

PETER WENTZ.

This is a utilitarian age in which effort must contribute to some line of usefulness whereby may be promoted the welfare of an individual or of the public. The marked energy and enterprise of the west has brought about a marvelous change in the cities situated on this side of the Alleghanies. This change is the result of the aggregate effort of thousands of enterprising, wide-awake and industrious citizens, of which class Peter Wentz is a representative.

He was born in Perry county, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1828. His father, Peter Wentz, Sr., died on the 6th of July of that year, before his son's birth, being only twenty-three years of age. His wife bore the maiden name of Anna Berrier, and for seventy-two years she remained a widow. She reared her three children at the home of her father-in-law, and by her own earnest efforts provided for her little ones and gave them the privilege of acquiring good, practical education in the public schools.

Peter Wentz, of this review, learned the miller's trade of his sister's husband in Pennsylvania, and after following that pursuit for three years in the Keystone state he came to Richland county, Ohio, in 1849, locating in London, where he resided with an uncle, Henry Wentz. Here he engaged in chopping wood and in teaming, in connection with railroad construction. He also made shaved shingles of oak, and in August, 1850, he accepted a position as the head miller at Plymouth, and in 1852 came to his present mill in the employ of A. C. Welch and received two hundred dollars per year and his board in compensation for the service. In 1854, however, he returned to Plymouth, where he conducted a steam gristmill, for one dollar a day. In 1882 Mr. Wentz purchased his present desirable mill property. The building was erected there forty years ago by A. C. Welch and is operated by water power, supplied by two never-failing springs. In the pioneer days two men who came here to make homes placed their stakes for pre-emption claims on these two springs, and on the original papers giving them the ownership of the land is the signature of James Monroe. They are still in the possession of the family. The first owner was John Welch, the grand-

father of Mrs. Wentz. In addition to his milling operations Mr. Wentz was interested in farming, being the owner of two valuable tracts of land.

On the 7th of November, 1854, Mr. Wentz was united in marriage to Margaret Benton Welch, who was born on the farm where she now resides. July 4, 1830, her parents being John and Janette (Wilson) Welch, the former a native of Pennsylvania, and the latter of Connecticut. Five children were born to our subject and his wife and the family circle yet remains unbroken by death. These are Anna A., the wife of James P. Seward, of Mansfield, by whom she has one daughter; John Lincoln, who lives in the new residence on the home farm, which he cultivates: he and his wife have one daughter; James C., who also is living on the old homestead and is the father of the only grandson in the family; Burt C., of Shelby, who has a wife and five daughters; and Frank P., who also is married and works one of his father's farms.

Mr. Wentz is a Republican, and, as every true American citizen should do, feels a deep interest in his party and its growth. He has for two terms been township trustee and discharged his duties with promptness and fidelity. All that he has been acquired through his own efforts. He entered upon his business career without capital, but he possessed determination and a willingness to work. Indolence and idleness constituted no part of his nature, and as his financial resources have increased he has made judicious investments which have classed him among the substantial residents of his community. His business methods are progressive. He is systematic in all that he does, and as the architect of his own fortunes he has builded wisely and well.