

Africo-American Presbyterian

AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.—John

Walter I. Clark
418 Witherspoon Bldg.

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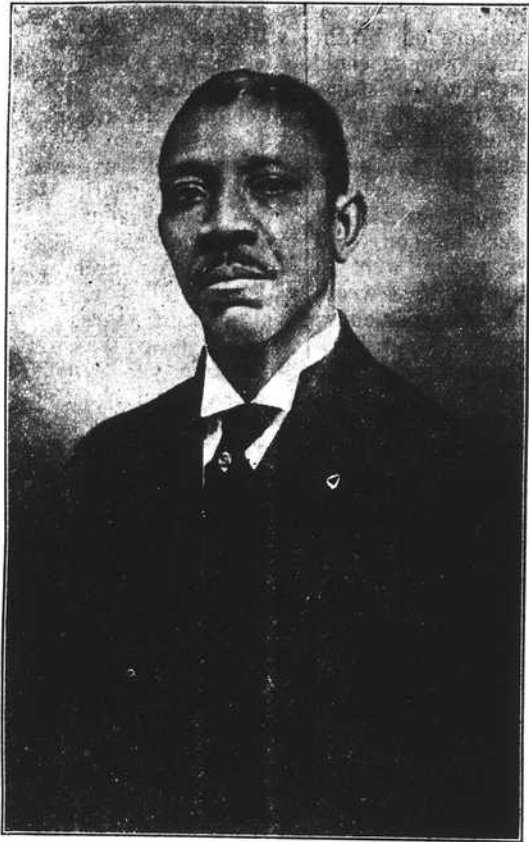
THE PASSING OF A BELOVED PASTOR

Truly it has been said, "to live in the hearts of those we leave behind is not to die."

The membership of the Chestnut Street Presbyterian church, of Wilmington, N. C., is bowed in sorrow as perhaps it has never been before because of the death of its beloved pastor, for so inestimably bound up with the family life of all

F. J. Anderson, of Charlotte, N. C., and other loving friends, members of his church.

The funeral services held at Chestnut Street Presbyterian church at 3 o'clock Tuesday afternoon, January 8, were conducted by Rev. G. C. Shaw, D. D., of Oxford, N. C. He was assisted by Dr. J. H. Hayswood, of Lumberton, and Rev. M. S.



REV. JAMES A. BONNER, D. D.

his little congregation was he, that there can be hardly a home which does not feel his loss.

Rev. J. A. Bonner, D. D., was born some 70 odd years ago in Petersburg, Va. Having completed his college and theological training in Lincoln University, Chester Co., Pa., he came South to take up his life's work of preaching the gospel. He met Miss Katherine Richie, a Scotia Seminary graduate, at Abbeville, S. C., whom he married. Later they went to Lexington, N. C., where he was pastor of the Presbyterian church for a time.

About 40 years ago Rev. Bonner, with Mrs. Bonner and their small son, came to Wilmington, to take charge as pastor of the Chestnut Street Presbyterian church. For some 20 odd years of that time Rev. Bonner was also Principal of Peabody Graded School of this city. Thus he became beloved and honored, not only as pastor of his church, but also as teacher and friend of both children and adults of his race of the entire city of Wilmington.

It is said Rev. Bonner entered more homes and married more couples than any other minister in the city. Truly he was the beloved pastor of all the people.

About twelve years ago, severing his connection with Chestnut Street Presbyterian church, he was called to pastor Grace Presbyterian church in Winston-Salem, N. C. Three years ago he was recalled to the Chestnut Street Presbyterian church in this city where he served acceptably until his death.

From the time of the death of his beloved wife 11 months ago, Rev. Bonner began noticeably to fail in health. Nevertheless he smiled and kept up his work to the end. Indeed he preached his usually strong sermon Sunday morning one week before the end.

Death came to the beloved pastor, Monday morning, Jan. 7th, 1935, at 3:10, in the Community Hospital. At his bedside was his sister-in-law, Mrs.

