

FOREWORD BY JOHN PIPER

The
FAITHFUL
PREACHER

Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering
African-American Pastors



THABITI M. ANYABWILE

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FOREWORD

By John Piper

I have been happily drawn into this book because it embodies four passions of my life. First, it is rooted in the big biblical vision of the sovereign God called reformed theology. Second, it expresses the wise conviction that knowing history and biography will protect us from trendiness in the ministry and will reveal the blind spots of our own age and enrich us with the insights that other generations have received. Third, it mines the unknown riches of the African-American experience and lays hold on the truth that their suffering was not in vain but has treasures for our time not yet dreamed of. Fourth, it lifts us above the low, managerial, psychologized, pragmatic, organizational view of the pastoral office and sets us in the high, clean air and bright light of the biblical vision of what it means to be called to shepherd the blood-bought bride of Christ.

You are about to meet three African-American pastors—Lemuel Haynes (1753–1833), Daniel A. Payne (1811–1893), and Francis Grimké (1850–1937). Their pastoral and educational ministries total over 130 years of faithfulness to God’s people. You will be introduced to them biographically by the able hand of Thabiti Anyabwile. Then you will meet them in their own words. This book is mainly to be prized as the never-before-gathered collection of African-American writings on the pastoral ministry from a time that spans 150 years and stretches across the terrible Civil War of our nation.

In this book we who are not African-American receive the double profit of reading not only across a culture but across the centuries—and thus across another culture. And, of course, that implies that the African-American reader will read across another culture as well. My guess and my prayer is that these unusual crossings will weave our lives and ministries together in ways we have not foreseen.

There are surprises ahead. Did you know there was such a thing as

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“black puritans”? The author describes all three of these brothers like this: “They were puritans. They committed themselves to sound theology in the pulpit, theologically informed practice in the church, and theologically reformed living in the world.”

Did you know that, in the words of John Saillant, “From Calvinism, this generation of black authors (referring specifically to Lemuel Haynes) drew a vision of God at work providentially in the lives of black people, directing their sufferings yet promising the faithful among them a restoration to his favor and his presence”?

Did you know that in 1835 the South Carolina Assembly passed a law that said, “[If] any free person of color or slave shall keep any school or other place of instruction for teaching any slave or free person of color to read or write, such free person of color or slave shall be liable to the same fine, imprisonment, and corporal punishment as are by this Act imposed and afflicted upon free persons of color and slaves for teaching slaves to read or write”? This forced the closing of Daniel Payne’s school and led him to work out his vision for an educated black ministry within the northern context of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and in the leadership of Wilberforce University in Ohio, “the first institution of higher education owned and operated by African-Americans.”

Did you know that it was even possible for a free black man (Lemuel Haynes) in the eighteenth century to marry a white woman and pastor an all-white congregation in Vermont for over thirty years?

Did you know that Charles Hodge, professor of theology at Princeton Seminary, taught African-American students such as Francis Grimké, who took the great reformed vision of God and spent his life working out its implications for race relations in the church while serving as pastor of 15th Street Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C.?

So there will be surprises. But what should be no surprise is that there are treasures of biblical wisdom in centuries before our own and in cultures not our own. I love the blow this book makes against chronological snobbery and ethnocentricity. May the Lord of the Church, for the good of His people and the ingathering of His lost sheep and the glory of His name, give this book good success.

John Piper
Pastor for Preaching and Vision,
Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis

INTRODUCTION

As I complete this book, I am at the eve of a dream come true—serving the Lord in full-time Christian ministry as a senior pastor. Over the past several years I have served as an elder in two churches, helped plant one of those churches, and carried on an itinerant preaching and evangelism ministry. Over the years and throughout these ministry opportunities, my desire for serving in pastoral ministry, for shepherding the people of His pasture, has steadily grown and has at times been nearly overwhelming.

However, sitting on the eve of that dream, I am stalked by questions and uncertainties that at some point surely haunt every man in the ministry. In fact, it is in some measure the uncertainties and the questions that prepare a man for the ministry—they keep him humble and dependent upon the Lord for wisdom and guidance. So I have come to embrace my questions as a particular form of grace from God. Still, questions and uncertainties call for answers and resolve.

