

# Democratic Watchman

Terms \$2.00 A Year, in Advance

Bellefonte, Pa., June 7, 1895.

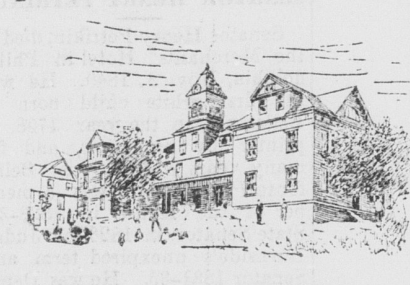
P. GRAY MEEK, Editor.

## THE GROWTH OF A SUPERB EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

Schools that have done much for an intelligent citizenship--One of them Founded with the Town--The Story of their Growth.

One element in the progress of our community during the past century to which the finger of pride has ever been pointing and is pointing still to-day; and which in the years long gone by created the attributes of "culture and refinement," so often applied to the county seat among the hills, is the excellent educational advantages that have been offered by our public and private schools.

Our earliest settlers seemed inspired with a thirst for education for themselves and their children, surely believing that "knowledge is the bulwark of our country, the basis of her government, the source of her glory and the prop of her institution," for when Centre county was organized in 1800, James Dunlop and James Harris, who owned the land at that time which is the site of our own Bellefonte today, granted to Andrew Gregg, Wm. Swanzy and Robert Boggs, as trustees of the new county, certain "lots and lands in and adjoining the town of Bellefonte" a part of the proceeds of which should be devoted to the support of an academy or public school.



BELLEFONTE ACADEMY 1850.

In January 1805, the act was approved whereby the "Bellefonte Academy" was incorporated. The first section of the act provided that there shall be established and hereby is established, in the town of Bellefonte in the county of Centre, an academy or public school for the education of youth in the useful arts, sciences and literature by the name style and title of "Bellefonte Academy." The second section provided for the first board of trustees to consist of Rev. Henry R. Wilson, James Dunlop, Roland Curtin, Wm. Petrick, Robert McClanahan and John Hall, of Bellefonte; Rev. Wm. Stewart, Andrew Gregg and James Potter, of Potter township; James Duncan, John Hall, and Jacob Hosterman, of Haines township; John Kridler, of Miles township; Jacob Taylor, of Half Moon township; David Whitehill, of Patton township; Richard Miles and John Dunlop, of Spring township; William McEwen and Thomas McCalmon, of Centre township; John Fearon, Matthew Allison and James Boyd, of Bald Eagle township. It further provided that these trustees shall have perpetual succession and be able to sue and be sued."

In January 1806, the academy received a grant from the State treasury of two thousand dollars for the erection of a building. Rev. Henry R. Wilson, was honored with the first principalship and was succeeded in 1800, by Rev. James Linn, who also was pastor of the Presbyterian church. Because of difficulties experienced at times in securing suitable principals there were interims when the academy proper was closed while two or three of the school rooms, perchance, were used by permission of the trustees by some teacher or teachers of private schools. Dr. Linn continued as principal for a brief period and then came some of the interims alluded to above. Mr. Chamberlain succeeded as the next regular principal and he was followed by Robert Baird, in 1818. Mr. Baird, afterwards became eminent as a traveler and author, visiting Europe nine times and writing many popular books such as "The Union of Church and State in New England," "Visit to Northern Europe," "Religion in America," "Protentantism in Italy," etc. Rev. J. B. McCarrell, a member of the associate Reformed church, was a principal also about this time in the century. Presbyterianism seemed to be the faith of a majority of the principals and yet the academy has never been sectarian, on the other hand it has been open to students representing every tenet and creed and even to-day has on its rolls pupils from every church in the community.

It was during Mr. McCarrell's, principalship in 1823, that the title of the academy site was vested in the trustees. The granting clause reads as follows: "The said James Harris and Nancy, his wife, for and on account of their desire and wish to encourage and promote literature, and in consideration of one silver dollar to them in hand paid by the trustees of the Bellefonte academy, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, have given, granted," &c., &c.

Old Dickinson College produced the next principal in the person of Alford Armstrong, who assumed control in 1824, with twelve pupils attending. Among the twelve were James Burnside, son of Judge Thomas Burnside, who himself afterwards became Judge; the lamented Edward C. Humes, for so many years the esteemed president of

the First National bank; John Norris; Robert McClelland, William Miles, Charles Huston. The term of the next principal, William Hamilton, was short and he was soon succeeded by John Livingstone, whose term lasted from 1837 to 1845, when he resigned owing to poor health.

