

1900. She and her husband saw this country in its state of almost primitive wildness, and encountered all the hardships and faced all the perils of frontier life. But they bore their destiny bravely and performed its duties faithfully, in accordance with the heroic spirit of the pioneers, whose exploits in various places embody many of the most thrilling and spectacular features of American history.

Elmer B. Ray shared the fate of country boys of his day in Missouri. He worked on his father's farm, attending the district school in the neighborhood of his home when he had opportunity, and reached manhood with no other prospect in life than that of following the occupation of his forefathers. He had, however, one advantage over many of his boyhood associates. He was allowed to take a finishing course of instruction at Leonard college, and this brought him near to his majority. So, after working a short time longer at home, he began farming on his own account on a farm of 120 acres in the vicinity of Shelbyville. Some time afterward he moved to his father's farm, which he cultivated during the next seven years.

But, while he was an excellent farmer and found both pleasure and profit in his occupation as such, he had a longing for mercantile life and mingling somewhat in the great world of business. Accordingly, he moved to Shelbina and opened a livery and sales stable. The results have realized his hopes of advancement and proved that his venture was not a mistake. He made a success of his present business and won a reputation for himself as a capable and enterprising

manager of it. His stable was known throughout a large extent of the surrounding country and to hosts of traveling men for the excellence of its equipment and service, and its sales feature was equally well known and popular.

On November 14, 1900, Mr. Ray was united in marriage with Miss Jennie Rankin, a native of this state. He is a prominent member of the Order of Odd Fellows, in whose progress he takes an interest and an active part. His religious connection is with the Christian church, and in this he is also zealous and serviceable, especially in the affairs of the congregation of which he is a member, but he is helpful to all churches without regard to creed or denominational differences.

In connection with the interests of his city and county Mr. Ray is a man of public spirit and enterprise. He is always ready to bear his portion of the burden of improvements and assist every worthy undertaking in the most practical and effective way. And he is intelligent and far-seeing in respect to such matters, and never narrow, obstinate or dogmatic. He expresses his own views freely and as freely accords to every other citizen the same right. And he welcomes every suggestion and examines it carefully, giving it weight in proportion to its merit as he sees it. He is universally regarded as one of the most enterprising and progressive citizens of the county, and as such is held in high esteem.

MARVIN WHITBY.

"Equal to either fortune," was the motto of Lord Byron, a mighty though

erring spirit, and the manner in which he lived up to it half redeemed his fame from the reproach due to even his grosser errors. Without involving anything of error, and in its best sense, this motto might be applied to Marvin Whitby, of Clarence, this county, which has been his home and the seat of his interesting career for many years. For he has been tried by both extremes of fortune and never seriously disturbed by either.

Mr. Whitby was born at Canton, Lewis county, Missouri, on January 27, 1849, and comes of good old Maryland and Kentucky stock. He is a grandson of William B. Whitby, who was born and reared in Maryland, and a son of Augustus E. Whitby, who was also a native of that state and born in 1806. He came to Missouri in 1841 and took up his residence in Shelby county, where he remained five years, removing to Lewis county in 1846. There he wrought at his trade as a millwright and prospered at the business, not only because there was great demand for his services, but also because he worked industriously and lived frugally. In politics he was a Democrat, loyal to his party and zealous in its service, and in religion a member of the Southern Methodist Episcopal church. And under all circumstances and wherever he lived he was an excellent citizen, and universally esteemed as such.

In 1842 he was united in marriage with Miss Catherine A. Miller, a native of Kentucky. They had six children, two of whom are living, Marvin and his sister, Laura A., the wife of Benjamin Heathman, of Shelbina. The

father died in March, 1855, and the mother on June 5, 1894. This excellent woman, who survived her husband and natural protector thirty-nine years, bore the burden of rearing her offspring cheerfully and with Spartan courage. She could not do all she wished for her children, but she did what she could, and this was all that could be asked. And it stands out greatly to her credit that she never shirked the duty or grew restless in performing it to the best of her ability and the full measure of her strength.

Marvin Whitby was orphaned at the age of six years by the untimely death of his father, and was thrown on his own resources at an early age. He attended school for a short period in Clarence, and then went to teaching. His own opportunities for scholastic training and acquirements had been very limited, but he had improved them in the fullest measure, and was fairly well qualified to impart to others the knowledge he had himself gained by such arduous effort. As he taught he kept on enlarging his fund of information and developing and training his mind with such success that he kept pace with the progress in teaching and adhered to his chosen vocation twenty-eight years, beginning in 1870 and teaching until 1898. In the meantime, so favorably had he impressed the public with his capacity and general acceptability that in 1889 he was elected school commissioner of Shelby county, and at the end of his term was re-elected for another.

Teaching school is exacting, exhausting and nerve-racking work, as all who have followed it zealously and conscien-

tiously know, and while engaged in it Mr. Whitby sought relief from its pressure in farming a tract of fifty-five acres of good land, which he purchased for the purpose. He was progressive and successful in farming, as he was in teaching, and won a reputation for intelligence and enterprise in that line of endeavor. In 1900 he was elected public administrator of Shelby county. This office he held continuously for eight years, making a first rate record for efficiency and ability in its administration and extending and strengthening his hold on the regard and good will of the people. He served as city clerk for eight years, also sixteen years as justice of peace and a number of years as a school director.

Since leaving the office of public administrator he has been engaged in farming on 283 acres of as good land as can be found in this county, all but ninety acres of which he has acquired by his own industry and thrift, aided by the counsel and assistance of his excellent wife, to whom the ninety acres came as an inheritance from her father. In addition to his farm he owns valuable city property. His present home in Clarence is a pleasant one, and in that city he is looked upon as one of the leading and most useful men in the community. He well deserves the rank he holds in public estimation, for he is unceasing in the use of his influence and the gift of his inspiration for the progress and improvement of the city and county, and at all times eagerly desirous of promoting the substantial, intellectual and moral welfare of their people in every way open to him.

On December 24, 1894, he married Miss Alice M. Taylor, a native of Missouri and a daughter of the late Major Taylor, of Shelby county. Mrs. Whitby walked life's troubled way with him fourteen years, and proved herself to be a model woman by every test of excellence. She was a true companion for her husband, and a highly useful factor in the life of the community. All she possessed of intelligence, wisdom and energy she freely devoted to the advancement of her household and the business of the family, and, at the same time, spared no effort of which she was capable to contribute to the betterment of the community around her. She died October 12, 1908.

Mr. Whitby's political faith and earnest support are given to the principles and candidates of the Democratic party. His church affiliation is with the Southern Methodists, and in fraternal relations he is connected with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the Ancient Order of United Workmen. In his party, his church and his lodges he is an energetic and effective worker, and his membership in each is highly valued, while in all the duties of citizenship he is as true as the needle to the pole, and as useful and productive as he is straightforward and upright.

On the erection of the New Methodist church at Clarence in 1910, Mr. Whitby donated the primary room of the building, furnishing it in memory of his wife and it is known as the Alice M. Whitby room.

Mr. Whitby's mother was a charter member of this church.