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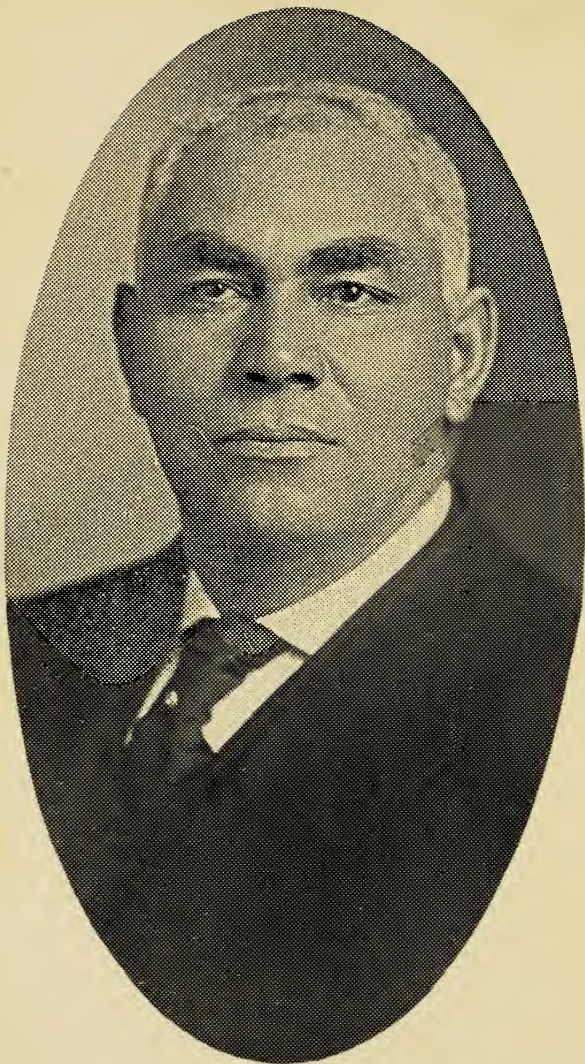


AUGUSTUS SHEPARD









REV. J. A. WHITTED, D.D.  
AUTHOR

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
OF THE LIFE AND WORK

OF THE LATE

REV. AUGUSTUS SHEPARD, D. D.

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

By J. A. WHITTED  
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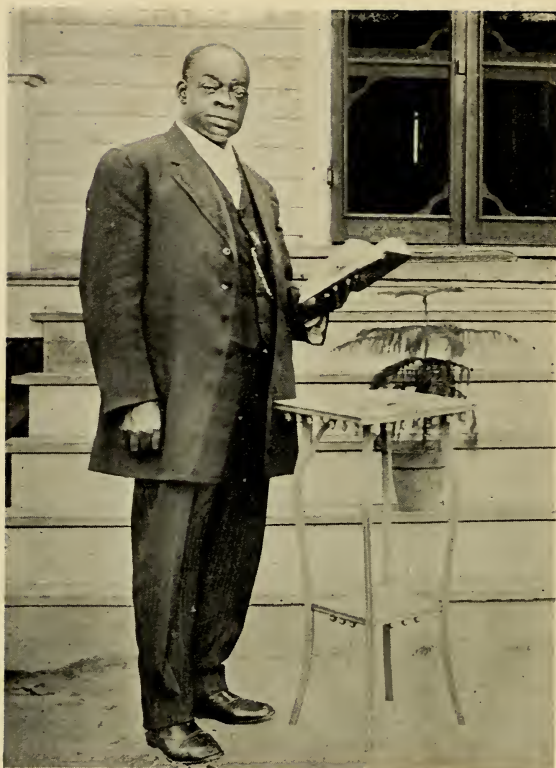
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REV. AUGUSTUS SHEPARD, D.D.  
(Taken 3 or 4 months before his death)



## Preface

While the hope and destiny of every individual is wholly dependent on the Divine Providence, yet God often uses individuals to shape the life and character of others in such a way they become a blessing to the world about them, and their end, everlasting life.

The Gentile Apostle was stricken down on his way to Damascus by the direct power of the Almighty, but Ananias was God's agent in pointing out to him the path in which he should walk, and which finally led to the greatest missionary service the world has ever known.

No man in North Carolina of the past generation has done more to shape the lives of young men of the race than did this man of God, the late Dr. A. Shepard. The writer of this sketch is one of that number whose life, in the important part of the formative period, was very fortunately brought under his influence, and as a mere pittance in return of his indebtedness, and profound gratitude, this brief sketch is written and dedicated to his lifelong and affectionate companion, Mrs. Hattie E. Shepard.



## Augustus Shepard

There are many scriptural truths which we may not here and now comprehend; the fulfillment of which we see daily before our eyes. That the "Potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor," is one of these scriptures. On the one hand we see individuals born with millions in money at their command; rocked in the cradle of ease and refinement; brought up under the tutelage of masters of art and intellect, a "by-word and a hissing" to the world about them, and sometimes a disgrace and a failure; again we see others of the humblest birth, enshrouded in adversity and discouragement, who begin early in life to climb the ladder, round by round, and ascend through adversity and opposition, step by step, until they reach the illustrious heights; emblazon the pages of history with their name and fame, and like the "Gentile Apostle" "look back on a life well spent" ere they enter their blest abode in heaven. Such is the life, labors, and end of Augustus Shepard.

Just seventeen years before the immortal Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, in the city of Raleigh, North Carolina, of Richard and Flora Shepard, both slaves, was born Augustus Shepard. A great man was once asked the secret of his greatness, his immediate and proverbial reply was, "I was born right." By that he meant he was the son of an honest parentage. Such might be truly said of the illustrious character of the sketch. Richard and Flora wore the manacles of slavery, but never a more honest and upright pair lived. Although deprived of the learning which has its place in shaping the lives of children in the home, yet they so fully possessed a character without stain, and a confidence in their Heavenly Father, they were enabled to hand down to their posterity that which will live when glittering gold becomes "sordid dust."

Of this union there were seven children, but like Joseph, in the family of Jacob, Augustus outstripped them all in the race of life. It is but just to say that all of them were honest and upright, and bore marks of piety and religious life. Robert, along the line of orphan work especially, has distinguished himself; and Sal-

lie along the line of missionary work. Although Augustus was third in point of years, he was the first to make peace with God. At the age of twenty, one Sunday afternoon in the year 1866, in the midst of the usual family devotion, Augustus proclaimed faith in God. This conversion was the beginning of the first great revival in Raleigh after the close of the Civil War. The whole city of Raleigh seemed to catch on fire with the Holy Spirit, and great revivals were held among the whites as well as the colored people. It did not stop in Raleigh, but revivals spread throughout the entire State. Around this same family altar, one after another of the children in rapid succession, until they all professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Although themselves unlettered, these parents of this humble home realized fully the worth of the soul, and in the salvation of their house; and God abundantly answered their prayers.

In April of the same year Augustus was baptized by Rev. William Warrick, the first colored Baptist preacher in Raleigh. His filial obedience, his fraternal disposition, made him the favorite, not only of his parents, but of the entire household. In the smallest detail the

wishes of Augustus found a ready response; not only while the family remained around the same hearthstone, but even after they had reached the years of maturity and had separated; and even until the death of this illustrious son and brother. A splendid demonstration of this favoritism was seen in the untold sacrifices that each made for the advancement of "Gus," as they loved to call him. When he made known his call to the Gospel ministry, Robert, his second brother, remained at home with his father and labored faithfully that he might keep his brother in school and fit him for his exalted calling.

