

Europe, he finally settled in Amsterdam, where, becoming convinced of the errors of popery, he abandoned that profession and joined the Baptists. The father of our historian was a surgeon, and having left Utrecht, became a free citizen of Amsterdam and practised his profession.

William speaks of his parents as being of a religious life and conversation. "My father," says he, "endeavored to walk in the narrow way, and conversed mostly with the strictest professors of the day. My mother was religiously inclined even from her youth, and became so well versed in the Holy Scriptures, and was so diligent in making note of the sermons she heard on paper, that her father used to say, 'It is a pity this girl is not a boy, who then, in time, might become an eminent instrument in the church.'" Both parents finally became dissatisfied with the way of worship in which they had been educated, and were brought under much religious concern of the saving truth as it is in Jesus. About this time William Ames and William Calton, ministering Friends, arrived in Holland, on a religious visit. They were made willing to join in membership with the then despised Quakers, and to bear the persecutions and reproach that in those days were heaped upon them. The mother, Judith Z. Sewell, is represented as a woman of superior mind and attainments. She became an approved minister among Friends, and was much esteemed by all. She was the author of several small books or tracts on religious subjects, and in 1663 paid a religious visit to England. At what time the father of William died we cannot tell, but he must have been quite young. In 1664 he lost his devoted mother when, if the supposed date of his birth is correct, he was in the 15th year of his age. That his mother had been conscientiously concerned to instill correct principles in his youthful mind may be inferred from the record he makes of her dying injunctions. "The night before she

departed," he says, "she called me to her bedside and exhorted me to depart from evil and fear the Lord, which, by the mercy of God, in time, made a very deep impression on my mind, so that still I find reason to bless the name of the Lord for having been pleased that I was the son of such an excellent mother. William Sewell learned the trade of weaving with a stuff manufacturer, and one of his biographers says, learned Latin, Greek, English, French, and High Dutch languages, while throwing the shuttle. His natural abilities being good, his application unwearied, and his habits strictly temperate, he soon became noticed by the most respectable booksellers of Holland, and he translated with credit, chiefly from Latin and English Tongues, into Low Dutch, seems to be the principal source from which his income was derived.

His modest unassuming manners gained for him the esteem of the literary men, for which Amsterdam was at that time noted, and there is reason to believe that many of their productions were revised and prepared for the press by him. His knowledge of his native tongue was profound. His dictionary, grammar and other treatises thereon, have left room for little succeeding improvement. He assisted materially in the completion of Halma's French and Dutch Dictionary. He is principally known to us through the work entitled "The History of the Rise and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers," dedicated to George, King of Great Britain and Ireland.

At what time the idea of writing this history first took possession of William Sewell's mind, we cannot determine, but it would seem he believed that from his early bias and taste he had been remarkably fitted for undertaking and perfecting such a work. When quite a youth he visited England, and made note of manuscripts, letters, etc., which probably would have been lost to posterity if not thus preserved.

We may see what a strong attach-