Branch, of Kinston, representing Cape Fear Presbytery; Rev. House, of the First Baptist church, and Rev. Cleland, of St. Stephen's A. M. E. church, representing the local Ministers' Alliance. Dr. Shaw who has been a friend of Dr. Bonner's since college days, said in his simple and heartfelt talk: "If I were to take a text, it would be the words of David when he had received the tidings of the death of Abner: 'Today a prince hath fallen in Israel.'" A prince, said Dr. Shaw, as a minister, as an educator and as a man. Miss Rubie Mitchell sang Burleigh's "Deep River." Rev. Cleland spoke touchingly of his own personal friendship of long standing with the deceased. Speaking for the Ministers' Alliance he told of Dr. Bonner's influence in that body as a minister and a man.

Mr. W. H. Sprunt, one of Wilmington's leading business men, told of the kindly and respectful regard in which the beloved pastor was held by the white citizens of Wilmington.

The body was tenderly laid to rest beside that of his dear departed wife in Pine Forest Cemetery. An escort of Masons from the local lodge acted as pallbearers and gave the full honors of the Grand Lodge.

E. C. GRIGG,
Clerk of Session.

WILMINGTON PAPER'S BEAUTIFUL TRIBUTE

(From The Cape Fear Journal, Wilmington, N. C.)

Dr. J. A. Bonner, venerable pastor of the Chestnut Street Presbyterian church, illustrious educator and noted statesman, died following a brief confinement early Monday morning at the Community Hospital. Bronchial pneumonia was the cause of his death. He survived his wife who died less than a year ago.

In his early life, aside from serving as pastor of the Presbyterian church, he also held the principality of

Peabody School. In the capacity of educator he served admirably. He gave profusely of his time and energy to implant in youth those moral virtues which he thought imperative to good citizenship. The erectness of his teaching can be seen in hundreds of his former students who are now useful men and women.

Besides being prominent in religious and educational circles, Dr. Bonner was one of the State's most outstanding fraternal leaders. When fraternalism was at its height in the State, Dr. Bonner was one of its greatest supporters, for he believed it served as a means of welding the Negro together. In the various lodges he held any number of offices.

Dr. Bonner was a man of amazing versatility. As a speaker he was without a peer in this section, and was one of the best extemporaneous speakers to be found anywhere. Aside from being richly endowed with eloquence he was also abundantly blessed with energy. Even until the very end almost, he could be seen dashing about the city, paying pastoral calls. He was an institution here; a potent cog in the Negro's civic and religious development.

In the most inner recesses of his soul Dr. Bonner suffered, but few were permitted to see that side of his life. His life, despite its longevity, was one of endless sunshine. Whenever you saw him, wherever you saw him his face was illumined with a smile, a happiness that was contagious, a joy that permeated your very being.

As a citizen he lived a most exemplary life. He was at all times interested in those things which tended for a more abundant life for all people. As a result of his demise this community and the State of North Carolina sustain an inestimable loss.

Funeral services for the deceased were held at the Chestnut Street Presbyterian church Tuesday afternoon at 3 o'clock. In the little church which he had pastored for almost a lifetime, hundreds gathered from every walk of life to pay their last tribute of respect and honor to their friend and leader. The funeral eulogy was made by one of his former Lincoln classmates, Dr. G. C. Shaw, of Oxford, N. C. He lauded Dr. Bonner for the fine, serviceable life which he lived, and for the splendid contribution he had made to civilization.

Following the services he was interred beside his beloved wife, the late Mrs. Katherine Bonner, who passed away several months ago. The floral tributes were beautiful.

Dr. Bonner is survived by one son, Benjamin Bonner, and innumerable relatives and friends.

MINISTERS REGRET DEATH OF DR. BONNER.

