

ists; that men who had once accepted the Preface would be morally bound to cease from agitating for further changes (an assumption that was, by the way, promptly repudiated) and that much was accomplished by this compromise towards securing peace for the Irish Church. Such peace, we fear, is not yet secured. The Bishop of Derry said that the agitation was sure to be continued. The new definitions were peeling wounds and were pregnant with consequences. "Speaking for himself, as a Bishop, he must say that the whole tone of the Preface was to him painful from beginning to end. \* \* \* It seemed to him in its closing sentence to be the sigh or smile of a higher intellect over the imbecility of human speculation and the inadequacy of human language; and that seemed to him to be as unlike as possible to that spirit of true faith which removeth mountains." Finally the Bishop declared that he solemnly refused to receive or subscribe to it, and he has formally withdrawn for the present from the Synod with a solemn protest against its doctrinal decisions."

The height of the Danube has hitherto had a dampening effect on the progress of the war similar to that exercised by the lowness of Russia's commercial credit. But the river is now falling; Russian troops are becoming concentrated on its banks, and we may soon expect the war to begin in real earnest. Will the Russians force the passages of the river at any really important points? If they do so, the Turkish forces must fall back on Schumla Varna, and the Balkan passes; and then, unless Austria intervenes, Bosnia, Servia and Herzegovina will declare their independence. In Asia Minor the reported capture, and even the investment, of Kars seems to have been fictitious. Probably the best thing that could happen, for the peace of the world and the sparing of Christian blood, would be some prompt and grave disaster to Turkish arms, such as would induce the Porte to sue for peace before Russia was in a position to dictate such terms as England and the other Powers could not consent to see her impose upon Turkey. If an end to the war is not speedily reached in this way, the chances of avoiding a general European imbroglio are small indeed.

#### WHITSUNDAY.

**N**EXT to the atonement made by Christ and the power of His death to cleanse from sin, there is no fact in the history of the Church or the world of so much importance to living men, who have to scale the awful barricade which separates the visible from the invisible, than the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Church, and His living influences extending from age to age, until the end of time. And yet, important as are the influences of the Divine Spirit upon the souls of Christians, who shall attempt to describe the nature of those influences or the mode of their operation? "The wind bloweth where it listeth" and we can acquaint ourselves with some of its effects, but we know not its origin

or cause; even so we may know something of the effects of the working of the Holy Spirit, but are utterly ignorant of the way in which His heavenly operations are carried on. He, the eternal, the uncreated, overshadows, penetrates, moulds and changes our finite, created spirits, infusing into them His light and power, carrying on the intercourse and communion between the Christian and the Christian's God, and fits them here amid the scenes of time and sense, for a more exalted sphere of existence in the world without end. But we can only recognize the fact as a most real though invisible miracle, daily and hourly taking place among us, wherever the Divine Comforter breathes and works in christian souls. From age to age the gifts of the Spirit, however they may vary in form, remain to the end of time substantially the same. When the Day of Pentecost was fully come, and the disciples were all with one accord in one place, the Holy Ghost descended upon them, filling their hearts with the same influences which are now experienced in the souls of christians, although accompanied likewise with inferior and more visible tokens of His presence. His first coming in His fulness, and many of His earlier descents were more strikingly manifest than are now to be seen; but His higher manifestations in guiding and transforming and comforting the souls of christians have been of precisely the same character in every age of the church, and will continue the same through all time.

The great festival of Whitsunday commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the infant Church of Christ, to abide in her for ever, according to the Lord's promise. It has ever since been annually observed, and was at first engrafted by the Jewish Christians on the Feast of Pentecost. The earliest writers among the Gentile Christians, however, mention it as a separate Feast, as Irenæus, Tertullian, and Origen. Tertullian also mentions it as one of the principal times for baptism in the early church. The original name of the Festival, Pentecost, alludes to its being the fiftieth day from the morrow of the Passover Sabbath. The English name Witsunday is generally supposed to refer to the white chrisoms of the newly baptized. Some, however, have thought that it comes from the German Pfingsten, Pentecost; and others that it is meant for Witsunday, the day of the outpouring of wisdom by the Holy Ghost. The original feast of Pentecost was instituted by God as a memorial of the day on which He gave His law to Moses, and declared the Israelites to be a kingdom of priests. But the prominent character of the day was a solemn harvest festival.

On the day after the Passover Sabbath, fifty days before, the first cut sheaf of grain was offered to God, and waved before the altar, with supplications for a blessing on the harvest then begun. On the day of Pentecost two loaves of the first bread made from the new wheat were offered in thanksgiving for the harvest now ended. And each of these objects has a significant typical allusion. It was on this day the Holy Spirit descended to sanctify a new Israel, to become

a chosen generation, a royal priesthood; and this separation began to be made when three thousand were added to the church by baptism on the day of Pentecost. On this day also, the grain of wheat, which had fallen into the ground and died on the day of the Passover, and had sprung up a new and perpetual sacrifice to God on Easter Day, now sent forth the Holy Spirit to make those three thousand the One Bread of the Lord's mystical Body, a first-fruits offering to God of the Church which had been purchased with His Blood.

On Whitsunday, June 9th, in the year 1549, the Book of Common Prayer in English was first used instead of the Latin offices. Probably that day was chosen in the assured belief that the Holy Ghost was with the Church of England in the important step then taken.

In the epistle and gospel for Whitsun-Monday, a trace is to be found of the primitive custom of baptism at Whitsuntide. The one giving an account of the baptism of Cornelius and his household, and the other referring to that enlightenment by Christ from which the sacrament of baptism took one of its primitive names, that of "Illumination." On Tuesday there is reference to another work of the Holy Ghost, that of confirmation, the epistle narrating the confirmation of the first Samaritan converts by the apostles St. Peter and St. John, after they had been converted and baptised by the Deacon Philip. In primitive times confirmation was administered immediately after the baptism if a bishop was present, as was usually the case—the Bishop's being in their principal churches for the ordinations of the following Sunday.

The gospel was probably selected with reference to the preparation of the candidates for ordination, pointing as it does to the one only lawful way of entering into the ministry of Christ; and that there are no true shepherds who do not enter in by the Door, the Chief Shepherd Himself, whose authority on earth for this purpose, is delegated only to the Bishops of His Church. The second lesson at evensong, 1 St. John iv. 1-13 refers to the same subject.

The Ember Days observed in Whitsun-week are of very ancient institution. They are referred to by St. Athanasias as the fasts of the week following Pentecost. No time of the year would be so naturally chosen for continuing the gift of the Divine Spirit by ordination, as that which follows immediately upon the day when the Holy Ghost first came to dwell in the mystical Body of Christ for the purpose of enabling the ministers of His truth and sacraments to perform their work with energy and effect.

#### THE ADDRESS TO THE ENGLISH BISHOPS.

**T**HE address we mentioned in a recent issue as having been presented to the English Bishops, having reference to the difficulties in which the Church is placed from want of a living voice, by which expression may be given to its opinions on the