

Rev. P. H. A. Brawley

REV. E. M. BRAWLEY, D.D.

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Griffith, and by giving lessons in vocal music, and preaching during vacations.

He left a good impression in the college and the college community. A commission was at once given him by the American Baptist Publication Society, as missionary for South Carolina. At that time there were in South Carolina few Sunday-schools, many churches, and scarcely any organizations. Some of the associations were crudely organized, large, and unwieldy. At first he was bitterly opposed, especially by many of the older brethren. Not that they opposed progress, but movements that they could not see clearly, comprehend, and see the results of, they looked upon as innovations and as radicalism. Rev. Brawley, however, soon gained their confidence, and, with united forces, organization after organization went on; many associations were re-organized, new ones came into being, then a state convention was organized of the different bodies. He became the corresponding secretary and financial agent of that body and directed its work. State mission work was carried on and a mission field was opened up in Africa, to which Rev. H. N. Bouey was appointed. Rev. Brawley finally decided to change his field of labor, and resigned his commission as Sunday-school missionary against the wishes of the American Baptist Publication Society.

In 1883 he accepted the presidency of the Alabama Baptist Normal and Theological School. He reconstructed the school, changing the courses of study, and giving it the rank of a college. The name of the institution was now changed to Selma University. In 1885, on account of the health of his family, he resigned and moved back to South Carolina. Here for several years he edited the *Baptist Pioneer*. Since then, Rev. Brawley has been district secretary of the South Atlantic States, with headquarters at Nashville, Tenn., under the appointment of the American Baptist Publication Society, which position he resigned in the fall of 1890, to take charge of the Harrison Street Baptist Church, of Petersburg, Va. The honorary degree, D.D., was conferred upon him by State University of Kentucky.

Dr. Brawley is a strong advocate of education and an educated ministry. He is a friend to every undertaking whose purpose is to elevate and educate. He has published a book of sermons written by different Baptist divines, for which he has received much commendation.

REV. P. H. A. BRAXTON.

Patrick Henry Alexander Braxton was born of slave parents, in King William County, Virginia, September 22, 1853. His father and mother,

William County, where they served their owners faithfully until January 1st, 1866, when mother and children were turned out without a dollar. However, they took courage and started out in life to earn a livelihood by the sweat of their brows, which they did, and have lived comfortably till to-day. Truly God careth for the widow and the fatherless. The subject of this sketch was his mother's main support, notwithstanding he was the youngest; he was also the brightest of the children. He worked on the farm and did severe labor till 1868, when a public school was started at Cattail Church in the aforesaid county. After several weeks in this school, August (the resting month for farmers) was over, and he had to return to his work. Some weeks later a night school was started in the same building; then Alexander worked all day and walked five miles each way, making ten miles per night, to attend. When winter set in he started to school again, and continued until the spring of 1869; then went back to the farm to work. He continued to study and go to school nights and winters until August, 1872, at which time the commencement took place, and he delivered the valedictory, from these words: "Show thyself a man, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest," which was admitted by all to have been an exceptionally grand literary and original effort. So great was his eloquence

and pathetic his appeal to his classmates that the whole audience, white and colored, were moved to tears. Beside this, with the exception of having learned to spell by association with a little white boy in 1863, he says, "If I am made at all I am self-made."

He stopped farming and went into the stove business in 1872. Was elected constable of the aforesaid county the same year. About eight months thereafter a warrant was put into his hands ordering the arrest of one William Virus, for assaulting one Dr.—— (both were white men); now Virus was a notorious braggadocio, never obeyed the law, and would not allow himself to be arrested. It is said that he killed a man before the war, for which the officers of the law were afraid to call him to account. The sheriff had tried in vain to arrest him with the assistance of twelve men. Mr. Braxton took two men besides himself, one white and the other colored, and went to his house, but pleaded in vain with him to go quietly; not only did he refuse to go, but started for his firearms, swearing as he went that he would put Mr. Braxton under the sod. Seeing that he must capture his man to save his own life, as well as to obey the injunctions of the court, Mr. Braxton went up to him, and after a short battle succeeded in overpowering him, and, putting him in his own cart, had him driven to

the court. For this the doctor threatened to kill Constable Braxton. The case went up to the county court, where Mr. Braxton was indicted for assault and battery on Dr.——; but the jury could not find an indictment against him for resisting and threatening to kill an officer of the law in the discharge of his duty. Mr. Braxton concluded that it was because he was a colored man, and resigned then and there before the same court, assigning the above as his reason.

