EARLY

RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF

JOHN BARR,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

AND LEFT AS A LEGACY TO HIS GRAND-CHILDREN.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A SKETCH OF HIS CHARACTER.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION,
NO. 265 CHESTNUT STREET.
Entered according to the Act of Congress in the year 1852, by
ALEXANDER W. MITCHELL, M. D.
In the office of the Clerk of the District Court for the
Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Stereotyped by SLOTE & MOONEY, Philadelphia.
Contents.

CHAPTER I.
Address to his Grand-children—Family History—Early Life—Remarkable Dream—Religious Impressions—Escape from Drowning, .......................... 5

CHAPTER II.
Various Exercises of Mind—Preparation for the Lord’s Supper, .......................... 23

CHAPTER III.
A remarkable Sabbath, .......................... 35

CHAPTER IV.
Various Temptations—Sabbath Exercises, .......................... 43

CHAPTER V.
Remarks on Salvation by Grace—On reading the Scriptures in Family Worship, .......................... 54

Sketch of his Character, .......................... 63

550162 (iii)
EARLY RELIGIOUS HISTORY

of

JOHN BARR.

CHAPTER I.


MY DEAR CHILDREN:—My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved.

What advantages or disadvantages the age you are now entering on may offer for that purpose, is to me altogether unknown. If you should be so happy as never to hear the doctrine of salvation by grace, or the operations of the Holy Spirit on the human heart, doubted by some, and denied and derided by 1* (5)
others, you may, in this respect at least, be said to live in a better age than your grandfather did. To give my feeble testimony to the truth of these doctrines, is what is principally intended in the following narrative. Subordinate to this, is a desire to leave a pledge of my respect and affection for you, that when I am silent in the dust, you may have these lines to serve as a memorandum, to remind you that you had a grandfather who cared for you while living, and who, "being dead, yet speaketh." You may also profit by my mistakes and errors, which are everywhere to be seen; and if you find anything worthy of imitation, copy after it, not as the example of a weak, fallible creature; but as you find it authorized and approved by the oracles of truth.

Let me hope that none of you will defer religion as long as I did, and upon the same mistaken and presumptuous grounds. The sooner you get it the better. In a word, let it be your first, your chief concern, to become religious. With this you will be rich, though you have nothing else—"As having nothing,
and yet possessing all things.” I know not how to conclude this address better than in the words of inspiration by Moses and the apostle Paul, to which I will add my Amen. “The Lord bless you and keep you—the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.” “Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen, and Amen.”

I was born in the lower part of Pennsylvania in the fall of the year 1749, of Irish parents.

The spring following, my father moved up to Little Connewago, York county, where he lived till 1765, when he came to Rowan county, North Carolina, October 5th, and died the year following, October 31st, at the age of 57 years, leaving four daughters and five sons. My father's name was William. He was of a middle stature, plain in his manners, mild in his deportment, and exemplary
in his life. His talents were moderate, and he seemed to excel in no one except in strength of memory. My youngest sister was married to John McCorkle, January 27th, 1774.

On the 4th of April, 1776, I was joined in marriage to Mary King, daughter of Richard King, by whom I had ten children.

But it is now time to take a retrospect of the former part of my life. “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.” Thus far I could imitate the great apostle; but when I became a man, I found it not so easy with him to “put away childish things.” At the age of sixty-five years, it will not be expected that anything more than a sketch can be given, and that a very imperfect one; but it may be depended on, so far as it goes, to be correct.

Being born of religious parents, their care and attention was exercised in endeavouring to bring me up in the nurture and fear of God. I seemed naturally to have an attachment to books, and was fond of learning to
read, and was not without some very early serious impressions, whether they could be called religious or not. I was told that heaven was a pretty place and that good people went there. I wondered that every body did not be good. I think, about the age of three or four, my father bought me a new book with a sky-blue cover, which recommended it to me very much. I thought heaven was all like the cover of my book.

I recollect about this time to have asked my mother what people should do to get to heaven. She told me if I wanted to go to heaven, I must be a good boy—must say my prayers—read my book—not fight or tell lies, &c. These conditions I thought I could very easily comply with; but thought it was not enough to pray twice a day, and asked her why people did not keep praying always. She told me people could not live without eating, and must work to get something to eat. I saw the force of this, and made no reply; yet still I thought with myself, that if people would do nothing but pray till they should die of hunger, it would be very likely
to secure heaven to them. I thought that if praying twice a day would make me good, praying seven times a day would make me better. This was more than mere speculation. I actually tried to put it in practice, so early and deeply rooted did the legal spirit appear. I soon, however, began to relax a little, and it was not long till I thought twice a day was too much trouble. And I know not whether I should not have laid it aside altogether, had it not been for some alarming dreams I had about this time. I frequently dreamed that the day of judgment was come, and it always found me unprepared. One dream in particular I will here insert at length, which made an impression on my mind that I could not easily shake off.

I thought I was on a vast extended plain, where I could see in every direction as far as the eye could reach. And looking up to the sky, I thought it parted and fell off to each side—when, to my no small astonishment, a light which darkened the sun, appeared in the opening a little south of where I stood. I
did not hesitate a moment about the cause of this light. I had no doubt that it was Christ coming to judgment. I saw the appearance of one like the Son of Man clothed in light, attended with thousands and tens of thousands of shining forms which I supposed to be angels, descending as if to the spot where I stood, but he stopped in the region of the clouds, and did not come quite to the ground. I saw a throne erected, and heard the loud trumpet sound, "arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." I cast my eyes around and saw the earth teeming with its former inhabitants, the dead rising in every direction. Some had got on their feet—others appeared in a sitting position—whilst only the heads of some were to be seen above ground. But this I observed, that all faces were turned towards where I was, and every one, so soon as disengaged from his clay, moved with hasty steps towards the centre where I stood, till a countless multitude filled the plain. I should have been very glad to have been only a spectator of this scene; but found I must have a share, and act a part in it. The
order of process I do not so well recollect, as what followed it, which I suppose I shall never forget, so long as I am capable of remembering any thing. A separation took place in this vast assembly—one part seemed to mount as on eagles' wings towards heaven. I followed them with a wishful eye, till out of sight, but remained still with those left upon the ground. It was not long however till the multitude on the ground was put in motion by legions of frightful beings, which I had no doubt were devils; and I among the rest descended a long declivity, at the end of which, as I expected, we came in sight of hell's gate. It was not without great reluctance that I proceeded—and though I felt no external force pushing me forward, yet I was somehow impelled to move on in a way that I could not resist. I at last came to the gate, and set my foot upon the threshold—the gate was wide and had been crowded for some time. I being near the last was not jostled by any person. I took my stand on the threshold, laying fast hold of one of the side-posts, and looked in. It was a most dismal place, be-
yond all description or conception I had formed of it. Some parts had the blackness of darkness—in others, objects could be seen in a dim twilight. I observed that it was much easier to get in than to get out again, the way to it being down hill, the door but little raised, and then a perpendicular pitch down, more than the length of a man's body. I thought with myself that if I should once go in, I would never get out again; and resolved that I would not go in, if I could do otherwise. O! how precious did time appear to me then! I thought if I had but one day, how I would improve it! how I would pray, and strive, and live! The thoughts of going into hell were greatly aggravated too, by the hopes I had formerly entertained of getting into the joys of heaven. I did not know, however, but a prayer might be heard from the very gates of hell, and resolved that if I could do nothing else, I would pray even before I went into it. I had learned the Lord's prayer, which was all that I made use of at that time, and began to say it over as well as I could; but my fears of every moment dropping into hell
awoke me, when I found myself about half through, speaking with an audible, broken accent, weeping at the same time. Some of the family awoke me, and asked what ailed me. I answered that I had only been dreaming.

