

word of God; but, he says, "I entered with ardour into the indulgence of youthful lusts; and like the generality of persons of similar pursuits, sought exclusively after gain, worldly appearance, the favour of men, and the glory of a name."

Thus it appears that his decided views of both the ordinances of the gospel were acquired by reading the Scriptures, and meditation upon them, whilst his heart remained un sanctified. By perseverance, however, in this process, he was led to reflect upon himself, and his condition in the sight of God. He felt convinced he was a sinner; his convictions increased; he sought and found the Saviour, and with Him "peace and joy in believing." The course of action he ought to adopt became a matter of anxious enquiry with him. "If I continue in this state," he exclaimed, "and do not to the utmost of my ability expose the hypocrisy of false teachers, and the impenitent and careless lives of men, their depraved baptism and supper, with their other superstitions, what will become of me?" All this time he was still in communion with the Romish church, but it was not possible, with his convictions, long to remain in it. Within nine months after his conversion he left that community for ever. Referring to this period, he writes—"God then stretched out to me his parental hand, and imparted to me such a degree of his Spirit, that I voluntarily made a surrender of my reputation, and of the honour which I had acquired among men, together with all my Popish abominations, my mass, my pedobaptism, my ungodly life, and all my worldly prospects, and determined to spend my life in poverty, bearing the cross of Christ. In my feeble measure, I feared God. I sought for pious men, and found some, though but few who were equally distinguished for the sound-

ness of their opinions and the ardour of their zeal. Thus, gentle reader, did my gracious God, by his rich grace towards me, a miserable sinner, draw me to himself. It was He who filled my heart with inquietude; it was He who renewed me in the spirit of my mind; it was He who humbled me in his fear, who made me in some measure acquainted with himself, who drew me from the path of death, and who introduced me into the communion of his saints, in the narrow path that leadeth to life. To Him be the praise for ever. Amen."

He now spent about a year in the society of a small, but faithful, band of Christians, with much gratification and profit. Long before the time of Menno, there existed in Holland several societies of Baptists, who were believed to have descended from the ancient Waldenses. From six or eight persons belonging to one of these societies Menno received an unexpected visit. They were of one heart and mind with himself, and had been deputed by the society to which they belonged to entreat him, which they did affectionately and earnestly, to become their Pastor.

This invitation threw him into great perplexity. On the one hand he was deterred from accepting it by a sense of his own incompetency, ignorance, timidity, and feeble constitution; by his knowledge of the wickedness and tyrannical disposition of the world; by the existence of numerous and powerful religious parties around him; and by the severe trials which were then connected with the preaching of the gospel. But in the other scale, the excellent character of these pious men, their poverty, and their urgent entreaty that he would accede to their request, were motives of sufficient weight to preponderate in his mind. After earnest prayer to God, he accepted the invitation, and upon the event makes the following re-