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A BRIEF HISTORY

OF THE

SLAVE LIFE

OF

REV. L. R. FEREBEE,

AND THE

BATTLES OF LIFE,

AND

FOUR YEARS OF HIS MINISTERIAL LIFE.

WRITTEN FROM MEMORY, TC 1882.

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RALEIGH :

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PREFACE.

The many readers of this little book will doubtless find many imperfect sentences. While the writer has not been blessed with a scholarship that many of the readers have, and in the thirty-third year of his life, after having passed through many conflicts, of which the public have been slightly informed, and many slanderous remarks have been made in relation to him. He therefore presents himself to the public in fair colors, without any regret of the past life, relative to his own action.

Hope the many readers will carefully read and ponder well the facts in the whole matter herein contained.

RALEIGH, *January 19th*, 1882.

HISTORY OF REV. L. R. FEREBEE.

CHAPTER I.

This chapter will relate to the birth-place and parentage of LONDON R. FEREBEE. He is a son of the late Elder Abel M. Ferebee, of the Virginia Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church in America. He was the son of the Rev. Robert Simmons, of Currituck county, North Carolina. During the time of slavery, while a slave, he was granted license under the M. E. Church, South, to preach, and was associated by the Rev. Gabriel Whitehurst. The Rev. Robert Simmons died in the year 1857. The Rev. Gabriel Whitehurst died about the year 1871 or '72, after being an ordained Elder in the A. M. E. Zion Church, and presided over the Rev. Abel M. Ferebee for several years. The Rev. Abel M. Ferebee was one of the first men in the organization of the North Carolina Annual Conference, with Bishop J. W. Hood, then an Elder of the New England Conference, and Bishop J. J. Clinton, Elder Hill, W. J. Moore, and others, in Newbern, North Carolina; and sometime in the summer of 1865, was ordained an Elder on Roanoke Island, North Carolina, and put in charge of the church, under Elder John Williams. And then W. J. Moore took charge as Presiding Elder sometime in 1866. The Rev. A. M. Ferebee was an active Elder until within nine days of his death, and at the time of his death was in charge of three churches, to-wit: Moses' Temple and Mary Holly Grove, in Pasquotank county, and one in Perquimans county, viz: Fork Bridge. In the time of life he always desired that one of his boys should be a preacher. He was a blacksmith by trade. Married about the age of twenty-three or twenty-four, to a woman

owned by Mrs. Oley Whitehurst, of Currituck county, by the name of Chloe. They lived together as man and wife for twenty-two years. The number of their children was ten—seven boys and three girls. In time of the life of his wife, a cross word by either of them to each other has never been known by any one. She died in May, 1859, and he remained a widower for seven years, and then married a second time, and in that selection got a quiet, Christian wife, and lived till his death in peace and quietness. He left his widow with a homestead, on which she now lives, without fear of molestation by any one, and is held in as high regard as a step-mother can be by his children, and will never be allowed to suffer while any of his children survive their father. The widow's residence is in Elizabeth City, Pasquotank county, North Carolina. The connection, as well as State, county and community, say: "*Peace to his ashes!*"

CHAPTER II.

This chapter begins to treat upon the life of London R. Ferebee, now known as Rev. L. R. Ferebee, an Elder of the A. M. E. Zion church, in America, who was a slave as all of his ancestors were.

At an early age my mother was sold. I scarcely can remember the occurrence which took place on the morning she was sold. It was said that all of my people are mixed with Indian blood, and she was a spirited woman and would not suffer to be imposed upon by her master nor mistress. A dispute arose between my mother and her mistress, and her mistress attempted to strike her, at which mother said "If you strike me, it will be the dearest lick ever you struck," and at the arrival of the master her mistress of course reported the conduct of my mother. He, knowing the spirit of my mother, took his gun and cowhide in hand