Many questions depend largely on individual circumstances—whether the person involved is married or single, whether he has children, how much experience he has, whether he is educated for the task, gifted, sure of his calling, etc. However, most questions fall generally into one of three categories:

- What does the Lord require of His pastors?
- How must I prepare for this calling, and am I ready?
- What is the pastor's responsibility outside the church, for engaging the world?

Bookshelves in Christian bookstores are filled with answers to these and other questions involving pastoral ministry. Some of them are classics and well worth reading. Others promise great payoffs for little effort and “new ideas for today's ministry.” The array of options is dizzying. Yet

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most of these new ideas have one fatal flaw in common—because they are new, they are not proven. These proposals on how to build an effective church or become a successful pastor generally lack any track record beyond the personal experiences of the individual authors. So the honest reader faces the daunting task of evaluating the worthiness of these various perspectives, gauging, usually through trial and error, whether the approaches will work in their local churches and whether their effects are good or bad, faithful or unfaithful to biblical truth. But who really wants to approach shepherding the Lord's sheep by trial and error?

As I have prepared for my own journey into ministry, wading through a truckload of trees used to print hundreds of books aimed at pastors, my experience confirmed that old folk wisdom, “all that glitters is not gold”—especially when it is extolled as a new form of gold. As I have sought for a better way, a better understanding, and a biblically faithful perspective, it has pleased my soul to realize that the old ideas are still the best ideas. Those who have gone before us, old friends with old ideas, have left us a proven track record of faithfulness and fruitfulness. And the two do go together: where there is faithfulness, fruitfulness is bound to follow.

We are told from the time we are schoolchildren that “those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” Maintaining an ignorance of history will not result in the replication of greatness and earlier success. Those who learn from history, who wisely consult those who have gone before, are the only ones who have a real chance at succeeding and avoiding pitfalls. Faithfulness and fruitfulness in ministry require wisdom, hard work, time, and the providential blessings of God, all of which are enhanced by a humble study of our predecessors.

The best place to learn and prepare for the ministry is still at the feet of the Master Himself, and from His apostles. Who would not want to study under Paul or Peter? To hear their account of firsthand experiences with our Lord? Jesus, Paul, Peter, and others are still available to us, to speak with us through God's Word. And I trust that every faithful pastor is learning, studying, praying, and seeking wisdom and grace for the task from them.

But also available to us are “lesser” luminaries, men who were not apostles but who were faithful students and shepherds. Christian history is filled with Spurgeons, Calvins, Luthers, and others who have had to

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answer tough questions, face uncertainties, and persevere in faith as they led God's people. From them the wise pastor gains valuable insights and observes patterns of godliness for his own ministry.

This book profiles three “lesser” luminaries from the African-American experience—Lemuel Haynes, Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne, and Dr. Francis Grimké. They are “lesser” luminaries in the sense that they are not worthy of comparison to the Lord and in the sense that the Lord's apostles had unique ministries in Christian history. But they are not lesser to other saints in their passion for God, in their love for God's people, in their zeal for a pure church, or in the wisdom they leave behind for pastors and leaders of the church.

In Haynes, Payne, and Grimké you will find great models of and exhortations to faithfulness. Lemuel Haynes, a former indentured servant, served as pastor of an all-white congregational church for thirty-three years in Rutland, Vermont—an unheard of feat for an African-American of his period and ours. Bishop Payne served over forty years as pastor, bishop, and university president. Dr. Grimké gave nearly six decades of his life to serving as pastor of 15th Street Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. These men were faithful to their Lord, their calling, and the people in their charge.

Related to their faithfulness is their longevity. Their careers span most major periods in American history, including the American Revolution, slavery at the height of its power, the Civil War, Emancipation and Reconstruction, and World War I. Through these periods, they faced extreme hardships. None of them were born into privilege. All of them either witnessed or tasted the lash of slavery and the racial prejudices that followed that institution. Around them American society changed radically. However, their commitment to the ministry and their understanding of it remained constant. They continued in the same glorious work of proclaiming the gospel “instant in season, out of season” (2 Timothy 4:2).