In the mean time he was studying law as opportunity offered; took an active part in politics, and held joint discussions with some of the ablest lawyers in the state of Virginia, viz.: such men as Hon. B. B. Duglass, W. R. Aylett, and others; and it was generally admitted that he did justice to his party; handled his subjects logically, manfully, and eloquently, made it hard for his opponents and did credit to his race. He was always noted for his aptness to learn, good memory, thirst for knowledge, eloquence in speech, honesty, bravery, and boldness in speaking his sentiments and love of debate. In October and November of 1874 he was a member of the United States paneled jury that tried the noted Brooks embezzlement case at Richmond, Va., and won great credit to himself and his race by his manner, and the way he examined the witnesses. He spent the latter part of 1874 and 1875 in

Washington, District of Columbia, and June, 1875, received an appointment in the United States Custom Service, where he was converted June 10, 1875, at Low-Cedar-Point, Westmoreland County, Virginia.

He was baptized the second Lord's day in October, 1875, by Rev. Silas Miles; joined the Cattail Baptist Church, from which he was commissioned to preach the gospel July 9, 1876. In December, 1878, he was appointed general collecting agent of the Consolidated American Baptist Missionary Convention, after he took his letter from the aforesaid church and joined the Ebenezer Baptist Church of Richmond, Va. In April, 1879, he was called to take charge of the Calvary Baptist Church, Baltimore, Maryland, and was ordained at the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., June 6, and took charge of the aforesaid church June 8, 1879, which was composed of ten members only, worshipping in a rented room in a little, old, dilapidated carpenter's shop, corner Mason alley and Preston street. They were all poor, and had worked without success until this time.

The following extracts are taken from *The Defender* published at Baltimore, Md.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE CHURCH AND THE
PASTOR, REV. P. H. A. BRAXTON.

TWELVE YEARS SINCE.—Feb. 9, 1878.

The Calvary Baptist Church was organized and recognized with ten members, who came from the Union Baptist Church and met in a little old dilapidated room, which had been formerly occupied as a carpenter shop, on the corner of Mason alley and Preston street, by a council of delegates, appointed from the Baptist churches of Baltimore, with Rev. A. J. Hires, Moderator, and F. W. King, Secretary. The members were all poor. They worked without any success until June, 1879.

After the unanimous call of the church, and the earnest and repeated solicitation of the church and its friends, Rev. P. H. A. Braxton, who was the general missionary and financial agent of the Consolidated Baptist Foreign Missionary Convention of the United States, took pastoral charge of the little persecuted Spartan band. He at once threw himself with his whole heart and great mental, literary, and executive ability into the work, fully realizing that he had much opposition to meet. His efforts were repaid by the immediate growth of the church. In two years it increased to one hundred and twenty-five members, and has sustained itself from the start, without appealing to any other church. See *History of the Baptist Churches of Maryland* :—

“The Board of the Maryland Union Association offered to assist this church by paying a part of the pastor’s salary, but it was refused, on the ground that the pastor believed that for a church to grow strong and prosperous it must be self-sustaining—all of which has been proven in the success of this church. So far from being a recipient, it has contributed to the funds of the aforesaid board every year since Rev. Braxton has been pastor.”

Notwithstanding the oppositions which were against the church before Rev. Braxton came to it, and the discouragement, it has moved on year after year. Most any man can go with the tide, but when one has to reverse himself and come against



CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH,
Park Avenue and Biddle Street, Baltimore, Md.

the tide of public opinion and all sorts of oppositions, it will prove what he is.

In the accomplishment of this great work, Rev. Braxton has had to contend and contest every inch of his way, against every imaginable opposition. What he has gone through would have killed most men.

He has raised and expended for benevolent work, \$33,055.76; added to the church, 555 persons.

From The Register, April 14, 1888.

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH.

RE-UNION AND CELEBRATION.—REV. P. H. A. BRAXTON
PRESENTED WITH A GOLD MEDAL.

On last Thursday evening the Calvary Baptist Church held its third annual re-union and celebration in the main auditorium of the church. The large, spacious edifice was crowded; the friends of Christianity and human improvement having embraced the occasion to tender an ovation to the pastor, Rev. P. H. A. Braxton, and to present to him a gold medal especially prepared by voluntary contributions, both from white and colored citizens, as a token of their appreciation of his manly and untiring efforts for the redemption of his people and the elevation of mankind generally. The meeting was a representative one, and those who attended were amply repaid in listening to the recital of the rapid progress this church has made under the pastorate of Rev. Braxton, and the stirring speeches of prominent citizens, eulogistic of his work and efforts in behalf of his people.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. Taylor, after which Rev. Braxton made a general statement of his work. He told how Calvary Church had only ten members and no house of worship when he came, and how, under the guidance of God, they had grown from ten to three hundred, and passed from worshipping in a carpenter shop in an alley to their present beautiful edifice costing \$20,000, all paid in three years except

\$3,000. All this was collected by the congregation except \$1,300.