and coming to the kitchen, said with an oath, "Chloe, if you don't let me whip you for saucing your mistress, I'll shoot you." She (my mother) said, opening her bosom, "Shoot; that's the only way you can whip me." Having at this time come in reach of her, he struck at her with the cowhide. She seized it and cut it in two with a butcher knife which she had been cleaning fish with: they then gathered each other and my mother threw him, and as he fell the gun discharged but injured no one. She put one knee in his breast, the other, as well as I can now remember, on one arm, wrested the gun from his hand and struck him over the head with the breech, wounding him badly, so that he called for help. She was taken off by some of his men. That morning he sold her to a speculator, Halstead, of Camden county, he, (Halstead) not knowing at the time it was my father's wife until after he had bought her. He then left her and rode thirty-one miles to see my father who was then working at Col. W. F. Martin's ship yard, Elizabeth City, N. C., and was hiring his time from his master, Dr. E. D. Ferebee, to see what arrangement he could make about buying her or getting his master to do so.

The plan was fixed between himself and master, so he bought her from the speculator by paying (\$1,100.00,) eleven hundred dollars. The next day, as near as I can remember, moved her and myself and two more of the children with her, where I remained until I was large enough to render service. I was then taken from her, and saw her twice from that time unto her death. According to my age the readers will see that I was quite young. I was born at a place called the Big Ditch, on Coin Jock shore, near the Sound, Currituck county, N. C., the 18th day of August, 1849. After leaving my mother, I had a rough life. Many hardships I had to undergo, as all young slave children had to suffer. I went by water with my master a good deal until I learned to man the vessel pretty well; even at night I could steer by the compass, or by any star. My mas-

ter would point out to me, before he went to his bunk, and I've heard him tell gentlemen in my presence he could lie down as well satisfied with me at the helm as any one of the crew.

My aptness gained his affections, and I received favors of him, and he would not allow me to be cruelly treated, and at last I felt satisfied when with him. His name was Edwin T. Cowles, his assigned initials was Capt. E. T. Cowles. My mistress was named Sarah. He had three children, Elizabeth, Olivioir, the eldest, Lydia, the next, and Willie, the youngest. I was given to the oldest, Elizabeth. Up to this day they are kind to me, and when I am with them they give me the best their table affords, and I am accommodated to all the hospitalities of the house. My mistress was always cruel to me. It appeared she always had spite to me by reason of my mother. I suppose it was because I allowed no one to whip me but my master. She always would say you are some of the old blue hen's chickens. At (7) seven years old she, with the assistance of her house girl, attempted to whip me and I was the conqueror, and my master, after having learned the circumstances connected with the case, refused to whip me, but teased her for letting me whip out the house. This always apparently gave her a distaste to me.

I suffered under the yoke of oppression until the 9th day of August, 1861, the Northern forces having taken Roanoke Island, and proceeded immediately to Elizabeth City in the winter preceding the date just mentioned. We were living then at a little place called Mill Town, ($1\frac{1}{2}$) one mile and a half from Shiloh, a little country village in Camden county, about (12 or 13) twelve or thirteen miles through the country and nine miles down the river called Pasquotank from Elizabeth City. The Northern army stationed a portion of their men at that place, and on the day mentioned, the 9th of August, I ran away and went to the Yankees, so called. I reached the Yankee lines about (30) minutes before my

master overtook me on the road. I remained with them until the 1st day of January, 1863. The Yankees then evacuated Shiloh and removed to Elizabeth City, and there they delivered me to my father, where I remained, until they evacuated Elizabeth City and went to the city of Newbern, N. C., carrying as many colored people with them as wanted to go. The war having not ended, my father and others not knowing what would be the consequences of those that remained, concluded it best to go with the Yankees where freedom was assured, embarked on board of a large vessel, to wit: the Edwards, having (4) four cannons on it, it being used as a gun boat, and she was accompanied by another large vessel named Benjamin Butler, both sail vessels. We left Elizabeth City the 19th of April, 1863, and arrived at Newbern, N. C., on the 21st. Then my father occupied a house for the time being on Pollock Street. At this time I knew not my alphabet and had become quite unhealthy and suffered with *Rheumatics*. I entered a private school at the Christian Church, taught by a colored man, a minister of that church, and an ex-slave, viz: Isaac Bishop, (*alias*) Isaac Peel.

