptions were taken, and Rev. Winebrenner not only subscribed one hundred dollars, but visited Reading and Philadelphia, and succeeded in collecting a considerable sum for that project. The members at home gave liberally. The corner stone was laid June 11th, 1821, and the brick church, at the corner of Chestnut and Third streets was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies August 4th, 1822. When he took charge of the congregations he discovered a low state of experimental religion existing among the people, the result, in part, of having been without a pastor for over a year. He was, therefore, prompted to make special efforts to raise the standard of true piety, and as his preaching was searching and impressive many persons

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became seriously alarmed, began to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" and soon found peace and salvation. But, to use his own words, "as revivals of religion were new and almost unheard of things in those days, especially among the German people of that region, this work of God failed not to excite opposition among hypocrites, false professors and the wicked generally; just as true revivals of religion, or genuine works of grace have very generally done. And as the members of these congregations or churches were unconverted, with few exceptions, and many grossly ignorant of the right ways of the Lord, the most violent opposition and persecution arose from that quarter, aided by not a few of the ministers of their Synod (HIST. OF DENOMINATIONS, page 172). Some of the members were not satisfied, and application was made to the Synod of the Reformed Church, which met at Harrisburg, September 29th, 1822, to investigate the causes of dissatisfaction existing between the congregations and minister. Also another document was submitted containing a series of complaints." Synod only noticed the first one, upon which it appointed a committee of seven, which met in Harrisburg, October 2d, 1822. This committee took notice of the whole matter, and its decision advised reconciliation by forgiving and forgetting all past differences, and to live in future in peace and harmony. The committee, vestry and Elder Winebrenner met face to face, and continued in session from seven o'clock in the evening till two o'clock next morning. The "complaints" were read, and then answered by him. The

following are the items of dissatisfaction upon which the committee acted: **Complaints Against the Rev. John Winebrenner.**

I. "That he proceeds in the affairs of the church at Harrisburg as if there were no vestry, as he never consults them on any occasion.

II. "In his recommendation to attend strictly divine worship he mentioned the Methodist church particularly as a suitable place for his congregation, and on the same day after such recommendation he preached in the Methodist church; he further stated that if any members could not derive benefit by attending our church, they should leave it; and that he himself would never have joined this church if he had not devoted himself to the ministry. And at the time of the quarterly meeting of the Methodists, at Harrisburg, Pa., he attended there, and took Love-Feast with them, and kept his own congregation waiting till he returned from the Methodist meeting house.

III. "He held prayer meetings, denominated anxious meetings, where he divided the members into two classes: First, those that say they have experienced a change, and believe themselves to be Christians; and, secondly, the sinners, those who believe themselves to be mourning sinners; and during all prayer meetings he encourages groaning, thereby disturbing others who might, if the groaning was omitted, receive some benefit; allows during prayer, certain persons to respond, Amen! Amen! thereby drawing the attention of the gazing crowd, who usually collect on the outside.

IV. "At a meeting held, which he called a conference meeting, on the last Monday of July, he allowed persons to converse, encouraged the Christians to speak to sinners, when Mr. Winebrenner, Mr. Jacob Helfenstein, Mr. Knouse, Mr. Krause, Mr. Officer, Mrs. Wetherholt and others, at one and the same time exhorted, prayed and continued until James Officer commenced singing a lively tune, which produced a state of confusion among them; after that Mr. Winebrenner called out, if any persons wished to be prayed for, they should come forward, that then numbers came forward, and Mr. Knouse prayed for them.

V. "At a meeting held on the last Monday in May, which he called an experience and conference meeting, which began at seven o'clock in the evening, he kept together all who would stay till four o'clock in the morning, at the breaking up of which he said, 'This is the way to fan the chaff from the wheat.'

VI. "His denunciation from the pulpit towards members and others has caused members to withdraw themselves from the church; and on one occasion, when he preached a funeral sermon, he said, "If I were to judge from Scripture, the majority buried in the neighboring graves must be in hell!" From which expression he gave a general dissatisfaction to the by-standers on the burying ground. Afterwards he said from the pulpit, he excepted the children from the expression given in the grave yard, thereby evidencing the general displeasure his expressions have given to the people.

VII. "He is now making, or has already made, arrangements to give up two of the congregations which form a part of our connection, viz.: At Wenrick's and Shoop's churches, thereby imposing a burden on the two remaining congregations to provide support for himself and his successor, which was ere this done by the four congregations. All this is done without consulting of the vestry, or membership of the adhering congregations.

VIII. "He has given such general dissatisfaction that on several late occasions where there were funerals in families of his members they passed by; would not have him to attend their funerals, and obtained ministers of other denominations.

IX. "He has admitted persons (who on account of misconduct in the church they previously belonged were expelled from membership) to become members of our church without consulting the vestry.

X. "He is very remiss in visiting members of our congregation, especially at such times when any are sick; and he absents himself from his residence, that he cannot pay the necessary visits to his members; and he has refused baptizing children of the members, when he had been particularly requested."

In commenting upon and answering these "complaints" before the committee, Elder Winebrenner said: "I am brought to the disagreeable necessity of declaring a great portion of them incorrect, and devoid of truth. There are, however, I admit, some facts contained in that paper, which, when freed

from error and misrepresentation, I am not ashamed to confess."

Our space will only permit a condensed report of the answer to the "complaints."