This dream appears to me a little extraordinary on two accounts.

1. The order and regularity of it, which is not common to me in dreaming. However regular my thoughts might appear to be in sleep, I had but few dreams that would stand the sober investigation and reflection of waking hours; but, generally speaking, they were too full of inconsistencies and incoherencies to be classed among the cogitations of a rational creature.

2. I could hardly persuade myself otherwise than that some things in it were beyond my acquired knowledge at that time. I recollect some time after to have read a description of the general judgment, which placed the seat of it in the air, and was struck with the likeness that appeared between the description in that particular and my dream; but
cannot recollect to have had any other idea before, than that it should be upon the earth.

But here perhaps I may incur the charge of enthusiasm, in seeming to indicate that I had a new revelation in sleep. I do not admit the charge, for two reasons: First, I am not certain that I had not the idea before; my not being able to recollect it, is not sufficient evidence to my own mind that no such idea existed there; but of this I am certain, that if I had the idea, it had made very little impression on my mind. Secondly, on the supposition that I had not the idea before, it was not what I would call a new revelation, but what was before plainly revealed. In 1 Thessalonians iv. 17, Paul mentions at least the saints meeting the Lord in the air, whether he will descend with them to the new earth (as some think,) or not. So that taken either way, that I had, or had not the idea before, I can see nothing but what is in perfect unison with the promise of the Comforter, (John xiv. 26,) who was to teach things before unnoticed or unknown, and bring to remembrance things that were known before. I know it may be
said, that "although in the early ages God was pleased to communicate instruction by dreams, visions, &c., as Elihu observes, (Job xxxiii. 14—16,) in this age of the world, it seems rather superstitious to expect communications in sleep, when we have now a more sure word of prophecy."

I must confess that I am no great advocate for dreams, and that any communications that are now made, when the canon of Scripture is completed, must be in conformity with the written word; but if a revealed truth that had been but little known, or scarcely noticed before, is in a dream more deeply impressed on the mind, I should be unwilling to reject it; because I believe that there may be a good as well as an evil agency on our minds in sleep, and that we may now be instructed in the night season, as well as those in David's time. For this we have the authority of the apostle Peter, in his quotation of, and comment on the prophet Joel, (Acts ii. 17,) that dreams should be occasioned by, or be a consequence of, the pouring out of the Spirit.

I shall now dismiss this particular, by ob-
serving, with an eminent English writer,*

“That the phenomenon of dreaming is inexplicable at least, if not absolutely impossible, without taking in the agency and intervention of spiritual beings to us invisible.”

About the age of five or six, I was much entertained with a little book written, I think, by James Janeway, on the piety and happy deaths of children, from the age I then was and upward. If I recollect right, the title was, “Janeway’s Token for Children.” I remember once taking it out to the field—(I think I had some small charge assigned to me of keeping cattle from the corn, which required but little attention,) and sitting down on a log, and reading till my eyes so overflowed with tears, that I could not see to read any more. I knelt down and prayed. I had by this time learned some forms of prayer out of my mother’s catechism; but this was the first time I recollect to have ventured to make use of my own words, or what is called extemporary prayer. Thus I spent perhaps some hours, reading and praying alternately.

* Baxter on the Vis Inertiae in Newton, vol. 1st.
I thought it would be a very desirable event to die and go to heaven. I could not content myself with being a common Christian. I wanted to be eminent for piety and religion. But these thoughts having spent their force, I returned again to my former state of coldness and carelessness.

At eight years of age, I attended preaching frequently; and although it was not much calculated to alarm sinners, yet I went home sometimes very uneasy. When the works of a true believer were described, I found I could not apply them. I was however fruitful in expedients, to prevent myself from being, as I thought, too much disturbed. Yet I found that I had enough to do to persuade myself that all was well with me.

The first expedient that occurred to me was, “that I was as good as my neighbours, and if it fared ill with me, it would fare ill with a great many.” This satisfied me for a while, till at last I thought if it should fare ill with others, it would be but a poor consolation for me, that I had gone to hell for the sake of company! In another expedient, I
thought I was more correct and more rational. I knew that it was the preacher’s business to try to make the people good, and that people were more disposed to stop short of the line of rectitude, than to reach or go over it. I thought then that it was a piece of wise policy in a preacher, when drawing the character of a man, to go a little over the mark in order to bring the people up to it: or perhaps draw the character of a man far advanced in religion, which the young beginner was by no means yet able to imitate. In this dexterous way of reasoning, and in which I was no doubt assisted by an invisible agency, I got the clamors of an awakened conscience laid asleep again.

With respect to my external conduct, it was in the main irreproachable; but I had a vain and empty mind, excessively fond of hearing my own praise; and perhaps from no higher motive, was urged on to what was deemed laudable. At the age of eleven, I suppose I could have answered, without hesitation, every question in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. About this time, Mr.
Thompson, our minister, came round in a course of family visitation—and observing me to be forward in answering questions, he asked my father how old I was. On being informed, he said I ought to be put to the Latin school. My father said nothing about my want of capacity to learn, but expressed some doubt of his circumstances being adequate to such an undertaking. This was food for my vanity. I began to think I was almost half a preacher already, and was vain and foolish enough to learn little scraps of Latin out of old authors, when they were put into English, such as "Quamvis sis in tuto, noli esse securus"—Though you be safe, be not secure. But after all, my splendid talents amounted to little more than an ease or facility in committing anything to memory, and a power of retaining it, when some of my brothers were greatly superior in depth, strength, and solidity of judgment.

When I was about fifteen, my father sold his land in order to move; which he did the year following. Having then little to do on the farm, I had much leisure; some of it I
spent in going to school, and on vacant days would sometimes join a fishing party. One day I went alone to a mill-pond about a mile from home. Soon after I let down my hook, I found it was fast on some old wood that lay concealed in the water. Being afraid of breaking my line, and consequently losing my hook, which was a borrowed one, I thought of trying to wade in to get it off. In this attempt, to human appearance, I was the nearest to death that I ever was in my life. What David said frequently to Jonathan—"there is but one step between me and death"—was more than literally true, when there was apparently not half a step with me.