He was not only held in high esteem by his immediate family, but by all who knew him, colored and white. It was his piety and manliness and unusual goodness that won him the place of esteem in which he was held in all the years of his after life. His former master, Mr. Manly, who was at one time Governor of North Carolina, had such implicit confidence in his religious character and fidelity, when on his death bed he sent for Augustus, his former slave, to come and offer prayer in his behalf. He went to this bedside with that earnest ex-

pression which was characteristic of him, and offered a prayer fervent and effective; the most profound impression was made on his former master, and he left him bathed in tears.

While Augustus was pious and of a godly life, his home life did much to shape him and make him the man he was. He was never addicted to any vicious or filthy habit; and although he had grace, he also had what we call "grit," and whenever it became imperative, like the Christ, the "lion" could be seen in him, as well as the lamb. This was exhibited on one occasion during the days of slavery, when he was but eighteen years of age, when an inhuman overseer employed by Mr. Manly undertook to brutally beat him into submission; with all the force at his command, he resented it, broke away from this cruel and inhuman overseer, and, like Paul "appealed to Cæsar," he appealed to his master; it was doubtless this brave stand for justice and fair treatment that gave him the exalted place he held in the esteem of Governor Manly.

We have mentioned the devotion in which Augustus was held by his parents and others of the family. It is just to say that this esteem

was mutual and fully reciprocated, and never a more loving family than this existed. In turn the parents were each laid away to rest; the family group was broken up, and the Shepard children separated to form families of their own. But to the day of his death, whenever an opportunity presented itself, manifestations of affection and esteem were exhibited one toward the other; and ere Augustus "fell on sleep," each of the four remaining members of this family were at his bedside, to wipe the sweat drops from his fevered brow and whisper words of prayer in behalf of his departing soul. Each was there to witness the last sad but impressive rites over his remains; not to weep as those who have no faith, but rather to rejoice for his multiplied achievements, for his splendid victory, and for the blessed assurance that he had gone to strengthen the family group in Heaven.

### **Dr. Shepard's Home Life**

While serving as pastor of the Baptist church at Hillsboro, North Carolina, Dr. Shepard met Miss Hattie E. Whitted, a young woman of sterling character and a devout Christian, whom



he courted and married in the year 1875, Rev. Crooms of Greensboro, N. C., officiating.

This union bore every evidence of Divine formation, and was abundantly blessed. Actuated by mutual interest and love, it made its impress upon humanity and became like all such unions, a blessing to mankind and a glory to our Heavenly Father. The quantity and quality of its offspring was an emphatic expression of God's approval and blessing. They lived happily together for thirty-six years and nine months. These years were joyfully spent, and hence were fleeting. Every one who came into that home felt at once its benign influences; aglow as it was with "sunshine and song," and with mottoes here and there upon the walls bearing scriptural texts, which were unmistakable evidence that the Word of God had a constant place in their lives and practices. Every one who entered this home was deeply impressed at the scriptural rule, and that was the rule and guide of this home. No day had duties too numerous, or tasks too arduous, for family devotion. Many have wondered why such unbounded success has come to the children of this family; the answer lies in the consecrated life

of both father and mother and their devotion to duty, which was the answer of a life of faithful service and prayer.

There were twelve children born to bless this home. Four of these passed into the blessed beyond in early childhood, many years ahead of this kind and loving father. Eight still survive him—three sons and five daughters. The best proof of the sincerity of this home is seen in the fact that each and all of these eight children professed a hope in Christ, and were baptized of their father, before they reached the age of thirteen years. If any one of these children is not thoroughly familiar with the teachings of the Bible, it is no fault of the father. As each became capable of reading and understanding the Scriptures, a splendid copy of the Bible was presented to him, and the constant admonition, and in some instances compulsion, to read so much of the Scriptures each day. The extensive teaching that children must of necessity sow some "wild oats," was false in the opinion of this father, and instead he let no opportunity pass to place in their hands the "golden grain" for early sowing that they might reap a golden harvest in after years, and in eternity. How

abundantly successful he was in this course, which is not of everyday occurrence, is seen in the phenomenal lives of his two elder sons and other children of this Christian home.

No parent was ever fonder of his children, and milder in his dealings with them, than was Dr. Shepard; but he himself had been trained in the old school, and when mild and gentle persuasion failed to accomplish the desired end, he turned with decision to the rod of correction, and laid it on with such force and precision the child soon realized the wisdom of falling in line. This, too, accounts for his success with his children.

No husband or father ever did more for the comfort and support, and even joy of his family. Not once, but always and everywhere were his offerings like the widow's mite, "all the living" that he had. What he did not give his family, is what he did not have; what he did not teach them, is what he did not know himself. Such sowing must of necessity bring a golden harvest to any home. As beneficent as he was to his family, he was not less beneficent to the world about him. Like Job, he could say, "If I have seen any perish for want of clothing; or

any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate; then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade and mine arm be broken from the bone." He fully realized that "a prudent wife is from the Lord," and that "children are an heritage from the Lord." Like unto few men, he entered earnestly into the smallest details to set them an example or to give them pleasure. No greater tribute was paid him than at the obsequies held over his remains, by a distinguished churchman, fellow-citizen and neighbor, who said, "He looked after the comfort of his family, even to the detail of picking up chips with which to kindle fires." And another said, who was associated with him for forty years, "The life of this man of God was so chaste, so pious, so calm and considerate under the most trying circumstances, that the very air through which he passed seemed changed because of his presence." Such a life not only contributed to the benefits of his immediate family, but like the gentle raindrops, or the glorious sunshine, all about him realized the benign influence of



REV. JAMES E. SHEPARD, D.D.



his genial life. The old and decrepit could always hear from his lips a word of cheer; the wayward and wandering, a word of admonition and warning; the outcast and dejected, a word of hope and encouragement.

Not until the "final consummation" shall bear testimony, will it be known what this "father in Israel" was to humanity in general in its uplift. Such men are not intended to carry large bank accounts; such men make no great material provision for his posterity, but his greatness is demonstrated, his monument is erected in the lives and characters of those who are so fortunate to come in contact with him; and his heritage consists of an untarnished name, a life of noble sacrifices and deeds. He did, however, leave his family a lovely home, hallowed with his prayers and benedictions. He saw his three oldest children comfortably situated in their own homes, and like Jacob of old, one of the last pleasures of earth was to lay his hand upon the heads of, not only his children but his grandchildren, and pronounce the benediction, ere he passed to join the ranks of those who had gone before him.

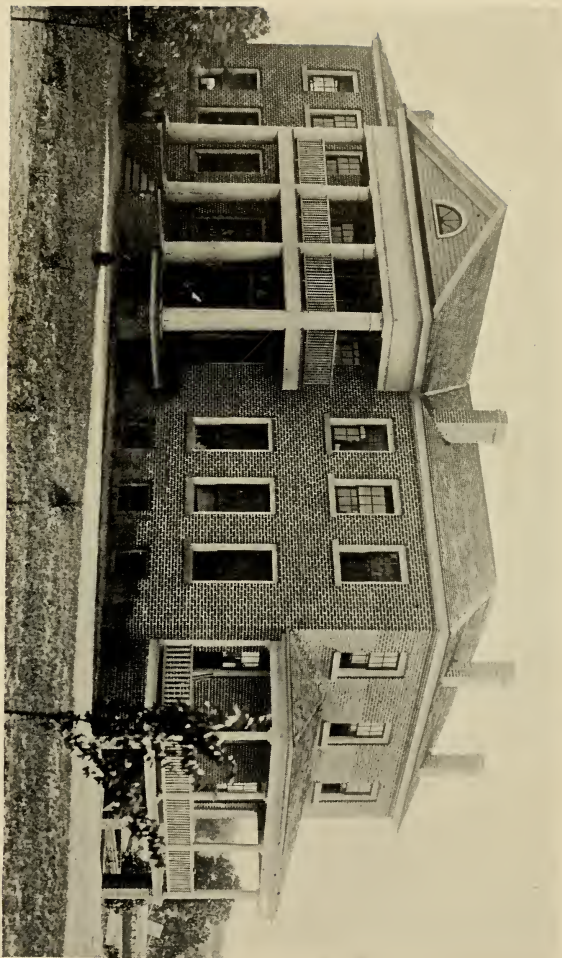
That we may illustrate the fruitfulness of

his family life, we have attached a sketch of the two eldest sons.

