

studies, that I joined the church as a member in full communion, by sitting down at the Lord's table. Frequency of intercourse with the pastor of the congregation prior to this, did, to a certain extent, perhaps, supersede minute examination on his part, and I passed easily along; but still I felt disappointed in the summary way in which the matter was gone about; and I notice it as a caution to brethren in the ministry, not to venture on the assumption that academical attainments, however respectable, necessarily presuppose accuracy of elementary religious knowledge, far less personal experience in the things of God. As to my own impressions, the "lights and shadows" of sixty years passing now over them cannot but throw a bedimning influence around, and yet I have always considered the period of one's first approach to the table of the Lord as a most solemn era in one's spiritual life, the remembrance of it sweet, and the impress of it savoury and profitable. The official relation of my father to the tenantry on the Kinneil estate brought us into close intimacy with all of them, and especially with a few of the more pious and intelligent who had been chosen office-bearers of the church. They were well informed men, judicious and upright, with piety sincere, if not very ardent. Spending a day about that time at the house of one of them, Mr. Macvey, the conversation, after dinner, turned upon books, and, among other things, he asked me if I was acquainted with a remarkable work just published by Mr. Wilberforce, Member of Parliament for Yorkshire, "A view of the prevailing sentiments and habits of the professing religious world" in England. The work was quite new to me, not so to the worthy Scottish yeoman, and the hint I got from him was enough. Our minister soon supplied me with the book, and I read it with pleasure, not a little surprise, and possibly some profit. The worthy man asked me, "Have you read the Meditations and Soliloquies of Captain John Henderson?" Of the man or of the book I had never heard. Years rolled away before I chanced to fall in with the volume. I picked it up in Edinburgh, and it is now on my table