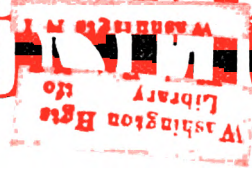


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Nassau and the Bahamas

THE ISLANDS: THE TOWN: THE PEOPLE AND THEIR WAYS

THE Bahama Islands are coral formations, which rise, according to the United States Coast Survey, from the shallow submerged platform of the great submarine shelf which borders the American continent from Massachusetts to the eastern end of the Great Antilles. They are all alike in structure, being composed of low heaps of calcareous shells and coral sand, which have been piled up by wind and wave. Together with the Lesser Antilles, they form the rim of what Mr. Hill, in his comprehensive work upon the West Indies, calls the "American Mediterranean," in which are included the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, and the adjacent channels and waters. I have in my book upon "Cruising in the Caribbees," and in "Letters from Bermuda," given a full account of the work which the coral polyp performs in building these islands; how he extracts the lime from the water and forms it into foundations for islands and stone for the use of man. More than half the seaboard of Cuba, and the entire group of Bahamas, embracing 690 islands and 2,387 rocks, an area of 5,450 square miles, which sustains 54,000 inhabitants, has been created by these coralline workers. They are still busy adding range to range, under a great part of the region occupied by the West Indies, though Professor A. Agassiz considers that the Bahama islands are chiefly heaps of coral ruins, shells and sand. However this may be, the traveler who sees the blocks of coral limestone of which the forts and houses of Nassau are built, and looks down through the glass bottom of a boat into the beautiful sea gardens where lovely growths of white and purple polyps sway as palm branches do in upper air, will credit the coral builders with these islands. There is no more delightful amuse-

ment at Nassau than an excursion to these sea-gardens. The Negro who takes you to the reefs, is full of stories of wonderful fishes, and since every fish here is a novelty and their number is legion, his tales are inexhaustible. But sight is better than hearing on such a day. One sees the treasures of the deep—delicate lace work and forms which the jeweller would vain reproduce in gold and precious stones; beautiful sponges, seafans, stars and globes; gaudy fishes colored azure blue, red, bronze and silver from tip to tail. Now and then a brown shovel-nosed shark appears prowling after his prey. Then there is the wonderful flora of the sea, purple, yellow, scarlet plants floating and swaying, rising and falling with the tide; and the ocean's floor is paved with the whitest of coral sand and strewn with shining shells. It is a joy to live for a while in such a soft warm atmosphere, to feel the breeze gently fan the relaxed body, to let steam whistles and trolley gongs and telephones and business calls die away into oblivion, to have responsibilities slide off from the back, like the Pilgrim's burden of sins, to sleep and dream of Paradise and awake to find yourself in the garden of Eden. Of course Nassau is not Paradise, for there is a prison here, in which a few offenders from the various islands are kept; and it has a British governor, a man of fine presence and manners, and about fifty Negro policemen who march to the cathedral with a brass band on Sunday mornings; and two Flagler hotels, the "Colonial" a six story wooden building on the sea, built amid gardens and lawns and furnished in the first American style and filled with guests who listen to music, and take three luxurious meals each day, and saunter about, perhaps play golf or swim, and rush for the papers and the mails when the semi-weekly boat comes in; and the "Royal Victoria" Hotel, equally good, but built of stone and a little cheaper, and more English. Nassau is a good place to while away winter days in a summer climate, to live a calm and unvexed life, and tone down the feverish excitement of the American citizen.

As I came up through the islands to New Providence, on which the town is built, they seemed like low green tablelands, encircled by a fringe of white sand or breaking surf. The white hotels and houses of Nassau, the lighthouse and a tall chimney were the salient points above a village of houses clustering among palms, ceiba trees, sapodillas and laurels. There are some hills crowned with old forts whose guns are dismounted now that the soldiers have sailed away; one of these is shaped like a ship and both are used for signal stations. The houses in the town are attractive, being built of coral and of timber, with broad latticed piazzas and shaded porches. The people are neat and fond of flowers, so that every house has its garden of palms and cacti and flowering shrubs and roses, and the walks are smooth and white and clean. There are many shops of rather a common sort, for the fifteen thousand people who dwell on this island are not rich, and are chiefly Negroes, the descendants of the various slave people who were brought here. These Negroes speak a mongrel dialect, which is difficult for outsiders to understand. Sponge fishing is the chief industry, and the sisal plant is successfully cultivated for ropemaking. Its fibre is very white and tough, and this

Tributes to Clergymen

DR. BENJAMIN M. PALMER

BY THE REV. THOMAS H. LAW, D. D.

THE Rev. Benjamin Morgan Palmer, D. D., LL D., for more than forty-six years pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in the city of New Orleans, La., expired at his home in that city on the 28th of May. On the 5th of May he was knocked down and dragged for some distance by an electric car, from which most lamentable accident he suffered the breaking of one leg, the crushing of the toes on the other foot and other painful injuries. To one thus injured in his eighty-fifth year, the worst consequences were instantly feared. But under the prompt treatment of skillful physicians and with a constitution which had shown great recuperative powers, he seemed to be progressing so favorably that hopes began to be entertained that he would recover, and yet remain for years amongst us. However, internal ailments from which he had previously suffered returned upon him, and after three weeks of languishing upon a bed of illness, the once sturdy physical frame succumbed and the noble spirit took its flight to a brighter, happier world.

