

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 1.

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"I WILL PRAY THE FATHER AND HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER THAT HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOREVER."

"THE COMFORTER, WHICH IS THE HOLY GHOST."

"HE SHALL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS AND BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU."

"HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME."

"HE SHALL GLORIFY ME."

"HE SHALL RECEIVE OF MINE AND SHALL SHOW IT UNTO YOU."

WHITSUN-TIDE.

Whitsun-tide is a season for searchings of heart as well as for abounding joy. It celebrates the abundant outpouring of God's Spirit upon His Church. The Spirit of God seems then to dwell in its fulness of power within the hearts of believers. But where is the evidence of this indwelling Spirit in the outward act, the daily life of Christians? Assuredly God's Spirit cannot be hid; it must be a spring of power ever flowing forth in manifest works of love. Doubtless the miraculous manifestation of apostolic days is not to be looked for; the speaking in strange tongues and the gift of healing accomplished their work and are no longer demanded as proof of divine grace. But none the less so high a claim as that we Christians are filled with the Spirit of God, beyond all others among men, must always need unique evidence to make it seem other than an idle boast in the world's eyes. Such a claim ought not to pass unchallenged. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Love—the world is justified when it rejects as empty profession any Whitsun-tide baptism which manifests itself only in narrowness and haste, in sloth and selfishness. No feast in the whole year is more awful than this when thus viewed from the practical standpoint of the Church's real accomplishment. Those disciples, baptized with the Holy Ghost on the first Whitsun-Day, went forth from the upper chamber and compelled the attention of an unwilling world by their never-flagging zeal and love; when the Church of to-day proves the possession of the priceless gift by works like theirs, surely the world again will hearken in wonder and joy to the proclamation of the good news.

The holy Feast suggests also to us as its great central thought the vital necessity for a further in-breathing of the Holy Spirit into the souls of men, a larger outpouring of the fire of love into their hearts, so as speedily to bring about the consummation of Christ's prayer, "That they all

may be one." But while men continue to be possessed of every spirit, but that which proceeds from the Father and the Son, the way is blocked and the work of the Holy Ghost let and hindered by the obstacles which the baptized themselves, the temples of the Holy Ghost, throw in the way of His operations. For how can men be at one in any sense of the word till they are first at peace with themselves; and how can they be at peace with themselves till the Holy Ghost shall first have convicted them of sin, and led them out of its weary and unrestful ways into the paths of pleasantness and rest? Till men are truly sanctified, there is no hope that they shall be at unity with themselves; as where is unsanctification, there is confusion and evil work. The peace of Jerusalem, therefore, can only be secured when men begin first of all to hate sin, then to love righteousness, and then to hold out the right hand of fellowship to all who are like-minded with themselves. Not till then the Holy Spirit will have free course, and will not have to contend against the worst foe of all to unity, men's love of the world, the flesh and the devil—a love that raises up in front of the pillar of fire a horror of gross darkness, so palpable as not to be penetrable even by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness Himself. Thus men's eyes are holden by the agency of the devil; and through a lack of the love of God refuse to extend to others that love which alone can cause the scales to fall off from the soul's organs of sight, and to see and understand clearly the teachings of Him who alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life. But those teachings are the teachings of the Church Catholic, within whose fold alone can men be really and truly at one. The Holy Ghost stands waiting at this Pentecostal season to cleanse men's eye from their sin-darkness, and to kindle in their hearts such a fire of divine love as shall cause them to feel straitened till the work of reunion is brought about. To this end be the prayers of the Church directed this Whitsun-tide.—*Selected.*

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SOURCE OF POWER TO THE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. EDMUND ROWLAND.

The Spirit of God is the one source of power in the Church of God to-day as it was eighteen centuries ago. In many places Christian people are strangely blind to this fact. They think it is intellect. They seek out the best culture and finest talent for the pulpit, and imagine that they have done all that is expected of them. The "magnetic power," the ability to organize and wisely to administer the affairs of the parish, the affable manners and diligent visiting of the min-

ister will secure the prosperity of the church. It cannot be denied that these things are very desirable, and are often used by the Spirit to the great advantage of Church; but when talent or wealth, or music, or favorable surroundings, or diligence are spoken of as the source of the only sort of power which the Church should aim to acquire, spiritual power, the power over the minds and hearts and consciences of men, I protest. Success does not lie in large and well-satisfied congregations. It is found in the increase of godliness, in the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, in the building up of Christian character—in a word, in the legitimate fruits of the Spirit. It is the forgetting this important truth that lies at the bottom of the mysterious lifelessness in many churches which have ability in the pulpit, wealth and willingness to give with the people, and apparently all the appliances necessary for work and worship. It is the forgetting of this truth that is the occasion of much of the distrust of the future which is assailing many sincere hearts. Our churches are posing before the eyes of men and seeking public attention to their large accessions and display of good works.

Perhaps it is hard to resist the tendency of the age in which we live. Ours is a day when more than in other days in religious matters people seek the outward rather than the inward. There is little that is sacred from the public gaze. We are bidden "not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth," but no sooner is the good act conceived than a reporter ferrets it out, and blazons it before the world. The newspaper man sits down pencil in hand, by the side of the awakened sinner, notes every throb of his repentant heart, and turns into matter for public delectation even the tears of penitence and the joys of conscious forgiveness and acceptance. And in many cases it would seem our churches aim at the approval of the world as of all things the most desirable. Anything that can justify a newspaper item or look well in a convention report appears to be regarded as the first thing to be sought.

In some places we have seen the names of candidates for Confirmation by the permission of their rector printed in the public journals. With this tendency to publicity the quiet unseen influences of the Spirit are not in harmony. We must learn to look beneath the surface for His work. We must cultivate something of that inward "stillness" of which the Quaker tells us. We must look into our hearts and see what is being done for us there. There in those invisible realms which the eye of God alone can penetrate does the work go on in which He takes the deepest interest. He holds our highest pulpits, our costly and beautiful churches,