

REV. ADAM F. TONER, a polished, courteous and cultured gentleman of fine education and good taste, and the present earnest, progressive and successful pastor of St. Bernard's Catholic church of Indiana, was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 24, 1856, and is a son of Clement and Barbara (Orth)Toner. His parents were natives of Prussia, where they were reared in the faith of the Catholic church, with which they united at an early age. In 1845 they came to the United States and located in Pittsburgh, this State, where they resided for many years. Clement Toner is a roller by trade, and after some years of economical and honest labor in Pittsburgh secured means sufficient to purchase the well-improved farm which he owns in Hampton township, Allegheny county, Pa. He was one of the originators of St. Mary's Catholic church at Sharpsburg, Allegheny county, of which he was an influential and liberally contributing member for many years. He is now in the seventieth year of his age, and has retired from the pursuits of active life. For the last two years he has resided with his son, the subject of this sketch. His wife, Barbara (Orth)Toner, passed away from this earth on August 31, 1888, when in the sixty-sixth year of her age, and her remains are entombed in the cemetery of St. Mary's Catholic church, of which she was an active and devout member for many years.

Adam F. toner was reared in pittsburg, where he received his elementary and academic education. In 1873 he went to St. Vincent's abbey and college, near Latrobe, Westmoreland county, where he took a seven years' classical course. He then took a full philosophical and theological course at St. Vincent's and the Grand seminary of Montreal, Canada. On August 21, 188t, he was ordained to the priesthood by Rt. Rev. Richard Phelan, D.D., being the first to be ordained by the newly consecrated bishop, at St. Vincent's abbey, and was appointed æ assistant pastor of St. Peter's church at McKeesport, Allegheny county. After two years' faithful and successful service there he was assigned to his present field of labor at Indiana. On August 31, 1887, he assumed charge of St. Bernard's Catholic church of Indiana and has remained its pastor ever since. The first Catholic families at Indiana came about 1814, and in 1845 the first Catholic church of that place was erected. It was a frame structure, costing about six hundred dollars and the congregation was served by priests from St. Vincent's in Westmoreland county. Among the ministers who acted as missionary laborers to Indiana, was the sainted Rt. Rev. Boniface Wimmer, the founder of St. Vincent's abbey and the order of St. Benedict in north America. The present brick church of St. Bernard's was began in 1869, and was dedicated on may 26, 1871. It is of the order of Gothic architecture and is in the form of a cross. It is 57x94 feet in dimensions, will eat six hundred people and cost twenty-two thousand dollars. When Rev. Toner came to the charge it included about sixty families, but under his labors it has increased to eighty-five families.

The church was badly out of repair, but with his characteristic energy and perseverance he began a series of much-needed and valuable improvements which has placed St. Bernard's among the most beautiful, attractive and finely-furnished churches of western Pennsylvania. He has heated the church, the parsonage and all other buildings on the premises with steam, and secured natural gas for fuel in the heating boilers of the buildings; he has had water put in every room of each building, and has had water-plugs placed at all necessary points. He has drained the grounds, put in sewage and contributed in many other ways to the healthfulness, the beauty and conveniences of St. Bernard's. All these improvements have been paid for and the charge is in a flourishing condition.

He has been largely instrumental in organizing a literary society and in founding an extensive library, which has a reading-room attached for the young folks. A room is also provided where they can indulge in healthful and innocent games. A very fine orchestra has been organized from the congregation, and is known as St. Bernard's orchestra.

Rev. Toner is laboring earnestly and successfully for the intellectual education and culture, the moral growth and the spiritual welfare of his people, and commands the respect of all who know him.