### **James E. Shepard, D. D.**

James E. Shepard, the eldest son of the late Rev. Augustus Shepard, D.D., was born in the city of Raleigh, N. C., on the third day of November, 1875. When eight years of age he entered the Model Department of Shaw University, where he remained for two years. Afterward, when his parents moved to Henderson, he entered the Shiloh Institute, Warrenton, N. C., then under the principalship of his uncle. Later he entered the Pharmaceutical Department of Shaw University. He graduated from this department in 1894. He was one of the first colored druggists in the State of North Carolina, and engaged in the drug business in the cities of Charlotte and Durham, N. C., and Danville, Va. In 1897 he was appointed chief clerk in the Recorder of Deeds office in Washington, D. C., and a year later Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue at Raleigh, N. C., which position he held for several years. It was while holding this position that the Executive Committee of the International Sunday School As-





MEN'S DORMITORY—NATIONAL RELIGIOUS TRAINING SCHOOL, DURHAM, N. C.



sociation selected him as Field Superintendent of work among colored people, with the Southern States as his territory. His work was to improve Sunday Schools in management, methods, and equipment; and to endeavor to bring the denominations into a closer understanding for coöperation to uplift the race. His efforts along these lines were very successful, as is attested by the different denominational conventions which meet annually in the several States. He was also founder of the North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company.

Seeing that the need of the Negro race was for trained leaders, he conceived the idea of establishing the National Religious Training School. On April 1, 1910, the first tree was cut on the land donated by the white citizens of Durham, N. C. April, 1912, there are ten buildings, valued at \$125,000, with students from several States, Africa, and the West Indies. This school has been phenomenal in its growth and development, and has the promise of a splendid future. As a mark of the esteem in which he is held, the following appeared in the papers of June 26, 1912:

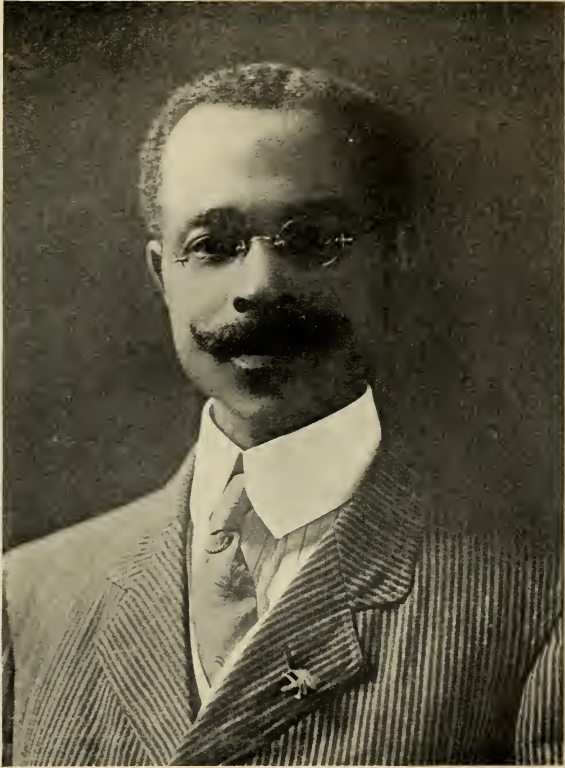
“Muskingum College, Ohio, has conferred the degree of ‘Doctor of Divinity’ upon Dr. James E. Shepard, the popular president of the National Religious Training School, Durham, N. C.

“While Muskingum is one of the smaller colleges, it is regarded as one of the truly great colleges of the country. It has sent out a host of notable men, who have made their impress upon the intellectual life of the nation and whose constructive labors have done much to advance the general good. Among the alumni of this college may be mentioned the late President Harper, of the Chicago University; Dr. Moorehead, dean of the Xenia Theological Seminary; Dr. Lawrence, Mr. Bryan’s pastor; Dr. McClenahan, pastor of the wealthiest Presbyterian church in Pittsburgh; and a host of others. It boasts of the fact that 55 per cent of the male graduates of this college are either in the ministry or the missionary work of the world.

“Dr. Shepard is the only colored man to be honored with a degree at the hands of Muskingum College, and the vote in the faculty was unanimous.”

### **Dr. Charles Haddon Shepard**

Dr. A. Shepard had such a profound reverence and esteem for an able ministry, he named his second son Charles Haddon, for the great London divine, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He was born in Raleigh, N. C., November 21, 1876. He attended the public schools of Raleigh, the Shiloh Institute of Warrenton, N. C., and Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C. He graduated from



DR. CHARLES H. SHEPARD



the Medical Department of Shaw University in 1901, passed the State Medical Board of North Carolina in June of the same year. He located in Durham, N. C., and at once took front rank as physician and surgeon; he has the largest practice of any colored physician in Durham. He has contributed several scientific articles to the medical journals of the country; one of which, entitled "The Effects of Ergoapiol in Female Diseases," was reproduced in one of the medical journals of Great Britain. He was the first colored physician in North Carolina to perform abdominal operations successfully. His first operation of this kind was performed at the age of twenty-two.

He is a member of the State and National Medical Associations, and has been prominently mentioned as president of the National Medical Association. He is president of the Bull City Drug Company, vice-president of the Board of Trustees of Lincoln Hospital, located at Durham, N. C.; director of the Farmers and Mechanics Bank, member of Board of Trustees of National Religious Training School, practicing physician, and instructor of physiology for this institution, medical director of the American-

Carolina Mutual Insurance Company, and a prominent member of the White Rock Baptist Church, of which his father was pastor until his death.

These two sons, ranking high in the professional world, was the pride of their distinguished father in his declining years. It was often said, if Dr. Shepard had done no more than give these two eminent sons to the world, it would be worth his own existence.

#### **Augustus Shepard, Student**

As nearly as we can ascertain, Augustus Shepard entered the Baptist Institute (or Tupper's School), now Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C., in 1869. The school then was in its infancy, and was conducted in the upper story of the Blount Street Baptist Church (or Tupper's Church). This church was located at the corner of Blount and Cabarrus streets, and is now known as the "Tupper Memorial Church." At this time the boarding students occupied rooms in the same building, at the rear end of the church. They boarded in a shed room on a lot adjoining the home of President Tupper—at that time outside the southern limits of the



city, on the Smithfield road. President Tupper's house consisted of two rooms, with two additional shed rooms attached, four rooms in all.

In this early and crude condition of the school, no pupil had a greater influence in the school, nor with the president, than did Augustus Shepard. An incident occurred in the fall of 1870 that gave evidence of this fact. President Tupper, burdened with poverty and laboring under many disadvantages for proper facilities for such a school as he hoped to establish, decided to write to a wealthy friend in the North and ask for a donation of \$10,000. As was his custom ever afterward, when a special effort was to be made to secure funds, he asked the student body to unite with him in prayer that God might touch the heart of his friend, and that the money might be forthcoming. Augustus Shepard was appointed by the student body to conduct this special service of prayer for this donation. Said one of the students who was present in this meeting, "All present were convinced that Augustus Shepard, then young in years, was strong in faith and deeply spiritual." This meeting had the desired effect.

“These effectual fervent prayers availed much,” the donation was granted, and the foundation for Shaw University was laid.