(From The Wilmington Star)

A resolution of regret at the death Monday of Rev. J. A. Bonner, D. D., pastor of the Chestnut Street Presbyterian church, who, it was said, "has been considered as an outstanding colored minister of Wilmington, holding an honorable place in the life of the city," was adopted yesterday by the Ministers' Association of Wilmington.

The resolution was drawn by a committee composed of the Rev. Andrew J. Howell, Dr. Arthur J. Barton and the Rev. A. P. Brantley. It read in part:

"His twenty-six years of continuous service as pastor of his church gave unmistakable testimony to his worth; and, when

to this was added a long career as teacher in the public school system for colored children, his contribution to the welfare of the city was of unusual value.

"Following his long pastorate, he was absent from the city for about nine years; and those who knew him were pleased when they learned of his return three years ago. It was thus to spend his remaining days in Wilmington, much to the pleasure and profit of those whom he influenced by his work and example. Eleven months ago his faithful wife and companion in labors passed away, but, with Christian fortitude, he stood at his post of duty in the midst of lonely days until he was called home to his eternal reward.

"The Ministers' Association through a committee appointed for that purpose, hereby expresses its profound sympathy for the bereaved family and friends, and its sincere appreciation of the services of Dr. Bonner among the colored population of Wilmington."

NEGRO DEMOCRAT IN CONGRESS NO CAUSE FOR ROW

Southern Newspapers Say Mitchell Entitled to "Every Consideration" at Hands of Colleagues.

Dallas, Texas, January:—Members of Congress are expected to be courteous enough to accord to Congressman Arthur W. Mitchell "every consideration customarily shown a member of Congress," according to the editorial opinion of two of the South's important daily papers. He has precisely the same right in Congress that other men have, according to these editors, and should be treated accordingly. The statements referred to appeared shortly before Congress met in the following editorial from the Daily Journal of Dallas, Texas, quoting the Chattanooga Times:

"What ought a Southern gentleman who happens likewise to be a white Congressman to do when he finds himself seated in the same chamber with a Negro who is also a Congressman and also a Democrat? The Chattanooga Times says something on the subject:

"Let it be said that the presence of a Negro Congressman on the Democratic side of the House of Representatives can not properly be taken as raising the question of social equality. It will be most unfortunate if Representative Mitchell and other Democratic Congressmen and officials should permit the question to obtrude itself in their thinking and influence their conduct.

"Arthur W. Mitchell has been elected to the House to serve his constituents and the Nation in matters of government. Other Democratic Congressmen and officials should accord the Negro Congressman, in matters relating to government, every consideration customarily shown those of their own color."

"In short, the Tennessee paper feels that the Negro from Illinois has the same right in Congress that the white man from Tennessee has. And it expects a gentleman from Tennessee to be gentleman enough not to take advantage of the Negro's color in order to insult or belittle him in his performance of his duties as a public servant. Surely the code of courtesy and consideration in the South is big enough to manage that. He whose status as a gentleman is so parlous that he has constantly to be making a row about it is usually of du-

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THE PROBLEMS OF THE FARMER

By Dr. Kelly Miller

The enclosed correspondence should indicate in concrete form, the plight of the ordinary Negro dirt farmer and my advice as to the best means of overcoming the heavy handicap under which he unquestionably labors.

I referred the correspondence given here to the Secretary of Agriculture. The response of the Department of Agriculture will constitute the substance of my next release.

Warsaw, N. C.,
November 17, 1934.

Prof. Kelly Miller,
Washington, D. C.,
My dear Professor:

This is what the "New Deal" has done for me.

By chance I was born down here in the woods where we have to grow corn and cotton for a living and not get a living from the government, and so I don't have to praise some one man for what I know he has not done.

I have a little plot of five acres of land, and rent 10 acres more. This year I had to buy a horse. That one died in May and I had to buy another one which put me in debt \$125.00 for horse flesh. I was \$40.00 some behind for taxes. The "New Deal" allowed me to plant only 1 3-4 acres of cotton and you know about how much that used to make when you were plowing for your father. It is not much better now and we did not get the fifteen or twenty cents a pound promised us.

