

F. A. 13193

Life of our late B^r: John Peter Theremin, Widower, who
departed at London, on Christmas-day 1779.

(The following is an abstract of his own extensive account
of his life.)

I was born at London Sept: 22: 1722, and brought up
with my dear and honoured Grand-father, the late B^r:
John Pellet. At the age of 14, he put me apprentice to an
Apothecary. During my apprenticeship it pleased the
Lord to awaken me. Reading one day in my master's
Shop a book, written in French by Mad^e: Bourignon,
entitled, Solid Virtue, giving the Character of a true Chris-
tian; I was struck, and broke out in the following exclama-
tion, which I remember perfectly well: "Good God! if this
is to be a Christian! I am far from being one. Lord have
mercy upon me!" From that time I began to have a
concern for my salvation. Soon acquainted my Grand-
father with what had passed within me. He was greatly
rejoiced at it, and gave me his good advice and assist-
ance. Took great delight in reading religious books,
and became very serious, so, as to be taken notice of
by others. Amongst other Books the Rev^d: M^r: Whitefield's
first Sermons were put into my Hands, which gave me
particular satisfaction, and cleared up to me, in an evan-
gelical manner, what I had read in Madam Bourignon's books.
By the persuasion of my Grand-father & the rest of my rela-
tions, I went to hear Mr Whitefield. I perceived a remark-
able change in my relations, thro' the blessings which at-
tended his Preaching at that time; and soon found some
benefit from it, with respect to my ^{own} Soul. Afterwards I
heard also Mr Wesley, and other Gospel-Ministers: for my
Grand-father had taken places both at the Tabernacle &

at the Foundry. I received the Word with joy, and forsook my former company and old ways. I must own it was a very extraordinary time. I was often as if transported for joy and gladness of heart. But, alas! it lasted scarcely the day out. Thus I continued for a considerable time: now upon the mount, extremely happy; then again down in the valley, as unhappy. In the Year 1744 I married my wife; & by her have had three childrⁿ. One of them, a daughter, is still living. She was baptized by the late B^r Boehler. About this time I became acquainted with the B^rm, & was admitted to their Society. I now felt my corruption in soul and body at times very strongly. Often did I pour out my complaints before our dear Sav^r, & pray to him for mercy. For I knew at this time that he was my Sav^r, and that he died for me. In 1746 I made my eager desire, to be a member of the Cong^r, known to the B^rm by a letter. The time seemed long to me, before I had an answer. I began to be very impatient, & wrote another letter. At length, on Easter Monday 1747, I was, to my very great joy, received into the Cong^r; which proved a great blessing to my poor heart. In Jan^ry 1749 I was admitted to the holy communion, of which I had never partaken before. This enjoyment indeed exceeded all my expectation. My wife who had, mean while, also had been received a member of the B^rm's Church, became in 1750 likewise a partaker of the holy communion. We went on, for some time, very blessedly. But at the time of the sifting, my wife, to my great grief, took offence, and left the Cong^r. Hitherto I had served as journeyman Apothecary in sundry shops: but now I set up for myself. I have passed thro' a great many trials and distressing circumstances. But in all these, my dear Lord has remarkably supported me. In the Year 1756 and 1757 I found myself quite reduced, partly for want of business, and partly thro' losses and disappointments. But yet, in the midst of it, my heart was happy in my dear Lord and Sav^r, trusting in him, and not doubting but, in his good

good time. He would deliver me. Once, walking in the fields very
penitent, I put up this ejaculation to my dear Sav^r: "Dear Lord!
if it ~~must~~ must be so, and I must ~~be~~ be, and I must go to prison,
son, only go thou with me, and I will be content." At that
hour I enjoyed such happiness of heart, and such ease of mind,
that it would be in vain to attempt to express it in words. In-
deed, I often used to pray thus: "Dear Lord! suffer me not to
fall into the hands of men; but let me fall into thine!"
However, my chief concern of heart was this: "Oh! leave me
not, but go thou with me, wheresoever I go; let me only feel thy
presence: and it suffices me." I often used to be comforted
with Texts of Scripture, brought home to me; such as, This
poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out
of all his troubles. Ps. 34: 6. But the greatest of all comforts
proved our dear Sav^r himself. In these circumstances, the
Meetings of the Cong^r were remarkably blessed and savoury
to me. At length, my dear Lord indeed heard and answered
my prayers, and delivered me in the manner following.
I went and consulted the Cong^r Committee, laying all my con-
cerns before them. Having maturely considered my affairs, they it
advised me to give up my all to my Creditors; which I did very
readily and cheerfully; and they accepted of it. But here, ^{any} a
lender and sympathizing heart may have some idea of what
I felt in these circumstances, on account of my poor wife and
child, who had not the same inward comfort as I was favoured
with. To their great surprise, I remained serene and composed,
enjoying my dear Sav^r's presence and assistance in an extra-
ordinary manner. I believe I was never happier in all my
life. I went adrift, by the advice of my Friends, for about
a fortnight, and lived in a little Garret by myself. There also
our dear Lord was with me, comforting and supporting
the help of the Br^m, and set up again in my shop. May
our