But principally these men are included here for their consistently high and biblical view of the pastoral ministry. They greatly esteemed the privilege and responsibility of caring for God's people, of cultivating and leading a “pure” church, and of dedicating one's self to representing Christ before a dying world. They were puritans. They committed themselves to sound theology in the pulpit, theologically informed practice in the church, and theologically reformed living in the world. They saw

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Christ in all things and endeavored to see Him glorified before all people. They were from the African-American tradition of Christianity, but like all true saints, they belong to all Christians of every background and era. They were gifts to the Body of Christ from Christ Himself, and they will befriend every leader with a God-given desire to glorify Christ through beautifying the church.

Lemuel Haynes reminds us to view the pastoral ministry from the vantage point of eternity and the accounting that pastors will give to the Lord of the Church. Daniel Alexander Payne instructs us on how preparation and education, both in intellect and character, affect the minister and the people in his charge. And Francis Grimké challenges us to remember that the church and the pastor, as they confront the world and its problems, are first and foremost to preach the gospel and to live the gospel.

For many readers, this volume will be an introduction to these men and their careers. For others, Haynes, Payne, and Grimké are already old friends. Both the newcomer and the longtime acquaintance will be rewarded for reading these pastors and will find answers for many of the questions and concerns that face us today. These are representatives of the old ideas that have served and preserved the church for over two thousand years.

PART ONE

Lemuel Haynes:

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If the church is to prosper and mature, she will need faithful men to lead and care for her. The church will need men who are sound in doctrine, whose lives are guided by the Word of God, and who are willing to defend the truth. The church will need to hold up as its ideal those who model fidelity and love toward God, men who will pour themselves out for the benefit of the Lord's sheep. Men of this mold are gifts to the church from her Lord. In the late 1700s the Lord did indeed give such a gift to the church—Lemuel Haynes.

Lemuel Haynes was born on July 18, 1753 in West Hartford, Connecticut. Early biographers speculated that Haynes's mother was either a daughter of the prominent Goodwin family of Hartford or a servant named Alice Fitch who worked for one John Haynes. However, speculations about his parentage proved profitless. Abandoned by his parents at five months of age, Haynes was raised as an indentured servant by the Rose family in Middle Granville, Massachusetts. The Roses treated Lemuel as one of the family's own children, giving him the same pious instruction in Christianity and family worship that Deacon Rose gave all his children.¹

Following his indenture, Haynes volunteered in 1774 as a Minuteman and in October 1776 joined the Continental Army, thus becoming part of the American Revolution. Haynes volunteered just as the Continental

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Navy and Army suffered heavy casualties at the Battle of Valcour Bay on October 11, 1776 and General Washington's forces met defeat at the Battle of White Plains on October 28, 1776. In November 1776 Continental forces witnessed over three thousand casualties and the loss of over one hundred cannons and thousands of muskets in defeats at Fort Mifflin and Fort Mifflin. Lemuel served in the Continental Army until November 17, 1776, when he contracted typhus and was relieved of duty. Despite the dismal prospects of the Revolution at this point, as a patriot Haynes was determined to defend with life and tongue the newly developing nation and its ideals of liberty. His political values were shaped by his "idealization of George Washington and allegiance to the Federalist Party."²

But it was during his time with the Rose family and after the American Revolution that Haynes demonstrated his interests and talents for theology and ministry. "Haynes was a determined, self-taught student who pored over Scripture until he could repeat from memory most of the texts dealing with the doctrines of grace."³ Though Haynes benefited from the devout religious practice and instruction of Deacon Rose, the works of Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and Philip Doddridge influenced him the most. Indeed, Haynes owed much to the revival and evangelism efforts of Whitefield and Edwards, who greatly impacted America, and especially the New England area, during the Great Awakening of the 1740s.

Haynes began his formal ministerial training by studying Greek and Latin with two Connecticut clergymen, Daniel Farrand and William Bradford. He was licensed to preach on November 29, 1780 and five years later became the first African-American ordained by any religious body in America. In 1804 Middlebury College awarded Haynes an honorary Master's degree—another first for an African-American.