Another short term was Prof. Phillips, he taking charge in 1846, and resigning in 1847. Prof. Armstrong was recalled at this juncture and continued as principal for several years. Originally there was no woman's department in the school. About the year 1843, an additional building was erected adjoining the original structure and used for a few years as a "female seminary," under control of a special board of trustees. In 1852 the trustees of the academy appointed a committee in the interest of a plan to unite the two boards of the academy and female seminary and of using the building as a high school in connection with the public schools of the borough. The plan was effected and for a time a high school was conducted as suggested.

The academy, for several years after 1854, was not in operation as a classical institution, though the buildings were used for public and select school purposes. However, in 1868, a new life was infused into the academy and a new epoch began in the educational interests of the town which has been marked with most flattering success. In that year the trustees again took possession of the buildings and Rev. J. P. Hughes, the present principal, was elected to that position at a meeting held on March 23, 1868. Among other principals who might be mentioned are J. B. Shugert, father of S. T. Shugert, Esq., Robert McBride, Moses Williamson, and others. The academy rolls of these earlier days included such names as Judge James Burnside, Hon. Robert J. Walker, Secretary of Treasury under Buchanan, Col. Gregg, Judge Samuel Linn, E. C. Humes, Edward and Evan Blanchard, Ex-Gov. Curtin, E. W. Hale, Jacob Thomas, W. P. Wilson, Austin Curtin, Dr. George Harris, J. P. Harris, W. W. Montgomery, W. P. Humes, Hon. J. G. Hall, of Ridgway, J. D. Shugert, the Valentines and others.

The facilities at the academy, according to Prof. Armstrong's speech made at the academy reunion in 1874, were very meagre. He described the main school room as it was in 1824, when he entered it as having "four windows, two facing the town on the east and two toward the spring, with furniture consisting of a few pine benches and two heavy oaken tables sufficiently large for eight or ten boys to sit around each. A heavy old six plated stove standing in the middle of the room and a hickory broom in the corner completed the furnishings." But since those days great changes have been wrought and by reason of successive improvements made at different periods during Mr. Hughes' long and successful term of 27 years as principal, the academy stands to-day an honor and a credit to the town not only in regard to the high excellence and thoroughness of the educational work done in it, but from an aesthetic point of view, it is a very attractive looking building, located as it is on the most beautiful site in town affording a most picturesque view of the town and surrounding country.

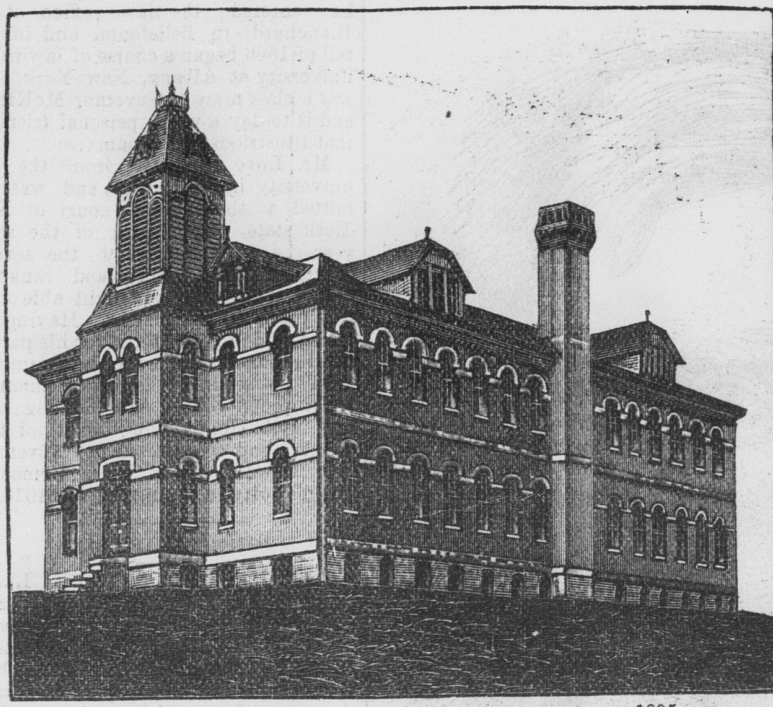
Mr. Hughes graduated at Princeton College N. J., in 1850, pursued a theological course at the seminary and was then called to teach mathematics, in "Luzerne Presbyterian Institute" Luzerne county, Pa. From there he accepted a call to assist in the Edge Hill school at Princeton, then under the charge of Dr. Cattell, who afterwards became the distinguished president of Lafayette College. Mr. Hughes eventually became principal remaining in Princeton nine years, when he accepted a call to the principalship of the Presbyterian academy at Logansport, Ind. He had been there but three years when an urgent invitation was extended to him to take charge of the Bellefonte academy. Mr. Hughes was anxious to get among the mountains of Pennsylvania and he gladly accepted the invitation, assuming charge in 1868, as before said.