I learned my alphabet that day, the 1st day of June of the date above mentioned. Then I remained in that school until September, at which time my father was ordered, as chief magistrate, to Roanoke Island, N. C., by Colonel Foster, and being advised by Chaplain James, as the small pox was raging then in Newbern, he moved his family to Roanoke Island also.

After he arrived, he was taken sick, and remained so until the next spring, to-wit, 1864. He, through the assistance of Chaplain W. A. Green, now pastor of the 1st Baptist church in Raleigh, N. C., succeeded in getting a nice school house and industrial building erected, and had 12 or 14 Northern teachers to come down, among them was a lady of the finest deportment and a finished *alumni*, and she was from Boston, Mass., by the name of Ella Roper, and another

by the name of Mary Burnepp, of Vermont, in all there were sixteen. I fell, fortunately, in the department taught by Miss Ella Roper, and Miss Mary Burnepp, and Kate Freeman, and many other too tedious to mention now.

Early in the spring of 1864, April, I entered the school, with Miss Roper as my teacher, where my progress was so rapid, I ascended to the head of the first class in school, and no scholar in school or on the Island could compete with me, in consequence of which I was made assistant teacher. When I began to write, I learned to make my alphabet in one night. The first copy book I ever had I wrote it up the first night—every page. My teacher set me no more alphabet, and the first copy of writing was this—*“Improve each shining hour.”*

By reason of study, my health grew bad, and my eyesight failed me. I made a profession of religion in September, 1864. Before I repented of my sins, I was elected superintendent of the Sabbath school. Some time in May, the same year, Rev. Andrew Cartwright lectured the Sabbath school on the subject of Repentance. I was then honored to the position in the Sabbath school as Superintendent, but had not made any profession of faith in Christ, and the language falling from the mouth of God's servant, touched my heart. He was followed by my father, and all that each said seemed to rest on me. By their words used relative to teachers teaching what they really knew nothing of; then in strong terms showed that all my instruction given as Superintendent, would prove to me, without repentance, my eternal destruction. Then I was convicted, and from that time, until I manifested a hope, I could not, nor did not, open school any more. And at a revival in September, 4th Sunday, about eight o'clock, P. M., I received the Pearl of Great Price. Soon after, I was nominated and elected Secretary of church and Board of Trustees.

All the teachers and scholars and members of the church apparently appreciated me for my usefulness in church,

school, &c. There was a young man by the name of Miles Bartlette, who, at a time previous to that, was a member of the same school, and in my class, but was dull in his studies, and the teacher said, one morning, Mr. Bartlette, I'll have to send you over to the primary school. She then, unfortunately, asked me if I didn't think best? I deliberately answered yes. At *my* sanction to her idea, he was sent down to Miss Kate Freeman, who taught that branch.

He then, with envy, sought to slay me, and at his first opportunity stabbed me on the 5th day of July, 1865. In the night, about 9 o'clock, he came up behind me and committed the vicious deed. The instrument used was a dirk. He was strong enough to throw it through my left shoulder blade, and came very near touching my heart, so that I was compelled to lie at home during the months of July, August and September. In October I was able to enter school again. The schools all flourished until the latter part of 1866. When, after it was understood by both races, learned and unlearned, that freedom was established, the people then began to scatter to the different parts of North Carolina and many of the teachers went back North. My father moved back to Elizabeth City, N. C., on the 20th day of April, 1867.

Schools there were somewhat dull then to what they had been on the Island. I entered there with a younger brother and sister—the baby. In the summer I was called to Nixonton, Pasquotank county, to take charge of a private school. Having taught a session before leaving Roanoke, it had become very familiar to me to teach, so I opened the first school of any note ever held in Nixonton, where I taught for three years in succession. In 1869, I entered a normal school, under the management of T. W. Cardozo, of New York city, and his wife, and his wife's cousin, Miss Sarah Williams, of New York. Thirty-five boys of the school were prepared for Howard University, but there were only three that could get any assistance from Northern

friends, as Prof. Cardozo, only appeared to look out for those of a light hue, or mulatto—none of the dark ones could get any assistance. We then had to go to Hampton, Va., and wherever we could acquire an English education. We all resolved, though the other boys were blessed above us, we would not envy them, but strive to compete. I managed to keep in the normal schools until I could master an English education partially, and demanded a first grade certificate from any county examiner, but having an eye and heart on the study of law, I contracted, by the consent of my father, with Judge C. C. Pool, of the First Judicial District, to live with him, for the purpose of taking lessons in Latin, law, &c. I had free access to all the books of his library and also in his law office. It was from him I got the most of my business training. It was rich, good, and came so freely from him I never felt like I wearied him in all classes of law he taught me.