The next speaker was Mr. John H. Butler, who expressed his gratification at being present to celebrate the third annual celebration of the opening of the church. He said he had not been so intimately acquainted with the church, but he knew the pastor, Rev. Braxton. He knew him as a man—as a Christian gentleman, and having worked with him in the Educational Union he was glad to be there to testify to his worth. He spoke of Rev. Braxton's connection with the Educational Union, and how, when its members almost despaired of accomplishing any good, he encouraged them, and by his tongue, pen, and personal visits to the school board and others in power, worked up an interest and sentiment which have finally crystallized into the desired fruit. "I regard your beloved pastor," said he, "as the peer, mentally, morally, and every otherwise of any man who has ever been connected with the work, and am proud to number him among our citizens. His brilliant and fearless speeches in advocacy of human rights and the protection of homes have won for him golden opinions, and given him a dear place in the heart of each citizen interested in Christianity and good laws. I am glad God has sent him to Baltimore, and trust he will stay here as long as I live and you live. I know you are proud of him, for he has led you like Moses, from the carpenter shop to this beautiful edifice. Some men call themselves, but if God called Moses, he called Rev. Braxton."

At this point the following letter was read from Mr. Isaac Myers who was unable, because of pressing business, to be present.

REV. P. H. A. BRAXTON,

Pastor Calvary Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md.

Dear Sir: I cheerfully accepted an invitation to be present at your third annual re-union and celebration, which takes place to-morrow evening, the 5th inst. I felt more than glad at the opportunity of being present, and with my testimony bear witness to the high esteem in which you are held, and show my appreciation of your invaluable services in advancing the interest of the colored people of Maryland.

I had gone so far as to prepare myself to speak on the subject of "*Adaptability*." But you will observe by the inclosed postal, special arrangements have been made for me to speak in Frederick City at the same time.

It is only this kind of an engagement that could prevent me from being with you, for the reason that the colored people of Baltimore owe you a debt of gratitude that they can never repay. Your fearless expression in demanding equal privileges for the colored citizens of Maryland has brought fruit in the bill just passed by the City Council giving colored teachers to our colored public schools. Of course I give all honor and praise to other representative men of our race who moved to the front of the battle, but "Cæsar is entitled to the laurels of Cæsar."

I am willing to allow all that the most severe and exact critic can demand, and then I say that the Calvary Baptist Church has a pastor who is the peer of any other colored pastor of any denomination in the city, and of whose high moral, intellectual, and religious standing every member should be proud.

Some men call themselves, other men are called of God, and your marvelous success clearly proves who called you, and this is what I intended to call "*Adaptability*."

Wishing for you and your congregation a happy re-union, and a happy and prosperous future, I am truly yours,

ISAAC MYERS.

On the 13th and 15th of June, 1890, Rev. P. H. A. Braxton spoke by appointment before the New England Baptist Missionary Convention, and the Second Baptist Church (white) at Newport, R. I., subject entitled "The Condition of the Colored People of the South," a sketch of which was published in all of the leading daily newspapers, and it was generally admitted that the subject had not been so ably handled before.

His defense of the Baptist ministry against an

attack made on them by a Rev. Smith of Massachusetts before the New England Baptist Missionary Convention in Philadelphia, June, 1889, "saved the New England Baptist Missionary Convention and the colored Baptist denomination from disgrace," says Rev. W. T. Dixon.

"As a writer, and as to his knowledge of the history of the Baptist denomination," says the *Baltimore Baptist*, "Rev. P. H. A. Braxton may be judged by a sermon which he wrote entitled, 'The Baptist and Foreign Missions,' for a book entitled, 'The Negro Baptist Pulpit,' edited by E. M. Brawley, D.D., and published by the American Baptist Publication Society. This sermon has received the praise of all, both white and colored, as being one of if not the best in the book."

He is a life member of the Virginia Baptist State Convention, and of the New England Baptist Missionary Convention, and of the Brotherhood of Liberty. He owns several thousand dollars worth of property in Virginia and Maryland, and has a library composed of the latest and choicest works of the age, valued at two thousand dollars.

of the state emanating from that convention, which was published by the papers of Chicago, Galesburg, and other cities of the state, with highly commendatory comments from them all. The movement started by the above named convention was the leading cause of the removal of the odious and disgraceful "black laws" from the statutes of Illinois. Rev. De Baptiste has served in other famous conventions, doing great good, and honored by all.

Rev. Richard De Baptiste has been married three times. He has three children living by his first wife, Georgiana, who died November, 1872. His second wife, Mary, enjoyed but a brief married life of eight months, before her earthly course was terminated by the fatal disease of consumption. The third marriage occurred November 11, 1890, to Mrs. Nellie Williams of Galesburg, Ills. Each of his companions in marriage was a devoted Christian woman and a useful church member.