Not knowing the depth of the water, I proceeded with some caution a few steps, when I was suddenly alarmed at not finding the bottom—and had imprudently ventured so far in feeling for it, that I found it much easier to go forward than to get back. Thus fixed in a kind of poise, death appeared on one side, and life on the other, and I hung for a few moments in doubtful suspense between them! I could not swim, and feared that I should
sink; the balance however soon turned in favour of life.

I was glad to get out again. But my hook was still fast. I then went up a small distance, to where some boys were at work in a clearing; told them how I was situated, with the attempt I had made. They were alarmed on hearing the danger I had just escaped, and came down with me; and being better acquainted with the fishing business than I was, got my hook off safely.

They told me that the water there was ten feet deep; that the bank at which I had stopped was perpendicular, being the bank of the creek's former channel. After thanking them for their kind assistance, I was content to go home without any further attempt at fishing. And although I considered myself very fortunate in having made such a narrow escape, yet the impression on my mind was very superficial. I thought more about it seven or eight years after, than I did at the time. In these days of vanity and dissipation, serious thoughts were almost banished from my mind.
CHAPTER II.

Various Exercises of Mind—Preparation for the Lord’s Supper.

After coming to Carolina, I found myself for some time rather lonesome, being cut off from intercourse with my former companions. I had however much time for thought and reflection. There was then no stated preaching in this country, but only occasional supplies from the northward, which were most frequent in the winter season. Our long summer Sabbaths were mostly silent. These however afforded a great deal of time for reading as well as rest. Being fond of reading and rest too, the Sabbath was to me generally a welcome day. And I sometimes thought that the sun shone with more beauty and benignity on that day than on any other; that it seemed to give a more pleasing aspect to the whole face of nature.

About this time I was much delighted in reading the dying sayings of good men, in
"Willison's Afflicted Man's Companion." I thought sometimes that if I could die like some of them, I did not much care how soon, and sometimes meditated on the joys of heaven till my eyes would overflow with tears, not of sorrow or remorse, but of joy, of gratitude, of desire, and, as I thought, of love. About the year 1772, the Rev. Mr. Harris took the charge of Thyatira congregation for one or two years. In the after part of the summer of 1773, the administration of the sacrament of the supper was proposed—preparatory to which several days were appointed for catechizing young people who had in prospect to come forward for the first time. I attended with the rest, and being found to have a competency of knowledge, and nothing against my moral character, the way was open for my admission. Self-examination was, however, to be attended to. This I found to be a pretty difficult business, for which I had neither much inclination nor capacity—but was determined that in the result it ought to come out in my favour. And so it did. But it cost me some trouble, both with respect to
my general character as a Christian, and more especially as to the exercises of some particular graces. Faith and repentance I had understood to be essential to the Christian character. Faith I thought to be quite an easy thing, and that I could believe as well as any body. I was not so certain about repentance—but a little doubtful whether ever I had repented in my life. I knew I had sometimes been sorry for sin, but whether my sorrow was of that kind and degree that was necessary to constitute true repentance, I could not so well determine.

However, I thought it was best to make sure work of it, and begin then, if I had never done it before. Not knowing or considering that Jesus Christ was exalted to give repentance, &c., I set myself to perform that good work in my own strength. To effect this, I tried to call up all my sins, and set them in order before me. But I had been such an innocent creature, I could not find materials to lay a foundation, on which I could build repentance. I believe I rather repented that I had not been a greater sinner, and
almost envied the situation of a malefactor condemned for murder, or some atrocious crime, and even once thought of committing some gross sin that would cause remorse, and lay a foundation for repentance. From whatever source this thought proceeded, whether from a heart blinded by ignorance and vice, or by the ruler of the darkness of this world, it was too gross to admit of a moment's serious investigation.

I saw then no other way than, like Saul with the burnt-offering, "to force myself;" but in this attempt also I failed. It gave me some uneasiness, that there was a grace that I knew to be absolutely necessary to salvation, and yet I could not exercise it. I read much on the subject to little advantage, and at last laid it aside, as an uncertainty which I would perhaps know more about afterwards. I was told that two things were necessary to fit us for the communion, viz. "a gracious state, and a gracious frame;" that it was not enough to have grace in the cold habit, but that it must be brought into lively exercise.

With regard to the first, I carefully exam-
ined "Guthrie's Trial of a Saving Interest," and found different exercises applied to different descriptions of characters:—that to those who had the advantages of a religious education, early instruction, and were moral in their lives, the change was generally more gradual, and less perceptible than in the more ignorant or profligate characters, and that such were more apt afterwards to call their religion in question. This characteristic description seemed to fit me very well, except in one particular.

I was not conscious of having experienced a thorough change in any period of my life. But in this my author helped me out by saying, that in some the change was so early, that they might be said, with Jeremiah or John the Baptist, to be sanctified from the birth. I concluded therefore that this must be the case with me.

I mention this, not to reproach the author, but to show how the best things may be abused by men of corrupt minds; as I made no better use of some parts even of the sacred Scriptures, particularly Romans x. 9 and
13, I thought I could confess with my mouth, and believe in my heart. I had no doubt of it. And as to calling on the name of the Lord, it was my daily practice, and so I claimed the promise.

But another and greater difficulty still remained. Although I could persuade myself that I had grace in the cold habit, yet certain I was that I had it not in lively exercise. This, however, I hoped to obtain in due time.

In this state, what is called the preparation week found me. Hoping still that if not before, at the last extremity my necessity would so powerfully plead for me, that I should then obtain the so much wished for promise, the week went round till Saturday, without any apparent change in my mind for the better. I thought rather that I got more hard and stupid, and was not without some fearful apprehensions that all was not well at the bottom.

In the evening Mr. Harris called the young people together to receive their tokens. I took one with little expectation of using it. Mr. Harris, as he handed the tokens round, spoke a few words that affected me more than
all the sermons I had heard for half a year. The words were these: "I give you these tokens, not knowing your hearts. May the Lord give you a token for good at his table to-morrow." My heart said Amen to the last clause. As to the first, I thought if he had known my heart, I should have had no token from him at that time.

In the evening I retired alone, resolving to spend the whole night in prayer. I was now come to what I supposed the last extremity, when it might be expected that every power of body and mind would be exerted to do the utmost that could be effected by human effort. How great was my disappointment! I here learned a lesson I had never been taught before. I always thought that I could do something for myself if brought to the pinch of dire necessity. And now I learned the amount of what I could do. The sum total was—nothing. It seemed to me that I could scarcely speak three words of common sense, or fix my attention to what I was saying for one moment. When I found that I could do nothing, I changed my resolution of sitting
up all night, and about midnight went to rest. Next morning I was up early, and in retirement found a little liberty and enlargement, from which I took some encouragement. I thought it was a good omen. If I am not mistaken, some change at this time took place in my views and exercises from what I had learned the evening before. Till then, I had always entertained the thought that I could do something towards my own salvation. I knew that I had never yet exerted myself to the utmost, but if necessity required it, every power I possessed would be roused to activity and exertion. O how I would pray! how "I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments!" Or if I should fail here, my distress would plead for me in language louder than words. But I had learned that this was all mere illusion, and that I could do nothing that would, in the smallest degree, entitle me to the favour or friendship of an offended Judge. I gave up therefore my legal hopes, and new frames and feelings were all in all. This change amounted then to no more than from one species of hypocrisy to
another. If I could only get my heart affected with divine things, my object was gained. I rested there satisfied. This I found I could best manage alone; and though I might have had good company, I chose to ride that morning all the way to the meeting alone. I was in hopes of being well prepared when I got there, by taking with me a good frame.* I called up every consideration I could think of to excite tender emotions in my mind, and gained my object. I believe I wept almost the whole way.