It is needless to say that of all such meetings, while he was a student, he was called on to lead them. Another student, who has since risen to eminence in his Alma Mater, said of Mr. Shepard: “His talks in these prayer meetings made a deep impression upon the student body; some of the passages he used to quote are fresh in my mind today. Brother Shepard was a quiet, dignified young man; and although he had the appearance of a big boy, any one could see upon his countenance distinctive expressions of Christian piety. And notwithstanding he seemed much reserved, he always took an active part in religious meetings, and always impressed me as a man born of the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, and led by the Spirit.” And still another said of him: “He impressed me as a young man of unusual ability. A robust physique, strong, heavy voice, but of a congenial disposition, and deep Christian piety. As I became better acquainted with him, I found that he not only possessed those natural traits of character, but

was a man possessing unusual spirituality, in consequence of his living near God."

As a natural sequence, life upon the student body, when the time came for the season of revival meetings in the institution, Augustus Shepard was selected to conduct these meetings. Great showers of blessings came as a result of these meetings, and the foundation was laid not merely for intellectual training, but for Christian education. Hundreds went out of the institution converted to God, with words of praise for the direct or indirect influence of this young man, clothed with unusual spiritual power, and especially adapted to the work of soul saving.

As usual in such institutions, there are other places of trust and confidence. Mr. Shepard had that esteem of the president, he was the first one called on to fill these places. The Bible teaches that there will be an accurate account of all things in "the judgment," whether they be "good or evil"; not until the day of reckoning will it ever be known the severe trials Rev. H. M. Tupper, president of Shaw University, was called upon to endure in this dark period. When it became evident that this Negro institution was established to live, develop and grow, ene-

mies multiplied on every side; these were not only among the whites, but Negroes were used as tools; and every imaginable mischief was devised to dethrone Mr. Tupper and ruin the institution. A long and tedious lawsuit ensued; the day was dark, the clouds were so threatening, despite the iron will and the great determination of the founder of Shaw University, it looked as if the enemy would triumph. Even some of the individuals who had received instruction at the hands of Mr. Tupper, turned away and held with firm grip the strong arm of the oppressor. At such a time a man of small calibre would either be hushed into silence, or run away and leave the guns to the enemy; but Augustus Shepard was not that man. In the thickest of the fight he stood by his commander. His gratitude was too well founded to yield. His sense of justice and right held superior place in his manly heart; his faith and trust in God was well founded.

When he was accosted by the other side and was told, "If you turn Tupper loose, he will either die or be forced to give up and go back North, like Martin Luther before the Diet of Worms." In reply he said, "I had rather die

on the side of right than live on the side of wrong; and I shall stand by Mr. Tupper and the blessed cause of Negro education, which he has so nobly espoused." Doubtless the truth was told even by these wicked men, for no single individual at this time could contribute half so much to the support and encouragement of the founder of Shaw University as could Augustus Shepard. The battle did not cease on Southern soil, but finally was waged at headquarters—New York City. The attack was made personally, and the destiny of Mr. Tupper was in an even balance. Then Mr. Shepard came out boldly in behalf of his teacher and friend, and the balances were immediately changed in his favor, and Mr. Tupper remained at the head of Shaw. In all the after years that followed in the lives of these two great men, they had the highest confidence, respect, and love for each other.

At that time visitors began to flock down to Shaw University from the North. Rev. Shepard was always the first to be called upon for a declamation, or an address, in the presence of these visitors.

A more effective plan for reaching Northern

friends was decided upon by Rev. Tupper, and a company of Shaw Jubilee Singers were prepared and sent throughout the North each year to raise funds for the Institution, and to give some evidence of the character of the work being done at the University. Rev. Augustus Shepard was always appointed to introduce the Jubilee Singers, and on occasions he would deliver sermons and addresses. He spoke in many of the principal churches throughout the New England States; and while the plantation melodies and other songs given were a rarity in the New England States, they were not more inspiring and helpful than these sermons and addresses of Rev. Shepard.

When the work of teaching and preaching became too arduous for Rev. Tupper, it was necessary that an associate pastor be called to Blount Street Church. Rev. Shepard was recommended and elected associate pastor to Rev. Tupper. In 1880 he graduated from the Theological Department of Shaw University, with degree of B.S. He was the second man to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from his Alma Mater.

When the American Baptist Publication So-

ciety of Philadelphia, Pa., decided to appoint a General Sunday School Missionary and Colporteur for North Carolina, they appealed to Rev. Tupper to make a recommendation. In his estimation, no man was found so thoroughly prepared; and without hesitation he gave his unqualified endorsement of Rev. Shepard for the position. His untiring service; the influence he exerted in North Carolina in this capacity; the many thousands who were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, through the Sunday Schools and churches throughout the State, which he established; the work in general with its splendid results; proved the wisdom of this selection. Amid the haloes of his companions, strong, bold, defiant, he leaves the institution and enters earnestly and anxiously the service.

An instance not so common in the lives of men is, that twice he was called to the pastorate of the same church. He was first called to Blount Street Church as an associate of Rev. Tupper, and several years later as pastor in charge. While serving in this capacity, he was appointed by Dr. C. F. Meserve, successor to Dr. Tupper, assistant professor in the Theological Department of Shaw University.

### **Sunday School Missionary and Colporteur**

The fact has already been mentioned that in 1875 Dr. A. Shepard, at the suggestion and recommendation of Dr. H. M. Tupper, was appointed Sunday School Missionary and Colporteur for North Carolina, for the American Baptist Publication Society. At the very beginning of his career, the greatest opportunity was afforded him to carry out the spirit of the "great commission." Everything, so far as church work among colored Baptists of North Carolina was concerned, was in a crude state. There were a comparatively few men with any degree of intellectual ability, and the field was ripe for a great harvest. No man in the State was so fully capable of the work at this time as was Rev. Shepard.

Fresh from college, accustomed to physical toil, robust and strong, commanding in appearance, genial in disposition, of a high moral character, and full of the Holy Ghost and power, he was the man for the place.

Located in the western section of the State of North Carolina was Rev. Edward Eagles; in the eastern section was Rev. Lemuel Boone; Dr. Shepard towering in strength in the center



of the State, formed a splendid link for a beginning, ere these two pioneers should be called to their reward. It required but a short while of such service as Dr. Shepard rendered to the State to convince the multitudes to whom he spoke that he was the man of the hour, sent from God to broaden the foundation on which the great Baptist hosts might build in after years. His influence began to be felt in every section of the State, and he was soon the acknowledged leader of the colored Baptists of North Carolina; not only in Sunday School work, but church work as well. Indeed, it may be said the field was ripe for the harvest; his plans and suggestions were received almost everywhere; organizations were formed, and the work was begun in earnest. It was through Dr. Shepard that the Baptist State Sunday School Convention of North Carolina was organized. He laid hold of the Convention, to propagate its work and to make it the great organization it is to-day. And, too, it was his work to form auxiliary conventions throughout the State, many of which are still in existence, and have done and are doing splendid service in themselves and for the State Sunday School Convention.

As it was said of the Christ, to an extent it might be said of Rev. Shepard, "The which, if they should be written every one," to say the least this book could not "contain" them. It was while serving in this capacity he demonstrated to the convention, other organizations, and churches his great power as a Gospel preacher, as well as organizer. It was generally conceded until the day of his death, that he was the best preacher among Baptists of North Carolina. We do not make this statement as a fact, but as a concession (while we state it in our individual opinion as a fact). No man was more extensively loved. His gentle spirit, his unassuming carriage, his kindly demeanor, and his universal interest, gave him that hold on men that everywhere a very charitable feeling was entertained for him. If this Sunday School missionary had done no more than cement hearts as he did, inspire lofty ideals, offer comfort, cheer, and encouragement to the despairing, that of itself would have given him a place in the front ranks of Christ's soldiery. But hundreds, yea, thousands, can recall some kind word or deed of this man of God, which has been a stepping stone to their lives.

