

MINUTES

— OF THE —

Forty-Fourth Session

— OF THE —

FLORIDA

Annual: Conference

— OF THE —

Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

— HELD AT —

LEESBURG, FLA., DECEMBER 14-19, 1887.

BISHOP J. S. KEY, D.D., PRESIDENT.

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REVS. H. E. PARTRIDGE.

A. A. BARNETT.

W. H. STEINMEYER.

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EDITORS OF MINUTES:

H. E. PARTRIDGE.

F. R. BRIDGES

But the warfare is over, and he rests from the conflicts of life. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

REV. WILLIAM E. COLLIER.

BY R. H. BARNETT.

Rev. W. E. Collier was born in North Georgia, April 1845, and died October 9th, 1886, in Ft. Myers, Fla. He was converted in early life and joined the Methodist church. Graduated at Cokesbury College. Was licensed to preach and joined the South Carolina Conference at the age of twenty. After a few years he located, in consequence of feeble health. He then moved to Georgia, studied law, and was a counsellor at the bar for a few years. Then he became a physician, and for many years was successful in this profession. He was employed as army surgeon during the last Indian war in Florida, and also during the Confederate war. Brother Collier joined the Florida Conference in 1859, and traveled three years; was readmitted in 1865, and continued his connection with us until his death. He was married to Miss Sarah A. Holmes, daughter of a faithful local preacher, with whom he lived about forty-six years. She shared with him the sorrows and joys of life in the true spirit of wifely devotion. She preceded him to the grave and the glory world by only two months. They were blessed with eight children, five sons and three daughters. Four of these still live to cherish the memory and emulate the example of their consecrated parents. One of their sons, Junius S. Collier, is now an honored member of this Conference.

Brother Collier, though a man of feeble health, was remarkable for labors abundant, and for enduring hardships for the Master's kingdom. When on the Tampa District he was at times away from home for months, and had to reach his Quarterly Meetings by traveling on horse-back through those low, wet prairies, where in some places it was more than a day's ride between houses. While laboring on that district he became deeply interested in the salvation of the few Seminole Indians in South Florida. He represented their condition and wants to the Bishop and Missionary Board. They decided to make an appointment of a missionary to that field, and he volunteered and went alone far beyond the white settlements, and would spend weeks hunting them out among the cypress swamps and telling them as well as he could about Jesus. His heart yearned for the conversion of these South Florida heathens as long as he lived.

Father Collier claimed the blessing of perfect love at Peace Creek Camp Ground some years before his death. On proper occasions he would confess this blessing humbly, yet clearly, and with confidence. He lived the experience. As death drew near his mind was sadly clouded and wandering on all other subjects; but when Christian experience was referred to, he thought and spoke definitely and correctly to the last. The day before his death he said to his pastor: "Tell my brethren of the Conference that the Gospel they preach is all I have left in death, but that it is all sufficient."