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MEMOIR OF REV. JOSEPH WHEELER.

The Rev. Joseph Wheeler, the subject of this memoir, was born in Camden, S. C., November 13th, 1833, and died at King's Mountain, N. C., December 25th, 1889.

His life was one signalized by his devotion to his Church and to his God, and wherever he labored he won the hearts of the people by his gentle manners and his kind and sympathetic nature. Though he is gone, the sweet influences of his character will linger with us, and the currents of good that started will flow on to meet him in eternity. He was one of the wisest and tenderest of pastors. He carried with him the Spirit of the Master, and you could not spend an hour with him without feeling the uplifting influences of his chaste conversation and Christ-like spirit. He was not considered a great preacher by the masses, but the chasteness of his style charmed the cultured, the clearness of his reasoning enchaind the attention of the thoughtful, and the deep spirituality of his doctrines edified Christians and convinced sinners. The preaching of such a man is not to be estimated by the voice of the masses, but by the intelligent faith and robust Christian character of his congregation. Measured by this standard, which is the true one, he was among the best preachers of the Conference.

As a man he was the highest type of a Christian gentleman. He owed this distinction to no adventitious circumstances of fortune, nor to any single sparkling quality; but looking to the whole of what forms a man, to what entitles him to rank high among his fellows, in a word, looking to the mind and soul, we pronounce him a Christian gentleman of the highest type.

He had a mind superior to fear, selfish interest and corruption, which no outward circumstances could conquer, no vascillating multitude turn from its purposes of right, which no promise of ease or gain could cause for a moment to prove false to its deepest convictions of duty, and which no pleasure could melt into effeminacy, nor distraction sink into dejection. This is the mind which forms the distinction and eminence of men. We can conceive of no circumstances under which he would have been either afraid or ashamed to act his part with firmness and constancy. He was true to the God whom he worshiped, true to the faith in which he professed to believe. He was full of affection to his brethren, faithful to his friends, and warm, with compassion, to the unfortunate. He was self-denying in little private interests and pleasures, but zealous for

the public interest and happiness. He was magnanimous without being proud, humble without being mean, and just without being harsh. He was simple in his manners, but manly in his feelings. On his word you could entirely depend. His countenance never deceived you, and his professions of kindness were effusions of his heart. He was a man whom, independent of any views of advantage, you would choose for a superior, could trust as a friend, and love as a brother. His home-life was beautiful in its expressions of tender affection for his wife and children. The family altar was never neglected. He never permitted the public services of the church to substitute his family or private devotions. His prayers at the family altars were not set nor formal, but simple and direct, being a sense of divine presence to each member of the household, and laying before God the plans, perplexities and hopes as a family and as individuals.

Such was the character of Joseph Wheeler. We honored him, we loved him, and we mourn his loss.

To his father he owed much, for it was his hand that moulded, to a large extent, the splendid Christian character that we have just sketched. He was brought up in the Church of which he became so successful a minister, and was consecrated in the church at New Berne, N. C., of which his father was at that time pastor.

In 1855 he was licensed and recommended by the Quarterly Conference of Washington Station for admission on trial into the traveling connection, and was admitted in November of that year in Wilmington, N. C.

He was appointed that year as junior preacher on Haw River Circuit, with P. W. Archer as senior. The remaining thirty-three years of his faithful and efficient ministry was spent in the following charges, and in the following order: New Berne, Straits and Rowan Circuits; Fifth Street (Wilmington) and Plymouth Stations; Snow Hill, Smithfield, Rockingham, Tarboro, Iredell and Mount Gilead Circuits; Salisbury, Concord and Fayetteville Stations.

He served Fifth Street Station and Rockingham Circuit two terms each. During his second year at Fayetteville his health failed rapidly, and at the Conference which held its session in Greensboro at the close of that year he asked for a superannuated relation. He lived only a few days after the adjournment of the Conference that superannuated him. His death took place in the midst of his family at King's Mountain, and was characterized by unwavering faith and holy confidence.