

steamers and packets, and great factories driven by water power be seen on every side. Merchants advertised with pride that their goods had arrived in only twenty days from New York. The canal basin, near Second and Chestnut streets, when the packets came in, was a popular resort, and it was quite a sight to see the neat boats float into dock after the little extra spurt around the bend, just for style, but canal boats were a little slow for 1850, and the Wabash and Erie canal had but a brief history, or at least that section near Terre Haute; for in 1850 its successful rival, the railroad, was building. The first movement to secure a railroad, was for one between this city and Evansville, just twenty years before the initial road of our great system, the Terre Haute and Richmond road, was opened for travel in 1852. The fare to Indianapolis was \$2. With this railroad, and the receipt of the first shipment of coal, five cars, in 1851, began the second era of Terre Haute's history. Neither the National road nor the canal fulfilled expectations in their effect upon the city's prosperity, although they were incidents in it. From 1816 to 1852, thirty-six years, was the first era; from 1852 to the close of 1888, thirty-six years, was the second era; from January, 1889, when the drills began to sink towards petroleum, dates the third era, and the spouting of the great oil well in May of the same year is but the beginning of the best but unwritten chapter of history. The Terre Haute and Richmond railroad tied the city to the East. By 1856 it was linked to the Mississippi by the Terre Haute and Alton road, and other roads followed in prompt and quite regular succession, connecting Terre Haute with the lakes and the Ohio River.

Tallow candles and lard-oil lamps gave way to gas in 1856, when the Gas Light Company was incorporated with a capital stock of \$200,000. The electric light was introduced in 1885.

Mr. J. O. Jones being the first commissioned postmaster, in 1841, has seen the mails expand from the occupancy of a room twenty feet square, at Second and Ohio streets, to the possession of the imposing stone building formally opened in April, 1889, and built at a cost of about \$200,000.

In 1853, with its first organization as a city, Terre Haute began to grow up to its title. Its level and regular streets and abundance of trees gave it a beauty not much enhanced as yet by any attempt at architectural display, either in residence or business property. In



#### RESIDENCE OF COL. R. W. THOMPSON.

1856, the building at Fourth and Main streets, now occupied in its greatly improved state by Myers Bros., was called a palace by the enterprising dry-goods firm which first used it. In 1857 the large dwelling house, now owned by Mr. Elisha Havens, was built. It was then not only the finest residence in the city, but was claimed to be the finest in the State. All the modern houses, with some pretension to exterior elegance and style which are now so numerous on Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Center streets, were yet to be built. The first really handsome building erected on Sixth street was the residence of Col. R. N. Hudson, at Sixth and Oak, now occupied by Mrs. T. B. Johns. Probably no city of its size has so little tendency to "splurge" as this, and it has been slow to change the old time residence, which was comfortable and roomy and very plain, for the more showy modern house. The old citizens who built the most houses believed in square corners, and their successors took their angular inheritances or purchases, as the case might be, and added to them. Thus the Terre Haute house had its style established in 1837, was added to and preserved in all its original simplicity until a new generation took hold of it in 1888. The old canal office on Ohio street was made into a delightful residence (now occupied by G. W. Bement) by