Owing largely to his Puritan-like experiences with the Rose family and his admiration of Whitefield and Edwards, Haynes adopted a decidedly Calvinistic theology. Calvinism was typical of African-American writers during Haynes's lifetime. One biographer, reflecting on a host of African-American writers in the late 1700s, observed:

Indeed, Calvinism seems to have corroborated the deepest structuring elements of the experiences of such men and women as they matured

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from children living in slavery or servitude into adults desiring freedom, literacy, and membership in a fair society. From Calvinism, this generation of black authors drew a vision of God at work providentially in the lives of black people, directing their sufferings yet promising the faithful among them a restoration to his favor and his presence. Not until around 1815 would African American authors, such as John Jea, explicitly declare themselves against Calvinism and for free-will religion.⁴

Despite what appeared to be a Calvinistic hegemony, the New England area was not without its disputes and controversies. Following the First Great Awakening, significant arguments regarding church membership, salvation, assurance, and the revivals themselves unsettled and divided churches. Jonathan Edwards, one of Haynes's theological influences, was fired from his Northampton pastorate for refusing to administer Communion to church members and their children who, though morally upstanding, did not profess saving faith in Christ, a practice known as the "half-way covenant." Other churches divided into "New Light," "Old Light," and "Moderate" local assemblies. New Light congregations welcomed the revival of the Great Awakening with open arms, while their Old Light counterparts opposed the revival and the emotional excesses that accompanied it. Moderates attempted a middle-of-the-road understanding that recognized God's activity in the revival but sought to curb emotionalism. These ecclesial and theological controversies were the protean matter of Haynes's intellectual formation. Haynes was a "New Light moderate" and a strict Congregationalist who favored the independence of the local church and the need for a regenerate membership.

Lemuel Haynes's pastoral career spanned forty years. He began his life of Christian service as a founding member and supply pastor to the church in Middle Granville, Massachusetts. He served in Middle Granville for five years, then received ordination from the Association of Ministers in Litchfield County, Connecticut. Haynes completed his ordination in 1785 while serving a church in Torrington, Connecticut. However, despite his evident prowess as a preacher, he was never offered the pastorate of that church due to racial prejudice and resentment among some churches in the area. In 1783 Haynes met and married twenty-year-old Elizabeth Babbit, a young white schoolteacher and a member of the Middle Granville congregation. The couple bore ten children between 1785 and 1805.

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On March 28, 1788 Haynes left the Torrington congregation and accepted a call to pastor the west parish of Rutland, Vermont, where he served the all-white congregation for thirty years—a relationship between pastor and congregation rare in Haynes’s time and in ours both for its length and for its racial dynamic. During his stay in Rutland, the church grew in membership from forty-two congregants to about three hundred and fifty as Haynes modeled pastoral devotedness and fidelity to the people in his charge. He also emerged as a defender of Calvinistic orthodoxy, opposing the encroachment of Arminianism, universalism, and other errors.

In March 1818, on the heels of a five-year-long dispute with a deacon and growing alienation between Haynes and members of the congregation, several of whom were facing various church discipline charges, the church voted against continuing its relationship with their pastor of thirty years. In his farewell sermon to the Rutland congregation, “The Sufferings, Support, and Reward of Faithful Ministers, Illustrated,” Lemuel Haynes concluded:

The flower of my life has been devoted to your service:—and while I lament a thousand imperfections which have attended my ministry; yet if I am not deceived, it has been my hearty desire to do something for the salvation of your souls.

Following his tenure in Rutland, Haynes remained active in ministry, serving despite declining health. He served as pastor in Manchester, Vermont from 1818 until 1822. In 1822 he began an eleven-year preaching ministry with a church in Granville, New York. Haynes contracted a gangrenous infection in one of his feet in March 1833. But he continued his duties with the Granville, New York congregation until May of that year, when health limitations overtook him. Lemuel Haynes died on September 28, 1833 at the age of eighty.⁵

As a pastor, Haynes seemed always to be possessed with thoughts of the welfare of his congregation. Their salvation was paramount. His sermons made explicit the centrality of the cross of Christ and were rich in both theological instruction and practical application for his hearers. Lemuel Haynes is a wonderful model of the “old ideas” that stand the test of time and point the way forward even in our day.

