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MINUTES

OF THE

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

OF THE

Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

FOR THE YEAR

1891.

Methodist Episcopal Church, South.
Conferences.

NASHVILLE, TENN.:

PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

BARBEE & SMITH, AGENTS.

toms were not at first considered dangerous, but he gradually grew worse until December 27, 1890, when his spirit took its flight to the God whom he loved, and whom he had served. The writer of this tribute visited him frequently during his illness, and always found him cheerful and hopeful. His trust was fixed in God. As he came nearer the end, he said to the dear ones who gathered around his bedside: "I am feeling as if the end is almost at hand." Later he said: "I am thinking all the time about those who have gone on before. It seems as if their spirits were here with me"—at the same time mentioning the names of several of our departed brethren. During all this time hope was entertained, both by his physician and his friends, of his ultimate recovery, and the suddenness of his death came at last as a sad surprise. Gradually he sunk into a stupor, which ended in death. "Well done, good and faithful servant." We doubt not that he has entered "into the joy of his Lord."

ROBERT A. ARMISTEAD, son of Robert and Elizabeth Armistead, was born in Hampton, Elizabeth City County, Va., May 7, 1808; and died in Richmond, Va., March 6, 1891. On October 26, 1826, he professed religion, and in the evening of the same day joined the M. E. Church. In September, 1827, he was appointed a class leader. On September 14, 1835, he was licensed as an exhorter, and on October 16, following, he was licensed as a local preacher, under Rev. Moses Brook as presiding elder. On February 23, 1840, at an Annual Conference held at Farmville, Va., he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Waugh. At the Conference held in Centenary Church, Richmond, Va., he was ordained elder by the same bishop November 19, 1843. His record as a local preacher was a noble one. He stood by the Church of his choice through the stormy period of her division in Hampton in 1828, and was largely instrumental in the building of a new house of worship in that town, the old having passed into the hands of the Methodist Protestants. The late war, resulting in the burning of his native town and home, compelled his removal, and put an arrest for awhile upon the labors to which he had been accustomed. Removing to Richmond, Va., he gave up secular business, and in 1866 we find him preaching in Rocketts, in that city. A gracious revival followed, and many were added to the Church. He continued his labors here through 1867. In November, 1868, at the session of our Conference held at Charlottesville, Va., he applied for admission, and was received on trial into the traveling connection. His first appointment was to Richmond as a city missionary. In this field he remained two years. In 1871-72 he was pastor of the Norfolk Circuit. In this charge his ministry was very successful, resulting in the conver-

sion of many souls, and in the building of three churches. In 1873 he was pastor of Princess Anne Circuit, a large and laborious field, and there were many added to the Church. From thence on he served as pastor the following charges in the order and dates as follows: Lunenburg Circuit, 1874; Dinwiddie Circuit, 1875; West Hanover Circuit, 1876-78; Goochland Circuit, 1879; Spottsylvania Circuit, 1880; Caroline Circuit, 1881-84; Edenton Station, 1885-86; Oaklette and Bethel, 1887-88. This year closed his active pastoral work. In November, 1888, at the Conference held in Portsmouth, Va., he was, at his own request, placed on the superannuated list. At his death he lacked but two months and one day of completing his eighty-third year. This record shows that he was a steadfast Christian for nearly sixty-five years, a minister of the gospel over fifty-five years, and a member of our Conference over twenty-two years. His funeral took place from Centenary Church, Richmond, Va., where he was ordained an elder more than forty-seven years before. After he was placed on the superannuated list he preached but seldom, but as long as his health permitted, he was regular in his attendance upon the services of the Church, and aided the writer in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. His health was feeble for some months before his death. His mind was clear and active to the last, and his end one of peace. Pages could be written in truthful exposition of the many noble qualities of our venerable brother, but the limits of this paper permit only a brief summary. He was a fine type of a dignified, courteous, and refined gentleman; retiring in disposition, gentle in manner, and true in his friendship. He had a thirst for knowledge; was studious, read much, thought much, and wrote much. The last two years of his life he spent largely in reading and writing out his views upon a number of religious themes. As a minister he had a high ideal. His conscientious attention to the details of his pastoral work, his untiring industry, and his patient toils, often under adverse circumstances—in old age and away from his children—bespoke the fullness of his consecration and his ardent desire faithfully to serve his generation by the will of God, and thus make full proof of his ministry. As a Christian he was humble, consistent, earnest, and devoted. His life showed the strength and constancy of his faith, and the reality of his profession. In his last illness his chief concern centered in the spiritual welfare of his children. To them and the Church he so loved and so served he has bequeathed the priceless legacy of a life high-minded and honorable, and one spent in the service of his God. His life and death place him in the category of those concerning whom it is said: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."