

MINUTES

OF THE

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

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Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

FOR THE YEAR

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loyal to his friends, his Church, and his God. No one was permitted to speak lightly of any of these in his presence. During the years of his superannuation he was ever thoughtful and kindly attentive to his pastor. He felt himself an integral part of the local church. He helped the preacher in charge in every way possible, and his presence at services, sympathetically attentive to the sermon as he always was, was an inspiration. The preacher might always see his lips moving in prayer as he besought divine blessing upon the sermon, or hear his rich, full, responsive "amen" as some passage of the sermon impressed him as worthy of commendation. Besides, his pastor could safely go to him amidst the perplexities of his pastoral work, assured of receiving safe, fatherly counsel from him. During the past two years he reached frequently, and his favorite theme was of heaven and the joys of eternal life. In thought he seemed to be ready over there. His pictures of that home were real and lifelike, and his toned expression strikingly those of one who had enjoyed glimpses, yea had tasted, of the things he described. Just one year ago, during the last session of this conference, he remarked to a brother: "I feel lonely, without any Conference associate. Brother Sidi Browne has gotten ahead of me, and I am left alone." After a pause, "But it won't be for long. I don't think I shall meet with the brethren again." Visitors at his home of late frequently asked, "Uncle Paul, don't you get lonesome in this quiet little home?" His ready answer was: "No, my Lord is with me here. How can I be lonesome when I have him to talk to me?" Wednesday, December 12, 1900, writing to his daughter in Orangeburg, S. C., he says: "You see a great difference in my writing; my hand trembles so that it is difficult to write at all. The old house is going away fast, but I have a better in the heavens, which will be an eternal one. I am looking forward to that one; I am content. I want to see you, to talk Conference with you. I must close, for I fear you will not be able to make out this writing. Poor old man! I won't be able to write you many more letters. Good-by, till we meet again. With much love, I am your old and loving, Pa." About three weeks or more before his death, to one meeting him on the street and inquiring after his health, he said: "I'd no use trying to hide it, paralysis is coming on. I am not for this world much longer. I'll soon be at rest." His manner and tone were as calm as if he had been planning a pleasant journey. For several months his health was seen to be giving way, and that the end would

not be long delayed. Stricken Tuesday, July 9, he lingered in an unconscious condition until the afternoon of Saturday, July 13. The next afternoon, delayed by rain, just as the funeral cortege entered the cemetery at Denmark, S. C., the rays of the setting sun pierced the clouds, painting the heavens with gorgeous sunset glory; and just as his body was lowered into the bosom of mother earth, the sun set with a splendor instinct with promise of the triumphant coming of our ascended Lord to gather to himself the redeemed of earth. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

He heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast.
He came to Jesus as he was,
Weary and worn and sad;
He found in Him a resting place,
And now in Him he's glad.

AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON WALKER, the son of Malcolm Johnston and Harriet Bostick Walker, was born at Lincolnton, Ga., March 11, 1828. He was educated at the Clarksville (Georgia) Academy and the Macon (North Carolina) High School. At the age of eighteen he read medicine, but did not graduate, though he afterwards practiced under special license. He also read law. In later years he taught school in Anderson county, S. C. In 1847 he married Miss Maria Talulah Richardson, a native of Anderson, but then resident in Laurens county. She was a true helper until her death on January 22, 1892. Three children were born of this union, but all died in infancy. An adopted son lives in Jacksonville, Fla. Brother Walker joined the Church and was converted in 1852, while teaching at Smith's Chapel, Anderson county, S. C. Called of God to preach, he was licensed to exhort in 1853, and to preach a year afterwards. He was admitted into the South Carolina Conference in 1857, and served wherever appointed with industrious fidelity. In all his charges he won souls to Christ. Failing sight and increasing feebleness required his superannuation in 1892. He bore manfully the stress of this relation, never murmuring, never showing despondency. As the years passed his helplessness increased, but he never yielded. Almost blind and unable to walk alone, he sought to meet friends and in their association receive and give cheer and hope. The session of his Annual Conference was to him well-nigh the antechamber of heaven, and he was on hand each year till the last. Even last year he had come to meet with his brethren, but a stroke of paralysis made it necessary for him to return to his sis-

ter's home in Florida. A few months ago he came to this city for treatment, and, if God willed, to see (or meet with) us again. A few days at a hotel and a few weeks at the Epworth Orphanage he lingered, suffered, and prayed. On the 24th day of August his wasted hands were folded, his blind eyes tremblingly closed, his tired heart ceased to beat, and his spirit returned to God who gave it. Brother Walker was a brave, manly man, true to his friends, true to himself, true to God. No man dared whisper a slander against even a foe, much less against a friend. He was self-reliant and independent. He did his own thinking and uttered his judgment anywhere. His cheerfulness was wonderful. Most persons afflicted as he was would have passed the days and nights in moaning and in tears. He suffered with a smile on his face and a cheer on his tongue. Brother Walker enjoyed a sound experience, based upon the teachings of the word of God and assured by the work of God in his soul. He never doubted, but when necessary gave a reason for the hope that was in him. In his effective days he was a strong preacher. He knew Methodist doctrines and could clearly explain and triumphantly defend them. Exact thought and accurate expression marked all his utterances, in public and private. As a pastor he was friendly and helpful. His brethren will never forget the few days of last year during which this man of God brightened their homes, albeit the aged preacher was utterly helpless. The memory is a benediction to this hour. Nor can this testimony be forgotten. Said he: "If the same years were before me that are behind me, I would gladly take the same way of life again—as an humble itinerant Methodist preacher. I am still growing in grace and in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour." And the wrinkled face shone with a fairer beauty than we witness on land or sea. May this be the mind of the Methodist ministry to the dawning of the last day! But the weary years are gone, the rugged path is passed. Eternity is now his portion, and the streets of the New Jerusalem now make music under his feet. Oh that we all may grow in grace to the last, and meet him where the blind shall see and the lame shall leap as the hart—where we shall be forever with the Lord!

CASPER ELDREDGE WIGGINS was born in what is now Berkeley county in this state, May 28, 1829. He was the son of William Wiggins and Elizabeth Bunch. At the time of his birth his father was a Methodist class leader—a position which he held during the greater part