

would remain impossible of imitation: the only beauty then left to Christianity would be the beauty of death: believers so far as spiritual being is concerned, would be lifeless as any stones cut hewn in an earthly quarry, or set in the walls of an earthly temple. Our religion is not a precept but a power, not a mere law, but a life: Christ comes up within each separate believing soul as a spirit of life and power, as the sap comes up through each separate branch and stem; and "if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His." The Spirit comes as the spirit of truth, taking of the things that are Christ's and showing them unto us. You may convince a man's reason regarding our religion, you may hedge him round with arguments, you may lay the truth in all clearness before him, till there seems no other course possible for him but to close with it, and yet, till the Spirit prepares the soil these truths may be to him fruitless as the seeds of corn in the hands of an Egyptian mummy. The spirit comes as a spirit of power, infusing grace into our efforts and so securing our success as we try to rise nearer to the pattern of Christ's perfect life. Physical and intellectual and emotional force, all fail to uplift the soul; these have their separate spheres in which to act, but here they are powerless; just as the strongest magnet cannot move glass, or as the soundest argument or most fervent appeal cannot raise a weight. So mere intellectual or emotional strength cannot, any more than physical force, inspire and uplift the soul to that divine life for which it was created, and to which it has been called in Christ. This is the Province of the Holy Spirit, and that Spirit coming to all who seek his help, enables them to live as the sons of God. The Spirit comes as the spirit of purity, and holy fervour. John said of Christ: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Fire purifies; it would take endless time with hammer and chisel to separate the gold from the ore; but cast them into the furnace and give full draft to the fire, and soon you can pour out the molten metal pure and unalloyed. So when the Spirit of God gains power over the soul, it cleanses away all dross and foulness which no ages of human labour could

remove. And fire gives warmth; the metal at its touch soon glows with heat and becomes a new source of warmth; so the spirit of God sets men aflame with earnestness, heats them into a Divine enthusiasm, so that they in turn help to warm the world, while they shall glow with the brightness of the firmament, and shall shine bright as the stars forever. "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Who among us has realized the blessedness and power of that presence? You cannot pour your spirit into the spirit of your child; you cannot infuse into his soul your wisdom and righteousness; you cannot inspire him with your strength and holiness; but the Divine Father can do and does this to each one that opens his heart in humble and hopeful confidence to receive the Spirit. God pours his Spirit into ours to be to us a spirit of life and love, of wisdom and energy, developing us into a "perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Philosophers have discussed man's highest development, and have pictured the possibility of his future growth through slow stages, like those through which they think he has already passed. They may fancy that, give him time, and through the circling centuries of endless development, man may reach up to the Divine. But Christianity tells us that God's Spirit can, by direct impact, produce this development in the soul, raising it to the fellowship and likeness of God, so that it "glows in His light and gladdens in his love." Our present possession of the Spirit is but the earnest, the foretoken of the first fruits of our inheritance. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God." "Behold, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Herein lies the true power and glory of the Church, and the great want of the Church is the more abundant in dwelling of that Spirit, that He may give wisdom and charity to her counsels, direction and energy to her efforts, that He may inspire her whole service with devotion and make every heart throb with intenser spiritual life. The Church may strive to perfect her forms and ceremonies