

“In these times they had anxious seats for the awakened inquirers. A large number obeyed the invitation to come forward to the front pews. I was in the gallery on that day and saw with deep emotion one and another, old and young, moving to the appointed seats, and ardently wished to join them, but from fear or shame dared not to stir, till Cyprian Morgan, a young member of the church, took me by the hand and led me all the way to the front. This seemed to me, at the time, the greatest and most difficult act of my whole life. It was at any rate the beginning of a public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus and of peace and joy through His holy name.”

On the 10th of September, 1831, he was received for baptism, and on the following Sabbath was baptized by the Rev. H. Safford and united with the Fort Covington Baptist Church. For several years he attended the Academy and taught alternately. These were also years of spiritual growth and Christian activity. The deepening conviction that God was calling him to preach the Gospel, led to the resolution, “Lord here am I, send me.” Most keenly he felt the need of a better educational equipment than he at that time possessed, for a calling so sacred and high. These days of small things to Canadian Baptists were beginning to brighten into a broader hope. Baptist interest was centering in Montreal. The Canada Baptist Missionary Society had been formed. There was a growing conviction that a trained native ministry was necessary, that the churches might be supplied with efficient pastors. In 1836 this conviction was formulated into a resolution by the Ottawa Association to establish a Theological Institution expressly for this purpose. This resolution took practical form, and in April of the same year Montreal Baptist College was opened with Rev. N. Bosworth, tutor pro tem. In September, 1838, D. Davies arrived to take charge of the Institution and began his work with two students. The founding of the Baptist College in Montreal afforded Mr. Gillies the needed opportunity of a special course of training for the ministry. Accordingly he resolved to enter the College at his earliest convenience and avail himself of such advantages as it afforded. In 1839 the name of Archibald Gillies was placed upon the College roll as a theological student. During a three years' course he applied himself with characteristic diligence.