On the *first*, he admitted that he did not always consult the consistory, because he knew that no harmonious cooperation could be had, but he did sometimes; besides, it did not consult him invariably either.

On the *second*, he said that he did preach for the Methodists, took love-feast with them, and on a certain occasion, when he intended to preach for them, he invited his people to come to hear him; and as his congregation was without preaching every other Sabbath he recommended it to go to other churches on the intervening Sabbath. But that he kept his congregation waiting longer than usual, at the time he took love-feast with the Methodists, was incorrect. Moreover, he was grieved to see so many professors of religion so destitute of charity as scarcely to go into any place of worship than their own.

On the *third*, he stated that he held *anxious* meetings, and in order to ascertain who were awakened, and who were not, it was mentioned that they should occupy separate rooms, or different parts of the same room, but every one was free to determine where and with whom to sit. That he did not encourage groaning; however, when sinners groan for redemption he delighted to hear it, but when it proceeds from mere habit it was vain and unprofitable.

On the *fourth*, he said, "The object contemplated at that meeting was to hold a free conversation with each

other on experimental religion," and what is complained of is true, with the exception of a few mistakes.

On the *fifth*, he stated that he did keep up the meeting till four o'clock in the morning; "but the last expression was unfounded."

On the *sixth*, he said "If men will become my enemies, yea, withdraw themselves from the church because I tell them the truth, I cannot help it; but I know of none save perhaps the few men who have lodged these complaints against me." And in relation to the probable state of dead adults, he referred them to Matthew vii:13, 14, and Luke xiii:24.

On the *seventh*, he stated that as Middletown and Hummelstown were once part of the Harrisburg charge, and are destitute of preaching, he intended to supply them for a while, provided the arrangements could be made with the country churches.

On the *eighth*, he said, "I do rejoice to say that, so far as I know, the pious and serious part of the congregation have always been my warm and affectionate friends."

On the *ninth*, he admitted that he did receive *one* person who was formerly a member of another Church, and had been excommunicated. But at the time he was admitted to church fellowship he had professed conversion.

On the *tenth*, he stated that he was not aware of the fact of a certain person being sick, or he would have visited him. He said further, that he had refused, and would continue to refuse, to baptize the children of unbelieving parents.

With this unsettled condition of affairs, Elder Winebrenner preached a sermon, in the German language, on Sunday morning, March 23d, 1823; and as he had a funeral in the country in the afternoon he engaged a minister, named Mr. Brown, to preach for him; but as Mr. Brown was not a member of the German Reformed Synod, some of the authorities of the church prohibited the sexton from ringing the bell and unlocking the door of the church. This made the prospect for reconciliation almost hopeless. The same evening Elder Winebrenner preached in the English language at early candle light, and after services said, "I shall not appoint the time for another meeting, as I do not know that I can be the pastor of this congregation any longer, unless that I shall again preach on Friday evening next; and if I do preach then I'll preach on the following Sunday."

After the congregation was dismissed the vestry asked him why he had made such an announcement; to which he replied, that he wanted to know whether they approved of the course of one of the vestry in not letting Mr. Brown preach, and also whether they would make up the same salary they did the first year. To the first question they answered "Yes." To the second one they replied, "No; because through his course many of the paying members stayed away, and consequently they could not do it."

A very critical state of affairs had now been reached. Various efforts were made by the friends of Eld. Winebrenner to bring matters into harmony again. There was division in

the congregation; and an attempt was made to reconcile both parties, provided he would quit holding so many prayer-meetings, which he absolutely refused to do. From some cause, not now known, he did not preach on the Friday evening as announced from the pulpit on the Sunday evening previous. This the vestry took to mean a resignation of the charge. But he did not so understand it, and continued to manifest a desire to preach for the congregation. On this account, and because fully one-half of the membership were his friends, the vestry met at his home on a week day evening, when these prominent members of the church said that they had come to hold a conference with him as to what he intended to do, and also to tell him what arrangements they would make with him for the future. They told him they had collected the salary due him, and if he would conform to their rules they would pay him the money, and continue him as their pastor. They said, he must preach for them only, and not for other congregations, and hereafter not invite so-called unordained ministers to preach in his pulpit, and not hold more than one prayer meeting a week, nor keep it up later than nine o'clock at night. To this he answered: "I will not consent to these arrangements, for I am a free man, preach a free gospel, and I will go where the Lord calls me to go."

The Sunday after this occurrence he went to the church to preach, but the door was locked and a large crowd had collected on the pavement and street. Finding that he could not enter the building he and about one-half of the

congregation, with many others that were attracted there, proceeded to the bank of the Susquehanna river, near the Harris grave, where he preached a sermon to them.

Part of the congregation, soon after this, held a meeting and resolved that it considered itself absolved from the connection that hitherto existed between it and Rev. John Winebrenner, after the date of his announcement from the pulpit, namely, March 23d, 1823. But this was unsatisfactory to the other part of the congregation, and another meeting of the male members was held on Friday, April 18th, for the purpose of deciding whether they would ask him to resume the pastorate. After "a full debate and a great discussion," they resolved, by a unanimous vote, not to retain him, as their pastor. But as the friends of Elder Winebrenner had withdrawn before the vote was taken, only twenty-one ballots were cast.