The sermons included in this volume provide a glimpse into Haynes’s

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understanding of pastoral ministry. In general, an eschatological expectation gripped Haynes's heart and mind. In each of the selections included here, the anticipation of meeting the Lord Jesus Christ at the Judgment motivated Haynes's instructions to his hearers. Haynes well understood that the bar of Christ, especially for the minister, would be a time of penetrating judgment, a time at which the heart and habits of the pastor would be laid bare and his just rewards made known.

Consequently, Haynes believed that a minister's Christian character was essential to his faithfulness and to his effectiveness in the gospel ministry. In a 1792 ordination sermon, "The Character and Work of a Spiritual Watchman Described," Haynes underscored five key traits a minister needs to possess. First, they are to "love the cause in which they profess to embark." That is, they must love Christ Himself and the proclamation of His divine glory to those who would hear and be saved. Second, the minister is to be wise and prudent, understanding the subtlety of the spiritual task and the spiritual enemies against whom he is engaged. Third, patience must accompany every member of the ministry. Fourth, courage and fortitude must fill his heart. And fifth, vigilance, alertness, and close attention to the business of watching for souls must characterize the spiritual watchman, the faithful preacher. Apart from these qualifications, the Christian minister is completely unprepared to give an account to God for his conduct and his care for God's people. But those who are prepared would examine their motives for entering the ministry, would be careful to know their duties as pastors, would seek to please none but God, would work to make their preaching plain, sober, modest, and reverent, and would work to know as much as possible about the souls entrusted to their care.

Haynes's eschatological vision of pastoral ministry was displayed most clearly in a 1798 funeral sermon entitled "The Important Concerns of Ministers and the People of Their Charge." In this sermon Haynes anticipated that the pastor and the congregation would have a special relationship to one another in the coming judgment of Christ, where the congregation would be the "hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing . . . in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming."⁶ However, the Second Coming of Christ and the accompanying judgment of ministers and their people was, in Haynes's estimation, a proposition filled with both joyous promise and striking terror. At stake, more than merely the souls of pastors

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and congregants, was the very glory of God Himself—whether the character of the Redeemer was properly displayed before His creation through the ministry of which both minister and member were a part. If the pastor was faithful, the congregation and their shepherd would enjoy a special intimacy with one another, an intimacy deepened by the congregants' commendation of the pastor and by the pastor's recommendation of his people before the Lord Himself. However, if either the pastor or the congregation were unfaithful, their eternal relationship would be one of accusing and exposing the other before God and His Son. For everlasting good or for eternal ill, the pastor and the congregation were joined in a most solemn union before God, according to Haynes. Haynes concluded, "The influence of a faithful or unfaithful minister is such as to effect unborn ages; it will commonly determine the sentiments and characters of their successors, and in this way they may be doing good or evil after they are dead, and even to the second coming of Christ." The unfaithful minister would be tried for his treasonous neglect of the souls of the people, and the unfaithful congregation would stand to hear the pastor's denouncement of their spiritual apathy and hardheartedness. Therefore, ministers ought to preach, and people ought to listen, "with death and judgment in view."

After three decades of pastoral ministry, the church in Rutland, Vermont discharged Lemuel Haynes from his pulpit. By most accounts, the strong sin of racial prejudice finally overcame some members of the congregation who challenged Haynes's leadership. At the occasion of his farewell sermon, "The Sufferings, Support, and Reward of Faithful Ministers, Illustrated," Haynes only briefly recounted some of his thirty years in Rutland. For the most part he took the opportunity to instruct the congregation one last time in the calling, character, and challenges of pastoral ministry. Perhaps feeling the sting of his own situation, Haynes focused on the joys and sorrows that accompany faithfulness in ministers. Faithful ministers are commissioned and sent by Christ as His ambassadors and messengers, a commission that determines their direction and manner in ministry, including how and what to preach and how long they are to serve in a particular place. That commission, asserted Haynes, sometimes ends quickly for the faithful minister:

