

# THE GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

## GOD'S PRESENCE WITH HIS CHURCH.

A SERMON PREACHED BY THE REV. A. A. DRUMMOND, SHAKESPEARE, MODERATOR OF THE U. P. SYNOD, IN THE U. P. CHURCH, MONTREAL, AT THE OPENING OF THE LATE SYNOD.

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."—Exod. xxxiii. 14-15.

Go forward is the command of God to his people. Follow where duty leads; shrink not from it, because it is arduous, nor keep back because there are difficulties in the way. "He sendeth no man at any time at his own charges." He accompanies the command with the promise,—my presence shall go with thee. It was thus he spake to the children of Israel, when journeying to Canaan; it is thus he speaks to his people still, when engaged in any special enterprize for the glory of God, or when performing the grand work of the Christian life.

We do not stay to review the occasion, interesting though it be, on which these words were first spoken. We appropriate the language to the true Israel in all ages. The presence of God with his people is a prominent feature of the New Testament Church—more enlarged, and enriching and abiding, than under former dispensations, and therefore our text may, with great propriety, be applied to the Church of God and her work in the present age, and we at once proceed to examine it in this light.

The presence of God with his Church—the Church's estimate of his presence—the church's desire for its continued enjoyment—the church's guarantee that this desire will be gratified and his promised presence, a pledge and foretaste of future rest, are the main topics suggested by our text and may His presence aid and direct us, to a clear understanding and proper improve-

ment of them, while we endeavour, in humble dependance on his help, to examine the important truths, thus presented for our consideration.

### I. THE PRESENCE OF GOD WITH HIS CHURCH.

Omnipresence is a grand attribute of Jehovah. He is present in every part of the universe—in heaven—on earth—in hell, with angels and with devils, with saints and with sinners. The psalmist enquires, "whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? if I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." But it is not in respect of his essence, we now view this expression, there is another sense in which it is understood—as implying a special privilege, enjoyed by His people and by none else. God gave two sensible manifestations of Himself to ancient Israel, in the pillar of fire and of cloud, that went before them in their journeyings; and the Shekinah that overshadowed the mercy seat; but these were only temporary accommodations and were by and by discontinued, so that the Jews must regard this promised presence in a higher sense, than any outward and visible manifestations. While it included his special providential dispensations toward