Until that year the original school buildings had been used without having undergone any extensive repairs. But then a new impulse was given to the school by a thorough remodeling of the buildings, adapting them perfectly to the important functions of academical education. Later also in the year 1872, additional improvements were made, and the facilities of the work of the academy considerably increased by the erection of a large brick structure containing dormitories and recitation rooms. Over one hundred boarding and day pupils representing every section of the union, were at that time enrolled at this institution.

During the past quarter of a century happiest success has crowned the work of the academy in the advancement of its graduates to positions of trust and responsibility in business and to the highest ranks in their respective classes in such colleges as Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, Mt. Holyoke, Princeton, Haverford, Franklin and Marshall, Lafayette, Penna. State and others.

The year 1891 witnessed the next effort to still further improve the Academy. Several thousand dollars were raised by voluntary subscription and the trustees were thereby enabled to remodel the buildings in true modern style and beautify the surrounding grounds. During the past year steam heat was put into the residence of the principal and the school building so that now with all its improvements the Bellefonte Academy is as attractive, commodious and comfortable as any similar institution in this or adjoining states.

The year 1894-1895, will always be remembered as one of the most prosperous in the school's history. One hundred pupils, equally divided between the



BELLEFONTE HIGH SCHOOL, EAST BISHOP STREET, 1895.

sexes were enrolled during the fall and winter terms and more advanced work accomplished than during any preceding, due in part to the fact that the requirements for entrance into colleges are advancing each year. The mathematical English, classical, scientific and primary departments have been under the control of teachers of wide experience and it goes without saying that the instruction imparted is of the highest order. Of the graduating class this year at the academy some will go to Mt. Holyoke College Mass.: Some will enter Princeton and others will identify themselves with our worthy institution, The Pennsylvania State College, while others will teach, having already passed their examinations. And thus our educational work is going on each passing year and through the eyes of hope we can see educational privileges untold awaiting the generations of the future and picture that enjoyment coming to one and all that Mann declares "education alone can give, best in quality and infinite in quantity."

In the collection of relics now on exhibition no object should excite more interest than the old Academy bell which, bearing the date of 1802, and a large cross has been ringing the children of the century to school on each successive day, many of whom developed into Penna's noblest and proudest sons. And it is interesting to reflect that it is still performing its wonted mission as it rings out upon the air in morning and in afternoon. Those who once responded to its summons are now its trustees who comprise many of the most prominent and influential citizens of the community.

### PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The first meeting ever held by the citizens of Bellefonte under the laws providing for a public school system in the State, was held at the Court House on the third Friday of September A. D., 1834. At this meeting John Rankin, Charles McBride, Dr. Constance Curtin, James Armor, Samuel Harris and Samuel Pettit were elected, school directors. The board, thus elected, organized on the 27th day of the same month by electing John Rankin, president and Charles McBride, secretary. At a meeting of the citizens of the borough held, on the 17th day of November, 1834, at which Dr. Curtin presided and James Armor, acted as secretary, it was "Resolved, that an additional tax of one mill on the dollar be laid on the assessments of the borough, in addition to that agreed upon at the joint meeting of the several township delegates and the county commissioners."

At the spring election of 1835 Hamilton Humes, and Dr. John Harris, were elected members of the board of directors and on April 18, 1835, at the organization of the board, Mr. Humes, was elected President and James Armor, secretary, and Dr. Curtin and Samuel Pettit, were appointed a committee to ascertain the amount of available funds, while Dr. Harris was appointed a delegate to meet the commissioners at their next meeting with the township delegates.

At the next meeting of the board (April 20, 1835), the committee on funds reported as available funds \$60,000 from taxation. At this meeting James Armor and Dr. John Harris, were appointed to engage school rooms, and the board agreed to advertise for two teachers for six months. Another committee consisting of Samuel Pettit, Samuel Harris, James Armor and Dr. Harris, were appointed a committee to ascertain the number of children in the borough of suitable age to go to school; and Dr. Curtin and Dr. Harris, were appointed a committee to examine "Cobb's series of school books" and report upon the propriety of adopting them.

