

waited and earnestly prayed for greater manifestations of acceptance before receiving the ordinance. Since his membership in the church in South Carolina he has been a member of six different churches—Shiloh and Penfield, in Greene county; New Hope, in Henry county; the First and Second churches, Atlanta, and Acworth, Cobb county. He was elected deacon by the Penfield church, in 1837, and has acted in that capacity ever since. He was one of the nineteen first constituted into the Second church of Atlanta, and his devotion to it cost him much labor and money. He is now in his seventy-fourth year, and although no charge has ever been preferred against him during a membership of half a century, yet, in reviewing his life, he regrets to find a want of entire conformity to the will of Christ. He has lived an active life, and has spent but few idle days during a period of over sixty years. His health has been generally good, and is now excellent; a blessing attributed by him mainly to uniformity in obeying the first law given to Adam after the fall, and to regular, temperate habits.

JAMES McDONALD.

Rev. JAMES McDONALD was descended from a Scotch Highland family, which had twenty representatives bearing its own name among the forces of the Pretender, Charles Edward, at the disastrous battle of Culloden, in 1746. This defeat of the adherents of the House of Stuart in its last attempt to regain the British crown, compelled many of their number to seek political safety by a change of residence; and the immediate ancestors of the subject of this sketch betook themselves to the south of Ireland, where he was born, in county Limerick, province of Munster, A. D. 1798. As might be expected in view of such antecedents, he was reared under the influence of that ultra—or, shall we say, that only consistent—Romanism, which is both ecclesiastical and political; and he was educated with reference to the priesthood of "the Mother of Harlots." But circumstances induced his emigration to America, when twenty years of age.

Shortly after his arrival in our country, a strong desire to read the Scriptures took possession of his soul. This he had been trained to regard as a "mortal sin;" and the longing that came to him from heaven assumed in his eyes the shape of a terrible temptation, against which he struggled in doubt and bitterness for ten years. During a part of this time he taught school in Burke county, Georgia, and afterwards studied law in the office of a distinguished jurist, Col. R. L. Gamble. But these engagements could neither terminate his inward conflict nor deaden the keen pain it gave him. His sufferings grew at last to be intolerable, and, in a fit of desperation, he determined to enter the navy of some one of the Central or South American States, which were then at war, hoping, at the worst, to lose in death the agony he felt himself unable to endure in life. With this purpose, he embarked for Havana. In the course of the voyage, the captain of the vessel judged from his countenance and deportment that some strange horror was preying on him, and became suspicious that he meditated self-destruction. Being a Christian, his sympathy led him to seek the confidence of the sufferer, who was at length persuaded to divulge the cause of his distress. The captain then labored to convince him that to search the Scriptures was to him, and to every soul burdened with sin, alike a duty and a privilege, and endeavored to lead him to Jesus Christ, the one only High Priest of our most holy faith, and Himself the Peace of men, because He is their Saviour. Half convinced but still sorely troubled, he landed in Havana, where, probably for reasons connected with the design which had carried him from home, he was arrested and cast into prison. That Cuban dungeon became the Bethel of his life-journey! There he covenanted with God that, if delivered from his bonds, he would make His word the man of his counsel and walk in His ways. To the day of his death, he believed that the Lord heard that vow and rescued him; for, a little after, unexpectedly, a friend appeared and secured his liberation.

Immediately on his release, Mr. McDonald returned to Georgia, made a public profession of faith in Christ, united with the people of God in Burke county, and was baptized. The spirit that unsealed the lips of the captain would not suffer him to be silent; and, with little delay, he began to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to others. Ever afterward, the stranger, the lowly, the suffering were the objects of his special solicitude; and he sought to alleviate the sorrows of all, whether physical or mental, as his own had been alleviated, by pointing to the Great Sorrow-Bearer. The Word which had so long been to him a sealed book became henceforth his treasure, his constant companion, his study by day and by night; and he "profited in it above many his equals."

His ordination was soon followed by a commission or a call to lower Georgia and to Florida, where he labored zealously from 1834 to 1853. He was exposed here to great persecution, and those who loved not the truth even threatened his life. Amidst this strife of tongues, and during the Seminole war, he was obliged to ride unattended to his appointments, facing danger and risking death in lonely glades and swamps. And yet, in later years, he often spoke of this as the happiest part of his life: God revealed Himself so fully, so sweetly, in these solitary journeyings, while the mind mused on Him and the heart panted after Him!

In 1853, Mr. McDonald removed to Atlanta, which was to be his home for ten years. There was then but one Baptist church in the city, and finding himself surrounded by many who never attended divine worship, he fitted up a room in his own house, on McDonough street, for preaching on Sabbath afternoons, and for prayer meetings during the week. These services created the desire and prepared the way for the constitution of the Second church, which may be fairly accounted as at least the mediate outgrowth of his faithful labors. While residing in Atlanta, he preached to country charges, for the most part, if not altogether, without remuneration, giving Saturday and the Sabbath to the work of the Lord, and devoting the rest of the week to that work in temporal things which a right spirit elevates into true worship.

In 1863 or 1864, he made his home in Upson county, preaching there, as before, whenever opportunities offered. He settled about 1868 at Stone Mountain, and, while his health was by this time greatly impaired, he still bore witness for his Redeemer. Shortly after, he removed to Rome, Georgia, where his death occurred, April 25th, 1869.

Mr. McDonald was married in May, 1842, to Miss Theresa A. Pendarvis, of Jacksonville, Florida. Though many years his junior, she warmly seconded his labors, for her love for the Saviour and her desire for the salvation of souls were equal to his own; and she cheerfully took on herself all the care of the household, whenever this was necessary, to leave him free for the prosecution of his ministry. She still survives him, a resident of Rome, Georgia. Of their children, three preceded him to the Better Land, and one followed him last year; while the five yet living all give evidence that they are heirs of God through faith in Christ.

Mr. McDonald was an *extempore* speaker, seldom using in the pulpit even the briefest notes; and his sermons lacked, therefore, the ornate finish which writing would have given them. But his earnestness would win attention and enforce conviction; and very often a stream of eloquence would flow from soul, and eye, and lip, electrifying his audience, and proving that with the assiduous labor of the student he would have made himself known everywhere as a mighty man in Israel. Though not popular with the masses, and appearing to strangers reserved and even stern, he was loving and attentive as a husband and a father, and beneficent as a master, caring for the souls and bodies of all his household. With a face steadfastly set against evil, he was very gentle toward the penitent, leading them, with great tenderness of soul, to the fountain of life.

Baptist Denominations in Georgia