When I got there and began to mix among the crowd, a variety of objects took my attention, and presently I found my frame was gone. This distressed me so much that I could pay but little attention to the forenoon sermon. The time was coming round apace when I must take a decided part—either stay back or go forward. I know of no words that can fully express the distress and anxiety of my mind. I knew not what to do. At last

* The word frame is used here, as is common with the old divines, in the sense of a suitable state of the affections, or comfortable exercises of mind.—Editor.
I thought of an encouragement that had been given by Mr. Robert Smith, of Pequea, on a similar occasion. Seeing people tardy in coming forward, he addressed them in these words: "What are you waiting for? You are waiting for a frame—come to Christ for one." This seemed precisely to suit my case; not knowing or considering, that to come to Christ, and to come to his table, in an unprepared state, were two very different things.

However, when the conflict within had lasted as long as time would admit, I went forward trembling. On sitting down, I met with something to which I can give no name, except I should call it a glow of animal nature. It appeared like a pleasant perfume diffusing itself through my whole body. For a moment I lost sight of every object around me. I seemed as if I was on mount Tabor, or in "a field that the Lord hath blest." In short, I thought it was Christ's table of a truth, and he was come to welcome me there.

While I was in this pleasing dream, one of the elders came along lifting the tokens. I had been so careful of mine as to put it into
a little pocket book that had a division in it; and that I might have no difficulty in finding it, had taken the precaution to mark in my memory the place I had put it. On feeling for my token I could not find it; and being very certain that I could not have lost it, I knew of no way it could have gotten out, except it had been removed by an invisible hand; and if so, it was proof presumptive that I was not worthy of it. I found it at last in the other side; the bottom of the division leaf was open, which I had not perceived, and the token had slipped through.

So small a matter as this was quite sufficient to disconcert and throw my mind into confusion, so that all my skill was not sufficient to reduce it again to order through the exercises of the whole day.

After returning home, I took a longer evening walk than usual, reflecting on my situation, and at last came to this conclusion—that all was wrong with me; that I was nothing more than a splendid hypocrite, blinded by self-flattery. And to this was attached the cutting thought and reflection, that to all my
other sins, I had added that day, the sin of communicating unworthily. I felt shame and remorse to a degree I had never before experienced. I sometimes thought my head and heart would have broken while I tried to suppress my inward anguish, till at length I was made bitterly to cry out. I returned home late at night more calm, being rather exhausted than relieved. Thus I continued in a sad and disconsolate state for two weeks.
CHAPTER III.

A remarkable Sabbath.

On the second Sabbath after the communion, Mr. Harris had an appointment in a neighbouring congregation. In the morning I was more than ordinarily disturbed in mind. I could get no rest. After breakfast I took Willison's Sacramental Catechism in my hand, and went out. I knew that there were many cases of conscience in it, and did not know but I might meet with something applicable to my case. I sat down to read, but found I could not keep my eye upon the book, and far less fix my attention to anything in it. I closed the book and laid it down beside me, while in a kind of melancholy musing these words frequently arrested my attention: "What will you do in the day of your visitation? To whom will you flee for help? Where will you leave your glory?" Ah, to flee! I could not tell where to flee! I once thought
of going to a pious neighbour for advice, but I thought again, "vain is the help of man"—they would be all "physicians of no value." I might go to men, I might go to books; they would all give me the same, or a similar answer to that of Joseph to Pharaoh, "It is not in me. God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." I must go to God, with whom alone I have to do.

Here my situation became more serious. My former refuges all failed me, and proved to be no better than refuges of lies. I saw that my best duties were of no more account to secure the favour and friendship of God than my sins; and that the united efforts of all the men upon earth, and angels in heaven, could do me but little service.

Thus despairing of relief from any other quarter, I had no alternative, but must go to that God whose law condemned me, and whose justice demanded nothing less than my eternal punishment. My imagination presented to my mind the following picture: that I was as if under a great mountain which hung over me. I saw the justice of
God, like huge massy rocks, hanging loose over my head, suspended upon nothing that I could see, sufficient to prevent their fall—when at the same time I knew that I deserved to be crushed to pieces, and that one small stone would be fully sufficient for that purpose, whilst I was unable to move one step for my own safety. I recollect once with an audible vehemence to have expressed, from the very bottom of my heart, these words: “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” I wondered that I was alive, and believe that this thought alone, that *I was alive*, for some time supported me. I reasoned like Manoah’s wife, “that if God were pleased to kill me, he would not have borne with me so long; nor would he have suffered me to profane his holy ordinance, the recollection of which lay heavy on my mind.” He might yet have thoughts of mercy towards me, but how it could be exercised consistent with his justice, I was totally at a loss to comprehend. I thought if I were sent to hell, I could justify God in my condemnation, and for ever say, “righteousness belongeth unto thee; but unto
me shame and confusion of face." And further, I thought that if it was possible for a sinner in hell to love God, I would love him.

The awful views I at first had of wrath and danger, gradually gave way to views of something amiable in the divine character, and a kind of trust, though I know of no foundation on which it rested, except it was on the mere mercy of God. I frequently thought of the resolution of Job—"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him,"—and tried to make it my own. I do not know that I was ever willing to go to hell. If I was, it was with the mistaken view that I could love, honour and promote the glory of God there. But this I remember well, that my sinfulness and insignificance made the mere matter of suffering appear to be comparatively a little thing, if the glory of God could by it be any way promoted. I knew that God could glorify his justice in my eternal condemnation; but O, I thought, if there were any way that I could be saved, his mercy would shine gloriously in my salvation.

There is one thing that I have since won-
dered at, perhaps a thousand times, that in all this time, which I suppose was about three hours, I do not recollect to have had one thought about Jesus Christ as a Mediator between God and man, but seemed still to have to deal with God as an absolute God. Though I had been doctrinally taught, and knew well the theory of the way of salvation, yet the practical view of it, so as to apply it to my own case, never entered my mind till I was driven on almost to despair.

While under great depression of spirits, looking every way for relief, or like a drowning man, catching at every stick or straw, these words came into, or rather seemed to dart across my mind: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," and gave a new spring to every power of my exhausted mind. I presently recollected, what I believe I had somewhere read before, that Jesus Christ, while on earth, never put any away that came to him begging for mercy; and that in his glorified state he retained the same bowels of compassion and tender mercy. I thought of the lepers at the gate of Samaria,
who said, "Why sit we here until we die?"

