

located on the corner of Spring and Second streets. Its foundations were laid in May, but before its walls were half up the subscription pledged was exhausted and the progress of our enterprise suddenly arrested. In that great extremity Brother Alanson Sweet waived his preference for the east side of the river and furnished the men and money that carried the work forward with such remarkable dispatch, that on the 3d of January, 1844, it was dedicated, and in the evening the pastor elect, after a probation of two years, was publicly installed.

“As I stood by Brother Sweet day after day on the walls, watching the progress of an undertaking so dear to my heart, I think I had some of the inward experiences of Eliashib the High Priest, as he stood by the side of Nehemiah on the walls of Jerusalem. For, as it was his task to build the ‘sheep-gate,’ it was mine to assist in hoisting all the timber for the roof and steeple and in laying the shingles.”

REV. JOHN J. MITER, D. D., son of Thomas and Eleanor Miter, was born in Lansingburg, New York, March 20, 1809. He was baptized in the Episcopal Church, with which his father was connected. His mother was a member of the Presbyterian Church. Thomas Miter, the father, died December 16, 1822, and two years later the mother followed, leaving the young lad, at the age of thirteen, orphaned. For a few years after this the boy was taken by his brother, who was in command of a vessel plying on the Hudson, with him in his trips up and down the river. During the Winter of 1826-7 the young man was, by some physical ailment, kept in Troy. During this season occurred in this city the remarkable revival of religion under the preaching of Dr. Beman, assisted by Messrs. Kirk and Finney, under whose influence young Miter was converted. His ability, which showed an early development, attracted the attention of a wealthy physician Dr. Robbins, a convert at the same revival, who proposed to the young man to commence at once a course of study for the ministry, offering to render the pecuniary help necessary. The offer was accepted. Mr. Miter commenced his academic studies in the Fall of 1827 which were completed in four years. From there he went to the Lane Seminary to complete his theological course, but impaired health caused his departure at the end of the first year. He afterwards joined a class which gathered in Troy under the tuition of Beman and Kirk, with whom he finished the last two years of his theological studies. On the completion of these studies Mr. Miter received license to preach from the Presbytery of Troy. But he was again prostrated by sickness. On his recovery his physician recommended change of climate. Agreeably to the advice of the friend who had favored his education, and following also, the bent of his own inclinations he turned his steps toward the young State Illinois, in the Spring of 1837. After serving in the pulpit of the First Church of Chicago for a few weeks he was invited to the little village of Hadley, just organized by settlers from old Hadley, Massachusetts. For about eight months he remained in charge there, serving most acceptably. A call then came from Knoxville, near the center of the State. This call was accepted and in 1838 Mr. Miter was ordained pastor of the Church in that place. Under his earnest efforts the church flourished and prospered greatly. After two years labor in this field he returned East and in Glenville, New York, on the eighth day of June, 1840, was joined in marriage to Miss Elizabeth D. Ayers, which companionship, there commenced, lasted unbroken for thirty-five years. In June, 1841, a call was extended to Mr. Miter to take charge of the newly formed congregation at Milwaukee. The call was at first refused, but a Higher Power had willed it otherwise and at length, yielding to the importunities of the brethren from the then young city, Mr. Miter packed his goods in one wagon, took his invalid wife and her first born in a second, and thus traversed the two hundred and thirty-three miles intervening between his Illinois and Wisconsin homes. Of his labors and life while in Milwaukee an extended history is given elsewhere. For fifteen years he labored unceasingly for the good of his Master, and the upbuilding of his cause. Then failing health constrained him to tender his resignation, which was at length reluctantly accepted by the congregation. In 1860 he served as pastor for three months of the Hanover street Congregational Church, but bad health again caused his resignation. In July, 1864, he was installed as pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Beaver Dam, at which post he remained until his death, May 5, 1870.

In 1869 the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon Mr. Miter by Beloit College, the aims of which he had earnestly supported from the first. His last sermon was preached on the first Sunday in April, 1875. For several years preceding there had been seen an increasing feebleness and an examination of his case held in April showed that the frail body could not hold out much longer, and on the fifth of May fitly closed the earthly life of this honored servant of God. His funeral was attended by a large concourse not only of his own parishioners, but members of other churches who thus united to pay the last tribute to one whose pure life and earnest labors had endeared him to the whole community.