

life was there, when it might please God in his saving mercy to lay on it his renewing hand, and consecrate it to his service.

In that early time ministers were few, and there was a dearth of the preached word. Those who were settled as pastors, did not confine their labors to the churches of which they had taken the oversight. They made what were in those days considered long journeys, doing evangelical work, preaching the gospel in the humble homes of the settlers, in school houses, barns, wherever people could be got together. Rev. D. McPhail, who had completed his preparatory studies in Hamilton, N. Y., organized a small Baptist Church in Osgoode in 1839, and became its pastor. He travelled extensively through the country, preaching the word of life and planting churches in new and destitute settlements. On several occasions he visited the region back of Perth, especially Beckwith and Drummond. In one of these evangelistic tours young Davidson, while still a boy, was brought under the power of saving truth. After a time of deep anxiety and struggles, such as an ardent temperament passes through in the birth throes of a new life, he found peace through faith in Jesus and laid his heavy burden of sin and sorrow down at the foot of the cross. He applied to Mr. McPhail for baptism, but being called away Mr. McPhail did not comply with the request. In 1842 the church in Perth was organized, and the late Rev. R. A. Fyfe, who had returned to Canada from Hamilton College, accepted the pastorate. To this church the boy Davidson applied for baptism and membership. He was received by the church and baptized by the pastor.

Just at what time thoughts of the gospel ministry were formed in Mr. Davidson's mind is not now known; but it must have been shortly after his conversion, and his connection with the Perth church, that God began to reveal his will respecting the service he required of the young lad, so recently enrolled among his people. In 1843 he applied to the Canada Baptist College, Montreal, for admission as a student for the ministry. What part he had taken in Christian work in Perth does not now appear, but his application to the college called forth an expression of the conviction of the church respecting his fitness for such a work. Before he could be received as a student for the ministry, his application had to be accompanied by a recom-