

earnest and continued prayers of his people for divine aid. Prayer precedes and accompanies all the efforts put forth by a prosperous church. When the first missionaries, Barnabas and Saul, were sent forth, God's presence was invoked; they were recommended to the grace of God for their work, and when they had returned and were giving a report of their labors, they rehearsed all that *God had done* with them, and how *He* had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles. In going forth against the enemy and seeking to rescue the heathen from their degradation and misery, they knew that the work was too great for man, no human might, nor power was able for it, God's spirit alone could give the needed blessing—they might plant and water, but the increase must come from the Lord. And this necessity is recognised by the people of God; everywhere and always they regard the continued presence of God as the grand essential to success in all their labors for the advancement of Messiah's kingdom.—While this high estimate of God's presence with his church is founded upon the sure word of God, yet it is pleasingly confirmed by the experience of his people in the past. When He is with her, she prospers, strengthens her stakes and lengthens her cords, and shoots forth to the right hand and to the left. Look for example, at that branch of the church with which it is our privilege to be connected, (and we select it, not because the same may not be found in other branches, but because you may not be more familiar with its history.) Witnessing against error, the four brethren came out from the Established Church of Scotland and formed themselves in a separate and distinct association. They trusted in God and he was with them, and soon gave unmistakable proof of his presence. Others beholding it, joined their ranks, saying "we will go with you for we know that God is with you," until in the present day, the Church numbers about 550 congregations. And what hath the Lord enabled her to accomplish? She hath borne noble testimony to the truth in the land of her birth, and she hath sent forth the gospel to other parts. Before the commencement of the present century, she had sent at least 50 ministers to the United States of America; and since then, she

hath planted the standard of the Cross in Nova Scotia, Jamaica, Trinidad, Persia, Caffraria, Old Calabar, Australia, India, besides labouring for the conversion of the Jews and aiding other societies that were similarly occupied. And it becomes us gratefully to acknowledge her early care for Canada, in planting and fostering and strengthening the United Presbyterian Church in this land. And hath not God been with us as with the parent Church? Twenty-nine winters have come and gone since the first band of missionaries landed in Montreal: within a month, one of their number was removed by death; another after many years of arduous toil in the Master's work—preaching from the pulpit, writing through the press, and teaching from the professorial chair—has finished his course and gone to his reward: and the last of the band remains with us to this day, the beloved pastor of a numerous people and the honored father of the Church. Other labours followed from year to year, and young men were trained up in the country, until at present there are over 100 congregations and between 80 and 90 ministers and preachers. What has the Lord done for us? Surely, it well becomes us, ere we lose our separate existence and unite with the sister church, to make mention of the goodness of God, and trace all our past success to his gracious presence. Here, where first our church lifted up her voice in this land, she is brought again, not by her own plans, but by the leadings of His providence, that she might review what things God has done for her, since she entered the country and shall we not now and here erect our *Ebenezer* and enscribe on it, "hitherto hath the Lord helped us." And when we leave this city, a larger, more influential and I trust still a *united body*, shall we not cause it to be known, throughout the length and breadth of the land, that God's presence hath blessed us in the past and is with us still?

III. THE CHURCH'S DESIRE FOR GOD'S PRESENCE.

If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. Whatever else these words imply, they undoubtedly express a very strong desire for the presence of God; so strong, indeed, that if not granted, he has no heart to go forward.—