This whole difficulty was brought before the German Reformed Synod at Bedford, Pa., September, — 1824, which decided that the Harrisburg charge was not vacant, and that it must hold an election "whether Mr. Winebrenner shall be their pastor or not?" Soon after Elder Winebrenner returned from Synod he notified the vestry, October 11th, 1824, of the Synod's decision. But as it paid no attention to it, a printed notice was served on the congregations, by his friends, ordering an election November 3d, 1824, by printed tickets, as follows: "For J. Winebrenner," "Against J. Winebrenner."

This ballot did not cure the trouble, because only the adherents of Elder

Winebrenner attended the election; nevertheless he was elected by a majority of nearly two hundred of the male members of the congregations. His opponents absented themselves, and did not give the matter any recognition at all. For they had long before that time called and elected Rev. Albert Helfenstein, Jr., to the charge, who became their pastor March 24th, 1824, and continued his ministry till September 8th, 1829.

In the meantime he was active in the work of his Master, holding prayer and experience meetings three and four evenings every week, preaching every evening during the week, and delivering from three to five sermons on Sabbath, with grand results. His whole life seemed to be wrapped up in the saving of precious souls. Writing to his sister, from Harrisburg, February 19th, 1822, he says: "We have very good and pleasant times here; from three to four prayer-meetings in our congregation each week. And the Lord sometimes comes in sacred nearness to our souls while we are waiting for him. Sinners are awakened and made to cry for mercy. Oh, that God may be with us still, and delight to bless us."

Matters had now culminated in a formal separation, for a large number of the friends of Elder Winebrenner withdrew from the congregation. These, with Elder Winebrenner, worshiped in the Court House, where from fifty to one hundred professed faith in Christ, in the market house, on the river bank, in private houses, in fields, in groves, and frequently in a lumber yard, where

the Pennsylvania railroad depot now stands.

They were decidedly aggressive, holding meetings by day and by night. There were almost daily conversions, and in turn violent opposition and persecution. The work of grace spread far and wide, and calls for preaching came from many places, which were cheerfully and quickly responded to. As the word was preached with great power, both in English and German, by the now noted revivalist, multitudes flocked to the standard of the cross. Then a new inspiration seized the converts, who, with their leader, built meeting houses, organized churches, and looked prayerfully and in faith to God for success.

Elder Winebrenner's complete separation from the Synod did not take place until 1828, as the following extracts from the minutes will show:

"Minutes of September, 1824, Bedford, Pa."

"The committee on correspondence reported further:

"The congregation at Harrisburg complains in reference to the conduct of the Rev. J. Winebrenner; hopes the Shoop's and Wenrich's congregations will soon connect themselves with the Harrisburg congregation, and refers to Judge Bucher for an explanation of the matter."

"On motion, the subject was deferred until to-morrow" (page 11).

"As the matters relating to the Harrisburg congregation came now under consideration, it was, on the motion of the Rev. Mr. Reily,

"*Resolved*, That the Harrisburg, Shoop's, Wenrich's, and Peace [Salem] congregations hold an election whether

Mr. Winebrenner shall be their pastor or not" (page 28).

(Mr. Winebrenner was present at this meeting of Synod.)

"Minutes of September, 1825, Philadelphia."

"The Committee on Correspondence reported:

"A letter from the congregation at Harrisburg.

"*Resolved*, That the subject be deferred until the report on the proceedings of the Lebanon Classis is received" (page 6).

"In reference to the Harrisburg congregation, and the Rev. Winebrenner, the matter was, after much discussion on both sides of the question, disposed of by a majority vote, which in the form of a resolution was laid before Synod by Rev. Wendel.

"Question—Has the Lebanon Classis acted right in this matter or not?

"After the matter was fully discussed, both for and against, the Synod decided that the Classis has well considered all matters and acted right (page 8.)

(No clue is given in the minutes as to the nature of the action of the Lebanon Classis.)

"Minutes of September, 1826, Frederick, Md."

"The Committee on Correspondence reported.

"A letter from the Rev. Henry Hoffmeier, in which he complains, in a moderate way, of the disorderly conduct of the Rev. J. Winebrenner, H. Habliston and D. Werz.

"*Resolved*, That this Synod cannot take up and decide this matter, because the complaints in the letter against the brethren should properly, in the first place, come before the Classis" (page 7).

(The foregoing is translated from the German language.)

“Minutes of September, 1827, York, Pa.

“Committee on Minutes of Classes report in regard to minutes of Lebanon Classis.

“Charges against the Rev. John Winebrenner.

“*Resolved*, That they be referred to a committee, who shall meet in a place to be appointed by themselves, to try these charges against Rev. John Winebrenner, and make report to Synod. The committee are Rev. F. W. Vandersloot, Lebrecht L. Hirsch and Jacob Beecher” (page 9).

“Minutes of September, 1828, Mifflinburg, Pa

“The committee which had been appointed by the Synod, at a meeting held at York, Pa., to investigate the case of Rev. Messrs. Winebrenner and Habliston, and to report at this meeting, reported that Mr. Winebrenner had not obeyed their citation, and he did not appear before them; and that, in their opinion, he ought not to be any longer considered a member of this body.

“The report, and the judgment expressed in it, were approved” (page 6).

About 1825, more extensive revivals of religion prevailed in many towns and neighborhoods. And as the views of Elder Winebrenner had gradually undergone a material change, as to church organization, ordinances, titles and government, he united with others in adopting the apostolic plan and the New Testament name in establishing churches. As a result, in October, 1830, at Harrisburg, he, in connection with five other ministers, namely, An-

drew Miller, John Elliott, John Walborn, David Maxwell and James Richards, representing a number of local churches, agreed to form themselves, for more successful co-operation, into an Eldership, under the title of “THE GENERAL ELDERSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF GOD.”