At a meeting held on the 28th, of the same month the proper committee reported that there were one hundred and seventy-five children in the borough of suitable age to attend school. The committee on books, after making an elaborate report on the minutes, of Cobb's series of books, offered the following resolution: Resolved, that in opinion of the directors, "Cobb's series of school books" is admirably adapted to the use of common schools in Pennsylvania, and that they hereby direct that these "books" be used in the schools of the district under their charge.

The board laid a school tax of two and a-half mills and determined to open school on the first day of Jan. 1836, for a term of four months.

Mr. Hamilton, at a salary of \$300 per month, was to teach all branches of education required and find his own school room. The other teachers were Geo. W. Wasson, 2nd school, \$25.00 per month. Charles McBride, 3rd school, \$20.00 per month and Mrs. Dunlop 4th school, \$15.00 per month. Rooms were furnished for the last three teachers.

This in brief is the history of the first years public school work in Bellefonte.

The men already named who constituted the board for the first year were all men of good business habits, of more than ordinary intelligence, of strict integrity and high moral character.

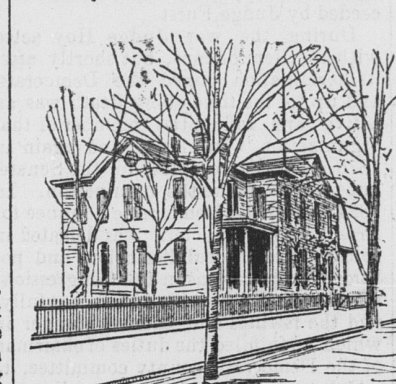
As early as 1836, the schools of the borough were graded and classified; and the directors required one lesson a day, at least, to be read out of the Bible and Testament.

In 1841, the board of directors contracted with J. J. & G. Alexander to build a school house capable of accommodating four schools for the sum of \$1,270.00. At this time children of school age in the borough numbered 275. All the branches of a liberal education were at this time required to be taught in the public schools of the borough and the reading of the scriptures at least once a day insisted upon.

The schools of the borough seemed to have little trouble until 1846, when it was reported that there were some cases of insubordination in the High school, which resulted in the resignation of the principal in the middle of the term. From this time to 1854, the progress of the schools was very creditable, the board adopting the best text books that could be secured, visiting the schools each month, taking note of the advancement of the scholars in their studies, and promoting them to the higher grades as they became qualified.

It is recorded in the minutes in 1856, that five cases of insubordination occurred in the female branch of the High school, and as a punishment four of the girls were transferred to the male department of the school. At this time the schools were separated according to sex. In the fall of 1856, the High school was transferred to the lower room in the north wing of the Academy. In 1862, an agreement was entered into with the trustees of the Academy by which the High school and the Academy were consolidated.

In 1855, the teacher of the High school was constituted the principal of all the public schools of the borough.



THE NORTH WARD PUBLIC SCHOOL.

From 1862 to 1868, the schools of the borough or most of them were located in the Academy. In 1868, however, the board of trustees of the Academy gave notice to the board of directors that they desired possession of the Academy by September of the same year. This caused the board of directors to search for other quarters for the public schools and led to the appointment of William McClelland who was then president, and John Hoffer treasurer being appointed a committee to purchase a lot upon which to erect a building for school purposes. This committee purchased the lot upon which the stone school building is now located from Hon. H. N. McAllister and E. C. Humes for the sum of \$5,000 and the building now there was commenced at once and was completed so that the schools first assembled there in the fall of 1869, under the superintendency of professor (now Governor) D. H. Hastings.

The schools continued under the direction of Prof. Hastings and greatly prospered, until the close of the school year in the spring of 1875. Hastings was succeeded in the principalship by W. C. Heinle, now a member of the bar of Centre county. Mr. Heinle, was succeeded by T. M. Balliet in 1876, now of Boston, Mass., and who ranks among the best educators of the country. Mr. Balliet, was succeeded by James H. Rankin, who for the second time became the principal in 1877. Mr. Rankin was succeeded to the principalship of the schools by professor David M. Lieb, in 1878, who continued in this position until the close of the school year in 1892, when by reason of failing health he declined a re-election. The board then elected David O. Eiters who now occupies the place.

During the superintendency of professor Lieb the schools became so crowded that it was necessary to obtain more room. In 1883, rooms were rented in what was then known as the "Humes block," and the High school taken from the stone building to those rooms, first under the principalship of J. C. Meyer, (now a member of the bar) a very able, thorough and conscientious teacher. Prof. D. O. Eiters succeeded Mr. J. C. Meyer as principal of the High school and continued in this position until he

\*To this point the facts are taken from a sketch of the schools contained in a history of the county published in 1877.

was elected Superintendent of the schools of the county in 1890.