"Let us fall unto the host of the Syrians, and if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us we shall but die." I thought of Esther's resolution to go in unto the king, though contrary to the law, and at the hazard of her life, and how well both succeeded.

I formed the resolution of casting my guilty soul at the feet of Christ, and if I perished, I would perish at his feet. This resolution was no sooner formed than I endeavoured to put it in practice. I saw a suitableness in the Saviour, to me before unknown, to answer all my soul's necessities. I saw in him everything I wanted, and in him I found rest for my weary soul with peace and joy in believing.

And though it is now more than forty years, I think I could go to the tree, if yet standing, (then only a sapling) at which I stood, and like a penitent confessed my sins, and saw the "fountain open for sin and uncleanness," freely flowing to remove my guilt, and wash away my pollution.

It was now about noon. My darkness was
turned to day. Never was there more difference between midnight darkness and noon-day, than was between that morning and afternoon. I thought I knew before what believing was, but now I knew "in whom I believed, and was persuaded that he was able to keep that which I had committed to him against that day." Although my joy was far from that height of rapture and ecstasy that I have in many instances since witnessed, yet it was more permanent, and continued uninterrupted for weeks, perhaps I might say for months, so that it would have been as difficult for me to have doubted as it was before to believe. It seemed as if I had gotten into a new world, and had new views and apprehensions of myself, and almost every thing around me—of God, of the world, of sin, of holiness, of time, of eternity, of the Saviour of sinners, and of the institutions of his grace. My feelings took my attention less than the objects that occasioned them.

It was not then, as it has been since, customary for young people to converse familiarly on their religious experience. I there-
fore kept all my feelings to myself, except what might be visible in my countenance, in which before might have been read the marks of dejection or despair, but which was now, with Hannah's, "no more sad." I then felt the force and propriety of one of Solomon's proverbs, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joys."
CHAPTER IV.

Various Temptations—Sabbath Exercises.

It was not long, however, till the arch adversary made for once an unsuccessful attack upon my peace. The suggestion was plausible, "Now you are a believer, and once in Christ, still in Christ. You are now out of danger; there is now no occasion for so much painfulness in duties. Less praying and time spent in meditation, will now answer your purpose. Besides, you are now in the vigour of youth, and prime of life; you may lawfully indulge in the innocent pleasures of your age. Religion was never intended to lessen, but rather to increase the pleasures of mankind. Your seriousness would much better befit the age of sixty, except you mean to devote yourself to the life of a hermit, or to spend the remainder of your days in a cloister."
How much truth soever there might have been in these suggestions, yet from this single specimen I have drawn a proof sufficient to satisfy me that Satan does not always know the inward exercises of our minds, or he would time his temptations in some instances better. When these suggestions were presented to my mind, I had learned to know something about being dead to the world by the cross of Christ, and sensual baits had no more influence upon me than the passing wind. And as to restraining prayer, and taking less time for meditation, it might just as well have been suggested to me when hungry, that I need not be at the trouble of eating; or when thirsty, that it was too much trouble to take the cooling draught. For in short, my meat and my drink seemed to be to do the will of my Heavenly Father.

But alas! my corruptions, that I thought were all dead, revived again, and I found evil enough within me, without any other tempter, to prompt me on to the commission of sin and neglect of duty. I soon found that when left
to myself, I was a poor, weak, wicked, and helpless creature; but it was long before I could learn to trust in that grace which was alone sufficient for me, and that strength by which alone I was able to stand. My unbelief and misgiving fears prevailed against my weak faith, and not unfrequently the foundation of my hope was called in question. And I believe I should sometimes have fainted, had it not been for the goodness of the Lord in giving me some reviving cordials, that cheered my drooping spirits.

When we had no sermon, I usually spent my Sabbaths alone in some retired place. This I found to be attended with its advantages, according to the state of my mind. When my mind had gotten a right bent or direction, its exercises were more free and uninterrupted; but this was not always the case.

However easily I could get rid of company, I could not always get rid of myself; vain thoughts still lodged within me, and would be breaking out on every occasion. I seemed like the young Median that thought he had
two souls, one disposed to good, the other inclined to evil, and each seemed to aim at nothing less than the destruction of the other. The contest between these two contending powers, made my heart literally the seat of war, and Israel and Amalek prevailed by turns; so that some Sabbaths were far from being days of rest, and might more properly be called days of conflict.

One morning, on going out, I was grieved to think how I had spent some preceding Sabbaths; and knowing that I carried with me the same deceitful, treacherous heart, I could have no security that that day would be spent any better. O, how happy I thought I should be to spend but one day in communion and fellowship with God, without interruption from vain, wandering, and wicked thoughts; and I knew of nothing to hinder but the wickedness of my own heart, that was ever like the sons of Zeruiah with David, "too hard for me."

Whilst musing as I walked along, on the ungovernable madness of my heart, these words came with impressive force into my
mind: "Son, give me thine heart." My heart promptly replied with the aid of my voice, "Lord, take my heart to thee; let it be thine this day, and thine for ever—the day is thine, may the work be thine—let no vain thought intrude upon these sacred hours." I presently felt a calm and composure of mind to me unknown for some time before.

I had Flavel's sixth volume, which treats on Husbandry and Navigation Spiritualized; and after committing myself to God for the day, I sat down to read. The place I opened upon, was on the union of the graft with the stock. I read with pleasure, and I think with profit. No vain thoughts troubled me.

A short poem on this subject I read several times over, and it seemed to me that I could have read it a hundred times, and still have seen in it something new. I soon committed it to memory, after which my book was of little further service to me. The verse that most attracted my attention was this,

"As long as e'er the root doth live,
The branches are not dry;
While Christ hath grace and life to give,
My soul can never die."
My thoughts and affections rose like the waters in Ezekiel's vision, till I lost sight of this earth; and for some time I thought no more about it, or any thing it contained, than if I had not been an inhabitant of it. I recollect once of giving a transient glance to this world, which appeared like a dusky shade, or no better than dust and ashes, when compared with the upper world.

Happening to fix my eyes upon the body of the sun, I was surprised at the speed it had made. It was near two o'clock, our usual time for dinner, when I would not have thought that I had been there more than half an hour. A small conflict arose in my mind about going home. I was loath to leave my sweet retreat, and felt no disposition for eating; but fearing that my absence would occasion some anxiety in the family, I thought that perhaps it was my duty upon their account to go, though for myself I had much rather have staid where I was. I set off for home, but hesitated and halted several times. The words of the Psalmist (Ps. xciv.) I thought I could use with self-application, "In the multi-
tude of my thoughts within me, his comforts delight my soul." O how glad I would have been to have had some secret place where I would have met with no interruption all the day. But the thoughts of giving uneasiness to the family finally prevailed, and I went home; but it was no home to me. I recollect nothing of what passed there, and it seemed as if my heart did not go with me.

