

with much contrition and considerable severity. Few, however, are so faithful in diving into the depths of their depravity, and bringing up thence reasons for penitence and humiliation, as was the subject of this brief memorial.

On his thirteenth birth-day he was bound an apprentice to a cabinet-maker. Referring to this period of his history, he says, in a deeply interesting account of his conversion found among his papers after his decease, "I entered on my apprenticeship a servant of sin, without God, without hope, and void of much concern about any thing important, in regard even to this world or the one to come." For three years longer he lived without remorse for the past, regard for the present, or any intention to repent and reform for the future; or, if he did form any resolutions to amend, they were never carried into effect, and were soon forgotten. "I had," he says, "many witnesses in myself that I was a sinner against God, an apostate from him, and an enemy to him in my mind, by wicked works. I had abundant proof that I was guilty and condemned—that I needed a divine Saviour, and a free redemption—that I must be created anew, and by energy divine be converted to God, or God and glory could never be mine. These things I did not learn at once. I became, however, the subject of divine teaching; and he who opens the eyes of the blind, and turns the cursed current of the rebel's heart, has, I trust, taught me what flesh and blood cannot reveal, and has led me in the way I knew not."

When about sixteen years of age he began to feel concern about his soul. He had been religiously brought up; but he neither understood, nor relished, nor had embraced the gospel. "The bent of my soul," he observes, "was towards the self-righteous circle; as my concern in-

creased, I made towards it; in due time I entered it, and *went about* to establish my own righteousness." In the winter of 1790, a cousin and companion of his own, and nearly of the same age, made a public profession of religion. This led Mr. Barclay's father to propose to him that he too should get prepared to join the congregation at the next communion. This proposal was gratifying to him; principally, perhaps, because it flattered the pride of his heart, while it suggested no necessity for his exercising "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," as an indispensable prerequisite to church fellowship. That very night he retired, and prayed, and wept about the matter. "I now," he says, "entered on a new course, but it was not the *narrow way*, though in course of time I trust it led me to it. But I should tremble to recommend the same road to another, in order to attain the same end. Who would recommend the course of Saul of Tarsus, in order to conversion to the faith of Christ? Yet his zeal in the former led to the latter. My course was, I believe, as unsuitable as his to this end; therefore it is meet that with him I should say, 'by the grace of God I am what I am.' About this period I worshipped I know not what. Depression of spirits, and elevation of affections, were occasionally my experience. I have no conviction that I was either penitent or believing; it is likely, then, that these states of mind were occasioned by what I considered failure or success in my self-righteous endeavours. Although more correct in my outward conduct, and in regard to the company I kept, yet when I sinned it did not pierce me very deeply, and when I refrained or fled from it, this excited my self-complacency, and encouraged me in my endeavours to establish my own righteousness."