REV. ISAAC M'COY.

Kansas was carved out of the Indian Territory. This Territory was so called, because it had been set apart by Congress for the homes of the remnants of nearly all of the Indian tribes, which had in former times possessed the entire portion of the United States north of the Potomac and Ohio rivers, and extending from the Hudson and Delaware on the east to the Missouri on the west. These remnant tribes occupied Kansas at the time it was opened for settlement, in 1854. The individual whose name stands at the head of this paper, more than any other, was instrumental in inducing the establishment of this Indian Territory. As the early history of Kansas has so much that relates to the immigrant Indians and their landed possessions, and as our Society has come in possession, in large part, of the books and manuscripts of Mr. McCoy, it seems proper that some account of him should be given in our published collections.*

He was born near Uniontown, Fayette county, Pennsylvania, June 13, 1784. At the age of six years, his parents removed to Kentucky, and in that State, chiefly in Jefferson and Shelby counties, he spent his youth. In 1817, at his special request, he was permitted by the Baptist Missionary Board to engage in missionary work among the Indians, on the Wabash river, in Indiana. He became the pioneer missionary in that region. He established his first mission among the Miami Indians, sixteen miles above Terre Haute, not far from where the town of Roseville now is. Here he opened a school among the Indians, on the first of January, 1819. In May, 1820, he removed his school to Fort Wayne. In December, 1822, he opened the Carey missionary establishment, among the Pottawatomies, on the St. Joseph river, in Michigan, near where Niles now is, having previously erected commodious buildings for that object. This place was then 180 miles from anything like a settled country, and 190 miles from a flouring mill. In June, 1823, Major Long's exploring party, on their way to the sources of the St. Peter's river, visited this station. Mr. Keating, in the first volume of the report of that expedition, pays a high compliment to Mr. McCoy and his associates at the mission. In 1826, he established Thomas Mission, among the Ottawas, near where Grand Rapids now is, on Grand river, in Michigan.

Mr. McCoy was one of the first to entertain the idea of removing the Ind-

*The incidents in the life of Mr. McCoy here given, have been gleaned in part from his manuscripts now in the collections of this Society, in part from his "History of Baptist Indian Missions," and in part from information communicated by his son, John C. McCoy. F. G. A.
dians from the vicinity of the white settlements to a remote territory, thus to save them from the corrupting influences attending association with the frontier people of that early period. In June, 1824, while in Washington, he submitted the subject to the consideration of the Baptist Board, then in session in that city, and was by the Board deputed to present the same to the President. Failing to obtain an audience of President Monroe, he had an interview with the Secretary of War, Hon. John C. Calhoun, who was, by virtue of office, in charge of Indian affairs. Mr. Calhoun approved the scheme, and from that time became its champion. Through his department, all the facts and arguments were brought forward which finally led to the action of Congress for the establishment of the Indian Territory and the emigration of the Indians. The measure was recommended by President Monroe in his next annual message to Congress.

Emigration of Eastern tribes to the west of the Mississippi, had, from the choice of the Indians themselves, in fact, begun many years before this time. Crowded from their hunting-grounds, members of the Shawnee and Delaware tribes, as early as 1793, by permission of the Spanish authorities, settled in Louisiana Territory, near Cape Girardeau. For the same reason, in 1809, a part of the Cherokee tribe, by consent of the President, made a location on the waters of the Arkansas and White rivers, in Arkansas Territory; and, under similar circumstances, small portions of the Choctaws and Creeks made settlements on the Arkansas and Red rivers.

But, for the object of civilization, and in pursuance of a well-defined policy, no action was taken by the Government until subsequent to the time that Isaac McCoy had that interview with John C. Calhoun. From that time, without waiting for the action of Congress, in the making of all subsequent treaties the subject of removal was suggested to the Indians by the commissioners deputed by Mr. Calhoun for that object. In 1825, treaties were negotiated with the Kansas and Osage Indians, to make room upon their lands for the proposed immigrants.

