

JAMES ZEHNER.

James Zehner was born in Milton township, in what is now Ashland county, January 19, 1835, a son of Peter and Mary (Cook) Zehner, who had but two children, twins, the sister of our subject being Mary, now the widow of Christ Stover, of Ashland, Ohio. The father was born in Schuylers county, Pennsylvania, and was a son of Peter Zehner, a native of that state and of German extraction. The latter emigrated with his family to Ohio and entered from the government a tract of land of one hundred and sixty acres in what is now Milton township, Ashland county. There he and his wife spent their remaining days, his attention being given to the work of the farm. He had previously operated a sawmill in Pennsylvania, but on arriving in Ohio he built a log cabin in the midst of the forest and began to clear and cultivate his land, which was transformed into a very rich and valuable fields. In politics he was an old-line Whig until the dissolution of the party, after which he became an ardent Republican. He was also a consistent member of the Lutheran church and was a man of much influence in the neighborhood, highly respected for his many virtues.

Peter Zehner, the father of our subject, was reared to manhood amid the wild scenes of the frontier and with the family shared in all the hardships and trials of pioneer life. He wedded Miss Mary Cook and with his bride settled on the old homestead, working with his father until his death, which occurred in 1844, when he was still a young man. His wife had preceded him to the home beyond several months, and their twin children, then nine years of age, were reared by their paternal grandparents. The subject of this review acquired his education in the common schools, and at the age of sixteen went to live with his uncle, Henry Zehner, who also resided on the home farm, which he afterward purchased in connection with his brother Isaac. There Mr. Zehner remained until the time of his marriage, in 1859, Miss Catherine Letz, a native of Pennsylvania, becoming his wife. She was a daughter of John Letz, who emigrated to Ohio in 1850, settling in Milton township.

When sixteen years of age, James Zehner had apprenticed himself to the carpenter's trade and continuously followed that calling until 1862, when the Civil war caused a cessation in building, and he accordingly removed to his

father-in-law's farm, where he entered upon an active career as an agriculturist. There he remained for eight years, and on the expiration of that period purchased a farm of one hundred and sixty acres four miles west of Ashland, in Milton township. That continued to be his place of abode until 1885, when he sold the property and removed to his present farm in Butler township, becoming the owner of two hundred and ten acres of rich and productive land. The fields yield to him an excellent return for the care and labor he bestows upon them. The farm is one of the best improved in the county, being supplied with all modern accessories and conveniences, including the latest improved machinery, substantial buildings for the shelter of grain and stock and a pleasant residence.

Unto Mr. and Mrs. Zehner have been born seven children, as follows: John T., a carpenter of Wabash county, Indiana; Samuel, a farmer of Butler township; Esther, now the wife of Irvin Schweyer, who runs her father's farm; Ella, the wife of Judd Cline, an agriculturist of Franklin township; H. Harmon, who is living in Cleveland, Ohio, where he conducts a grocery store; Dora, at home; and Kate, the wife of Alvin Wolford, a farmer of Blooming Grove township.

Mr. Zehner is unswerving in his advocacy of Republican principles, believing that the platform of the party contains the best elements of good government. He is a member of the Lutheran church and contributes liberally to the support of all Christian and charitable work. His life is in harmony with his professions, and in business circles he sustains an unassailable reputation by reason of his trustworthy methods. He is a man of ambition and much energy and his success in life is due entirely to his own efforts. His persistency of purpose has been the chief element of his success.

"Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves.
His slightest action or inaction serves
The one great aim."