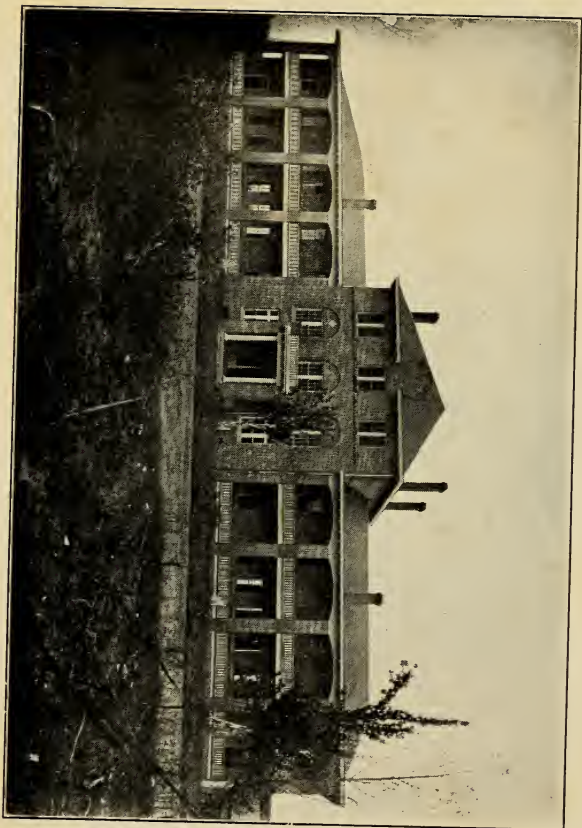
Some one has said in substance, "To be young while one lives, is to live in the hearts and lives of the young." If this is true, and we believe it, Dr. Shepard was but a youth when called to his reward. For peculiarly it may be said of him, that his crowning years, as well as at the beginning, and all through his life, much time was spent with the youth. It is that debt of gratitude which has led to the writing of his biography. The good one does when he places in the hands of another the Bible or other Gospel literature, can never be estimated. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of Bibles and Gospel tracts were distributed by Dr. Shepard, and through his direction throughout North Carolina. Hundreds of our ministers who had scarcely no helps, were supplied with libraries, which proved of inestimable value in preparing them for their work. Not then as now, did they have theological seminaries and access to libraries; but many of them were wholly dependent upon these helps afforded, through Dr. Shepard, by the American Baptist Publication Society.

For eighteen years he served as the Society's missionary. Everywhere throughout the State protests were heard against his leaving the work.

Accommodations during these years were very meager. He had to endure much privation and suffering to do this work. We have often heard him tell how on one occasion, like Jacob of old, he had "nothing upon which to rest his weary head" save a "cold stone," and this he endured for a whole night. Often for many miles and hours, with the sweat pouring down his face, bearing his budget of books, tramping his way from place to place, that the destitute might be supplied. With eighteen long years of such service, he felt it incumbent, over the protests on every side, to retire from the field work to the pastorate. In almost every organization throughout the State, resolutions were passed commending his service and wishing for him many years of usefulness in other fields to which he was called. With deep gratitude to God Almighty, hopeful, and even ambitious for greater service along other lines, he bids a long farewell to the field work and enters the pastorate.

### **Founder of Colored Orphan Asylum**

It is sometimes difficult to tell where, when and by whom great enterprises have their origin. Several have laid claim to the honor of bringing



MAIN BUILDING—COLORED ORPHAN ASYLUM, OXFORD, N. C.



the Colored Orphan Asylum into existence; we dare not dispute this claim. Like David in his relation to the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, "it was in his heart to build the Temple," but the actual building was left to the wise and skillful Solomon. As the Sunday School missionary for North Carolina, coming in contact with all classes and conditions of people throughout the State, no man was in a better position to study and know the needs of the people of this State; the neglected orphan boys and girls appealed to the sympathy of Dr. Shepard as no other subject. His heart became so burdened with the thought of some place for the care and attention of the orphan, he would often spend sleepless nights and anxious hours, trying to fix upon some definite plan for an institution for the maintenance and support. It was said by some who were in position to know, that while pastor at Henderson, N. C., Dr. Shepard had a regular "praying ground," where he would resort night after night, and plead with God for the orphan children. Such prayers never go unanswered.

There were not the organizations in the State then as there are now, to which he might make appeals, in the hope of an answer. But there

was a God on high, who numbers the very "hairs of our heads and marks the sparrow's fall," and who has explicitly said in His Word, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the widows and orphans in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

In August, 1883, he felt that the time had fully come; they who have the will and make it known to God, God always makes the way. There is no chance work in the Divine providence; God has fixed everything to move in His own time, and along right lines. The Wake Baptist Association met with First Baptist Church of Franklinton, N. C., of that same year, and the Shiloh Baptist Convention met at the First Baptist Church of Henderson, N. C., in close proximity. This was God's time, and Dr. Shepard was God's man to do the work. Through his influence, committees were appointed by each of these Associations, to take into consideration the establishment of an orphan home. Drs. N. F. Roberts, Wm. A. Greene, Rev. C. M. Ransom, Joshua Perry, and Prof. Jerry S. Lee composed the committee from the Wake Association; Rev. Isaac Alston, M. F. Thornton, and Henry Hes-



ter from the Shiloh Association. The time was ripe, and after some deliberation, an organization was formed, under the name of the "Orphan Asylum Association." An appeal was issued to churches, associations, conventions, and secret organizations throughout the State. With a burning heart and prayerful desires, no man was so well qualified to follow up these appeals as was this man of God. From the mountains to the seashore, from church to church, from place to place, clothed in earnestness and eloquence, his voice resounded "in behalf of neglected boys and girls." And yet with all this, it was first a season of clouds and darkness, and then a season of life and hope. Members of this committee grew faint; but "Brother Shepard" would still say, "There is yet hope."

To better advance the work, and to make it more effective, he organized county Sunday School conventions throughout the State as auxiliaries to the State Convention, and in the constitutions of each of these auxiliaries the main object was the establishment and maintenance of the Colored Orphan Asylum. Evidently the plan was of God and it had its desired effect. The cause of the orphan was not only heralded

by this great champion, but pious women began to multiply through the auxiliary conventions. Each of them had their monthly meetings, instead of annual meetings as contemplated in the State Convention; and as funds were sent up from time to time the soul of the founder was touched with gratitude and praises to God.

While other denominations have contributed from time to time, it can be truthfully said that the Baptists are the sole cause of the existence of the asylum, and for several years it was called the Baptist Asylum. That the appeal might be more extensive and effective, the name was changed to the Grant Asylum. It was then decided to appeal to the State Legislature, and the name was then changed to that of the Colored Orphan Asylum of Oxford. While its name has been changed to meet the demand, the Baptists have been by far the greatest contributors among the religious denominations.

Rev. W. A. Patillo was the first superintendent, with Dr. Shepard president of the Board of Trustees. It was the day of "small things" while he remained at its head; many sacrifices were imperatively necessary, but he proved equal to the task; and while others have still built

splendidly, it was upon the foundation made by Rev. Patillo, associated with Dr. Shepard. When Rev. Patillo surrendered his post, everything was still in a crude state, and even then it looked as if the institution would be a thing of the past; but the same unseen Hand was at the helm, to guide this ship to a safe haven.