In November, 1827, Mr. McCoy met the Baptist Missionary Board in Boston, and brought the subject of Indian emigration again before it. A memorial to Congress was prepared, and a pamphlet which had been written by Mr. McCoy, in support of this measure of Indian reform, was ordered to be printed. This pamphlet was widely circulated, and copies presented to members of Congress and heads of departments at Washington. Mr. McCoy was sent to Washington in December, and devoted two months to this subject, interviewing the President and Secretary of War, and members and committees of Congress. He made the acquaintance of more than thirty members of Congress at this time, whom he made special effort to enlist in this cause. President John Quincy Adams and Secretary Barbour both encouraged the measure, as did also many other influential persons. But there was much opposition, urged especially from a philanthropic point of view. The removal of the primitive inhabitants and rightful owners of the
rich regions of the East from the homes of their ancestors to the so-called desert plains of the West, was a measure revolting to the minds of many of those humane people who only saw the subject in that aspect. The slavery question, too, entered into the discussion; Northern members, believing that, if suited to settlement, and if left open to the enterprise of Northern white settlers, the portion of territory west of Missouri and north of the slavery-compromise line of 1820, (that of latitude 36° 30'), would soon be occupied by a population forming a new free State, thus favoring the Northern States in the struggle for a balance of power between slavery and freedom. The question of fitness for occupancy, even of a considerable Indian population, was, too, an unsettled one. The emigration bill did not pass at that time. But an appropriation was made for an exploration of the country; and during that year, 1828, the Secretary sent out Mr. McCoy and Capt. George Kennerly, of St. Louis, as commissioners, with delegations of Choctaws, Creeks, Chickasaws, Pottawatomies and Ottawas, to examine the country. Mr. McCoy reached St. Louis with his Ottawa and Pottawatomi delegations on the 16th of July. The Southern Indians were reluctant to make the tour, and made their plans to start out so late in the season that Mr. McCoy determined to make an exploration with the Northern delegates before the others should arrive. There were three Pottawatomies and three Ottawas in the delegation. They started from St. Louis on the 21st of August, 1828, Mr. McCoy receiving the following letter of instructions from Superintendent Clark before setting out:

"Superintendency of Indian Affairs,"
"St. Louis, August 20, 1828."

"Dear Sir: As the exploring party of Chickasaws are not expected here before the 20th of next month, and will not be in advance of this State until the first of October, and as the Pottawatomies and Ottawas, who accompanied you to this place, are unwilling to delay, I would, in accordance with your suggestions, recommend that you proceed with your party, and explore a portion of the country purchased of the Osages and Kanzas, west of the State of Missouri, westward of the Osage and Shawnee reservations, and north of the Kansas reservation, taking care not to go so far west as to endanger your party by falling in with parties of Pawnee and other tribes who are at war with the Osages and Kanzas. The Indian agents in your direction are informed of your movements, and will afford you every aid and assistance in their power. You will take Noel Mograin, a half-breed Osage, who is acquainted with the country, the routes of the Indians, and speaks the Osage and Kanza languages. I must request the favor of you to write me from Harmony Mission, and on your return to Camp Leavenworth, or the out settlements, and state your views and wishes, that I may be enabled to afford such aid as may be necessary.

"Accept the assurance of my best wishes.

"Yours sincerely,

Wm. Clark."

"Rev. Isaac McCoy."

The party entered the Territory on the Osage river, followed that stream out to its head branches, and passed on to the Neosho; and, following that stream to its source, crossed over to the Kansas river, where there was a village of Kansas Indians. They returned on the south side of the Kansas
river to the Missouri State line, where were some new settlements of Shawnees, in what is now Johnson county.

Mr. McCoy, in his "History of Baptist Indian Missions," gives an interesting account of this Indian exploration. The tour had enabled him to acquire a pretty correct knowledge, as he says, of the country designed for the Indian settlements, embracing a tract of about eighty miles in width, from north to south, and one hundred and fifty miles in length, from east to west; "which country," he remarks, "was far better than I had expected." He returned to St. Louis after an absence of fifty days, and sent his delegation of Pottawatomies and Ottawas home, well pleased with their journey.

