

**SIX MONTHS OF A
NEWFOUNDLAND
MISSIONARY'S JOURNAL FROM
FEBRUARY TO AUGUST, 1835**

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Six months of a Newfoundland missionary's journal from February to August, 1835 by Edward Wix

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EDWARD WIX

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LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL.
DROUPEE LEGS TO THEIR MAJESTIES.
1836.

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DEDICATORY LETTER.

*St. John's, Newfoundland,
November 11, 1835.*

MY DEAR WIFE,

MANY of my friends, who, like yourself, take a deep interest in the spiritual condition of the scattered members of our protestant episcopal church, pressed me, upon my return from my late tour of visitation to the southern and western shores of this island, to furnish them with an opportunity of perusing the notes of my journal. Our remote settlements, and the interior of the island, are so difficult of access, that many who have been all their lives resident in Newfoundland, have not so much knowledge of our settlements along the shore, and of the interior, as they

have of the more distant provinces of North America, which have been accurately described to them by different travellers. Those, therefore, who felt a curiosity to learn something of these parts of their own *Terra Nova*, which were to them still a *Terra Incognita*, urged upon me a compliance with the same request; they expressed, too, the desire that I would include in my journal the notice of matters beyond the more immediate field of the Missionary's inquiry, which I might have found interesting upon my tour, and might have thought worthy of being recorded. I had promised myself, on my return to St. John's, a temporary cessation of labour. This promised ease, however, was somewhat curtailed by the attention which the filling up the brief notes of my journal required, superadded, as it was, to the formidable accumulation of the correspondence of six months, and the care of the churches within this arch-deaconry.

It was under great difficulties that I had kept even the slightest diary of my jour-

ney; my ink would frequently freeze, in spite of all my precautions; my supply of paper was always necessarily scanty, and it occasionally altogether failed me, in districts where it would have been as reasonable to have expected a gas-lamp for my convenience at night, as a sheet of letter-paper by day. Had it not been for some boxes of paper, which had been dispersed along the shore from different wrecks, I might have failed entirely in procuring this convenience in some places where my application was successful. The notes which I succeeded in keeping, under all these disadvantages, were, moreover, very slight; they were intended merely to furnish me with brief particulars of dates and journies, and duties performed, for the information of the committee of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, under which society I have had the honour to be a missionary in British North America nearly ten years. They are, therefore, destitute of that information respecting the population and other particulars, which it

would have been my endeavour to have collected and accurately noted, had I anticipated the present application of my journal.

Brief, however, as the notes necessarily were, which I had been able to take while engaged upon my laborious tour, they have increased under my hand, since I have endeavoured to reduce them into a regular journal, until they have almost alarmed me by their bulk. Had they been confined to details strictly Missionary,—although, on the solicitation of my friends, I had resolved on giving them a greater publicity than my correspondence with the Reverend Archibald Campbell, the secretary of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*, would have given them,—I, yet, could not have wished for them a fitter, or more flattering mode of introduction to the reading world than they would have had, if I could have solicited and obtained the honour of being allowed to dedicate the humble journal to his Grace the venerated President, or the respected Board of that

Society, or to our own beloved Diocesan. But the material is not worthy, I deeply feel, of such distinction. I must consequently send it forth without an introduction, or seek for it the interest of some one, who, from partiality to the Missionary, and sympathy with his occupation, may be disposed to overlook the defects of his journal; and, from a knowledge of the extreme difficulty of keeping a requisite supply of writing materials, or of using them in such circumstances, and amid such lassitude, may make all due allowances for its many imperfections.—Whom, then, could I, upon such determination, select more properly than yourself? When, ten years ago, I formed the resolution of giving my feeble aid to the colonial church, you said nothing to dissuade me from a resolution in which your own happiness was so deeply involved; when I had gone first that I might feel my way, and had resided two years in Nova Scotia, you resolved, eight years since, to join me in my foreign labours. Since that time, you have cheered

me in the intervals of my Missionary wanderings, and have rendered my long seasons of absence from my dear home, and its scenes of domestic comfort, more supportable, by the assurance that the work of the church, and the education of the young in the Sunday school, were making progress under your judicious care and indefatigable attention, while I was unavoidably away. You have all along felt all a Missionary's anxiety for all a Missionary's objects. Again, to whom could I, in duty, more fitly dedicate this journal, than to one who experienced so much anxiety for my safety during my somewhat perilous tour?—an anxiety, heightened by the impracticability which existed, through the want of opportunities of communicating with the capital, for my informing you for months together of my occupations, of my whereabouts, or of my safety; during which time you were living in a town, which, for the lawlessness of a large portion of its inhabitants, who are excited to frequent breaches of the peace by a most seditious Romish priest-