Elder Winebrenner was tall and slender, about six feet high, and very erect, whether walking or standing in the pulpit; with high and prominent forehead, and rather long, thin face, bluish eyes, inclining to gray; his hair was smooth and of light chestnut color when young; later in life it was slightly mixed with gray, and which he wore rather long. Dignity and solemnity were prominent features in his countenance; and it was impossible to be in his company without feeling that you were in the presence of a great and good man. Yet there was so little stiffness in his manners that a little child could readily approach him with confidence.

His preaching was generally methodical, and so logical that his positions were almost irresistible; his delivery was easy and deliberate; and while he was mild and affectionate to inquiring penitents, his reproofs to rebellious sinners were often terrible in their character. He used his index finger with telling effect in his gestures. Besides, his subjects were always selected to suit the circumstances and localities in which he preached.

He was very popular with unprejudiced men, who read and thought for themselves. This class was universally attracted to him, and when they once

heard him preach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus they became his real friends and defenders. Many such were converted through his preaching.

It is a significant tribute to the personal power of Elder Winebrenner, that wherever he went, among all denominations, impartial men acknowledged his ability as a reformer. His sermons had great power in convincing men of sin, and through his splendid reasoning his hearers yielded willingly to the power of the gospel. Besides, his force of character itself contributed intensely to rivet conviction upon the people. Thus he gathered around him a number of able and resolute men to help to carry on the work of saving sinners and disseminating the views that he had embraced, and which he was desirous of implanting into the hearts and minds of his hearers.

If ever there was a man ordained of God for the work of the gospel, that man was Elder John Winebrenner. One of his special gifts was to bring sinners to repentance, and in this part of the ministerial work he had wonderful success, for he could tell sinners precisely what they must do to be saved. His language was so plain that every one understood him, and his reasoning so strong that people listened with attention, and before they were aware of it were convinced. Seldom using notes in his early labors, he would preach, exhort and sing for hours at a time in apparent forgetfulness of every thing else.

His pure life and unspotted character, his firm attachment and devotion to whatever he believed to be right, were shown in all his acts. While he

had many bitter enemies, he also had hosts of true and enthusiastic friends. This caused him to devote his time, his talents, his means, his energies, his all to Christ's cause and its success.

He waged a determined war against sectarianism, and tried to obliterate it, and met with wonderful success. Preaching the terrors of the law and the efficiency of the blood of Christ to blot out sin, he constrained thousands to accept the overtures of the gospel. Much of his success depended on his thorough radicalism. At that time it was unpopular to be a Christian, and men sought their Redeemer from principle and a conviction of duty. For they counted the cost at the outset, and stood firm as a rock in the hour of trial and persecution, proving the well established law that persecution and opposition will seldom hinder or destroy any project.

It was his custom, in his early revivals, to dismiss the congregation, after the regular services, and to ask the penitents to stay, so that he could talk to, and pray with, them. These "inquiry meetings" were seasons of joy and much divine power, and scores and hundreds were converted. The meetings were characterized by much excitement, by shouts of triumph and leapings for joy. This was called fanaticism. It was the extravagant overjoy of the redeemed soul. But what they called fanaticism we call reform—the genuine reform from sin unto righteousness.

As a pastor he had few superiors. Visiting from house to house, he prayed with every family, asked every one in the family whether they "enjoyed reli-

gion," urged the unconverted to seek their Savior, the converted to greater diligence, and comforted the broken-hearted. And through much fasting and prayer, by the invisible power of God, through personal effort and faith in Christ, he brought salvation to many.

His cheerful, quiet, unobtrusive demeanor in the family circle gave a charm to the religion that he professed. He was respectful and gentlemanly, and did not indulge in trifling and idle conversation. Besides, he had a great deal of self-control, so that when abused and persecuted he did not retaliate, but met opposition with arguments and smiles. Teaching his converts to do likewise, they usually bore the malignant railings of their opposers without much murmuring. For he possessed the power of encouraging the faint-hearted, and inspiring the zealous to a very great degree.

Being liberal towards ministers of all denominations, he permitted them, and invited them, to preach in all his pulpits, at the camp-meetings, and wherever he held services. When some of them refused his generous offers, because they held doctrinal sentiments differing essentially from those which he held, he told them to lay aside their differences, and preach one of their "gospel sermons."

As he was religiously trained under the teachings and influences of the German Reformed Church, educated and converted through its ministry, connected with its Synod for eight years, along with early family prejudices, and the expectation of losing a large salary, it must have taken a severe struggle to change his religious

opinions and church relationship. It has been said, that there was no occasion for the course he pursued, and that he should have remained as a reformer in the body. But, under all the circumstances, this was hardly possible, not only on account of his radicalism and advanced religious views, but also because of the uncalled for persecutions that met him at every step, as well as the slanderous reports that were published by his enemies.

His reputation as a minister of the gospel was such that crowds flocked to hear him. And notwithstanding there were neither railroads nor telegraphs at the time he made his greatest pulpit efforts, his fame as a preacher was widespread.