He then went to work and got a free school for me, the first I ever taught drawing pay from the State; he also managed that I got first-class pay. This was in the latter part of 1869, I think, as my memory is not as good as we wish on the date at this juncture. I had a good reputation as a teacher, at that early age, so I was always in employment in that direction, all over Camden, Pasquotank and Perquimans, and at last became to be a swift politician and canvassed the Judicial and Congressional Districts over in favor of Republican candidates, and in my course was never known to change or waver from Republican principles. In all campaigns my attention was always called, by those concerned, and solicited, and eagerly importuned to take part and was always successful. I married in March, 1872, at South Mills, Camden county, where I was then teaching, to a young lady of Gates county, N. C., by the name of Lucinda Smith, her residence being near Sunsbury.

I was yet engaged in politics. I had, in my own county, many enemies that I was unconscious of, both colored and

white of my own party, for the fact that the colored voters, which is the strength of the Republican party in Pasquotank county, had severally expressed a desire of my coming before them as a candidate, and as my aspiration was the Legislature or the Senate, and, at that time, could have received any office within the gift of the people.

In 1872 a conspiracy was gotten up against me by some office lobbies of Pasquotank of both races, for the fear they had of my prominence, or popularity, as it would warrant my nomination in the county convention. Thomas P. Wilcox, then County Treasurer, and his brother, James Wilcox, and another man, of New Land Township, (two first mentioned are white men, the third was colored.)

I was teaching at Nixonton, and had said, when I canvassed the county for W. J. Munden, the Republican candidate for the Legislature, that if the people would support him, I would assure them they would have a colored man the next time, for I intended to ask for the position myself. Munden was elected. These parties were also aspirants and opposed me in the convention, and when Munden was nominated sought an opportunity to break down my reputation.

While teaching at Nixonton I had occasion to go to T. P. Wilcox, County Treasurer, with my school vouchers, four in all, drawing \$30 each. He lived eighteen miles from Elizabeth City.

I had been to his residence, and finding him not at home, was on my return when I met him and his wife on their return home. Just before this I had overtaken a young man by the name of Benjamin Dozier, (colored,) and had taken him up in my buggy. I stopped Mr. Wilcox, told him my business. He said he had been to town but the sheriff had not made settlement, but would take my vouchers and give me a duplicate, and when the sheriff settled I should receive the first monies. I gave him one \$30 order and took a written duplicate; he at the time was half drunk.

I, with my friend, Mr. Dozier, went on for home. On the next day, as I always had been doing and as it was a general custom, passed the duplicate off to Mr. Emanuel Davis as a deposit until I received some money. I left the next day following for Edenton, N. C., where the A. M. E. Zion Annual Conference had assembled, and returned a few days after. I waited on the Treasurer some time, as I had been accustomed to do.

And one day Mr. Davis approached me, saying, "I presented that duplicate to the Treasurer, and he would not settle it." "Why?" said I. "Because he says he has not given you any," said he. "He don't deny having a voucher of mine?" said I; "does he?" Mr. Davis said, "No." "Well," said I, "why not pay you then on the order and not consider the duplicate, for it is of no use if he settles the voucher, as both are numbered."

