

Mission. In that time, besides attending to other duties, I had the pleasure of visiting all our congregations in P. E. Island; all in Cape Breton except Cape North; and all in Nova Scotia. Allow me here to say that my visits to you, and my meetings with brethren in the ministry and other friends have been to me very refreshing. While the conversation of a few tended to discourage me in my present career; my hands have been strengthened, and my heart greatly encouraged by my contact with others. I rejoice here to acknowledge that nothing but kindness has met me during my visits among you—kindness to myself personally, and to the good cause in which I have the honour to be engaged. Many individuals of you have put yourselves to much inconvenience to forward the object of my visits, while very generally as congregations, you have contributed liberally of your means for the same cause. My appreciation of your kindness, good will, and sympathy, I beg now to express to you, and hope that, by such individuals and congregations, throughout the church, as have thus helped on the work, my humble acknowledgments will be accepted. I am aware that much of the christian courtesy extended to me has been rather on account of my work than for my own sake. I value it the more highly on this account. I make these statements, not with any desire to flatter, but simply with a view to discharge a duty which personally I feel I owe to you, and with a view to encourage and stimulate you in the good work in which you are engaged—the enlightening of the heathen with the gospel. You are engaged in a good work; but it is possible to do so in a wrong manner. To assist the cause of Christ at home or abroad is a glorious work—the work for which God gave his Son, and who left heaven, bled and died. Yet we may possibly lend it a helping hand from wrong motives. We may seek glory for ourselves, or seek denominational honour. Thus all we do ostensibly for Christ and his cause, may be simply to pamper our own vanity. Let us beware of this. God is a jealous God. He will not give his glory to another. If we set up for ourselves an idol of any kind, let us beware

that it is “before” Him. He sees it and is displeased, and is sure to visit it with his judgments. His judgments of old were executed on the gods of Egypt. We have more to fear, by far, from our own cherished idols than from heathenism. Our sins cause God to hide his countenance from us, and to stand aloof from our aid. Then our enemies become bold, and we like Samson, shorn of his locks, become weak and helpless. The stolen treasures of Achan were more disastrous to the Israelites than all the inhabitants of Canaan. While God was with them they could overthrow the walls of a Jericho with ram’s horns. Without God they had to turn their back in flight on the citizens of Ai.

The holier we are the nearer Jehovah is to us. He is our strength, our wisdom, and our Redeemer. As long as He is on our side we shall do valiantly and win victory. Sin separates Him from us. Our strength as a church, does not consist in our greatness of numbers, nor in wealth, nor in social position as individuals. The strength of a church consists in the presence and power of Christ in her. This is forfeited by her and denied to her in proportion as she fosters sin. If we wish to be strong as a church, let us be holy as individuals and as a church. Then shall Jehovah march at our head, causing, at once, the earth to shake and the heavens to drop down before Him. Then shall we be blessed at home with peace and abroad with prosperity. Have we not reason to fear that God’s hand on us in our missions, has been brought down on us, by a vain-glorious disposition growing upon us? and by a tendency to idolize our mission abroad? We are displeased at the savages for their cruel treatment of our missionaries; but have we not reason, at least, to enquire and consider whether our own sins at home have not had much to do in the matter? Have we not reason to fear that our idolizing the mission, or rather ourselves through the mission, has been the cause why the Lord lay his chastening rod upon our mission? If we forsake God he will forsake us; if we turn to Him He will turn to us. Let us therefore search our hearts and turn again to the Lord.