For a short while Miss Hawkins, a generous hearted white missionary from the North, had temporary charge, and erected on an adjoining lot, at her own expense, a building which has since been used as a girls' dormitory. Never a wiser choice was made than when Rev. Robert Shepard, brother to Rev. Augustus Shepard, was called to the superintendency of this institution. At that time there was needed prayer, patience, and perseverance, and it may be peculiarly said of him, he possessed each of these in turn. A more familiar face and form was never seen in North Carolina than that of "Brother Shepard," standing in the midst of some audience singing "Saviour, more than life to me," and pleading for the orphan with tears streaming down his face; these appeals never failed to get a hearty response, and things began to take shape and form at the Home. It was during his adminis-

tration that an appeal was made to the Legislature of North Carolina for an annual appropriation to the asylum. A singular incident occurred in answer to this appeal. They asked for an appropriation of \$5,000.00, or fifty hundred dollars; the committee objected to that amount, and directed the clerk to write forty hundred instead; the clerk neglected to make the change, and when the time came, the bill read "fifty hundred dollars," and "Brother Shepard" always felt that this was an answer to his prayer.

The institution grew rapidly and very prosperous under his administration. He was succeeded by Hon. H. P. Cheatham, a former member of the United States Congress; a man of broad experience, of much common sense and business ability; a man whom everybody knows is thoroughly equipped for the position. During all these years of change of administration, Dr. Augustus Shepard held the place of president of the Board of Trustees, and lived to see many splendid improvements at the institution. He held the place until the day of his death. He never failed while he lived to lift his voice in behalf of the orphan. After his demise, in

consideration of the exalted service he rendered to the institution, which in after years became an object of charity for the Masonic Fraternity of North Carolina, although himself not a member, in their annual convocation held at Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1911, a resolution was unanimously passed to erect some suitable monument on the campus of the Oxford Asylum, or elsewhere, as the committee may direct, in honor of his memory. Hence his name will be doubly writ: first, upon the hearts, lives, and characters of those who shall go out of that institution to bless the world; and upon this stone, which is a tribute of the generosity of the Masonic Fraternity. A further tribute was paid to his memory by the board which he served so faithfully and long, to leave his chair vacant, with a temporary presiding officer, for twelve months.

We give below a statement of the Oxford Orphan Asylum at the time of his death:

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Number of orphan children.....  | 652         |
| Value of plant:   |             |
| 295 acres of land.....  | \$12,000.00 |
| Brick dormitory .....   | 26,000.00   |
| Six frame buildings, including shops,<br>sawmill and brick plant..... | 15,000.00   |
| Improved farm implements and live<br>stock .....                      | 2,500.00    |

free from encumbrance, save balance due on a small tract of land purchased near the institution. The State appropriates annually six thousand dollars for maintenance of the institution. Many men might consider themselves fortunate if they had done no more than to have been an instrument in the hands of God in establishing such an institution.

### **Dr. Shepard as Pastor**

From what has already been written, it would seem as if Dr. Shepard excelled along all lines. His manly character, his splendid record, his affable disposition, made this largely true; but he was never so fully satisfied, and suited, as he was in the pastorate. If there was ever a man who loved home and home comfort, it was Dr. Shepard. The pastorate afforded him the opportunity of this enjoyment. Much of his splendid powers as a speaker came by natural instinct, and growing out of the earnest, conscientious Christian life that he led; but much of it came as a result of hard, faithful, unceasing study and preparation; his home life afforded him this opportunity.

Uniquely, he was a Gospel preacher of the

rarest type. This was readily admitted by all who heard him. The Bible was to him a text-book, a guide book, and a daily companion; and his knowledge of the Bible was thorough and complete. This most of all made him a Gospel preacher. One could rarely mention any portion of Scripture with which he was not thoroughly familiar, and could quote that Scripture verbatim and could tell exactly where it was found in the Bible. And, too, he had great faith and a vital hope in every promise of God's Word. "Thus saith the Lord," quoting his own language, was all that was necessary for a foundation upon which to build our hope for time and eternity. During his entire life, nothing gave him greater joy than to spend hours and hours alone with God and the Bible, in constant devotion. It goes without saying, that he never went to his pulpit after such devotion that he was not able to send the truth home to the hearts of his congregation.

It was said once of a great orator, had he done nothing more than gesticulate, his gestures were so perfect he could have been so fully understood it would have been a greater speech, by far, than any ordinary orator. So say we of

Augustus Shepard. His life was so chaste and pure, so imposing in his demeanor, his manly face bearing such an expression of the Christ, his very presence in the pulpit meant more to the people who knew and loved him, than many preachers laboring with their might.

We have already mentioned the fact that while a student at the Baptist Institute, or Shaw University, he was called to the Blount Street Baptist Church to be associated with the pastor, President H. M. Tupper. His services greatly aided the overworked Rev. Dr. Tupper, and through him the church was greatly strengthened, both in numbers and influence. He was afterward called to Hillsboro, North Carolina. The church at Hillsboro never enjoyed such prosperity as it did under his pastorate; having the leadership all to himself, he demonstrated his ability to lead, and gave promise of greater results by far in greater fields of usefulness. The membership was greatly increased, and dignity and spiritual force were in evidence. In 1875, over the strong protests of church and community, he resigned.

The year following he was called to the First Baptist Church of Oxford, N. C. The greatest



revival known in the history of the church at Oxford came during the pastorate of Dr. Shepard. While serving in this pastorate he was called to Henderson, N. C. In his first pastorate in Henderson he served three years. And in 1880 was succeeded by Rev. M. C. Ransom. One of the unusual occurrences in life, he was succeeded in three churches by Rev. Ransom: at Hillsboro, Oxford, and Henderson. He was twice called to the church at Henderson, and served six years in the last call. It was during this second pastorate here that he established a secondary Baptist school, with Miss Cora B. Persons, of Franklinton, N. C., principal. She was succeeded by Rev. Jas. Young, of Louisville. The school flourished during his pastorate, but was discontinued after he left Henderson.

Dr. Shepard believed in splendid church edifices, and almost without exception, where the edifice was inadequate, that was his first undertaking. He began the erection of a lovely brick structure at Henderson, but he did not remain there to finish it. Dr. Walden, his successor, thought it wise, and erected on the same spot a beautiful frame structure. Dr. Shepard was

then called to the Roanoke-Salem Baptist Church at Garysburg in 1885. In the language of one who was then a member, but has since been called to the same pastorate, "Dr. Shepard found us in a poor condition as to our house of worship; it was almost completely demolished, held together only by the ceiling; and he left us in a beautiful and commodious church structure. He put life into the Sunday School. While he was a great builder, his wide knowledge and experience taught him that the prayer meeting and Sunday School lay at the very foundation of a progressive, prosperous, and successful church." He found the people at Roanoke-Salem Church ready to work; and they found in him a leader untiring in his efforts to build up, to develop, and to go forward. About three hundred persons were added to the church by baptism during the six years of his pastorate. Not as in other churches, this church had preaching but once a month. In 1891 he left this strong, loving country church to take up work in another section of the State; but like the Apostle to the Gentiles, he never let an opportunity pass to revisit this church, to give and to get inspiration; for this particular church was always an inspiration to him.

His next pastorate was the First Baptist Church at Charlotte. Dr. Shepard was a great believer in the education of the youth, and one of the first things he did after settling down in Charlotte, was the erection of the Wharton Normal and Industrial School; which work was carried on by his successor, Dr. C. C. Somerville, for some time, and afterward it passed under the auspices of the Rowan Baptist Association, and was transferred to Salisbury, N. C., under the name of Piedmont Institute. He erected a parsonage, and then he laid the foundation for the brick structure which was continued under his successor, Dr. Somerville; but was completed under its present pastor, Dr. P. S. Lewis. This is regarded as the best church structure in North Carolina. As characterized his pastorate everywhere, great spiritual awakenings followed in this church. And it may be said of this membership that nowhere in North Carolina, or out of it, can there be found a more loyal, hustling crowd. Dr. Shepard believed in long pastorates only in exceptional cases, and whenever it occurred to him that some one else might do better, or that he might do better elsewhere, over the protests and admo-

nitions of those who had learned to love him and appreciate his real worth, he would go elsewhere.

