

## JEFF. DAVIS'S SUCCESSOR IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

By Rev. Timothy Hill, of Missouri.

The papers announce that a colored man by the name of HIRAM R. REVELS has recently been elected to the Senate from Mississippi, to fill the chair so long vacant by the treason of the great rebel leader, Jefferson Davis. Perhaps the history of the world cannot show an instance of more exact poetic justice than is illustrated by the election of this man to this place. Think of a war begun and carried on to rivet the chains of the slave so that they could never be broken, and ended not only by giving freedom to the race, but by raising them in political rights to the level of their oppressors, and finally by the election of one of the despised and down-trodden to succeed Davis himself in the Senate! It is the first black man who ever entered that august body. The change is wonderful indeed, and while thinking of it, it has occurred to me that a chapter in the history of this new-made senator may be read with interest.

Some time in the year 1854, Hiram R. Revels came to St. Louis and took charge of the African Methodist church, which worshipped in a church situated at the head of Green street on Eleventh street. It was not long before some of his own race began to make trouble for him, as a free man, as the State then exacted a license for all colored persons who might come into it from another State. There were also some personal difficulties between him and the Methodist Bishop. These various trials led Revels and others to think they might be more at home and better cared for among the Presbyterians, and he and his friends waited on Dr. Rice, at that time the pastor of the Second church, and proposed to unite with the Old School Presbytery. But Dr. Rice gave them such a cool reception that they were discouraged from making the proposed arrangement.

During the Winter of 1854-5, Dr. Cox was in St. Louis some time, delivering a course of lectures on History. While there he made his home with Rev. Wm. Homes, then the pastor of the Union church. He soon became acquainted with Revels and his project for a Presbyterian church among the colored people, and he and Mr. Homes entered warmly into it. Dr. Cox took our black brother under his care for some time, giving him such special theological instruction as he needed for admission into the Presbytery, while he was making arrangements for the proposed organization. The hall over Biddle Market was secured as a place of worship, and the enterprise began. On the 17th of January, 1855, a meeting of Presbytery was held, and Dr. Cox introduced his protégé, who presented his credentials from the African Methodist church, was examined and admitted to Presbytery. A committee was appointed to organize the new church, and Dr. Cox was invited to act as chairman. On the next day, the Sabbath, there was a gathering of colored people, filling the large lecture-room of the Union church, and a church of nearly 200 persons was formally organized, and called the HAYNES CHURCH, in honor of the celebrated Lemuel Haynes. This was the largest Presbyterian organization ever made in St. Louis. Four elders and four deacons were elected and ordained.

One month later Mr. Revels was installed pastor. I well remember the occasion. There was a choir of singers, led by an aged colored man with a large pair of spectacles on, who magnified his office by beating time most vigorously. They sang the piece in which the words

"The Year of Jubilee is come"

are repeated several times, and in their care to keep time they divided the word with marked accent on the first syllable:

"The Year of Jubee-i-lee is come."

Nearer was the real earthly Jubilee than they then understood.

So far all was fair, but it was not long before difficulties arose; they were unable to pay their pastor, and a commission was obtained from the American Home Missionary Society. They disliked their hall, and changed about from place to place, and found no rest until at length a vacant church called the West church, belonging to the Old School, on Fifteenth street near Olive, was offered them. The terrible Gasconade catastrophe had taken away Dr. Bullard, who had been their careful friend from the first, and New Schoolism in St. Louis looked like an institution soon to vanish away.

While Mr. Revels was receiving home missionary aid the drafts from the Society to him were sent through me. I had been to his house and paid his quarterage one day. On my way back I learned that he and his people proposed to leave us and go to the Old School. I immediately returned and inquired if that was so, and learned that such an idea was then under discussion. Thinking that such a people were not likely to act very intelligently in that matter, and dreading to lose another church, I proposed to him to call a meeting, and the Rev. Mr. Wright and myself would see if their difficulties could not be removed. The meeting was held, Mr. Wright and myself were there. We listened to a statement of all their difficulties and tried to obviate them, but to no purpose. When I sat down, after trying to persuade them to remain quietly in their present connection, a man arose at the far end of the room and replied nearly as follows:

"The brother speaks very kind, and I have no doubt he feels so, but there is one thing he don't understand; he don't understand colored people: THEY CAN'T WAIT. He says, 'Wait till Presbytery meets, and then perhaps you will get aid,' but he can't promise it; he says he will vote for it, but we are afraid the others won't be so kind as he is, and we don't know. Now the Old School people tell us, we will help you, we will build you a church,

and you shall have nothing to do but to maintain your minister; and if we had a church we could do it. Now when the Old School tell us, we will build you a church, we go to them just as easy as butter will melt in the sun!"

I have listened to many speeches, but that is the only one I ever heard where there was nothing to be said in reply. Presbytery met soon. Revels asked and received a letter to the Old School Presbytery, into which he was soon after received; after which that Presbytery appointed a committee "to act and report as to the expediency of organizing a church among our colored population." What the words of that committee were in their report I never knew, but their action showed that the report should have been, "There is a body of colored people called the Haynes church which should be duly organized into a church," for they proceeded to reorganize this same church and took it into their care. But the sun of the Old School was too torrid for even this African butter, for it melted so perfectly that in less than a year, church, pastor, organization and all, disappeared forever from view, without leaving a grease spot.

Such was the Haynes church and Mr. Revels's connection with it. Of his subsequent history I have but few details. He was in Leavenworth some time, and now turns up in Mississippi as senator of the United States. Mr. Revels is a dark mulatto, in person large, good-looking, with a pleasing address, and no inconsiderable shrewdness. As the first of his race in his position, we wish him abundant success. Sure we are that he is far higher in morals than many who sit in that hall, and we are confident he is not the least either in intellect or in education.

Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 11, 1870.