I then paid all the money I received from Davis on it but \$2.00, and told Mr. Davis to let me have the duplicate. He then said he did not have it with him, so I made myself easy, waiting to see Mr. Wilcox, but for some time I could not see him; but in the meantime they had concocted the plan to destroy me, for when Mr. Davis was talking to me he had then given the duplicate to the parties and had agreed to the prosecution. He at this time, remember, was an aspirant for the Legislature also, and would not tell me it was in the hands of an officer for my arrest, upon the oath of T. P. Wilcox, swearing he had never given me any, and that it was forged, and his brother James Wilcox, the brother of the plaintiff, was an aspirant for the Sheriff's office. He had his brother to kill the matter, and the matter between him and myself was settled, no more to be heard of, according to promise. At the June term of the Superior Court the case, however, was called. I appeared as defendant. The plaintiff was called and failed. I was recognized by the Court, Judge J. W. Albertson. He inquired into the case somewhat, and finding it frivolous, passed it by. But

Col. D. M. D. Lindsey, of Hertford, Perquimans county, had told Wilcox and brother, if they undertook to prosecute me in that case, neither of them should be elected, and if elected, should not give bond. This was not known to me until after the election, which came on in August, after court. My friends, white and black, made frequent inquiry as to what disposition had been made in the case, and the only answer that could be given, "Oh, it's all nothing; no case could be made out of it." And, in fact, the State had failed to make a case out of it.

The next court the case came up again before Hon. J. W. Albertson, and the State had yet not been able to make out a case. I was put under no bond, and was no more interested, and the important witness, Mr. Benjamin Dozier, had to leave for New York, and the case was supposed to be over.

All things now were apparently good and pleasant. The judicial nomination for Judge in the First District took place in the summer of 1873. Judge Albertson was nominated as the candidate of the Republican party for Judge, and Mills L. Eure was nominated as the candidate of the Democratic party.

My brother and Col. D. M. D. Lindsey, both of Hertford, had had a previous difficulty in some of the municipal elections. Some of the men the Judge would not support; therefore, they determined to defeat the Judge, though he was the Republican candidate, and to satisfy their devilish design, they proposed to work for the Democratic nominee, Mills L. Eure, of Gates county. He promised my brother, W. E. Ferebee, a lot in Hertford for his support; also to furnish all the money he wanted for the support of his family, and to pay all traveling expenses. The same offer was made to me, but I refused to accept. I determined to support the regular nominee of our party. In May or June there was a mass meeting held at Gatesville for the purpose of consolidating the Republicans with the Democrats. I attended that

meeting. I drove Judge Albertson's horse. I opposed the measure, in the Court House, and defeated it. Next morning, before I left the hotel, I was waited on by a committee for the purpose of wiping out my Radicalism relative to Judge Albertson. I became disgusted at the entreaties made, so uncalled for, and the only plea made was upon what my brother had said about what he and the Judge differed on in the municipal election. I argued that personal differences should never make a political disorganization. I remarked that no true loyal citizen—loyal to his country—would make any difference in that case, but would support the choice of his people. At this my brother apparently got very angry, so much so I called for my horse and buggy and left the hotel. Gatesville was stirred up from centre to circumference. The true Republicans were with me. I was the only man there, as a public man, defending Judge Albertson, and urging his claims. A remark was made by my brother, that if he could get Mills L. Eure elected, he would never be troubled with me again, but I thought nothing of it. At a meeting held in New Land township, Pasquotank county, quite a hot discussion arose. Myself and all the citizens of Pasquotank were Judge Albertson's men, or men for the party. The scheme they tried was to wipe out all party issues in electing a Judge, for the purpose of tangling the vote, so that M. L. Eure would be elected. I defeated it that day. My brother, with quite rough language, said all he wanted was Eure elected, and I would soon be out of his way.

They succeeded in electing Eure by a small majority—I think 180, or thereabout.

We lost Albertson. The winter term of the Superior Court Eure presided, and had that case resurrected. At this time my witness was in New York and could not be gotten. They forced me into trial without a witness for my defence and the State never proved any forgery, and failed to procure any evidence as to its being my handwriting. They intro-

duced a Mr. Smith—a Yankee that I had been keeping books for—to recognize the handwriting, but he would not. Mr. John F. Pool, a school-mate, wanted to be sworn to testify to the handwriting, but the Judge was so prejudiced he would not allow any evidence whatever in my favor.

CHAPTER III.