We quote the following tribute from the *Lutheran Observer*, August 17th, 1877, from the pen of Rev. R. Weiser, D. D.:

"The first revival of religion, of which I have any personal knowledge, was in York, Pa., in the winter of 1825-26. This work started in the German Reformed Church. Rev. James R. Reily was pastor of that church, and he had Rev. John Winebrenner, then of Harrisburg, to assist at a communion. Mr. Winebrenner was then in his prime, and was a powerful and effective preacher, especially in German. The interest commenced in the Reformed church, but soon spread over the whole community."

August, 1827, a camp-meeting was held in a woods close to the borough of Lebanon. Elder Winebrenner preached at this camp-meeting, and in the meeting house near by. He preached with much success, and when

he raised his hands and shook his long, thin fingers, as was his custom, there were marvelous displays of God's power. Men fell prostrate on the ground, scores cried for mercy, and pardoning grace was poured into many hearts. The supernatural appeared to prevail to such an extent that superstitious people were afraid to shake hands with him, because they said they felt so strangely as soon as he touched them.

He did not value or care about money. In the correspondence relating to his call to the church at Harrisburg, not a word is written about the amount of salary he was to get, and when personally spoken to about it, he said, "he wanted only as much salary as was necessary for him to live." And though he was getting one thousand dollars salary per annum at the time of the early church troubles, a very large sum then, yet for principle and for Christ's sake he gave it up, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." It was at this period that one of his friends collected some money and handing it to him, he carelessly thrust the roll of bank notes into his vest pocket, thanked the collector, and exclaimed, "Trash!" "He counted all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." One of the petty persecutions that he suffered related to matters of this character. It was the rule of certain turnpike companies to let ministers pass through the toll gates free, when on horse-back, but some of the gatekeepers refused him this privilege, because they maintained

that he was not a minister, so that Elder Winebrenner was often compelled to borrow money for this use when going to some of his appointments.

Notwithstanding many annoyances of a like character, he usually looked upon the bright side of affairs, working on with great faith in God's promises. On an occasion of much trouble he was preparing some manuscript for publication. At that period only a few church organizations existed west of Pennsylvania, but he said, "Good news from Ohio," and then read an extract from a letter giving an account of a revival "Ah!" continued he, "it will not be many years until the churches and ministry will be very numerous in the West."

He was shrewd in seizing a point, and quick at repartee. By this faculty he discomfited his enemies and opponents, and gathered strength for the cause he advocated, making his adherents more firm and his opposers more bitter. A few instances are given.

When the Stone Church (Salem's) near Shiremanstown, Pa., was closed against him, and a large congregation had assembled to hear him preach, he stood on the large flat stone at the door, and pointing his finger to the sky, said: "They can lock church doors, but they cannot lock the door of the kingdom of heaven." In the evening his friends fastened candles to the trees in front of the church, and while preaching there quite a number sought and found salvation.

After having published an appointment to preach in the court house at Harrisburg, his enemies succeeded in getting the county commissioners to

lock the doors against him. But he stood on the steps, and pointing to the door, said, "And the door was shut" (Matt. xxv:10), and then preached a sermon from the text.

His early co-laborer, Elder John Elliott, having preached a sermon from the text, "Prove all things" (I Thess. v: 21); and as it was the usual custom to follow every sermon with an exhortation, Elder Winebrenner gave out as the basis of his remarks the latter clause of the same verse: "Hold fast that which is good."

At the General Eldership, at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, 1860, when in debate one of the younger delegates said: "Old men shall dream dreams." He replied: "And your young men shall see visions, and they will not be able to interpret them."

In the investigation of a subject he did not reach a decision until he had given it a most thorough examination, but when convinced he was immovable. He gave the most rigid examination to the ordinance of feet-washing before he decided it to be a positive command.

A union camp-meeting was held near Linglestown in 1827, and on the evening that this ordinance was attended to he left the meeting and went to Harrisburg. The opinion prevailed at the time that he went away because he did not want to participate in it. The same year, or possibly a year later, another union camp-meeting was held at Bowman's, in Cumberland county, at which time Rev. H. Habliston preached a sermon declaring most positively that it was an ordinance. Elder Winebrenner sat on the pulpit an apparently un-

concerned looker-on. Rev. J. Erb came to him, clapped him on the knee, and asked him to participate. "Do not bind your brother's conscience," said he. "You believe that it is a positive command; and I do not." In course of time he examined the subject more fully, and soon thereafter determined it to be a positive ordinance; and at the camp-meeting held at the same place, the next year, publicly participated in its celebration.

As he had been brought up under the teachings of a pedo-baptist Church he did not give up his early convictions without a good deal of thought and prayer; but he went forward gradually in the right direction. At the camp-meeting which he held at the poor house, near Harrisburg, in 1826, he baptized the converts by several different actions in the mill dam near by. But then he was in the transition state, for at the camp-meeting held at the same place, in 1830, he baptized them by a single immersion, backwards, having radically changed his views. He said that in seeking for the truth on this and some other disputed subjects, he determined to read the Bible through on his knees, and while doing so he received new light and a clearer view of the right way of the Lord.

