

## EARLY DAYS

liberal views, allowing his children to indulge in harmless amusements, and occasionally permitting them to attend the theatre and to play cards, if not for money.

William from childhood was of a deeply religious turn of mind, and at the age of sixteen was baptized by immersion, on a profession of his faith, by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel. This step caused his mother great joy, and after her death the following was found among her many papers :

"*July 7, 1850.*—This day I would record the mercy which has rendered it one of peculiar blessing and happiness. The favour and presence of God has been manifested to us again during the past week, and I have enjoyed the best earthly happiness in seeing my dear and dutiful son W. devote himself unreservedly to the service of his Saviour. Having conscientiously decided on baptism by immersion, he was publicly baptized on the 5th by Mr. Baptist Noel, at his chapel in John Street, and was at the same time admitted as member of Mr. Stratten's church, and to-day I have had the privilege of partaking with him of that ordinance which I trust will be most profitable to us both."

At this time William was attending a small day-school, and the master, Mr. Elliott, wrote of him :

"I never had a pupil who made such acquisitions of knowledge in so short a time ; his attainments in mathematics and classics are far beyond the majority of youths at his age, and would warrant anyone conversant with the state of education in the Universities in predicting a brilliant career for him, should he ever have that path open to him. I think, however, that the development of his mind is still more remarkable than the amount of his knowledge."

But a University career was not practicable, and William was therefore articled in 1852 to the same firm of solicitors with whom his brother George was working. At the expiration of his five years of service he transferred himself to