I soon returned, but with this disadvantage, that it did not appear to me to be the same place. It was neither a Bethel nor a Peniel—nothing but common woods. I tried to realize the beauties I had seen in my poem; but they were all gone. I could see no more in it than in the rest of the book, and it all appeared to be little more than a blank. Thus situated, the afternoon appeared as much longer than usual, as the forenoon was shorter; the greater part of which, I believe, I was on my knees. It was in the season of feeding cattle, and though I did not then attend to that business on week days, I usually assisted on the Sabbath. Observing that the sun was sinking down, and that it would soon
be time for that business to commence, I knew not how I could leave the place without some token of the Divine presence with me.

I resolved to try what supplicating the throne of grace once more would do. The result was, I thought no more of feeding cattle till it was dark. This I consider as one of my high days. And such indeed it might have been to me, if I had known how to improve it. I know that these were signal manifestations and communications of divine grace; and I know also that "where much is given, much will be required," and that I have been far from rendering according to the benefit received. When I reflect upon my poor unprofitable life, shame and confusion of face may cover me. It is said of Solomon, that "the Lord was angry with him because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared to him twice."

I am well aware that these and such like exercises will, by the gay world, be accounted enthusiastic and delusive. To this I at present feel no disposition to make any other
reply, than that "I could wish to be always thus enthusiastic," while at the same time I am prepared not to wonder at the world's mistaken notion, when I recollect that he who was the subject of these exercises, and who, more than all others, might be supposed to have a fair opportunity of knowing their truth and reality, once formed an opinion of them not much more to their advantage; and even more than once doubted the genuineness of their source. If it should be asked how this was brought about, I answer, by what is but too common to all, more especially to young Christians—I mean paying too great a compliment to religious feelings; "forsaking the fountain of living waters," and following the dying stream till it dries up, like the sportive fish that can glide and play down the current while it has a sufficient depth of water, but when that fails, is found gasping and dying, and can never return without a fresh supply.

However useful and ornamental such exercises may be in the superstructure, they are by no means fit materials for the foundation.
"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." "We have a more sure word of prophesy unto which we do well to take heed."

" Faith has for its foundation broad,
A stable rock on which I stand;
The truth and faithfulness of God—
All other grounds are sinking sand.

"The oath and promise of the Lord,
Join to confirm the wondrous grace,
Eternal power performs the word,
And fills all heaven with endless praise."

Upon the whole, when I take a retrospective view of my past life, I can say nothing less than this, "goodness and mercy have followed me." I know I have not been exempt from trials; and I know also that God is faithful, who has not suffered me to be tried above what he gave me strength to bear, and has also with the trial made a way of escape.

One thing on this subject may appear a paradox to many; that is, that the days of my greatest trials I reckon among the most comfortable days that I have spent upon earth. So that upon the whole I can say,
that "I have never been a great sufferer, though always a great sinner." I speak not now of gross out-breakings, but an inward alienation of heart from God. My backslidings have been many. I have much to lament, but desire to be an eternal debtor to that grace that has so often restored my wandering soul. Thus, "having obtained help of God, I continue to this day," hoping and trusting that the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin, will still continue to cleanse, and at last present me without spot, before his Father's throne, where I shall see his face and sing his praise, world without end. Amen.
CHAPTER V.

Remarks on Salvation by Grace—on reading the Scriptures in Family Worship.

Having finished what I intended by way of narrative, I shall now make some observations in subservience to my main design; which was to give my feeble testimony to the truth of the doctrine of salvation by grace, and the operations of the Holy Spirit in the conviction and renovation of the human heart. If a general view of what I have written gives no evidence of the truth of these doctrines, I should almost despair of success in making any comment upon it. I shall however notice a few particulars, which, unless we admit a divine agency in changing the heart, and the invincibleness of divine grace, are to me altogether inexplicable.

If it should be asked why I have selected the doctrines of salvation by grace, and the operations of the Holy Spirit, out of several
others, so nearly related to them, such as our lost state by nature; the imputation of Christ's righteousness, &c., they being all doctrines of the Reformation, I answer, because I believe them all to be doctrines of the Scriptures as well as of the Reformation, and so nearly related, that they cannot be easily separated. But in placing these two doctrines together, I would not wish to be understood to think them of equal importance; or rather, that the rejection or denial of them would be attended with equal danger. Although they are nearly connected, and seem both to lie at the very foundation of my hope, yet I can more easily conceive of the possibility of salvation, in the denial of the fulness and sovereignty of grace, (though I confess I do not understand it) than in the denial of the operations of the Spirit, which is a prominent characteristic trait of an infidel.

As to the former, a quotation from Dr. Witherspoon, in his Essay on Justification, (vol. i. p. 80,) will express my thoughts fully, and with it I will dismiss the subject. "If the righteousness of Christ is the only
ground of our justification, I do not see how we can avoid concluding the danger of those who are upon any other plan. And yet I am persuaded there have been and are many good men among them, which may be accounted for in this manner, that their hearts are better than their understandings, and they are habitually under the government of principles which, through some mistaken views and groundless fears of their abuse, they speak of more sparingly, or rather seem to establish the contrary positions. The proof of this I take from their writings, particularly from the difference between their sermons and other discourses, and their forms of prayer which they have drawn up, and not only recommended to others, but left behind them as a witness of their own exercises in their closets. If they be supposed to feel the sentiments which they express in their prayers, it can easily be made appear that these sentiments can only be dictated by the doctrine of free grace. If what they say of themselves be true in its natural and obvious meaning, and if they believe it, which charity
obliges us to suppose, it must be altogether in vain to lay the least stress upon their own righteousness for their acceptance with God.'

I shall now conclude with a few remarks on reading the Scriptures in family worship.

Soon after I was entrusted with the charge of a family, it was recommended to me, by one whose judgment I had reason to respect, as the most expedient method of reading the Scriptures in family worship, to read them in order: that is to say, a portion out of the New Testament in the morning, and out of the Old at night.

This arrangement was thought best on account that the Old Testament contained a greater number and variety of historical facts, which would be most likely to engage the attention of children, and prevent drowsiness, which might otherwise be too ready to steal in after the active duties and fatigues of the day. The only objection I had against this proposal was, that the Old Testament would take the same proportion of time and attention with the New, when I thought the latter ought, on some accounts, to have greatly the
preference. This objection, however, was in a great measure removed, when I found, by actual experiment, that when not much interrupted by sickness, absence, or otherwise, and by sometimes reading two chapters together, when connected, and not too long, I could read the whole of the New Testament in less than eight months; when the Old Testament, under like circumstances, required little less than two years. The proportion of time then was about three to one; that is, observing this order, I could read the New Testament three times for once that I could read the Old.