Shortly after returning to St. Louis, the southern delegation arrived, and Mr. McCoy, with Capt. Kennerly, accompanied them to the Territory, entering on the 30th of November, at the point where he left it on the former visit. Spending a few days with the Shawnees, the party proceeded southward in the Territory, visiting Whitehair's Osage village, and passing down as far as the Arkansas river, near Fort Gibson. The Indian delegations were here left to visit their kinsmen already settled about the Arkansas. Mr. McCoy and his associates returned to St. Louis.

In January following, he submitted his report of these explorations to the Department of Indian Affairs. The report was appended to a report of the Committee on Indian Affairs of the House of Representatives submitted January 30, 1829, favoring the policy of Indian emigration, but the bill for that object again failed. The administrations of Monroe and John Quincy Adams both favored the measure; but it was left for that of President Jackson to obtain the consent of Congress. A bill was finally passed, May 26, 1830, authorizing "the President of the United States to cause so much of any territory belonging to the United States, west of the river Mississippi, not included in any State or organized Territory, and to which the Indian title had been extinguished, as he might judge necessary to be divided into a suitable number of districts, for the reception of such tribes or nations of Indians as might choose to exchange the lands where they then resided, and remove there; and to cause each of said districts to be so described by natural or artificial marks as to be easily distinguished from every other."

Meantime, in the fall of 1829, Mr. McCoy made his third exploration, visiting the Kansas villages, and occupying twenty days in examining various parts of the Territory.

During the period, occupying some years, in which Mr. McCoy had been giving most of his time to this preparatory work of Indian emigration, the Baptist missionary stations in Michigan had been carried on by the persons whom he had associated with him in that work; among them were Jotham Meeker, Johnston Lykins and Robert Simerwell, and their wives, the wife of Mr. Lykins being a daughter of Mr. McCoy. Preparations were now made for closing the missions in the East, and transferring the missionary work to the Territory, as the Indians should emigrate to it.
For the next ten years Mr. McCoy was almost constantly employed in the Territory in the service of the Government, in selecting and surveying locations for the immigrant Indians, and in establishing and sustaining missions and schools among them. His work was indefatigable. His efforts for the civilization of the Indians were attended with no little success. To his labors and those of his associates, was largely due the intelligence and sobriety which characterized so many of the members of the tribes at the time our white settlers came among them. Several of the noble band of men and women who labored with him on the Wabash, the Maumee, the St. Joseph and Grand rivers, in Indiana and Michigan, came with him to Kansas, and continued faithfully in their missionary work. Rev. Jotham Meeker died at the Ottawa Mission, in Franklin county, January 12, 1854. Rev. Robert Simerwell died in Williamsport township, near Auburn, in Shawnee county, December 11, 1868. Rev. Johnston Lykins died at Kansas City, a few years since.

Mr. McCoy, in 1842, took up his residence at Louisville, Kentucky, to take charge of the work of the "American Indian Mission Association," a society which he himself had organized, and of which he was made the secretary, and to the work of which he devoted his entire energies until his death, which occurred in Louisville, in 1846. He had several sons and daughters, some of whom became residents of western Missouri and Kansas. One son, John C. McCoy, now residing in Johnson county, in this State, came to Kansas as early as 1830, and assisted his father in his work of locating the immigrant Indians, and in surveying their lands, under orders from the government. Our Society has, in its collections, a volume of official manuscript copies of maps and field notes of many of these surveys, made by father and son, some of them dating back as early as 1830. These are of rare interest to the student of early Kansas. They show boundaries, and many landmarks, localities and names of which the lapse of time has long since obliterated all traces upon Kansas maps.

Mr. John C. McCoy has, from time to time, during the past few years, contributed to newspapers, chiefly the Kansas City Journal, some accounts of his recollections of those early times. He is a very capable writer, and it is hoped that much more from his pen will be given to the records of Kansas history. The Historical Society is indebted to him for the contribution of the manuscripts of his father, and of many valuable books and pamphlets of history, relating in large part to Indian affairs.

F. G. A.