He was now called to the pastorate of the Blount Street Church, where he had served years before as associate pastor. While there he gave a part of his time to the Roseville Baptist Church. From Raleigh he went to Warrenton, to pastor the First Baptist Church, where he served about two years and during which time he was elected principal of the Shiloh Institute, of Warrenton. Teaching, however, was not his calling, but he felt it incumbent to relieve the situation until another could take charge. So often in the providence of Him "who marks the sparrow's fall," grants the earthly reward to enable us to perform the most ennobling service just before entering the eternal reward. Like the fruitages and flowers greatest and sweetest and best in ripening season, so was he called to White Rock Church, Durham, North Carolina, a hero of many battles, to fight his last battle and to come to the end of his service. The last, the best, and yet the most trying of Dr. Shepard's life was left to this last pastorate. Just before he was called to this



WHITE ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH, DURHAM, N. C.



church, it was torn asunder, and in the midst of a great lawsuit. A part of the church had gone out, and were worshipping elsewhere. As a proviso in the settlement of this suit, a decision of the courts, unheard of before in the annals of court decisions, was that the names of three ministers prominently mentioned before by either faction of the church, should be excluded from the list of those who would be considered as pastor, for three years. Among those mentioned was the name of Dr. Shepard. At the expiration of three years, his eldest son, Dr. J. E. Shepard, with explicit confidence in the ability of his father to bring shape and form out of chaos, peace out of confusion, made the motion that his father be elected pastor of White Rock Church. This motion prevailed.

With an indomitable will, with that faith that characterized him in all these years, he assumed the pastorate in 1901. In the language of one of the members of White Rock Church, "His unflinching sweetness of temper, his custom to think no evil, even of his enemies, his unswerving employment of means of prayer, soon brought a decided increase in the membership and congregation. An unusual occurrence,

some of the most prominent members of the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational churches flocked under the shelter of White Rock Church, and those who at first thought to "laugh him to scorn," were soon made to feel that he was not a mere "idle curiosity" on their hands.

From an enrollment in the Sunday School of 150, and an average attendance of 70 or 80, at the time of his death the enrollment was 520, with an average attendance of 480. In praise of Dr. Shepard's great service, we do not lose sight of the hearty coöperation of the constituency of the church; and yet he was the great instrument in the hands of God to unravel the tangle and furnish the inspiration for the marvelous changes which ensued.

Dr. Shepard, with long years of service and ripe experience in pastoral work, held extensive Bible readings, and sought to lay in the membership a foundation, firm and strong, by acquainting the people with a knowledge of the Bible, and emphasizing the fact that the Bible was not a toy to decorate the center tables of parlors; but to be read in daily family devotion and applied to their lives. The wisdom of this course



is seen even now in the fact that, though his body lies cold in the grave, the membership still holds together in a glorious union.

With the increase of the Sunday School, as a natural sequence the facilities of the Sunday School must be extended. It was evident that more room would have to be made, to accommodate them, and the Sunday School annex was the first improvement. Afterward, it was seen that the main auditorium was inadequate, and hence followed the beautiful structure which is the pride of the church people of North Carolina. No church, white or colored, in Durham, has the same conveniences and modern appliances; besides the main auditorium, there is a Sunday School department, a distinct adjunct, with its own apartments and divisions for the accommodation of its classes; the pastor's study; the reading and lecture room; the ladies' parlor, kitchen, dining room, and even bath rooms. The privations of pastor and membership during the time of the erection of this new structure were great. As a temporary place of worship they used a tent, which during the season of summer was excessively hot; and yet pastor and people and congregation held on even under these trying circumstances.

The test of the physical, as well as the oratorical and spiritual, strength of the pastor was tried. The congregations and collections did not fall a whit behind; but for one, at his time of life, who had known nothing but hardships and toil, the strain was too much; and it was thought by many these trying circumstances hastened his death, which so soon followed. With great ceremony and Christian pride, in 1911, the new edifice was thrown open to the public. As in so many other instances, "In the midst of life we are in death." Just as White Rock Church felt that they were prepared to enter upon their greatest work, in less than twelve months this "watchman" was called from the walls. True to his trust in the closing hours of an eventful life, as he had been in all preceding years, he gave them timely warning, as God had given warning to him, the fulfillment of which they were in no sense prepared to accept, when it came. Said he to his church, "I will soon have to leave you, but while I am here, I will tell you the truth, as it is revealed to me." Less than one year from that day, just long enough to enjoy some fruitage of such earnest and anxious sowing of tears, sacrifices and pray-

ers, God required him to answer to a summons from on high.

He was invited to preach the dedicatorial sermon in the beautiful and imposing First Baptist Church of Charlotte, N. C., of which mention has been made among his pastorates; but the invitation came just too late for compliance. His summons had come from his Father's throne on high, and it was mandatory. Even his family was unmindful of the real situation; his wife had gone to Charlotte ahead of him, and anxiously awaited his coming. For the first time a message over the wires told of the real situation, and his wife hastened to his bedside, where she remained to the end.

### **The End**

The news of the extreme illness of the distinguished pastor of White Rock Baptist Church was flashed over the wires from his home in Durham to the remotest parts of the State of North Carolina and elsewhere. The newspapers told the sad story of his illness with as much reservation as possible, and yet one could easily "read between the lines" and was made to feel that the "prince" of preachers

among the Negro Baptists of North Carolina was fast approaching the end.

A specialist in the medical field was hurried to the scene, while two other physicians were at his bedside, twice each day, and sometimes far up into the night; every care and attention which human hands could devise, was employed; prayers in the State meetings, in the churches, and in the closets went up daily and hourly in his behalf; for seven weeks he lingered, but these petitions were unceasing. Not once during all these weeks and days of suffering was he heard to utter a word of complaint. Although under a strain, as was evident sometimes, each visitor was met in his approach with a genial smile and a kindly greeting. His usual reply to the many inquiries, "I am making out," or "I am just waiting."

Never before have we seen such deep anxiety exhibited, and for such a long time. The scene was often pathetic, to find members and friends waiting in adjoining homes, with tearful eyes, asking for one word of cheer from the sick room. Augustus Shepard shared, as no other we have ever known, the deepest sympathy and good wishes of the world about him. The State Con-

vention, in its annual session at Fayetteville, N. C., which provided for him in its program to preach one of the annual sermons, on learning of the condition of the sufferer, was touched into tenderness as we have never seen them before; resolutions were passed, to be sent over the wires to his bedside; several fervent prayers were offered in his behalf; and more than an hour was spent by different members, who had been associated with him for so many years, in giving expression to his many virtues and achievements.

From time to time during these seven weeks of illness, the home was crowded with people from all ranks of life. All this could not stay death from his claim. The appointed time had come, and the debt must be paid. The hero of so many battles must face the battle of battles, the battle of the death struggle; but with that fortitude which never failed him in the fiercest contests of the life he had lived so nobly, his every word, and even his very countenance, gave evidence; although upon the verge of the dark "valley of the shadow of death," he "feared no evil," for God was with him.

One of the last things he did was to give the

last counsel to his family, as he had constantly done in life. With his hand clasped in that of his daughter, "faith caught the sound," love heard the rustling of wings, angels coming from above to bear his spirit to that blest spirit land. The Heavenly Father, as if to give emphasis to this beautiful life, called him just at sunset, on the beautiful day of November 19th. Silence reigned everywhere, broken only by an occasional sob; his end was not the agony and groans of the lost, or the radiance of the departing clothed in poetry and song, but as the sun in his glory at eventide of this day died in silence sublime, so passed this "father in Israel," not to return as the king of day on the following morning, to light up and beautify the earth; but to reflect a brightness with that of others in realms immortal fair; in realms where "the Lord giveth them light: and where they shall reign forever and ever."