They say we must plant less cotton next year. All who grew tobacco got out fine but some of us could not grow tobacco. Hundreds of our people have been given work helping to make out records but not one of them had a black face. A few black saw mill hands got twenty to forty cents more a day for three or four day weeks' work while they and others have to pay fifteen to nineteen cents a pound for fat back meat and proportionate prices for about all other things.

Now this is the way we country Negroes see the "New Deal." We would not object to seeing the "N D" in the burning place if we were on the outside.

My dear Mr. Best:

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favor and wish to say that from my early experience as a farm boy in South Carolina, I can fully understand and appreciate the sad plight of the Negro farmer in the South. But notwithstanding the undisputed hardships and handicaps, there does not seem to be any relief through escape, so far as the masses of the Negroes are concerned. City conditions are even worse than the rural with a still more gloomy prospect ahead.

I am an advocate of the New Deal, not only because it is a reality from which there is no escape, but because I believe that the Negro will be gradually or rapidly integrated into its beneficent dispensation. There is absolutely nothing to be gained by taking the hostile and pessimistic view which characterizes your letter. If you and your Negro neighbors experience unjust and unfair treatment on account of race, if you will, in an intelligent and straightforward way, bring the matter to the attention of the proper authorities in your own State or at Washington, I am sure your complaint will be given sympathetic and just consideration.

There is absolutely nothing of a radical, discriminatory

character in the New Deal as it lies in the mind of President Roosevelt and his chief advisors. However, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible to eliminate altogether the injustice of race prejudice especially in regions where it is so deeply entrenched.

A spirit of co-operation with the administration, rather than of futile hostility will, I am sure, help to relieve the evils of which you so justly complain. With best wishes.

Yours truly,
KELLY MILLER.

ST. JAMES CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY

Rev. Dr. Wm. L. Imes, Pastor

On Sunday morning, January 13, the pastor preached an interesting and impressive children's sermon, based on the postage stamp.

For several Sundays Dr. Imes has been encouraging the boys and girls to collect foreign stamps for their stamp books. The pastor stated that stamp collecting teaches a real lesson in humanity. It is evidence that money has been spent for a useful and specific purpose.

The postmark gives the date, place and hour the letter is stamped; so our lives, deeds and actions are stamped with the wisdom of God.

The theme of the morning sermon was: "The Teaching of Devotion." The text was Romans 12:1, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

In closing the sermon, Dr. Imes, in a beautiful and vivid way, paraphrased the Lord's Prayer.

At the close of the sermon Mr. Parker Watson sang: "There is a Balm in Gilead."

The following members have joined the church since the beginning of January:

January 5, Miss Edna Belton, Mrs. Bertha Thomas and Mrs. Barbara Walton; January 13, Mr. Aaron Douglas, Mr. Henry Thoman, Misses Eddie Mooney, Jennie Dorsey and Evelyn Williams.

We were very glad to welcome Dr. Channing H. Tobias and Dr. T. H. Amos as visitors at the morning service.

Not only are the adult members interested in the spiritual activities of the church, city, and community, but the youth of the church are coming to the front and are doing a great work.

On January 27, there will be a Spiritual Emphasis Conference, held in St. James church, afternoon and evening. The Conference theme will be: "Life's Fullest Meaning," and there will be five conference groups. Subject themes are: (a) Life as Christ Interprets It; (b) Life and Personal Growth; (c) Life and Our Un-Christlike Social Order; (d) Life and a Christlike Church.

We begin promptly at 4:30 P. M. There will be a devotional service, and the groups will start their activities at 5 P. M. Out-of-town visitors will be guests of our young people at supper at 6:15. All friends and members are cordially invited to attend these group conferences.

Dr. Imes preached for Dr. L. B. Ellerson in Newark, N. J., Sunday evening. Dr. Ellerson has been sick for some time and the pastors of the neighboring churches have been kindly carrying on the services during his illness.