Elder Winebrenner having fully changed his views on the action of baptism, made arrangements with Rev. Jacob Erb (now Ex-Bishop Erb, of Shiremanstown, Pa.), to baptize him. At first Mr. Erb objected, on the ground that he was too young a man; but Elder Winebrenner insisted, and told him that some young men were further advanced in the divine life than many

old men. Besides, they had labored together in the ministry for many years. Mr. Erb was then preaching on the Dauphin county circuit for the United Brethren in Christ, and met his engagements punctually. On the day that he had appointed to baptize Elder Winebrenner, he preached at the Peter's Mountain appointment, two miles below Halifax, and in order that he might reach Harrisburg in time, he began his services at 8 o'clock in the morning and closed at about 10½ o'clock, took dinner, and started at 11 o'clock and rode to Harrisburg, a distance of fifteen miles, arriving there at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. A large congregation had met together in the Bethel, on Mulberry street, where now the Harrisburg Hospital stands. Elder Winebrenner preached what is now known as the 1830 sermon on baptism. Immediately after the preaching, and between 3 and 4 o'clock, P. M., they proceeded to the Susquehanna river, and Mr. Erb baptized him, just above where the railroad bridge now is. This took place Sunday, July 4th, 1830 (see *Christian Index*). The text from which he preached on the above named memorable occasion was taken from Ephesians iv:4, 5—"There is * * * one baptism." He published it in a pamphlet at the time, and it has been since republished. Besides this sermon, he also published one in 1842, as well as another one in 1860, on the same subject.

The following is an account of one of the baptismal scenes at Harrisburg, in 1830, taken from the *Christian Index*:

"A day or two previous to the tenth of August, I was returning from a tour to the western country, and came to Harrisburg. Hearing that the ordinance of baptism was to be administered to a large number of persons, by immersion, I delayed my journey to witness the novel scene. About 11 A. M., on a delightful morning, I left my lodgings and proceeded to the place appointed for the ordinance. As I went I perceived on my left a company in solemn procession, moving towards the Susquehanna river. Their regular movement, singing and devout appearance affected my mind most sensibly. I followed the procession, and quickly we were at the water's edge. This exceeded all scenes I ever witnessed. The exercises at the river commenced with a hymn and devout prayer, afterwards an address, after which *twenty-five* men and *thirty* women presented themselves as candidates for the ordinance. What made the scene more striking to my mind was the fact that they had all been members of the German Reformed Church for many years. This I had from the mouth of one of the elders, a man who stands high amongst the citizens of the town, and was one of the candidates. The administrator walked down into the water, attended by the male candidates, two by two, and there he baptized them in a solemn manner. Then went down the females and submitted fearlessly to the command of the blessed Jesus. The scene was sweetly awful, tears found their way down my cheeks, my cold heart relented, I felt that God's Spirit was there in a special manner. I trust the opportunity and exercises

will never be forgotten by me; and I was not the only one that wept. Almost every face that met mine was suffused with tears; there appeared to be a long and deep spell upon the beholding multitude."

He issued the first edition of his *Revival Hymn Book* March 22d, 1825. It contained 360 hymns, and the demand for it was so great that in 1827 it had already passed through its third edition, to which he added an appendix of twelve hymns. He continued to add to it new and popular hymns, and it passed through twenty-seven editions. In its day it was the most popular hymn book issued, finding its place into many households, and the hymns were sung by thousands of people. They gave life to public worship, and were sung in strains that captivated many hearts and brought them to the feet of Jesus.

Many will call to mind with what fervor he sung his favorite hymns, such as his preferred invitation hymn, "Come, ye sinners, poor and needy;" his song of rejoicing, "Oh! how happy are they, who their Savior obey;" and his song of hope, "Jesus, my all, to heaven has gone," with the chorus, "There's a better day coming." He also published a *German Revival Hymn Book*; *A Brief View of the Church*; *The Seraphina* (a music book); a volume of *Sermons*; *A Treatise on Regeneration*; *The Reference and Pronouncing Testament: The Wandering Soul*, in German and English; and in connection with I. D. Rupp, he published the *History of Denominations in the United States*; lastly he compiled and edited the *Church*

Hymn Book, a work that met with, and is continuing to meet with, a degree of success that few hymn books have ever attained. These hymns will be sung and appreciated when most of the ephemeral hymns of the day will be buried in oblivion. He possessed the very rare faculty of striking the popular chord in hymnology.

He was the first editor of the *Gospel Publisher*, which began its issues June 5th, 1835, and he held that position till April, 1840. He conducted it with much zeal for evangelical faith, and in an exceedingly unsectarian manner. And when the *Gospel Publisher* in 1845 suspended for want of sufficient support, he established *The Church Advocate* May 1st, 1846, a small semi-monthly paper, at that time, at \$1.25 per year. He continued to edit it until May, 1857, at which time he sold it. His chief reason for selling it was "to get time to write more new books, reprint some of his old ones, and to travel more at large to preach the gospel and promote the work of God."

Elder Winebrenner's first wife died Tuesday, May 20th, 1834, aged about 32 years. Rev. Wm. R. DeWitt, of the Presbyterian Church, preached the funeral discourse.

He was married the second time by Elder James Mackey, Thursday, November 2d, 1837, to Mary H. Mitchell, of Harrisburg, with whom he had four children, one daughter and three sons, all of which, with his widow, are still living, as well as a daughter of the former marriage.

He was a brave leader in every good work, and feeling called to a great field of usefulness, he labored with a zeal

inspired by the grace of God. His soul was lit up with the divine fire, and he went forward fearlessly "conquering and to conquer."

