

I—THE CALL.

"Come over into Macedonia and help us."—Acts 16:9.

In the fall of 1821 the people of Beckwith township, Lanark County, Upper Canada, petitioned the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Scotland, for a Presbyterian minister. True to their early training and honest convictions, these sturdy followers of John Knox desired to maintain the public worship of God in the new settlement they had crossed the sea to establish. Not the least of their privations was the lack of spiritual advantages, such as they had enjoyed in Scotland. Churches, ministers, schools, and modern conveniences, were unknown in the dense forests the hardy pioneers must conquer if they would survive. The hard struggle for existence failed to diminish their loyalty to Jesus Christ, and to the rugged Presbyterianism of their devout ancestors. With Doddridge they could pray fervently :

"God of our Fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race."

To be cut off from religious services meant a great deal to these godly men and women. They believed only in piety that governed the lives and conduct of its professors. The incense of the family altar, ascending to the throne from their rude cabins, and repeating daily the scenes of "The Cotter's Saturday Night," did not supply the privileges peculiar to the sanctuary. The house of God they regarded as the vestibule of heaven, the preaching of the Gospel as His appointed method to save a ruined world. To them the "assembling of the saints" was a duty not to be neglected for slight cause. Twenty miles of swamp and bush separated them from Perth, where McPherson felled the first tree in 1816, and a small log church—the first, and for five years the only one in the county—was built a twelvemonth later. The woodman's