

year erected on West Bridge street for public uses, and was occupied for some years as a lecture room. Agitation for the building of a plank road to Kalamazoo was begun in December.

The year 1849 opened with cold weather and good sleighing, which helped the lumber business, and general trade in the village. There were complaints in the newspapers about the piles of wood brought in by farmers and placed in the streets or on sidewalks. Good beech and maple wood, four feet in length, was then worth from \$1 to \$1.50 per cord. The school house in District No. 1 was burned on the night of February 22. High water just after the middle of March stopped business at the mills for some days; flooded the lower part of the town as far back as where the Union railroad depot now is, and covered the islands in the river nearly out of sight. An amendatory act was passed by the Legislature concerning the construction of the canal and locks around the rapids, and authorizing the construction of a dam across the river. The corner stone of the Roman Catholic church, built on Monroe street of the river limestone, was laid June 10. The walls were completed in August. It was roofed in October, and consecrated in the following year. Work on the canal (east side) was resumed in July, and prosecuted vigorously. The water was turned away from the east channel of the river by a temporary dam, and excavations were begun for locks from the basin into the slack water below. The files of "Dutch buggies," as the wheelbarrows were called, attracted much attention. The east half of the basin was cut off by an embankment through the center, and that part of it next Canal street made dry land, and turned over for building and business uses. The proposed locks were never constructed. The work was suspended shortly afterward, and the canal rested. There was much activity in building that season, business was brisk, and the people very cheerful in the prospects of the coming greatness of Grand Rapids. The Union School building, constructed of limestone, "the old stone school house," was completed that fall. A three-story wood building on Canal street, a short distance above Lyon, was erected by Harry H. Ives and Benjamin Luce, the second story of which was used for a public hall, and the third story was occupied by the Sons of Temperance as a lodge room. There was plenty of water in the river all summer, and freight and passenger traffic was