In the last chapter in its conclusion you had the beginning of my troubles. I shall endeavor to finish in this chapter. My character was unattacked and proven good. My counsels, Hon. C. W. Grandy, J. P. Whidbee and W. F. Pool urged that further time be given, so that I might get my witness from New York. The court would not allow any further indulgence. I was therefore rushed into trial unprepared in every respect. The Solicitor, J. P. Whidbee, was employed by me before, so he let Henry Gilliam, of Edenton, appear for the State, one of the worst enemies I had on God's green earth; took the advantage of me by removing or setting at least every colored man off the jury except two, one of whom was a known enemy of mine, his name was Henry ———, the other was Isaac Martin. He claimed he did not or could not hold the rest, for when my counsel were asking leniency in the case, the Judge said he ought not to allow any chance for anything, for I was a mean, mean, disrespectful wretch, and he "Isaac" said he saw the rest of the jury were so bitter, relying on what the judge had said, they returned a verdict of guilty.

At this juncture, my counsel asked that he allow an appeal, so as to have a fair showing in the case. He, the Judge, said he would grant nothing, so it was said by every body, especially those in court, and saw his manœuvres on the bench, came to me and said, Ferebee, all the favor you'll get now will be from the Governor, and we will help in

every thing we can. Just rest easy, it don't make any difference what his sentence may be. The Hon. Hugh Cale and others came up to go my bail for a new trial, but he would not allow it. During the night my white friends went to see him, and he required them to give a justified bond of one thousand dollars, which was too heavy. I was kept 27 days in jail. My friends failed to get me a new trial. The Hon. Hugh Cale succeeded, with the assistance of Hon. W. J. Munden and other citizens, in getting the Governor to grant a pardon from under the sentence of a four years in the penitentiary.

The County Treasurer, T. P. Wilcox, afterwards said he did give the duplicate, but he was drunk at the time he gave it. He afterwards was charged of stealing fifteen hundred dollars of the county money, and his sureties had to do all they could to save him, and the commissioners had to appoint another to fill the vacancy, and his brother, who was sheriff, had to run away from the town; and in fact every one that was in it have come to disgrace finally, both white and colored.

The citizens desired I should not be moved in daylight, so, early on the 28th day of March, 1874, Monday, I left my home for prison, but I was reconciled and had unshaken confidence in God that an iron bar could not hold me if I trusted Him, the all powerful God. I went with joy, and the second day after getting there, Dr. Mullen, of Camden, and Hon. W. J. Munden and several of the friends came to see me, and asked the Warden and Captain to favor me until they could have time to work for me; from that time the Captain, W. H. Thompson, done all in his power apparently to render me comfortable, and I was licensed to preach in the prison, and could go all over the stockade, and all the guards, white and colored, fell in love with me, and all would try to get on the beat next to me, and I held Sunday School. When the order came to send men to the mountains to the Railroad, Capt. Baldy Davis was allowed

to pick his men of the best there were in prison. I was the first man sent for to come up to the office. I went, and the Captain told me if I did not wish to go he would not send me against my will; he also stated it would be better for my health and better about writing home, and if there was any reprieve for me I should certainly have one, if any man did. I then, at the office, told the Captain who I would like to go with us, so he and myself selected the crowd. He promised me I should do nothing more than cook and wait on the officers.

He kept his word, and while in the mountains I was made a steward and trustee, and when I wanted to, and had hours Sundays for preaching. I had a large crowd of whites every Sunday as my audience, together with my captains and guards.

The day my reprieve came, I was in the cook-house preparing pastry for Capt. Moore's dinner. He did not allow me to finish his dinner, at once came in the kitchen, and said, "Ferebee, your prayers are answered. You can put the business you are about down, and tell all the boys good bye, and bid them follow your examples and they'll never get punished." I bid my fellow-prisoners farewell, and the Captain allowed me to pray with them. I then came out and went to Henry Station, McDowell county, N. C., where Major H. M. Miller was acting superintendent on the Western North Carolina Railroad, and his wife was a Christian-hearted woman, and gave me the best her table afforded, and from her appearance she always felt for a prisoner, and when it was said some must go to headquarters to do any work, all wanted to go, because she was kind; and the Major, also; there never could be a better man over a parcel of men than he was. He was not heard ordering a man to be whipped. Though I've seen them in the mountains, struck nine and thirty twice in one morning, out of doors and the snow falling on them at the same time. But it was not the Major's fault—he never gave such sentences. But Captain

Baldy Davis was a blood-thirsty man, also Captain Moore was so inclined. Thus, they would take the men and whip them until the blood would run from their shoulders to their heels. They did not stop for snow nor rain except when they thought the Major would be up, and except it snowed so they could not get to their work. But, thank God, I was blessed with a favor from all. It was thought by the doctor that I was ruptured, or becoming so, and the Captain furnished me with a truss hoop. So it was God protecting me that I might be able to preach His word.

