



DR. J. F. LAWSON

The large number of ministers who preceded Dr. Lawson as pastor of Central were of a type affectionally referred to as old-fashioned. He was a composite of their best traits—truly devout, sincere and sympathetic, kind and considerate. He was affable, with the in-born courtesy that makes no distinction of color or creed. His friendliness was contagious, and he left its imprint on his church—"The Friendly Church." In the charmed circle of home and family his hospitality was as Southern as his speech. Dr. Long once said that Dr. Lawson was the most original Biblical teacher-preacher he ever knew.

Dr. Lawson was one of the great preachers of Central, and the first to see his church pass from one era to another, when Time shifted gears and set a new pace. He swung into step and led his growing membership through an intricate building program which culminated in this commodious structure.

Dr. Lawson served Central for 12 years. When he left the pulpit after his farewell sermon a new automobile, the gift of the congregation, was parked in the spot his old car usually occupied.

Now, well past man's allotted three score years and ten, Dr. Lawson abides in sight of green pastures and the still waters, in a comfortable home in Shreveport, Louisiana.

dates desiring to succeed Rev. Norris was Rev. C. of Meridian, Mississippi. Mr. C. was offered \$350 per year for any part of his time. He came to Little Rock to look the situation over, and got down to cases with the local churchmen. Being out of practice, the pulpit-supply committee let the matter get out of hand—and the honorarium soared to \$1,000 per year. The Scotch preacher returned home beaming, to find a telegram stating that his services and salary were to be divided between three churches "and we hope this is agreeable." It wasn't!

Calls were extended to Revs. Baker, Shive, Wiley, Sechrest, Graham, Foreman, and C. again—this time by accident. One preacher who was contacted, pompously inquired if the committee wasn't aiming a little high, for a young and not too prosperous church. "W-e-l-l," drawled the church officer, "you know what came out of the sycamore tree to work for Jesus!" "Yes," dubiously replied the preacher. "W-e-l-l. I guess we did aim too high, in your case!"

Rev. Foreman was accepted, and installed in October, 1897. The new preacher had requested, and obtained, a vacation before starting his pastorate. The committee that had extended the call to Rev. Foreman raised an eyebrow at the request, and inserted a question mark after the notation in the minutes of July 7. They didn't know that he was a malarial sufferer, and it had taken much of his strength to change from his current church to Central. He held out until March, 1898, when he bowed in defeat to the ailment. He was one of the best-liked pastors the church ever had.

In May, 1898, a Presbyterian Home Mission Committee appeared at the church with what the