In the anti-slavery work he was in the front at a time when it was decidedly unpopular and dangerous to be engaged in it. Born and raised in a slave State (Maryland), where slavery existed in its mildest form, he saw enough of its evils to make him a bold and determined foe to it in every shape. In furtherance of this project he aided in forming the first Anti-Slavery Society of Harrisburg, Pa., and was one of the managers of it. This meeting was held January 14th, 1836. At a meeting of the Harrisburg Anti-Slavery Society held in the meeting-house of the Church of God, on Friday evening, January 6th, 1836, he was appointed one of the delegates to represent said society in the State Anti-Slavery Convention that convened in that place, January 31st. January 22d, 1838, he was elected Corresponding Secretary of the Harrisburg Anti-Slavery Society.

On the Temperance question he had very decided views, and by precept and example showed determined and persistent opposition to everything that intoxicates.

So, too, in regard to the use of tobacco. From the pulpit and through the press he proclaimed that its use was unnecessary, expensive and injurious; but he was not violent, censorious or abusive in his opposition to any of these evils.

In all movements for the advancement and benefit of the human race he was pre-eminently abreast of the times, as was shown by the interest he always

took in agriculture, silk-culture, etc.; but in some of these things his zeal ran away with his judgment, as was shown in the *Morus Multicaulis* speculation.

The religious work grew and prospered, and through the instrumentality of an active and aggressive ministry, spread rapidly and greatly. God blessed these men's labors so much, and gave them such remarkable success, that an Eldership was organized, in Ohio, September 17th, 1836; and another in western Pennsylvania, March 4th, 1844. This made it necessary to change the name of the first organized Eldership, to that of East Pennsylvania. Elder Winebrenner, with a number of delegates from these three Annual Elderships, organized the first General Eldership of the Church of God, at Pittsburg, Pa., May 25th, 1845.

He lived to see the day when the body which he was the principle instrument, under God, in organizing, numbered hundreds of churches, thousands of members, and eleven Annual Elderships. At the present time there are fourteen Annual Elderships, more than four hundred licensed ministers, with many hundreds of churches, and thousands of members in sixteen States of the Union, to wit: Maine, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Arkansas, Texas, Indian Territory. Besides, many members of the Church of God are scattered in California, Oregon, Dakota, Minnesota, Colorado, Montana, and Washington Territory. These great results may be almost entirely attributed to him. Working under many difficulties, severe oppositions

and violent persecutions, God blessed him wonderfully in building the Church of the living God. He did not leave wealth, for he died poor; but he left a record on the imperishable roll of fame that thousands may covet, and many would give great earthly possessions to obtain.

Elder Winebrenner, who was an active minister for about forty years, often preaching every night, and three times on the Sabbath, for weeks and months at a time; besides, holding inquiry meetings through the day and at night, began to show signs of failing health. Nevertheless, his health was tolerably good until the meeting of the East Pa. Eldership at Goldsboro', in November, 1859, when he had a severe attack of cholera morbus, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. Though somewhat weak and emaciated, he attended the General Eldership at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, May 28, 1860. On his way home he took sick at New Brighton, Pa., but after two days' delay was able to return home. After this he preached only a few times, his health becoming more precarious daily. As his sickness was unto death, he lingered many weeks, severely afflicted with a complicated abdominal disease. Tuesday, September 11th, at 8 o'clock, P. M., he had a chill, and an attack of fainting, gradually sinking, till a quarter before one o'clock, A. M., Wednesday, 12th, when he quietly passed away;—so quietly, that those present did not know that he was gone. Elder A. X. Shoemaker, pastor of the Harrisburg church, and his own immediate family were the

only ones present. Many of his true and tried friends visited him at his residence in North street, Harrisburg, Pa., during his illness, and were deeply interested in his recovery; but to them all he spoke cheerfully of his bright hopes. To Elder E. H. Thomas he said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and because he lives, I shall live also." During his last hours he spoke to his pastor, and the pastor of his family, as follows: "Brother Shoemaker, preach Jesus while you have health." "O, the glory of preaching Jesus in health!" "Tell the brethren to stick together." "Stand up for Jesus! Stand up for Jesus!"

He died at the age of sixty-three years, five months and seventeen days. His funeral took place on Friday, September 14th, at 2 P. M., from the Methodist church, which was generously given for the purpose. Rev. Wm. Bishop, pastor of the Methodist church, made an appropriate and impressive prayer; and fitting addresses were made by Elders E. H. Thomas, James Mackey, Joseph Ross and A. X. Shoemaker, and the Middletown and Mechanicsburg choirs led the singing. The last rites, at the cemetery were conducted by Elders Wm. McFadden and A. X. Shoemaker, a large number of friends being present from the neighboring towns and country.

September 12th, 1860, the Harrisburg (Pa.) *Telegraph* noticed his death in the following language: "Elder John Winebrenner, of this city, died last night after a lingering illness. For years past the deceased has been prominently connected with the Church of

God in various capacities. As the founder of this branch of the Christian church, he accomplished a vast amount of good, and was honored and esteemed by the entire membership, embracing many thousands in different States of the Union. The deceased was a man of considerable ability, and indomitable energy, and triumphed over obstacles that would have proved impassible barriers to many men of less determined will similarly situated. He enjoyed the respect of our citizens generally, and his death will be sincerely lamented." The same paper in speaking of his funeral said: "All the vast audience were more or less affected; even strong men, unused to the melting mood, yielded to the sympathetic influence of the occasion, and let their tears mingle freely with those of the deeply afflicted mourners. At the close of the solemn services the remains of the deceased were conveyed to the cemetery, accompanied by his relatives and a large number of his friends and acquaintances, and consigned to their last resting place in that quiet and beautiful 'city of the dead.' He died, as he had lived, a

Christian, and has gone to his reward.
Requiescat in pace!"