I cannot help being surprised and ashamed too, to think how often I must have read the Scriptures, and how very small my knowledge of them continues to be. I suppose, upon a very moderate calculation, which I must certainly have exceeded, I have read the New Testament once every year, and the Old Testament once every three years, for thirty-nine years past, which is as much as to say, that I have read the New Testament thirty-nine times, and the Old Testament thirteen times over.
By an attentive reader, it might be expected by this time, that the New Testament at least would have been all committed to memory. This is so far from being the case, that I believe I scarcely ever read either of them over without finding something that I never knew or noticed before. And I am rather inclined to think that this would be the case, were I to live and read on to the age of Methuselah. There is no book which will stand reading, without weariness, like the Bible. I suppose I should long since have been tired of reading so much in any other book. But instead of this, I find my taste and relish for the Scriptures greatly increased, since I first began to read them. So that I can join my hearty assent to the following verse, with which I will come to a close:

"Thy word is everlasting truth,
How pure is every page!
That holy book shall guide our youth,
And well support our age."
SKETCH OF HIS CHARACTER,

BY A GRANDSON.
SKETCH

OF THE

CHARACTER OF JOHN BARR.

Among the early inhabitants of Pennsylvania, emigrants immediately from Ireland, but of Scottish descent, the annals of kindred have preserved the memory of a somewhat numerous connection of families by the name of Barr. They established themselves in the western part of Chester county, and regions adjacent there, still covered with their native and interminable forests.

William Barr, a descendant of one of these Pilgrim Fathers of the same name, removed with his family to York county, from which place he at length, in the fall of 1765, emigrated to North Carolina and settled in
what is now Rowan county, about fifteen miles west of the town of Salisbury. In October following he died, at the age of fifty-seven, leaving a family of five sons and four daughters.

John Barr, the youngest of the five sons, was born in 1749, and was fifteen years of age when, from Pennsylvania, his father and family emigrated to the Carolinas. On the same tract, upon which the paternal settlement was made, he passed nearly seventy years of life that still remained; a man, in the world's acceptance of the terms,

"To fortune and to fame unknown;"

and whose resting place is marked by a plain head-stone, bearing in import only this inscription, "That having lived four score years and two, he died."

His voice was soft and persuasive, his countenance benevolent, with an eye intelligent, and expressive of permanent placidity of mind. He was pleasing and instructive in conversation, yet he spoke but little, and in the latter years of his life, his hearing hav-
ing become much impaired, he was, in good degree, a silent member of the social or family circle.

Feeling himself excluded from the usual facilities of pleasurable intercourse among friends, he cheerfully retired within, to the conscious resources of his own mind; and, amid the accumulated treasures of a long life, found there an unfading and pure delight.

In the language of an eminently holy man, of like age and kindred spirit, when asked how, in the monotony of a country residence, he could find enjoyment for his declining years, the subject of this brief tribute of regard could answer, "I have a long life to review, and an unending eternity to expect; the errors of the one for repentance, the joys of the other to anticipate;" for he was one who in early years had sought a title to "a better country, even an heavenly," and whose simplicity of life and godly sincerity gave surest promise that he should inherit those beatific scenes for which he hoped.

In the advantages of education, Mr. Barr
can scarcely be said to have shared at all. Society, during his early youth, and more especially in agricultural regions, was, in Pennsylvania, passing through its transition state. The Carolinas were a wilderness, solitude the companion of each household, and organizations for instruction of the young hardly to be found. Of what might have been construed as indirect self-commendation he was not accustomed to speak. But family tradition recounts that the entire period of his tuition did not amount to more than twelve weeks in a country school, such as were known in those early days.

Besides, his youth was nurtured in a family whose frugal portion of this world's goods, and frequent change of residence, left them a library scarce more than the old fashioned Bible, Rouse's version of the Psalms, Boston's Fourfold State, and the Pilgrim's Progress.

But he possessed an ardent thirst for knowledge, and a steadfastness of purpose which knew not how to shrink from difficulties or yield to discouragement.
His reading was much more extensive than we would have supposed for a man of his avocation and retired manner of life. He possessed not a large library, but the books contained in it were selected with care. And what is far more important, by attentive and frequent perusal their contents were made all his own.

He read slowly, but to great advantage. Thus, of what he read, that which was worthy of preservation, by scarcely an effort of memory he perfectly retained.

When arrived to about the years of middle life, Mr. Barr associated himself with others in the establishing of a circulating library among the families of the congregation, whence were derived great and invaluable accessions to his stock of knowledge. The selections were of the most substantial character; among them Rollin's Ancient History, Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Robertson's Charles the Fifth, Hume's History of England, the works of Flavius Josephus, Butler's Analogy of Natural and
Revealed Religion, and similar standard works.

Amidst these an hour at noon and his winter evenings were spent. He read them thoroughly; read until he understood; and what he thus obtained seemed never to be forgotten. Long after he would refer to what he then read, and converse on it with the facility and freshness of recollection, that we might expect from a professional student who had but the day before closed the book.

I was once present when, in the social circle, a question was raised respecting an alleged statement in Prideaux's Connections. He showed himself to be perfectly at home in the positions of that learned but not specially interesting chronicler. It was inquired if he possessed the work. "Oh no," was his reply, "but I had an opportunity of reading it some thirty years ago. It was in our Thyatira Library, of which I had a share."

Of the volume of divine revelation he was an unwearied and successful student. And by this we do not mean that he daily passed over so many chapters. He read slowly. In
obedience to the injunction, he searched the Scriptures. He had no concordance; not even a reference Bible. For the greater part of his life he possessed no commentary, even on portions of the Bible, except the brief annotations of Burkitt on the New Testament. Dr. Scott's Commentary on the entire Scriptures being published in this country, he sent to Philadelphia and procured a copy of it; but not until quite advanced in life. And yet it is using no hyperbole, or figure of speech, to say he was second to no man with whom I ever have been acquainted, in a general and correct knowledge of the Scriptures.

The book of inspiration seemed to be spread out before him in one view. Of almost every passage for which you might make inquiry, he could refer you to the chapter, at the same time stating the connection. And this, not from having apparently bestowed any special care to obtain this kind of local memory. Farthest of all was he from a vain show of how much labour he had expended to acquire it.

His acquaintance with the Scriptures was
not intuitive. His was treasure for which he digged; his knowledge he gained; nor is it difficult to trace the stream up to its fountain. He was a constant reader of the Bible. He read it both in private and in family worship in order. In conversation with men of study, as on other subjects of inquiry, he was always adding to his biblical treasures. On a visit to a friend's house, some book which he did not possess was consulted, and through uncom-
mon retentiveness of memory, what he once obtained was thence his own.

Mr. Barr's attainments in almost every department of intellectual cultivation within the reach of the English scholar, were far in advance of what is common with men in his station of life. History and chronology, ancient and modern; natural, moral, and mental philosophy, in addition to subjects connected with theology, were his daily studies, each receiving in turn his undivided attention. He was endowed with a vigor of thought, and had acquired a patience of investigation, which enabled him to pursue these paths of science with a success truly remarkable. And
notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he had to labour, and the honour deservedly attendant upon success, the simplicity of his mind seemed not to allow him even to suppose that his attainments were beyond what might reasonably be expected of men in like situations.

It may be asked, How could one engaged in the daily labours of the farm obtain time for these studies? To which we can only answer, that such was the fact, during a long and laborious life. Like Drew and Carey, Lee and Burrit, he redeemed time to be ever laying up something new, and adding to what he already possessed. The true secret of which was, he paid

"No moment but in purchase of its worth."