In the summer of 1886, the school board purchased a lot, containing about two acres of ground, on east Bishop street, and erected thereon what is since known as the "brick school building." This building was completed and schools first opened in it on the 19th day of September 1887. The High school was then taken from the rooms in the "Humes block" to the fine large room prepared for it in the new building.

From the opening of the schools in 1887, the principal was only required to teach part of his time in order that he might be better able to exercise a closer and better supervision over all the schools. This proved to be a great help in the efficient organization of the schools.

Professor Lieb was one of the most thorough scholars and efficient principals our schools, in all probability, ever had. Affable in manner, quick to see and prompt to act, enabled him to do an immense amount of work in the shortest possible time.

The school plant of the borough as it stands now, all in good repair and splendid trim, is valued at \$50,000. The schools to-day are in a prosperous condition under a corps of excellent teachers. They have taken a great step forward since the completion of the brick building. Young men and women are so well trained and instructed that they enter college directly from the High school.

### NOTES.

In 1850, A. G. Curtin, afterwards Governor, resigned his position as a member of the school board, and it is recorded that he was nineteen years a member of the board and that this service was consecutive, with the exception of the three years he was secretary of the commonwealth under Governor Pollock.

John Hoffer, who died in December 1885, was a member of the board of directors for almost 20 years--consecutively. The 21 years would have been completed by June 1886.

Hon. A. O. Furst, was a member of the board for nine consecutive years 1872-1881. During all this time he served as president of the board.

John P. Harris, at present the efficient treasurer of the board, is now serving his eighth term and by its expiration in June 1897, will have served continuously for 24 years.

D. F. Fortney, president of the board, has been thirteen years a member of the board and for the last eleven years has been its president.

W. B. Rankin has served continuously on the board since June 1884, and for the last nine years has been its secretary.

H. D. Yeger has just completed a service of nine years as member of the board. The other members of the board are Charles Smith who has served since 1890. J. L. Runkle has been a member of the board since 1889 and John I. Oleswing serving his second term--not consecutively, however--each in the first term.

After June 1, 1895, Robert Cole will be succeeded by R. S. Brouse; J. L. Runkle by Dr. J. E. Ward and H. D. Yeger by Isaac Underwood.

Present corps of teachers are principal and superintendent, Prof. D. O. Eiters.

Prof. S. L. Ammerman, principal of the High school; Prof. A. K. Ruit, Assistant; Miss Ella Levy, assistant; Stone Building; John F. Harrison, senior grammar; Miss Kate Hewes, assistant; Misses Jennie Strickland, boys junior grammar; Annie McCaffrey, girls junior grammar; Millie Smith, girls intermediate; Jennie Longacre, boys intermediate; Bessie Dorworth, primary.

Brick Building--Roy Mattern, senior grammar; Carrie Weaver, junior grammar; B. Agnes Curry, intermediate; Rose J. Fox, 2nd primary; Bella K. Rankin, 1st primary.

### Democratic Primaries.

On Saturday afternoon next, June 8, the Democratic primaries throughout Centre county will be held at the respective polling places. While there is no contest on hand for the various officers, Democrats should make it a point to be on hand and see that the same is duly held.

The following Tuesday the county convention meets in the Court House at Bellefonte.

### The West Ward Caucus.

The West ward Democratic caucus will meet in the WATCHMAN office at 8 o'clock, this Friday evening. A good turn out is desired.

WANTED--At Lyon & Co's store, Bellefonte, 50,000 lbs. wool.



Built by Daniel Garman in 1880 opposite the Court House. The building is 52 by 90 feet with a stage 30 by 52 feet. It has a seating capacity of 1000 and is regarded as one of the handsomest opera houses in the interior of the State.

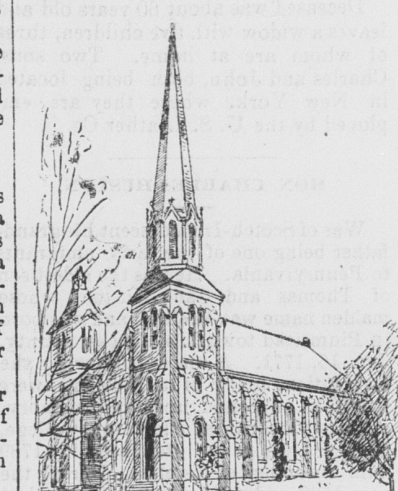
800 pair of pants at 40 cts. on the dollar. Strictly all wool, good quality wear and sewing guaranteed at \$1.50 pair. They are actually worth \$3 to \$5.50.--LYON & CO. 40-20-31

## CHURCHES OF BELLEFONTE.

Many and Beautiful Churches Their Growth and Work.