His spacious residence on Cozart Avenue was not sufficient to meet the demands of the vast crowds that gathered around, and his remains were borne by gentle hands to the church edifice in which he had served so faithfully up to the closing days of his earthly career. The thou-

sands of both races, of all classes and conditions, throughout the day, with bared heads and reverential expressions, passed the coffin to take the last look at the face so familiar to all Durham, and to all North Carolina. It never was ours before to realize such an imposing funeral occasion; members and organizations of White Rock Church; friends, white and colored, seemed to vie with each other in the floral offerings of the most lovely and costly designs. There was hardly room on the spacious rostrum to contain them. These expressions came not only from persons with whom he had been associated, but we are told from persons who had only heard of his noble life and character. Hours before the time for the funeral services, the street for about two hundred yards was crowded to its utmost capacity; the train bearing friends from Raleigh stopped just in front of the home to accommodate the vast numbers. It was impossible to have all the distinguished men speak, who had gathered to do honor to the occasion. The sermon was preached by Rev. N. F. Roberts, D.D., a schoolmate and lifelong friend of the deceased; others who spoke were Dr. A. W. Pegues, Col. Jas. H. Young, Dr. C. F. Meserve,

of Raleigh, N. C.; Dr. J. Elmer Dellinger, of Greensboro, N. C.; Dr. P. S. Lewis, of Charlotte, N. C.; Dr. A. M. Moore, Dr. J. E. Jackson, Prof. W. G. Pearson, and Mr. John Merrick, of Durham. An original poem was read by G. W. McCorkle, and among the songs, one that he loved so well, a solo, "Flee as a bird to your mountain," by Miss Maggie Poole. We shall never forget the scene as the remains were borne from the church, eighty young men representing the Baraca Class, of which he was teacher, with bared heads, each bearing in his hand one of the many floral designs. Ere the grave was reached the shades of night, as if to give their share of gloom, had settled down on all. With torches in hand, the vast throng gathered around the last resting place of the dead; and after a fervent prayer was offered and the burial service was read by Rev. Dr. Jackson, of the St. Joseph A. M. E. Church, all that was mortal of Augustus Shepard, the distinguished pastor of the White Rock Baptist Church, by gentle hands was laid to rest to await the resurrection morn. Every heart was touched to tenderness as they heard so distinctly the clods of cold clay as they fell upon the metal coffin;



all eyes were bathed in tears as the coffin was lost from view, by the mound of fresh clay. But the situation was changed, as if by imagination, instead of the clay, it was a bank of flowers, a reminder that what might seem lost in the grave's confines would one day be revived and clothed in a blessed immortality; would pass into those blest realms where the flowers are always in bloom.

The mourners filed away in turn as they came, with a blessed hope that they should meet this loved one "In the sweet by and bye." There was just one profound thought which filled our inmost soul through all these scenes, which we have but half painted, and that thought was, *after all it pays to live right.*

### **White Rock Baptist Church**

The Baraca Class of the White Rock Baptist Church is the live wire of the church. The late pastor, Rev. Augustus Shepard, D.D., always believed in young men, and he conceived the idea at the very outset of his pastorate in Durham, to enlist the young men in the work of the church. He started the work with a class of six, and from six the class grew to one hundred and five, with an average attendance of sixty-four. It is a remarkable sight to see such a large body of young men anxiously and eagerly engaged in church work, seeking to do something. The motto of the class is, "Young Men Helping Young Men, All Standing by the Bible." The class has a regular business organization which meets weekly. They contribute each week to any sick member of the class; they seek out the stranger, they help in the general work of the church. From this class ushers are appointed, and they have charge of the penny collection or offering for the sick. The organization of this class has added hundreds of dollars to the church's finances; besides, it has exerted a saving influence upon a large num-

ber of young men. No story, however graphically told, could do justice to the good done by this class and the influence it has had in helping the church.

White Rock Baptist Church was remodeled in 1911 at a cost of \$26,000.00. It is modern in its equipment, having a large general Sunday School room and ten separate class rooms. It has a parlor, library, reading room, kitchen, dining room, pastor's study, and general assembly room.

The library of this church is open to the people of Durham, and it is made a reading room at night so that the young men can gather and have a place for meeting.

Baths have been arranged in the church, so that young men may have a place, by paying a nominal fee, to take any kind of bath desired.

Night classes are conducted each evening, where bookkeeping, stenography, and literary branches are taught.

In every way possible, this church has tried to carry out the spirit of the pastor, to help young men, because it realizes that the young men must be the future hope of the nation.

We give just a few letters to show the esteem in which the character of our sketch was held. And what say these few, so say they all.

**Appreciation by Dr. Charles F. Meserve**

I first became acquainted with Dr. Shepard soon after my arrival at Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C., in March, 1894. I saw at once that he was an unusual man, both by birth and training. I came to know him very closely through the years, and to esteem him as one of the best, most upright and conscientious ministers of the State. On several occasions he conducted special revival services in our chapel, and always successfully and with the best of judgment. He was a finished speaker, a careful thinker, and in all of his associations with the leading people of both races displayed rare good sense; and always showed himself a perfect Christian gentleman. He was born in slavery, and at the close of the Civil War began to take advantage of the meagre educational advantages then offered, and pursued his studies later under more favorable conditions, and was graduated from Shaw University with the degree of B.S. in 1880. The institution honored herself as well as our dear departed brother in conferring upon him later the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

I have had a wide acquaintance during a long life with a large number of prominent ministers of both races, and have rarely found any one more courteous, conscientious, gentle, and spiritually minded than was the late Dr. Shepard. The world is poorer and heaven is richer because he has lived, rendered a splendid service, and gone to his reward.

CHARLES FRANCIS MESERVE,  
*President of Shaw University,*  
*Raleigh, N. C.*

March 5, 1912.

**Tribute by Rev. S. N. Vass, D. D.**

If there is any one minister that stands at the head of the colored preachers of North Carolina, I suppose the honor belongs to Dr. A. Shepard, both because of his work, his talent as orator and preacher, and most of all, his stalwart Christian character. He has accomplished a great work for local churches, and also for the denomination at large, and he is ending up his days at the White Rock Baptist Church, Durham, N. C., where he is giving us all some object lessons in pastoring a people. This church ought to do its utmost to retain him as pastor the rest of his life, for he is by no means an old man yet, and is inclined to go where the people love him enough to try to live up to a right standard.

Dr. Shepard was one of the pioneers in our denominational work in this State. What we are today is due very largely to him. He has traveled the State from one end to the other, in the country and in towns and cities, and wherever he went he organized Sunday Schools and churches, and placed good books in the hands of old and young. He was the second Sunday

School missionary sent out by the great American Baptist Publication Society to work in North Carolina, and he did the work of dozens organizing our State Sunday School Convention. I have found it true that an organized body retains and represents the spirit of the man that founded it. This is especially true of our Convention. Dr. Shepard has never known any other spirit in his work than that of the lowly Nazarene, and I know of few State Sunday School Conventions where there is such little bombast and so much of the genuine spirit of our Lord and Master as in the case of our Convention, and I thank God it was started by such a man. One reason why some conventions and churches always are in trouble and do such little is because they represent the spirit of their founders.

Dr. Shepard also organized the Oxford Orphan Asylum, which has so commended itself generally that the State of North Carolina is now helping it with a handsome appropriation yearly, and a second one of the kind has been started at Winston-Salem as an outgrowth of this effort.

Dr. A. Shepard is no time server, nor does he



flatter men and study to please them. He aims rather to show himself approved unto God as a worker that needeth not to be ashamed, and is an example to us all. May God bless him and spare him to us for many long years to come.

S. N. VASS.

[Tribute offered in the form of a resolution and address by Dr. S. N. Vass at the Baptist State Sunday School Convention, Goldsboro, N. C.]