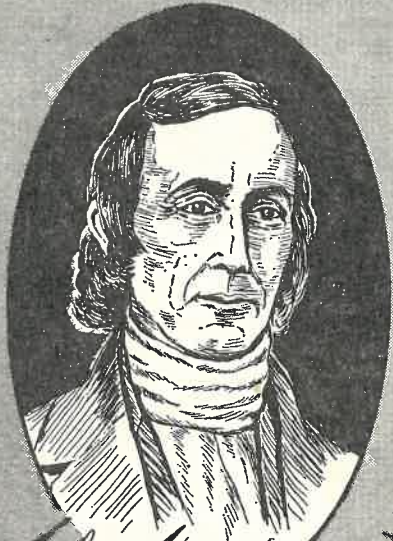
A monument was erected to his memory, by his friends, September 23d, 1868; which is hexagonal in form, and thirteen feet high, surmounted with an urn entwined with a spray of oak leaves. The tablets bear the following inscriptions:

"Erected by the Church of God to the memory of John Winebrenner, born in Frederick county, Maryland, March 25th, 1797. Died in Harrisburg, September 12th, 1860.

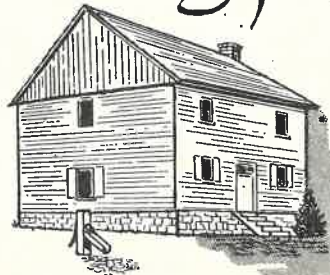
"An able minister of the New Testament,—earnest, and signally blest, in his efforts to save his fellow men. He has perpetuated his own memory, not on tables of stone, but on fleshy tables of the heart: 'They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever.' A successful reformer, he labored to build up the Church of God, she having one name, one faith, one baptism and one mission. This: To gather together in one all the children of God that are scattered abroad."

LEBANON, P.A.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania



John Winebrenner



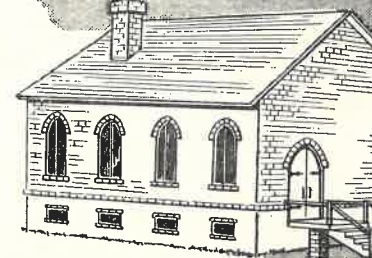
FIRST CHURCH BUILDING IN HARRISBURG BUILT IN 1787



FOURTH STREET CHURCH OF GOD BUILT IN 1854



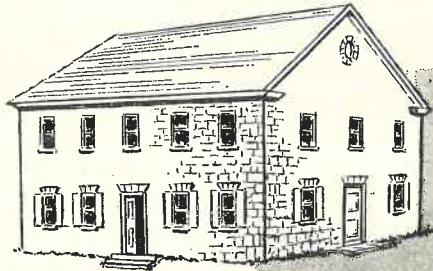
SALEM REFORMED CHURCH BUILT IN 1821 DURING WINEBRENNER'S PASTORATE



UNION BETHEL BUILT IN 1827

THE RIVER BANKS AT TIMES, IF WEATHER PERMITTED, WAS A PLACE OF GATHERING FOR WINEBRENNER AND HIS FOLLOWING BEFORE THE BETHEL WAS BUILT

Susquehanna River



PEACE CHURCH BUILT IN 1798 NEAR SHIREMANSTOWN

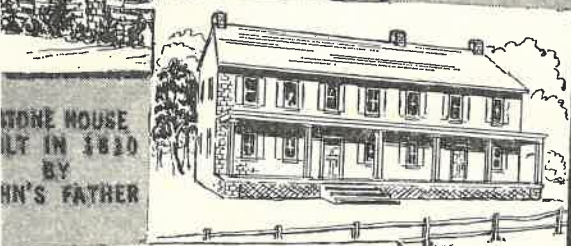
In 1820, the year of John Winebrenner's arrival in Harrisburg, the population of the town was approximately 3,000. Basically it was a German and Scotch-Irish community.

In 1812 it had been made the capital of Pennsylvania. Political concentration and development of inland transportation quickly stimulated the growth of what was once a small trading post town.

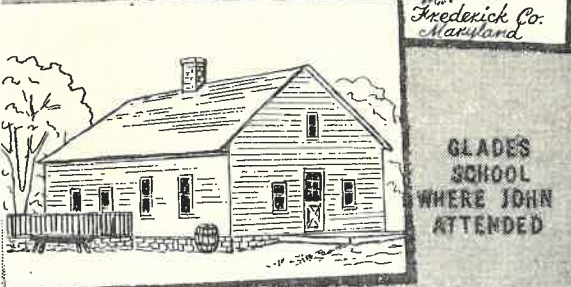
Although John Winebrenner left the busy city life of Philadelphia, he soon became engulfed in the problems and issues of small time community living.



BORN MARCH 25, 1797 IN A LOG HOUSE



STONE HOUSE BUILT IN 1820 BY JOHN WINEBRENNER'S FATHER



GLADES SCHOOL WHERE JOHN WINEBRENNER ATTENDED

Frederick Co. Maryland