Notwithstanding the many good works to which Rev. De Baptiste has given much of his time and labor, and others to which devoted attention and interest have been given, there has been but one year since his ordination in 1860 that he has not filled the office of pastor of a Baptist church, and performed the duties of that office, how well the Chief Shepherd must say when he comes to reward his servants.

REV. JAMES ALBERT DENNIS.

The subject of this sketch was born March 27, 1857, in Appomattox County, Virginia. His parents were born free. His mother paid special attention to his education. He attended the public schools at Pamplin City, Va., in 1870-71. In 1872 he left Virginia and went to Baltimore to live with his mother's brother, Mr. N. S. Carter. There he worked at menial labor. In February, 1877, during a revival conducted by Dr. Harvey Johnson, he was hopefully converted. He and one hundred and sixteen others were baptized on the first Sunday in March. Dr. Johnson, believing that he was called to preach, urged and assisted him to go to school and prepare for the work. He entered Wayland Seminary in the fall of 1877. He found there a friend in Dr. King, the president.

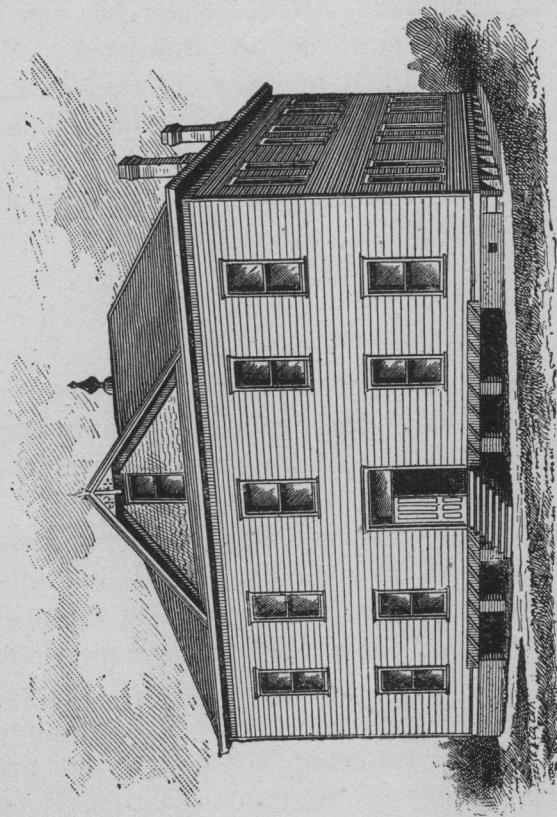
Dr. King induced the Women's Missionary Society of Euclid Street Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio, to assist him through school. He graduated, after four years' study, from the theological and normal departments. The fifth year he studied the languages in the same institution. He was set apart to the gospel ministry, in Baltimore, in 1882. Monday morning, September 11, 1882, a council met in the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association. Dr. Kerfoot con-

most popular pastor of central Texas. Under the pastoral care of Rev. Dennis the New Hope Church is growing strong numerically, financially, and spiritually. Rev. Dennis has not as yet reached the zenith of his usefulness. The history of the Baptist ministers of the state of Texas would be incomplete without mentioning his grand work. As a teacher he stands in the front rank, and as a preacher he is among the first in the state.

REV. BAZILE DORSEY.

Rev. Bazile Dorsey was born November 20, 1843, in Iberville, Louisiana. His parents were Bazile and Harriet, and were slaves of a widow—a Mrs. Dodd.

Young Dorsey was one of her trusted slaves, and he often speaks with pleasure of her kind and tender treatment. At the age of eighteen young Dorsey was converted and was baptized by an old brother named Louis Spraggins. In 1865 he was licensed to preach. Although illiterate, he believed that he could not understand and efficiently explain the Scriptures without some education. By hard work and careful saving he accumulated a sufficient amount of money to enable him to enter the Freedmen's school, established at Plaquemine. In a short time, by dint of



YOUNG LADIES' HALL AND PUBLIC ROOMS.

Arkansas Baptist College, Little Rock, Ark.

Pages missing in
book -

(83 & 84)

From Book by

A. W. Pegues -

Dennis lived for a
time in Balto; was a
member of ^{and} was or-
dained from the Theion
Bapt. Church of Balto.

7
Sketches of 3 Balto. Ministers
written up in
"Our Baptist Ministers"
by
A. W. Pegues.

(An old book with many loose
and missing pages.) (3)

Revs. Harvey Johnson, J. A. Dennis & P. H. A. Braxton