

### LEWIS BRUCKER.

Among Michigan's native sons and Mansfield's representative citizens stands Judge Lewis Brucker, who, by the exercise of his native abilities and those acquired through diligent effort, has secured a foremost place at the bar. He comes of a family noted for strong intellectuality and mental force, and, though deprived of many advantages which have aided in their life work some of the most eminent jurists of our country, he has improved all his opportunities, overcoming the difficulties and obstacles in his path, steadily working his way upward until he has left the ranks of the many and gained a place among the successful few.

Judge Brucker was born October 30, 1855, in a log cabin on the banks of the Cass river, near the village of Bridgeport, Saginaw county, Michigan. His parents were born in the city of Vienna, Austria. His father, Ferdinand Brucker, was an architect by profession, and in 1848, in the city of his birth, he married Miss Margaretta Zeichmeister. At the close of the Rebellion in 1848 he emigrated to America and took up his abode in Detroit, but subse-

quently removed to Canton, Michigan, and later located on a farm in Saginaw county, where he remained until 1877 and engaged in the lumbering business in connection with his agricultural pursuits. In the year mentioned, however, he removed with his family to Shelby, Ohio, where he became connected with the retail lumber trade, there remaining until his death, which occurred in 1889.

Judge Brucker was the third son in a family of eight children,—four sons and four daughters. He was reared amid the scenes of pioneer life and his first years were a period of earnest toil in which he aided in the arduous task of developing and cultivating the new fields, or worked in the lumber mill. Through the winter months he pursued his education in the public schools, as he found opportunity, and through the long winter evenings he pored over his books, thus acquiring the knowledge that served as a foundation upon which to rear the superstructure of advanced learning. In the winter of 1876-7, turning aside from his studies, Mr. Brucker was the foreman of a force of men in the lumber woods, while in the following summer he superintended a shingle-mill at Blackmar, Michigan. He continued his studies at home whenever opportunity offered, and in the winter of 1878-9 took a commercial course in the business college at Saginaw. In the following summer he again engaged in sawing shingles, and with the money thus obtained he paid his tuition in the law department in the University of Michigan, which he entered in October, 1879. For two years he closely pursued the study of law, defraying his own expenses, and in the spring of 1881 he was graduated.

Several years passed before he began the active practice of the profession, for after his graduation he spent two years with his father in the lumber business at Shelby, Ohio, and for three years was a traveling representative of a firm of lumber merchants of Toledo, Ohio. In March, 1886, Judge Brucker became identified with the bar of Mansfield, beginning practice in the office of W. S. Kerr. Success did not come to him immediately but gradually he built up a practice, and in the meantime he fortified himself for his future career by close and earnest study of the principles of jurisprudence and precedents of decisions. In the spring of 1890 he was nominated, on the Democratic ticket, for the office of probate judge, and his personal popularity, as well as the confidence reposed in him, was indicated by the fact that he ran four hundred ahead of his ticket. He discharged his duties so ably that in 1893 he was renominated and elected without opposition for a second term. The office of probate judge in Richland county is of unusual importance on account of its more extended jurisdiction in comparison with other counties, including foreclosure of mortgages, partition, divorces and alimony.

In 1897, on the expiration of his second term as probate judge, he opened

a law office in Mansfield with D. W. Cummins, under the firm name of Brucker & Cummins, and has since continued in practice, having a large and distinctively representative clientage. Though he meets in forensic combat the ablest of the bar of the district, he has won their highest respect and confidence by his extreme fairness. He craves not laurels if they must be won by debasing himself or degrading the dignity of the profession. He stands as a defender of the weak against the strong, the right against the wrong, the just against the unjust. He is well versed in every department of jurisprudence and he prepares his cases with thoroughness, leaving no point untouched that will strengthen his client's cause. He is strong in solving technically involved and complicated legal problems, and he is particularly strong in corporation law. Judge Brucker was also one of the original incorporators of the Bank of Mansfield and from its organization has served on its directorate.

In 1884 the Judge married Miss Mary J. Cummins, of Shelby, Ohio, and they have had two children: Angeline Cummins, born August 18, 1884; and David Ferdinand, born March 23, 1891. Mrs. Brucker was the daughter of David and Angeline (Taylor) Cummins, of Shelby, whose parents were among the pioneers of Richland county. Her parents were born in the vicinity of Shelby, where her father was engaged for the most of his life in the mercantile business. He died at Shelby, January 13, 1899.

In political affairs Mr. Brucker has been an active worker. He was a member of the Democratic state executive committee in 1894-5, and was the chairman of the Democratic county central committee at the same time. For the past ten years he has been almost continuously on the county executive committee. In 1899 he was elected the state central committeeman for the fourteenth congressional district, and in 1900 re-elected to the same position and made the chairman of the Democratic state central committee. He has given his support to the Democracy because he believes in its principles, and that its platform contains the best elements of good government.

Socially he is connected with the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, the Knights of Pythias, the Knights of Honor and with the Masonic fraternity. His active co-operation is given to all measures and movements planned for the good of the public.