

The Church Guardian

OF MONTREAL.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."—Eph. vi. 24.
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

VOL. XVII. }
No. 50. }

PUBLISHED AT ST. JOHNS, P. Q., MAY 25. 1892.

PER YEAR
\$1.50

"THOU HAST RE-
CEIVED GI-
LIUS ALSO, THAT THE
AMONG THEM."
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THOU HAST RE-
FOR THE REBEL-
LIOUS ALSO, THAT THE
LORD GOD MIGHT DWELL
AMONG THEM."

"BY HIS OWN BLOOD, HE ENTERED IN ONCE
INTO THE HOLY PLACE."

"LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O YE GATES, AND BE
LIFT UP YE EVERLASTING DOORS: AND
THE KING OF GLORY SHALL COME IN."

THE THREE-FOLD JOY OF ASCEN- SION TIDE.

In the celebration of this transcendent exaltation of our Divine Lord into the excellent glory of his enthronement, Judge forevermore of both quick and dead, The Church, His faithful spouse, rejoices with a joy that flows from heavenly heights.

"All my fresh springs are in Thee, "and this song of the Psalmist is the keynote to the canticle of this holy season. There is the joy of our exalted Lord, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despised the shame and is set down at the Right Hand of the Majesty on high. For the eternal purposes of man's redemption are fully ripe. The Red Sea of human peril and enslavement is well passed. The eternal offering of divine sacrifice for sin is fully paid; and the Great High Priest, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities and who verily tasted death for every man, now ever liveth, King of kings and Lord of Lords, to make intercession for His inheritance of souls. This is joy ineffable, and past all understanding; yet, let The Church rejoice and be glad therein.

Again there in the joy of the loving, faithful hearts, in this comfortable assurance of the Ascended Lord, who has gone according to His promise, to prepare a place for His own in the Father's house of many mansions.

"Jesus lives: our hearts know well
Naught from us His love shall sever;
Life, nor death, nor powers of hell
Tear us from His keeping ever.

ALLELUIA."

For the pilgrim henceforth, even the vale of misery shall be a well-spring of living waters. The patience of hope, anchored sure and steadfast within the veil, is the mainspring of discipleship. The world and all that is therein, all the shifting sands of human experience, may change and pass away, but the Word and Promise of our Lord stand fast forever. After the labor is ended and the appointed resting is over, we shall awake in His likeness, who is our glorified Brother, and we shall be satisfied with it; and the joy of this faith no man taketh from us.

More than that, the presence of our Lord Jesus in heaven is the very *summing up of Christian faith and hope*. "Whither our Saviour, Christ, is gone before, thither man may also ascend and with Him continually dwell." So St. Paul sums up his wonderful description of the last day, declaring that the sons of God shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

And there is the larger joy of *The Church*, His faithful, waiting spouse, in the promise of the presence and indwelling of the Holy Ghost the Third Person of the ever adorable Trinity. All souls shall be quickened and regenerated in the divine life, and the spiritual dominion of our blessed Lord be spread over all lands and kindreds and nations until the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. There remains the minor undertone of waiting, and sacrifice, and duty, felt in her strains of highest laud and thanksgiving; and so there must be until the last. But the Church is strong in the divine promises; and by faith she hears already the wonderful tumult of *Te Deum* and *Trisagion* in the temple not made with hands, wherein her shriven sons and daughters, rest not, day and night, in the divine liturgy, of perpetual praise and worship. And this is the *larger joy of the waiting Church*.—*The Churchman*.

CHRIST'S ASCENSION THE CHURCH'S GAIN.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away."—St. John XVI. 7.

Of the many hard sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the disciples could only treasure up in their hearts in the hope that some further revelation might reveal their meaning, this saying of His which I have taken from my text must, perhaps, have seemed one of the hardest. For consider when it was spoken. It was very shortly before His Passion, when they were met together for the last time to keep the Passover before He suffered.

On this very night Philip gave sad evidence of how little he and the others even yet understood of Him. "Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?" was the Saviour's reply to Philip's request that He would show to them the Father. To the very end of His life it was still true of the disciples that "they understood not what things they were that He spake unto them," and what He did they knew not either as yet—but should only know hereafter.

Was this, then what our Saviour meant in the text when He said "It is expedient for you that

I go away"—"You will be able, after I am gone, to balance and weigh the things that I have said and done, better than you can at present, and so, by the exercise of your calmer judgment, arrive at a juster estimate of Me;" This would certainly be a consequence of His departure—but it was not this He meant by the words He used.

There was a further meaning yet; our Lord's departure into heaven should be expedient "for His Church, and bring His followers a greater gain even than this; and our Saviour did not allow us to be in ignorance of what this gain should be. "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you—but if I depart I will send Him unto you."

And now do we understand this? Do we know why it is better for us to have the blessed Spirit of God present with us in this world than to have the second Person of the ever blessed Trinity—the Son of Man Himself? Is it that the Holy Spirit is kinder, more loving, more powerful than He who sends Him? Ah no, we know that the Three Persons are at the same time *one God*—one in power, and in holiness, and in love.

The meaning has already been partly stated. It is better for the Church—it is better for each one of us its members—to walk by *faith* than to walk by sight. It is better, and it is the work of God the Holy Ghost to lead us on to this higher life. So long as Jesus was present upon earth there could not fail to be something earthly and carnal in the attachment of His disciples to Him; but when He was departed the Holy Ghost would teach men a more spiritual attachment.—*Selected*.

SOME LESSONS FROM ASCEN- SION-TIDE.

In this sublime festival the universal Church commemorates the consummation of the glorious mystery of the Incarnation, when the Son of Man was exalted by the mighty power of God, with great triumph into the heavenly kingdom, there to complete His transcendent ministry of intercession and reconciliation, until His coming again.

The orphaned Church, which is His mystical body, should no more look upon His face or behold His glorified person. For the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, even the first fruits of our blessed Lord's enthronement, should descend with great might, and become the indwelling Comforter and Sanctifier of the faithful. As at this time, our Great High Priest hath entered within the veil, and no man living shall gaze upon the Christophany until that