

1832. I then met a company of my ministerial brethren, who had come together from one of the most favored portions of the country. They sat down together, and gave to each other an undisguised disclosure of their hearts; and they all, with one exception—and the experience of that individual I did not hear—acknowledged that they had not daily communion and peace with God. Over these facts they wept, but neither knew how to direct the others out of the thick, impenetrable gloom which covered them; and I was in the same ignorance as my brethren.

SECRET OF HOLY LIVING SOUGHT.

I state these facts as a fair example of the state of the Churches, and of the ministry, as far as my observation has extended; and that has been very extensive. I here affirm that the great mass of Christians do not know the Gospel in their daily experience, as a life-giving and peace-giving Gospel. When my mind became fully conscious of this fact, I was led to compare my own, and the experience of the Church around me, with that of the apostles, and primitive Christians, and with the "path of the just," as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures. I found the two in direct contact with each other. Hence, the great inquiry arose in my mind, *what is the grand secret of holy living?* How shall I attain to that-perpetual fulness and peace in Christ, which, for example, Paul enjoyed. Till this secret was fully disclosed to mind, I felt that I was, and must be disqualified, in one fundamental respect, to "feed the flock of God."

While the Gospel was not life and peace to me, how could I present it in such a manner that it would be life and peace to others?

I must myself be led by the Great Shepherd into the "green pastures and beside the still waters," before I could lead the flock of God into the same blissful regions. For years this one inquiry pressed upon my thoughts; and often, as I have looked over a company of inquiring sinners, have I said within myself, I would gladly take my place among those inquirers, if any individual would show me how to come into pos-

session of these riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance of the saints. But clouds and darkness covered my mind in respect to this, the most momentous of all subjects.

NOT SATISFIED YET, AND THE CHURCH AWAKENED.

In this state of mind I became connected with the Institution at Oberlin, and continued to press my inquiries with increasing interest upon this one subject, till the fall of 1836. At that time, during a series of religious meetings held in the Institution, a large number of the members of the Church arose and informed us that they were fully convinced that they had been deceived in respect to their character as Christians, and that they were now without hope, and appeared as inquirers, to know "what they should do to be saved." At the same time the great mass of the remainder disclosed to us the cheerless bondage in which they had long been groaning, and asked us if we could tell them how to obtain deliverance. I now felt myself as one of the leaders of the "flock of God," and pressed with the great inquiry, above referred to, with greater interest than ever before. I set my heart, by prayer and supplication to God, to find the light after which I had been so long seeking.

THE DAY DAWNS.

In this state I visited one of my associates in the Institution, and disclosed to him the burden which had weighed down my mind for so many years. I asked him if he could tell me the secret of the piety of Paul, and tell me the reason of the strange contrast between the apostle's experience and my own. In laboring for the salvation of men, I observed that my feelings often remained unmoved and unaffected, while Paul was constantly "constrained" by the love of Christ. Our conversation then turned upon the passage, "The love of Christ constraineth us," etc. While thus employed, my heart leaped up with an ecstasy indescribable, with the exclamation, "I have found it." I have now, by the grace of God, discovered the