

commendation of the church, affirming their confidence in his piety, their conviction that God had conferred on him talents that would make him useful in that sphere of service, and that as far as they could judge, had called him to it. This letter of approval was granted by the church in Perth, and after a six months' probation in the college Mr. Davidson was duly entered as a student for the ministry while considerably under twenty years of age.

Though college life, with its diversity of talent and facility of acquisition, in any period and institution is generally much the same, there are notable exceptions, and among these exceptions Mr. Davidson's college career may fairly be classed. He was no imitator. He had an individuality all his own, was on all occasions himself, and was so constructed that he could be no one else. He did not try to mould his habits of speaking and acting after any earthly model, in these he was a law unto himself. He did not trouble himself much about the conventionalities to which many people give a good deal of attention, which are considered necessary in public life, and essential in polite society. With a superabundance of jocularity, (many people thought too much for a Christian and out of harmony with the gravity of the embryo minister) a large amount of ready wit and ever ready repartee, he was the life of the groups of students with whom he associated, sometimes giving offence by sharp retorts, or what was considered a coarse anecdote, but generally giving pleasure for the moment and creating merriment among those who had no desire to imitate him, and could not even if they wished. If there was fun or frolic on hand, he was nearly always to the front, and the pranks played were not always agreeable or harmless. His jollity filled many an hour with noise, that would otherwise have passed more quietly. Yet Mr. Davidson was no idler, or trifler. He was a diligent student, and if to the front in mirth, so was he also in his classes. Acquisition was comparatively easy. He had a good mind, a more than ordinarily retentive memory, which treasured up whatever it received, and made every achievement the servant of greater progress. The diffidence and self-distrust, which on trying occasions make some students seem inferior to what they really are, were strangers to him. His self-confidence always stood by him, and enabled him to appear at such times to the best advantage.