He retired early in the evening. At the first dawn of day he rose, and with his book in his hand, musing, he sat until the increasing light enabled him to read. He did not take up whatever volume he might first lay his hand upon in the gray twilight of the morning. He was always reading, in course, some one book, and that book lay in the win-
dow, to receive on its opening page the earliest beams of perfect day. An hour thus redeemed before the business of the farm put in its claims—the period of rest allowed the labourer at heat of day, in even hay and harvest time—with his evenings spent always at home, brought him in slow but certain revenue. These treasures of knowledge, which enriched his declining years with the purest and most abundant delights. By one sojourning a short time with his family, it was remarked, in Mr. Barr's vast store of knowledge there is not so much mystery. To those who had opportunity to observe his habits of diligent and unwearied study, it would have been far more difficult to explain, had he not become among the wisest of men.

In the great modern enterprise of benevolence, he embarked with all his soul. The cause of missions, and that of Sabbath schools particularly lay near his heart. To the former he contributed by diffusing information, by his money and his prayers, while in addition to these, the Sabbath school had his instructions as the stated teacher of a
class composed of young men of colour, until his last sickness called him off the field of action in his eighty-third year.

Strange as it may now seem, the temperance reformation found him, not only the owner of a fruit distillery, but engaged himself in the manufacture of the most abundant of all causes of misery and crime. How his attention was first turned to a consideration of the evil he was promoting, it would be tedious fully to relate, as also what led to not only a change in his views, but to an abandoning of the manufacture. Suffice it to say, though he had but recently erected a spacious distillery, and at much cost had newly fitted up the apparatus of death, he at once arrested the progress of the work, and with his name to the pledge, he lent all his counsel, his influence, and his example, to the furtherance of that cause.

He did every thing by rule; but he seldom alluded even remotely to the exercise of that mental discipline which imparts this trait of character. Some men are ever giving you notice how they are regulating themselves,
and what they do. Mr. Barr more resembled an old family clock, whose excellence is not that it can be turned to the hour, but that it faithfully measures the time as graduated on the face of the dial. Whatever he did, when it was finished you could perceive that he had been operating according to a previously arranged plan, and agreeably to some standard. His buildings bore the impress of well executed design. His fences were for ornament as well as utility. The roads leading from his dwelling through the extensive adjacent forest, were perfectly straight, along which the view was lost in the inequalities of the ground, or the dim vista of the native oak.

To church, a mile distant, he seldom rode. He knew to a few minutes the time requisite to walk, at the measured step of a man of his years. And however watches might vary, or conjectures disagree, the near approach of the appointed hour for public worship was easily determined by the appearing of Mr. Barr at the door of the session-room.

He was remarkably free from corroding eares. I never saw him fretted or vexed.
Like a skilful navigator, he had acquired the art of "lying to" until the severity of the gale was past. And his countenance always shone so placid that you could not but believe peace reigned within.

To give one illustration of his meek and quiet spirit: He had made extensive preparations to erect a spacious barn, as is common where timber abounds, of hewn logs. This rendered necessary the aid of a large number of men. Much trouble and pains unavoidably preceded the assembling of his neighbours to commence the work. Great expense had been incurred in making provision for so many persons through several successive days. Only had they entered on their labours, when a settled rain compelled the builders to leave the foundation and flee for shelter. With others, he sat on his porch, having in full view the scarcely rising walls, and the scene of his frustrated plans. All were expressing their deep regrets, some in one form, some in another. Mr. Barr, seeming not to hear what was said by those around him, after long musing, remarked, "How beautifully the
descent of this rain illustrates the goodness of the Creator, and the care he exercises over the works of his hand, so abundant as to mollify the earth, and so gentle as to prepare it for the springing of the tenderest blade!"

Having said this he was silent.

In early life he was ordained a ruling elder in the Presbyterian church of Thyatira, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. Samuel E. McCorkle, D. D. After the organization of that of Back Creek, near to his residence, with which church he became connected, he there exercised the same spiritual office until the close of life. To his worth as a member of church judicatories, they whom he met in council can bear ample testimony.

There was with him no display of intellect or acquirement; no expenditure of talent. As Mr. Adams says in his eulogy on La Fayette, "he was just equal to the occasion." He could skilfully put his hand to the humblest occupation of the field or shop, and then in the hour's rest at noon, turn with like ease to trace out the rise or fall of empires, or to the contemplation of the sublimest truths of
natural or mental philosophy. A day labourer on his own farm, and a scientific agriculturist, bred to no mechanic art, yet an architect by rule; called to know little of the world, still a wise counsellor in time of perplexity; ready to learn from every one who could teach, himself the safest expounnder of truth; a weaver of the most tasteful diamonds for domestic coverlets, and a successful student of Bacon's principles of inductive philosophy; the best cooper of the district, while Locke himself could scarcely have, with more skill, unfolded the treasures of his own treatise on the Human Understanding; seldom beyond the limits of his own country, yet on the map of the world, in tracing the boundaries of empires, and the course of rivers, as much at home as in the relative position of his fields and the current of the intersecting brooks; a man of domestic spirit and habits, yet conversant with the transactions of European courts, as if commissioned to treat with them on questions of national importance.

On the day that his remains were committed to the grave, one who knew him well
exclaimed in sadness, "Could he but have left us in bequest, those moral and intellectual treasures which he gathered through a long and laborious life!" But such inheritance none can transmit; such bequest 'tis not in man to make. To call these moral excellencies our own, we must seek for and cultivate them ourselves; to enjoy these intellectual stores, they must be gathered by our own labours.

And where shall we find an example more effectually to inspire the young man with high resolve, and cheer him with confident hope? Here we see leading the way, and beckoning us to follow, the son of an obscure labouring man, brought up in obscurity, employed in the unvarying toils of the field, without education, with few books, having neither advantage of name nor influence of patron; every thing against him, save only a thirst for knowledge, and a patient searching after truth. We have seen to what he attained.

In attempting briefly to sketch the character of one whose moral and intellectual features were so distinctly traceable, while I
would do honour to the man, and justice to his talents; while I would speak in profound respect of his native genius, and his acquired resources, I would above all contemplate him as the man of God, strong in faith, rich in the fruits of love, and adorned with the beauties of holiness.

He died full of years and honour, lamented by all good men. It is not a costly monument which in Thyatira church-yard marks the spot where his ashes repose. He needs none. But of those who saw his sun in the evening of life go down full orbed, without a cloud, there is traced indelibly upon the tablet of the heart the remembrance of John Barr; a name sacred to piety, to genius, and a patient search for truth. Cheered by a confident and abiding expectation of another world, in the full exercise of his reason, and a quiet waiting until his change should come, with his family around him, and in the presence of his brethren, he bade life adieu on the 10th of November, 1831, in the eighty-third year of his age. "Satisfied with long life," sustained by a
hope full of immortality, "after he had served his own generation, by the will of God, he fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers."

S. M. ANDREWS.

DOYLESTOWN, Pa., Jan. 1852.
University of California Library
Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.