

near, the first voice I heard was the merry laugh of Dr. Thomas. He had his coat off and was enjoying himself immensely with the young folks, and was, of course, correspondingly popular with them. I attended the Sunday services and after hearing Dr. Thomas preach I expressed my opinion that the Pittston church could not long retain him as their pastor."

The earnestness and sincerity of his nature, the warm cordiality of his disposition, and his unselfish and unaffected interest in the joys and sorrows of his people endeared him to them, while his ability and eloquence enabled him to reach and influence a large number who had hitherto been irresponsive, and who later became very useful to the church.

His success in Pittston led to his being called to occupy the pulpit of the Fifth Baptist Church of Philadelphia. He took charge in October, 1871, being at that time the youngest pastor in the city. The church had a membership of more than seven hundred, and a Sabbath School of over a thousand.

Here he spent eleven years, marked by rapid and solid growth in all the varied qualifications of his profession, and was eminently successful in his ministrations. As pastor of an influential and constantly growing church, his duties were heavy and exacting, and a large tax on his strength and endurance, but in all his labors he was sustained by a most generous loyalty on the part of the membership.

During his pastorate a mortgage debt upon the land of eight thousand dollars was cleared off, and the church edifice was renovated and beautified. A colony was sent out from the church to rehabilitate the Eleventh Church, accompanied as pastor by one of the deacons, who had special gifts. A mission was also started which has since developed into a flourishing church, now known as Trinity Baptist Church.

Of his pastorate here one has said, "he was beloved by the entire church, and laid broad and deep foundations in establishing the Christian characters of the members. His influence is felt to this day."

Another writes,—*"The influence of Dr. Thomas as pastor and preacher was not evanescent. Men and women, who were led to Christ under his ministry, are manifesting in their lives the transforming power of the cross of Christ."* More imperish-