Dr. Palmer was a native of Charleston, S. C., where he was born January 25, 1818, and was an illustrious type of the true South Carolinian of that olden time. He came of a family noted for its preachers. His great grandfather, Samuel Palmer, was a preacher in the Eighteenth Century; an uncle whose name he bore was a distinguished pastor of the "Circular Church" of Charleston, S. C., in the early part of the last century. His own father, Edward Palmer, was an honored pastor in lower South Carolina, where he continued to preach until ninety-three years of age; his only brother, Edward P. Palmer, is now pastor at Harrisburg, Va., whose son, Wallace T. Palmer has been for some time the associate pastor with the deceased in New Orleans, and his only grandson, J. W. Caldwell, is pastor of Carrolton Church, New Orleans. But of all these noble army of worthy heralds of the Cross, the name has been made most illustrious by the one who has just finished his distinguished career.

Dr. Palmer was reared in the quiet home of a country pastor in lower South Carolina, and received his early education largely under the teaching of his gifted mother. When a youth of fourteen, he was sent to Amherst College, Mass., but returned home shortly and graduated with the highest honors of his class at the University of Georgia, in 1838. He then entered the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., where he graduated in 1841. The same year he was licensed and ordained and installed pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Savannah, Ga., but two years later he became the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, S. C., where he re-

For the weary, heartsick, nervous, unstrung mother, there is no restorative equal to Dr. D. Jayne's Tonic Vermifuge. It is a strength-giver.

mained, serving also a part of the time as professor of Church History and Polity in the Theological Seminary, until 1856 when he began his notable pastorate in New Orleans.

While in Columbia, this young, talented and susceptible minister fell under the magic influence of that prince of theologians, preachers, and teachers. Dr. James H. Thornwell, then professor and chaplain of the South Carolina College, who possessed a marvelous faculty of impressing himself upon men. These two gifted divines became intimate associates and bosom friends, and Dr. Palmer, five years the younger, received, it is said, an impress and development from his beloved associate and friend which he carried with him to his final day. They were thoroughly one in their views of morality, their doctrines of theology and church government, and their ardent patriotism. Dr. Thornwell died comparatively young, in his fiftieth year, but Dr. Palmer lived to a ripe old age to propagate through a mighty personality and an eloquent tongue their noble, exalted principles.

Dr. Palmer preached the opening sermon and was the moderator of the Southern Presbyterian Assembly at its organization in 1861; and he was a true exponent of the type of theology and ecclesiastical administration which under the leadership of Dr. Thornwell was signalized in that organization. And since the removal of Dr. Thornwell a few months later, he has been the recognized champion of its principles and leader of its hosts. He ever lived in the confidence, affection and esteem of his brethren. Every respect which they could show him was gladly bestowed, and every honor that they conferred upon him was joyfully accorded. Four years ago, in deference to his own request, the General Assembly held its sessions in his church, and as a member of the body, he was heard with profound attention and regard whenever the spoke, and by special invitation of the Assembly, preached from his own pulpit the sermon at the sacramental services, a grand and noble discourse on the offering up of Jesus as the lamb which God had provided (Gen. xxi:8).

In New Orleans, where Dr. Palmer served one church for nearly a half a century, his pastorate was a most remarkable one. Crowds flocked every Sabbath to hear him; his people loved him with an unquenchable devotion; the whole city respected and honored him, and no citizen of that Southern metropolis commanded such an influence for truth and righteousness and holiness as he. No wonder then that the Southern Methodist General Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention, both in session about the time of his fatal injury, in common with the Assembly of his own church, hastened to send him telegrams of sympathy, that the great Northern Assembly in New York paused in its proceedings to offer special prayers in his behalf, and that at his funeral in New Orleans, on the 30th of May, the whole city paid him reverence. Truly a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel.

Dr. Palmer was in himself a marvelous combination of physical endurance, of intellectual quickness and profundity, and of practical force and efficiency. He was a fascinating companion, a charming conversationalist, an elegant writer, and a most eloquent orator, using a rich and musical voice, the choicest language and the most graceful action. No wonder

then that he readily became the centre of a charmed circle of friends, the cherished pastor of a loving and devoted flock, the celebrated preacher upon whose eloquent and impressive sermons listening multitudes waited, and the commanding presbyter to whose judgment synods and assemblies bowed. And that he should have retained and exercised all these powers to his eighty-fifth year is truly remarkable. Alas, alas, pitiable indeed that such a man should come to the end of so illustrious a career by being run over and dragged in the dust of the streets by a trolley car! But "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Spartanburg, S. C.

JOSEPH ADDISON SAXTON

BY THE REV. JOHN H. EDWARDS*

IN the death of the Rev. Joseph Addison Saxton, this Association has lost its most venerable member, and one of our most faithful and esteemed associates. He was born at Tolland, Conn., Nov. 27, 1810, and died in New York city Feb. 11, 1902, in the ninety-second year of his age.

Graduating at the University of New York in 1835, he studied theology at the Yale Divinity School 1836-38, and was graduated at Union Theological Seminary in this city in 1839. He was ordained and installed at Greenport, L. I., June 7, 1843. The sermon on this occasion was preached by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Hanson Cox, who is said by the Rev. Dr. Whitaker to have taken much interest in him.

He served the Greenport Presbyterian Church for two years, and had another pastorate of equal length in the Congregational Church at New Hartford, Conn. He served several churches as stated supply, namely: Marlboro, Ware, and Ashburnham, Mass.; Harrisonburgh, Va.; New River, Parish of Ascension, La.; (from 1845 to 1850, his longest continuous pulpit service); New York city: Fin Place (now Brookhaven), L. I.; and Plymouth New Preston, Brookville, and Fitchville in his native State.

Finally, in 1859, he yielded to his strong bent to the teacher's vocation, having already taught in this city, 1854-56. From 1859 to 1867 he was principal of the Coleridge Institute at Norwich

* Prepared for the Presbyterian Minister's Association by Dr. Edwards and Dr. Albert Erdman.

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