I had so often prayed this prayer, "Lord, thou knowest the charges made against me were false, and Thou hast foreinstructed me of this prosecution, now give me patience to stand and wait until Thou art satisfied with my faith and patience, and then deliver me," and at that time, according to my prayer, he done, and I have none of that life to regret. I am to-day satisfied with my lot among men in the past, and can risk the future in God's care.

Since I've been reprieved men of the aristocratic order have labored to bury me, but they have found it a difficult matter to do so. I received license to preach in 1877, and in 1878 I made application to join the Annual Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church, at Goldsboro, N. C. I met an objection by Elder T. F. H. Blackman, J. A. Tyler and others, who bitterly opposed me, and had me sent before a committee and examined after undergoing an examination as a candidate to join the Conference, and had passed a first grade. The committee was composed of Blackman, Hill, Tyler, Mattocks, Simmons and Reeves. Committee reported favorable, and Blackman, who made the open objections, made this plea, the only thing he was after was to know whether I was married or not, as he "understood I was courting for a single gentleman." The Bishop, who knew all the facts in the case, satisfied the Conference in reference to my standing at home, my wife, &c., and vouched himself for my competency, &c.

I was received into Conference and assigned to Winston,

N. C., where I had held the charge one year and a-half before, and such strong petitions went to the Conference for me, provided I was permitted to join. The judgment of the Conference was to send me to them, where I spent a pleasant year.

In the Conference at Lincolnton, N. C., a motion was made that I go before the committee on Deacons' orders; and after passing an examination, No. 1, on motion to receive, Elder J. A. Tyler opposed, on the grounds of the time according to law, and urged his objection by saying it made no difference how well equipped a young man may be, it was just giving them license to be in the way of the old Elders. The Bishop stated there was a necessity for my being ordained, and if I was not ordained he should not send me where he wanted me, and should let me go to teaching, as it was my occupation. The Conference voted in favor of ordination. I was ordained and sent to Granville county, on the Oxford Circuit, where I held charge two years—1880-'81.

During the year 1880, I had an uphill way, but went through; the Circuit was poor and could pay no salary. For that year I only received eighty (\$80) dollars. I had to attend the Conference at Tarboro, N. C., and had collected five (\$5.10) dollars and ten cents of the general fund, and my churches had not paid me enough to carry me, but the chairman of the Trustee Board had some money in hand for me, and he said I could go and he would send it to Conference time enough for me to replace it and make a settlement with the Conference Steward. And the money did not arrive in time—and on the passage of my character, the Steward asked for settlement of general fund. I related the matter, and as the Conference was about to pass my character, an objection was raised by Elder R. H. Simmons, because I had spent the money in *lieu* of my own, and he held I had committed a crime punishable in law, and held it a prison offence, and my character ought not to pass.

The Conference differed, and could not see any crime, for I had told the Bishop about it and also several of the Elders, and the Steward also, and I could have said nothing of what I collected, as others did, and it would not have been known. The Bishop stated that Bro. Simmons' language was too strong, and that there was no crime in the case; it was only misapplying the money from the purpose it was collected without any intent to do wrong—showing a letter that had been sent relative to the money, assuring me the money would reach me before the Conference closed. The Conference passed my character, and the Bishop opened his pocket book and paid the \$5.00 for me, due the Conference. Elder Simmons urged still his course against me, until the Conference ruled him out of order. I have been hated all the way through by brothers in church and State, by men who aspire and think my ability will demand any thing creditable; but I've kept my course all the time, and have not put on a flinching jacket.