may our dear Lord reward my dear Brethren for all their love
and kindness shown to me! I had now to begin the World anew,
having nothing in hand, and my business lying altogether
among Strangers. I laid my case simply before the Lord, pray-
ing Him to increase ^{my} faith and confidence to Him; which
He did. He also procured me love and credit among my
neighbours, and by degrees helped me thro' the rest of the dif-
ficulties which fell to my share, in all which His sweet
nearness proved my comfort and stay. In the year 1758 my
much respected Grand-father departed this life in the
88th year of his age. It gave me much pain to be deprived
of so kind and so tender a ~~Dear~~ Parent, who had brought me
up from my infancy, and whose memory I shall revere to
my latest Breath. But my loss is his gain. Since 1760, in
which year I removed to my present habitation, the Lord
has made me prosperous in my business. But alas! what
poor creatures are we; and how soon does this world carry
us away, when we begin to be at ease, and set our hearts
upon it! This was beginning to be my case. For I grew luke-
warm by degrees, and indifferent about going to the
meetings. I began to get a relish for the world, and indulg-
ed a trifling Spirit. Indeed, ^{I was} very near losing myself entirely.
But my Sav^r had compassion on me, and did not permit
me to go such lengths as I might have done, had he not,
by his preventing grace, restrained me. About ~~the~~ this time
I found my corruption powerfully stirring within me; w^{ch}
went so far, that I had reason to be afraid, that I might
be led away by it. In short, I went on in a very precarious
way for near two years; till at length the Lord had pity
on me, and by his piercing, yet gracious, look, brought
me back again, like Peter, as a sinner to His feet, ^{callis-}

waking me to enter into myself, and to bewail my wretched condition before Him. I felt His Mercy and Forgiveness, and enjoyed again His loving presence, as formerly. To this, a solid conversation which I had about this time with B: Traneker before the H: Communion, greatly contributed; as also the hearing of the minutes of the last Synod, and of the Brotherly Agreement, in which I heartily concurred. May our dear Sav^r preserve me in his Grace, and form me more and more so, as He would have me to be! In my ~~physi~~^{me} cal practice I have often found opportunities of testifying of our Sav^r's Love to poor Sinners, especially when my Patients were in danger, or in their last moments; and I trust, our Lord has granted His Unction and blessing to it. I will, however, relate the following particular instance of the kind. A certain Gentleman, who had employed me as his house-Physician, having used me very ill, ~~for some~~ was visited with a violent sickness. After he had been ill for some time, he sent for me to attend him, which I at first refused: but after some repeated solicitations, I was prevailed upon to go ^{to} see him. He expressed great satisfaction at seeing me, and said if I had not come, he was determined to have no one else, and would have laid his death at my door. I did what I could for this poor man, attending him constantly with love and affection. In a little time finding that his illness, in all appearance, would be unto Death, & feeling a great concern for his Soul, I found myself exceedingly moved in my heart, and desirous to speak to him; but could not for some time: till at length one day, perceiving that his dissolution drew nigh, just as I was going out of the room, I was, as it were, inwardly compelled to turn back, which I did, and sat by him. My heart being full, the Lord opened my mouth; and I spoke to him as the Lord gave me utterance. I began to tell him that he was in eminent danger, and that he would soon be summoned to appear before the Judge of the quick and dead, and launch into Eternity; at which he seemed struck.

