

service of God. Thoughts of the Christian ministry were early cherished, but at what precise date his purpose to prepare for it was definitely formed we have not learned.

He attended the High School at Clinton, then—as for many years—so ably conducted by Mr. Turnbull. At this school, where so many who have entered the ministry of our church have been prepared for the University, he had amongst his class-mates the Rev. D. M. Ramsay, M.A., B.D., of Mount Forest, the Rev. J. A. Turnbull, LL. B., West Church, Toronto, and the Rev. W. G. Hanna, M. A., of Uxbridge. These all testify to the remarkable ability which he manifested in every subject of study, and to the modesty and self-forgetfulness which characterized him then, as at every subsequent stage of his life. There could be no doubt that his capacity was exceedingly great, and as little doubt that his diligence was sustained by uncommon strength of purpose.

In 1876 he matriculated in the University of Toronto. Though younger than most matriculants he was proficient in classics, in mathematics and in modern languages. His knowledge in these departments was much advanced during his four years in Arts; but he chose the Honor Course in Philosophy as his special line of study. That this course had great attractions for him was due both to his intellectual characteristics and to its close relations to ethical and religious truth. The circumstance that the Chair of Philosophy was filled by such a teacher as the late Professor George Paxton Young lent, we need hardly say, additional interest to this branch of study.

In mental studies Mr. Thomson delighted, and he attained unusual proficiency in them. He read much and reflected much. In the most earnest way he grappled with the great problems touching the sources, limits and certainty of human knowledge. Ethical questions still more, perhaps, engaged his thinking. He deeply pondered the grounds of moral obligation, the criteria of right and wrong and the doctrines of freedom and necessity. Even at so early an age his thinking was comprehensive and mature, as well as acute; and his eminent teacher often referred to his remarkable