

Christ in this land—occurred during this period: *his conversion to God*. His "call to the ministry" speedily followed, and may be considered as a unique and precious experience. While tossing on seas of doubt respecting his own spiritual condition, he was graciously brought into the "desired haven" of settled peace, by being enabled to resolve that with self-forgetting earnestness he would devote his life to saving others. Such a deliverance, wrought by such means, might well be regarded as a voice from heaven. He obeyed it with characteristic promptitude, and in the face of obstacles raised by some he loved.

His next step, after ending his business engagement, was in the direction of thorough mental training and equipment for the nobler employment to which he aspired. Entering Madison University, in the State of New York, he applied himself to study with intense ardour, his natural vigor of intellect and keen desire for knowledge, receiving added force from the exalted and powerful motives by which he was animated. It is to be presumed that he intended to take a "full course" at Madison, but we learn from an authoritative source, that he did not do so. Hard work and poor living broke down his health,—there being at that time a too prevalent idea that the body was of little consequence,—and he returned to Canada to recruit. One circumstance of much interest occurred just before he left the University, for the particulars of which we are indebted to Mrs. Fyfe. We give it place just here because it belongs to this part of his history, and what is more, reveals something of his mental exercises while a student, and of the goodness of God toward him in leading him from a region of shadow into clearer light. "He had," writes Mrs. Fyfe, "in his wretched state of health been beset with doubts of a serious nature. On his partial recovery he one day wandered off to the woods (I think), time passing un-noted till a fellow student discovered him sitting by a hollow stump and roused him. From circumstances, he found he had probably been there thirty-six hours.—I am pretty sure my memory is correct in this. His mind, he told me, went through a process of reasoning at that time, which he regretted he had not then written down. It seemed

always to him to have been unlike what he found in books. But *never* again did he doubt God or the truths of the Bible. No ancient or modern skeptic, or imaginative speculator, shook him in his convictions for one minute after that time."

On his complete restoration to health, he resumed his literary pursuits, preferring, however, to attend the Academy at Worcester, Mass., instead of returning to Madison. Our data of these early student days are by no means full. We cannot say how long he remained at Worcester, or whether he commenced his theological studies immediately after leaving the Academy. For some portion of this period he was engaged in teaching school, though it may simply have been during "vacations," and occasional "terms," when it was not necessary or possible for him to attend the classes. His theological studies were pursued at the Newton Seminary, from which he graduated in the year 1842.

Dr. Fyfe was ordained at Brookline, Mass. on the 25th of August following the completion of his theological course, he being a member of the church in that place. His first pastoral charge was in Perth, in the county of Lanark, Ontario, where he settled soon after his ordination. He remained there a year and a half. At the close of 1843 he consented, at the urgent request of the trustees of the Montreal Baptist College, to take charge of that institution until they could secure a successor to Dr. Davies, who had returned to England. He remained in Montreal one year, when he was called to the pastorate of the old "March St." Church in Toronto. In those days the Baptists of this city were not only few and poor, but, to use his own graphic words, "their outward condition might be compared to that of those unhappy criminals, who were by their Tuscan tyrants tied hand to hand and face to face with the rotting dead." The surroundings of the church, to which this quotation applies, had, as the locality filled up, assumed a very disreputable character, and "were constantly growing worse and worse;" so that the low condition of the cause was not to be wondered at. The removal to Bond St. marked the commencement of that period of growing prosperity still enjoyed by the Toronto Churches, and was owing

chiefly to Dr. Fyfe's untiring exertions. Soon after the opening of the new house he tendered his resignation to the church and returned to Perth, where he laboured about a year. Being compelled for a time to seek a milder climate, he spent the next four years in pastoral work at Warren, Rhode Island, going thither in the month of November, 1849. From thence he went to Milwaukee, late in October or early in November, 1853. After two years of earnest service there, he was recalled to Bond St. Toronto, and entered upon his second pastorate with that church in the Fall of 1855. Five years from this time,—yielding reluctantly to the urgent wishes of the denomination, he one more resigned his charge, and accepted the position of Principal of the Canadian Literary Institute at Woodstock.

This appointment was both natural and wise. It was Dr. Fyfe's enterprising and fertile mind that first conceived the educational scheme which he was now invited to inaugurate and develop. It was the inspiration of his courage, and the force of his arguments and appeals that led other prominent brethren, and finally the denomination at large, to view the project with favour and to combine for its realization. And we may truly say that he alone possessed the gifts, culture and reputation, necessary to the efficient performance of the work that would devolve upon a Principal, at a time when the school itself had scarcely an existence. To quote from Dr. Davidson's appreciative article which appeared in the *Baptist*, "his position was a trying one for years; for everything had to be begun, plans formed for future work, foundations laid broad and deep, and it was here as he began his work that his great executive power as an organizer and an educator was most clearly seen. Through his untiring energy and well-directed efforts, funds were raised to erect the first building, afterwards destroyed by fire, and the same is strictly true of all the buildings erected since and now standing on College Hill. These are his monument as far as brick and mortar can be; but he has left a grander monument behind him in the moulding influences he has exerted on the hundreds of young men who are now Christian pastors, teachers, physicians and lawyers, and on scores of young ladies who have been