I then testified of our Sav^r's dying love to Sinners, with warmth andunction. I repeated my visits, and declarations to the same effect, every day. He was very much affected, and thanked me for my love and attention to him. I exhorted him to cry to our dear Sav^r, the Friend of Sinners, that He would prepare him for the awful moment approaching. Finding that he had been at variance with his wife, I advised him to send for her, which he did; upon which they were in my presence reconciled to each other. When I was with him the last time, he said upon my question if we were willing and resigned to go? "Yes; I believe the Lord Jesus will have mercy on me." Soon after, he sweetly expired, at which I had a very happy feeling. He had been a notoriously wicked liver, despising all religion; and perhaps had never before heard the sound of the Gospel. I am, indeed, ashamed and bowed in the dust before him at the thought that I should be thus highly honoured, as to be, in the smallest degree instrumental to the salvation of any of my fellow-creatures; when I reflect what a poor and undeserving creature I am, and how exceeding short I fall of what I ought to be! May I only remain his poor sinner to the last! I doubt not in the least that my dear Sav^r Grace is sufficient to preserve me in Him. I should be guilty of ingratitude, were I not to acknowledge that especial blessing the Lord has granted me, of a remarkable good share of health all my life time. For this, and the rest of his benefits, I want only a truly thankful heart. In September this year (1779), I met with the last of my severe trials in this time of probation, the Lord taking my dear wife from me, by means of an apoplectic fit. She had two such fits before; one in Sept^r 79, and another in March this year. Whilst she lay in this second fit, I was extrem^y uneasy about her, and could not give up; but earnestly prayed our Sav^r to spare her this time, and restore her to me again, that I might have some comfort and satisfaction about the state of her soul. He granted me my request. Since her recovery, I had many blessed conversations with her, and sufficient proofs of the work of the H. Ghost in her soul, perceiving an happy change wrought in her. About a fortnight before her end, we had the last and very comfortable interview; she being, during her sickness, at lodgings in the country. She declared she could resign herself into her dear Redeemer's hands, not doubting in the least that

He had died for her; in which confidence she was happy
and joyful. This, indeed, proved as great joy to me, and
comforted me for the loss of her. May our dear Lord prepare me
to follow her!

Thus far his own account, which goes down to the 12th of Nov. this year.
Our late B^r had many other trials, besides those he has men-
tioned. His love and affection to his Wife and daughter & his
grandchild made him a tender husband and affectionate
parent. From hence arose many of his Griefs, which at times
oppreſſed him much, but seldom darkened his Heart. These, and
his outward difficulties, caused him to walk much in stillness,
so, that he was not known in his true character to many of
his Br^m. His Path being rather rugged, and his concerns
laying ⁱⁿ a line of a more delicate nature, he did not chuse
to speak much about his own affairs but to his labourers.
Hence he contracted an habit of pouring out his Heart to
his best Friend, the Sart of his Soul, and of seeking, in his
daily walk, light and comfort from him; which he never
failed to receive. His declarations upon this head were
often edifying; but made some apt to think that he
did not know himself: which, however, could not be
supposed by any, more intimately acquainted with him.
Having, as he himself tells us, gone for some time out of
the way; and his heart being revived again, thro' our Law^{is}
Grace, by means of the last Synodal Minutes and the
introduction of the Brotherly Agreement; a new period
of Grace commenced in his Soul. It is still remembered
in this Cong^r that he then publicly declared at a Cong^r-
Meeting. "If these be the principles upon which we
came together, I have, alas! deviated from them: but hope,
tho' our Lord's Mercy, to keep to them for the future."

From

From that time his attachment to our Savⁿ and His Cong^r
grew, and his first love was rekindled. His humble and
candid openings of his Heart were not only a pleasure,
but often a blessing, to the Labourers who spoke with him.
About 3 weeks before his end, he signified to B^r Latrobe that,
tho' in pretty good health, it was clear to him, that he should
not be much longer here: for our Savⁿ would soon take him
to himself. He was diligent and faithful in his profession,
attending his Patients with unremitting assiduity. He was
kind to all, but more particularly attentive
to serve the poor; many of whom now lament the loss
of him. On the 19th of Dec^r he was seized with a violent
sickness, which caused him great pain. But he was pa-
tient as a lamb, and, when visited, always found well and
happy in his Heart. His crucified Lord was his constant object,
and he showed an entire resignation unto His Will. He desired
D^r Fothergil, ^{who attended him,} to tell him his thoughts about him. "You need
not be afraid," said he, "to tell me that I shall die; for I am
not afraid of death; I know that my Redeemer liveth."
On Christmas day, B^r Latrobe, being sent for, he found him
almost insensible; yet, on being asked about his state of
heart, he declared that he was very happy, and quite resigned
to his Lord, rather rejoicing at the near prospect of his going
unto Him. He said, and repeated it, with a broken voice,
For me to die is gain. B^r Latrobe having sung some
verses and prayed, pronounced the Blessing of the Lord &
His Cong^r over him. In the night he expired softly &
happily, Aged 57 years and a quarter.