In the year 1881 I had quite a pleasant time in the ministry. My presiding Elder, W. J. Moore, was the most feeling Elder I ever had, with one exception, to wit: Elder W. H. Thurbee cannot be forgotten.

In June I lost a new church, by an incendiary, located near Wilton, Granville county, in two hundred yards of Bank's Chapel, the white Methodist church.

On the 13th of May, 1881, I was elected as delegate from Granville county to the convention which assembled in Raleigh on the 17th May. E. W. Turner, an aspirant, wanted me to insert his name in the place of Mr. G. W. Rogers'. I refused upon the grounds that it would be unlawful. He took an exception at this action on my part and introduced into the convention, unknown to me, a paper that had been circulated by the Democratic party relative to my imprisonment, &c., which they used to defeat the Republican party of Granville, because I was said to be the champion canvasser of the county, and was successful in

electing the whole ticket—County, State and National. He handed this paper to the committee appointed by the chairman of the convention, *pro tempore*, as a committee on credentials. The committee were as follows, as near as I can remember: Rev. J. C. Price, Hon. J. H. Harris, W. V. Turner, and when they reported they left my name as a delegate out, and had inserted E. W. Turner. I had not learned the concocted plan of theirs, brought about by John H. Lane and Turner. The former, Lane, has a reputation at home; as a schoolmate of mine I know all about his standing, a man that can't teach a school in Pasquotank. W. V. Turner, a notorious drunkard and had been sold right in Raleigh for stealing, and having a telegram sent from another State for his arrest, and Col. I. J. Young saved him from being in prison. Doubtless these were the men that objected to me, and were the big men in that convention.

Hon. J. C. Price, who was elected chairman, a brother of mine in the gospel, never opened his mouth in my behalf, and he and I both members of the same Conference. I saw then that for the sake of honor and promotion, he would suffer his brother minister to be crushed into the dust, and my vote helped to put him there. I felt then that all preachers do not practice what they sing and preach, to wit: "And each the other's burden bear," &c. He failed to put me on his beast, and the only way he would allow me to say a word was when Elder W. J. Moore and others, white and colored, came to my rescue, with the Hon. Hugh Cale, of Pasquotank county, to the front, then it was that I rose to a question of personal privilege and obtained the floor, through the assistance of Hon. J. H. Williamson and Col. G. T. Wassom. I had the big men of the day against me: Lawyer Leary, of Fayetteville, J. E. O'Hara, of Halifax, George W. Price, of Wilmington, James H. Harris, of Raleigh, and many others, while Col. George T. Wassom, of Goldsboro, and Hon. J. H. Williamson, of Franklin county, all the way through, were in my defense. After I made my speech the

fever was quieted, and then it was that I ordered my name to be stricken from the roll and withdrew. So when men want to ascend above their brothers, if prompted by self, they will allow a brother to be killed so they climb. It's a good thing Jesus was not so, isn't it?

CHAPTER IV.

In conclusion, I will say something about what causes many a young man to be finally lost.

In the early days of my conversion I was called to preach, but for six years I refused, and when I made up my mind to try, I applied to my Quarterly Conference, and the old brethren denied me upon the ground of age. I went another year and they refused, on the ground that I had not paid an assessment laid upon the members. I was at this time teaching seventeen miles from home, and had not been home. So right then I paid the assessments, but they still refused. I waited another six months, and applied again. They refused because I had not attended class. I proved to them I had been home three times during the six months and visited class every time. They still refused, and if it had not been for them I should never have got into politics as I did. So often the dog is in the manger and can't eat the hay, and won't let the ox eat it, either.

Since I have been in the ministry I have had always spiritual success. I have closely kept the number of all the converts, which I claim will add some stars to my crown if I continue faithful. My church ledger shows six hundred and fifty (650) converts, besides a number claiming Christ and not in any church, and from other denominations that have chosen to come to Zion, one hundred and thirty-seven (137.)

My congregations have always manifested a pleasure in listening to my imperfect preaching, and so act towards me that I always feel pleasant in their midst, at church or at their firesides.

All this is respectfully submitted, by your servant,
 With refined obdience,
 L. R. FEREBEE.

Stationed at Raleigh, North Carolina.

JANUARY 19th, A. D. 1882.



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