

ed with a malignity and a subtlety to which hardly any age furnishes a parallel, it is peculiarly incumbent on the friends of the Lord Jesus, to strengthen each others, hands, and encourage each others heart. When the powers of darkness are seen mustering their forces and leaguings together against the Lord and his anointed, surely Christians ought to find strong motives for drawing closer to one another in brotherly love, while all as with one heart should draw nearer to their divine master. These are our sentiments, brethren, on a matter which we fear the Churches of Christ have in modern times too much neglected. We take it therefore kindly that you have addressed us in the frank and affectionate terms which so peculiarly characterize your acceptable letter.

In our first communication it will naturally be expected that we should give you some account of the present condition of that Church over which we are appointed to watch in the Lord. We are sorry that we cannot speak of the state of religion in such favourable terms as we could wish. Vital piety, we fear, is at a low ebb, for iniquity abounds, and the love of the world prevails to a lamentable extent; and many professing christians, manifest but little of the fruits of true godliness. These evils have been greatly aggravated by the distractions to which civil Society has been subjected for a considerable time past. And in addressing you we need hardly do more than refer to the many obstacles which religion has to encounter in a new country, settled by a mixed population, many of whom are entirely without the knowledge, and the fear of the Lord. And while in addition to this it is known that there is a great want of faithful and able Ministers to go into the destitute settlements to proclaim the Gospel of salvation, it will not surprise you that we are called to mourn over much irreligion around us, and to lament the little evidence we have in many places of genuine piety. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few.

Our Synod contains at present fifty-five settled ministers. This number however is quite inadequate to the wants of even that portion of the people who naturally look to us for spiritual instructors. We have nearly a hundred congregations or settlements, some of them very numerous, that are wholly destitute of pastors. Hitherto we have depended entirely on the Mother Country for preachers. But we now find the supply from home to fall so far short of the demand that steps have been taken, and are in course of being vigorously prosecuted, to establish a theological seminary for training pious youths from among ourselves, for the work of the holy ministry.

Greatly indeed do we want an increase of ministerial labourers as well as an increase of faith, diligence, love, and patience in our own hearts that we may more devotedly labour in the work of the gospel. For while there is much within our Church to fill us with sorrow and humiliation there is also much in the world around us to produce perplexity and fear. Popery, that monstrous perversion of Christianity, has a strong hold in these Provinces and is greatly strengthened by the spurious charity of the age; while infidelity, the natural product of superstition and fanaticism, is embraced to a considerable extent by the vicious and speculative portion of the people. We have also to deplore the prevalence of various sects that preach another gospel, than the gospel of Christ.

Yet amidst these various causes of discouragement, we are not left without many tokens for good from the Lord. Throughout our own church Sabbath schools have generally been established, and we believe are in many places in a prosperous condition. Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies, are supported by our people, and in some instances with a very considerable degree of liberality. Public ordinances are upon the whole well attended while the number of communicants in the church has been annually increasing. As a christian community we enjoy very great harmony. Our standards are received and held *ex animo*. Hence on church government and the great doctrines of faith we are of one mind and live in peace as brethren. This unanimity on matters of the highest moment contributes greatly to our comfort in all our ecclesiastical affairs.

Our connection with the Church of Scotland has been to us of unspeakable advantage. From that church we have received preachers, pecuniary aid, much wholesome counsel and such protection as could be afforded. For all this we desire to lift our hearts in thankful acknowledgment to God and in sincere gratitude to our revered mother Church to whom we are so deeply indebted for the means of furnishing religious instruction to many a destitute settlement in Canada. And we hope, christian brethren, when you revert to the early history of your own Zion and remember that some of those who bore the heat and burden of the day in laying the foundation of Presbyterianism in America were ministers of the church of Scotland—and when you think how readily she gave her support to those men of God, Edwards and Brainerd—and what a tender interest she felt in their labours, you will readily sympathise with us in the gratitude which we have expressed.