There are few towns in the State that boast of as many and beautiful churches as Bellefonte and in addition to these other organizations in christian work have added much to bring about the remarkable atmosphere of reverence for the Sabbath that has always characterized the town.

In presenting these sketches we only regret that we are unable to produce pictures of the old churches in the town, but would call your attention to the picture on the 1st page in which the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches, the first to be built, can be recognized. Very readily. Of all Bellefonte's institutions none have done more for the real good of the town than her churches and bands of christian workers. It is but right that you should know something of these and in view of our centenary we append the following sketches of each organization now working here.



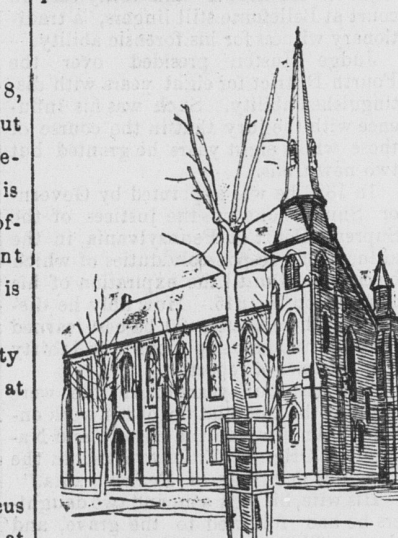
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

AS early as 1795 application had been made for supplies for Bellefonte and Milesburg, but no regular congregation was organized at Bellefonte until 1800. Rev. Henry R. Wilson was the first regular pastor and he was installed April 20th, 1803. His charge embraced Bellefonte and Lick Run. He remained until October 3rd, 1809. On the 17th of the following April, Rev. James Linn was installed pastor and he continued as such for almost fifty-eight years, an almost unprecedented period of pastoral relation. On October 18th, 1818, the first Sabbath school in Bellefonte was organized at this church and known as "The Bellefonte Sabbath School Association." It was union in its character and may be regarded as the parent of the present schools conducted with the different congregations.

Mr. Linn continued pastor of the church until his death, February 23, 1868. He had been assisted in the pastorate by Rev. J. H. Barnard, 1861-1866, Rev. Alfred Yeomans, 1866 until Mr. Linn's death, when he acted as full pastor until 1869, being succeeded in 1860 by Rev. W. T. Wylie. The present pastor, Rev. Dr. Wm. Laurie, D. D., succeeded Mr. Wylie in 1876.

The present church, on Spring street, was erected in 1870. It is a handsome red sand stone edifice and together with the parsonage is valued at about \$50,000. The membership is about 350 and the Sunday school numbers about 270. The interior of the church has lately been remodeled and now presents a magnificent appearance. A new \$5,000 pipe organ was among the improvements.

Adjoining the church property is a beautiful gray sand stone chapel done in rubble work which makes one of the prettiest structures in town.



THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THE early records of the Bellefonte class are lost, so the date of its organization is not known. In 1822 the first church was built and the Sabbath school was organized in June, 1823. In 1824 there were three classes in Bellefonte, and the appointment belonged to the Bellefonte circuit, which included a great many preaching points in Penna's Valley.

The present church was built in 1875, through the energetic efforts of the pastor Rev. George Miller. It was dedicated in July 1876 and cost \$20,000. It is a very fine brick edifice on the corner of Spring and Howard streets. At that time school superintendent. The building committee was W. V. Hughes, G. W. Tate, M. W. Cowdick, John G. Love, D. Z. Kline, Wm. McClelland and Rev. Geo. W. Miller. The parsonage is on East Linn street and was built in 1885 by Rev. M. K. Foster. It is of red brick also. The value of the combined property is about \$25,000. The present membership of the church is 450 and the Sabbath school numbers 400. Among the pastors were Jas. Mullen, M. L. Snyser, Geo. W. Miller, A. D. Yocum, John Donahue, G. D. Penacker, M. K. Foster, 9 months, J. A. Woodcock 8 months, D. S. Monroe, W. A. Houck, J. H. McGarrish, and J. W. Rue.