

has left no partien'ar record of what he has done. He kept no journal of his early toils, and with the humility of his character, he made little reference to what he had done, and in consequence his life can be very imperfectly written. But his labors are written on the face of the country, in the moral wilderness rejoicing and blossoming as the rose. Such facts however as we have been able to glean regarding his life, we shall here record.

II. PARENTAGE AND YOUTH.

The Rev. John Keir was born at Buchlyvie in the parish of Kippon, Stirlingshire, Scotland, on the 2nd February 1780. He was the eldest of the family, which consisted of two sons and a daughter.—The daughter died after reaching maturity, and shortly after her marriage, and the other son has long since preceded him to the eternal world. His parents, whose names were John and Christiana Keir, were very pious people. The district in which they then resided, was one of the earliest in which the Secession had gained a footing, the congregation there being an offshoot of the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine's at Stirling. The people of this parish had been distinguished for their attachment to the Solemn League and Covenant in the bloody days of Lauderdale and Claverhouse, and some of them had suffered and bled in the cause of Scotland's covenanted reformation. At the rise of the Secession, when corruption and tyranny were gaining the ascendancy in the Church of Scotland, they strongly sympathized with the contendings of the Secession fathers, and cheerfully cast in their lot with them. For ten years, many of them were to be found travelling thirty miles every Sabbath to enjoy the ministrations of Ebenezer Erskine, till their own number, and the increase of preachers in the body, led them, along with their brethren in the neighboring parishes of Balfroun, Drymen, and Kilmarnock, to set up a tabernacle for themselves near the centre of the parish of Balfroun. They continued to form part of this congregation till the year 1752, when they erected their own place of worship at Buchlyvie.* This congregation it may be mentioned, produced a large number of the early ministers of the Secession. To it belonged, from a very early period, the parents of the subject of this memoir, and so far as Dr. Keir knew, their parents before them; so that by his ancestry he was connected with the Secession from its origin, and at its very fountain head.

When he was about a year old, his parents removed to Baldernock, a few miles distant from Glasgow. Here they became members of the congregation of Duke St., Glasgow, then under the superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Ramsay, and afterward of the Rev. Dr. Muter, then in connection with the Antiburgher Synod. It may be mentioned that, such was their zeal in attending upon ordinances, that they at one time walked regularly every Sabbath, between seven and eight miles, to attend upon the preaching of the word.—Under these ministers Dr. Keir was brought up; in that congrega-

* U. P. Mag., vol. 8, page 127.