The lives of ministers are often shortened by the trials they meet with; some times they are actually put to death for the sake of the gospel: they

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can say with this holy apostle, As dying, and behold we live! As chastened, and not killed; As sorrowing, yet always rejoicing. The memory of a Patrick, a Beveridge, a Manton, a Flavel, a Watts, a Doddridge, an Edwards, Hopkins, Bellamy, Spencer and Fuller is previous to us; but alas! we see them no more. No more in their studies; no more the visitants of their bereaved flock; no more in their chapels or sanctuaries on earth. They have run their race, finished their course, and are receiving their reward. Their successors in office are pursuing them with rapid speed: and will soon, very soon accomplish their work.

Haynes anticipated that his own demise would follow shortly after leaving the pulpit in Rutland. But for all the bonds and afflictions, briars and thorns, vilification, and opposition faced by faithful ministers, the faithful ministers were never to despair or lose heart because their lot in eternity would be great joy and satisfaction with their Master.

For those in or contemplating entrance into pastoral ministry, Lemuel Haynes reminds us of the solemn importance of faithfulness in the gospel minister. Haynes warns us of a blithe attitude toward our work as ministers, ambassadors for Jesus Christ. Indifference is deadly—to our people and to ourselves. Ours is a life dedicated to caring for another's children with the anticipation of one day returning them to their Heavenly Father. At that time we shall give an account of our stewardship—what we have taught His children, what model or example we have provided, whether we have tended to the state of their souls, and most importantly, whether we spoke reproachfully or gloriously of their True Father. If we would be faithful, we must keep the coming of our Lord in full view as we discharge all the duties we have been given by Him who walks in the midst of the seven lampstands (Revelation 1:13).



Sketch of Rev. Lemuel Haynes, a frontispiece in Timothy Mather Cooley,
*Sketches of the Life and Character of the Rev. Lemuel Haynes, A.M.,
for Many Years Pastor of a Church in Rutland, Vt., and Later in Granville,
New York* (1837; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969).

NOTES

Part I: Lemuel Haynes

1. Timothy Mather Cooley, *Sketches of the Life and Character of the Rev. Lemuel Haynes, A.M., for Many Years Pastor of a Church in Rutland, Vt., and Later in Granville, New York* (1837; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969).
2. Helen MacLam, "Introduction: Black Puritan on the Northern Frontier," in Richard Newman, ed., *Black Preacher to White America: The Collected Writings of Lemuel Haynes, 1774–1833* (New York: Carlson, 1990), p. xx.
3. *Ibid.*
4. John Saillant, *Black Puritan, Black Republican: The Life and Thought of Lemuel Haynes, 1753–1833* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 4.
5. MacLam, "Introduction: Black Puritan on the Northern Frontier," in Newman, ed., *Black Preacher to White America: The Collected Writings of Lemuel Haynes, 1774–1833*, p. xxxv.
6. Haynes used 1 Thessalonians 2:19 as his key text for the funeral sermon of the Rev. Abraham Carpenter. The text reads: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

Part II: Bishop Daniel A. Payne

1. Daniel Alexander Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years* (Nashville: AME Sunday School Union, 1888), p. 14.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Francis J. Grimké, "Addresses Dealing with the Careers of Distinguished Americans: Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne," delivered December 10 and 17, 1893. In Carter G. Woodson, ed., *The Works of Francis J. Grimké, Volume I: Addresses Mainly Personal and Racial* (Washington, DC: The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1942), p. 2.
5. Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years*, pp. 27-28.
6. Benjamin F. Lee, "The Centenary of Daniel Alexander Payne, Fourth Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church," *Church Review*, 28 (1), July 1911: 423-429.
7. Francis J. Grimké, "Addresses Dealing with the Careers of Distinguished Americans: Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne," p. 8.
8. Payne, *Recollection of Seventy Years*, pp. 109-110.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 92, 133, 149.
11. The term *tippling* referred to drinking alcoholic beverages. Payne and many of his contemporaries actively supported temperance and the Temperance Movement. They