

Throughout the whole History of Christianity, until the Founder of it shall come again, it has been and will be what it was in the manger of Bethlehem. It has always borne two aspects—one meeting the bodily eye, another the eye of faith. The visible, earthly side of Christianity has seemed to those who have failed to understand its Divine character to be its all. The eye of flesh has gazed exclusively at the infant lying in the manger, while faith has stood listening to the angels chanting "Glory to God in the Highest," around their Lord. Take also the record of Christian truth as we have it in the Bible. To sight, it is a collection of history and of morality, entitled on many grounds to our admiration; but, neither free from error nor above criticism. But to faith, it is the word of the living God; it is the unveiling of the mind of Him who is the Father of Eternity, at whose fiat an infinite, succession of ages ceaselessly issues forth. And so with Christian worship. The natural sight sees in it only the employment of certain works, the observance of certain forms, the use of certain regulations which have come down from past ages, partaking publicly of a little bread and wine—sprinkling a little water on an infant brow. To faith all is lighted up by the sense of His presence to whom worship is offered, and without whose manifestation all is unmeaning. Its words are felt to be addressed to a living Being; the baptismal water is the channel of the grace of a new life—the bread and wine the veil of a Saviour present to bless and save His people.

In all ages of the world it has been a feature of the inquiring mind, to "seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us;" and it would have been somewhat strange if a living, active, loving God had implanted in men this yearning for real, constant contact with Himself, but had failed to satisfy it. It would have been passing strange if He had not met these anticipations of reason—if He had not raised them into certainties by some kind of gift or manifestation. And we Christians believe that He has done this by being manifest in the flesh. He has placed Himself within our reach. He has presented Himself to us under a form that takes our hearts captive, and which supports, without suppressing the thought that seeks Him. Hence forth, God, while in His Majesty, He is necessarily inaccessible to the human understanding—(we can indeed *apprehend*, we cannot *comprehend* Him)—is, nevertheless, in His Incarnate life, the possession of every individual, human heart, that wills to have Him. Each may say: "This is our God: we have waited for Him. He will save us."

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

THE difficulty of obtaining candidates for the ministry, is experienced, not only in Canada, but to a very large extent also in England and the United States. At a time when every profession appears to be full, and no head of a family knows what to do with his sons, it would appear remarkable that there should be any difficulty whatever in securing plenty of candidates for the ministerial office. It is true that the pay is small and precarious, but so it is also in more than one other profession; and if the remuneration connected with the work of the ministry were much less than it is, and much more precarious, it would be strange if there were not to be found men zealous enough to burn with ardor in their desire to devote themselves to so exalted an office. We are, therefore, convinced that the cause of the deficiency of candidates is to be found in another direction. A

priest of the Church commissioned to exercise the sacred functions of the ministry, is an ambassador for Christ. He has a message to deliver, he has functions to execute, he has authority to regulate and control. And in the way in which the duties of the office are interfered with in the present day by those who do not hold it, is to be found the cause of the lack of candidates for the ministry. When a man wishes to devote himself to the duties of his high office and feels the responsibility, a large amount of the ardor first experienced is repressed, when it is found that in the execution of the duties of the office, there are so many clogs and hindrances thrown in the way by the worldly and the wayward.

In some parts of the Church there are peculiar circumstances that come in the way of men who would otherwise present themselves to the Church for ministerial duty. The subject was dwelt upon considerably by various Missionary Bishops in the recent U. S. Convention, who have had much experience in the matter. The Bishop of Oregon, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Benjamin Wistard Morris, expressed his wonder at the difficulty of obtaining men for the Missionary work. He said: "I have a great many letters from young men; they have made a great many inquiries about the climate, the condition of the work, the society, and all that sort of thing, but never yet one said, 'here I am without terms or conditions of any sort, take me.' It has not been so in regard to the older men. I have had many such come forward and volunteer—men who knew something of life, men who knew something of the ministry, men who had the cares and responsibilities of a family. They were ready to come—men before whom I would have taken off my hat; but I dared not take them; it would have been unkind, it would have been dishonest, it would have been cruel. I do not believe that this is my experience only; I know it is not. I wrote to one of my neighboring Missionary Bishops a few months ago asking him to help me. I said to him: 'You are nearer the East, you know more about the brethren than I do, you are a younger man than I am; can you not help me to some men?' Said he, 'I will tell you a story. I have called twenty-three men within the last year to one of my places, and twenty-one of them said, No, I thank you, sir; one other would have come, and was about to come but his congregation interfered, and finally by dint of perseverance, I got the twenty-third man.' The Bishop may well ask: 'Where is the spirit that we thought would animate the young men who are preparing themselves for the ministry of the Church?'"

"The Missionary Bishop of Western Texas, the Rt. Rev. Robert Woodward Barnwell Elliott, dwelt considerably on the same subject. He said: 'I received a letter not very long ago from a young man, saying to me, 'Have you got any encouraging missionary work in Western Texas?' I wrote back to that man, that, since the days of the Apostles to this hour there never had been any difficulty in getting men to do encouraging work of any sort; what we wanted was men who were willing to look the discouraging variety in the face.'

"What does 'encouraging work' mean? Why, that some other man has been there, and that the Holy Ghost had made him a centre for his operations, and, radiating from him, the Spirit has developed this work; and that some other man who has not been the centre of any such influence wants to get his place. That is not the spirit that is equal to the tearing down of strongholds. Such men as that are not Malakoff-takers. They will

never come up against the fortresses of darkness; and I will never tell any man that I have an easy place for him. I say, if you want an easy place, come and make it."

Both the Bishops whose addresses we have quoted, dwelt on the fact that the right men have not offered themselves for the work of the ministry. The real cause of this is, no doubt not, as we stated at the commencement of this article, that the right men are deterred from the work by the feeling that unnecessary hindrances are thrown in the way of a due performance of the functions of the same ministry.

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.

Knowing the great interest which many of our readers take in the several branches of the Church in the East, we have much pleasure in re-printing the following speech delivered by Monsignor Nerses, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, to a deputation representing one hundred families of "Oriental Armenian Catholics," on the occasion of their placing themselves under his jurisdiction, and so entering within the pale of the Armenian branch of the Catholic Church:

"When last Easter Day, you honoured me with a visit in our Patriarchate, and, with words that came direct from your hearts, expressed your warm love towards the Armenian nation and our national Church, in the character of a deputation, representing a large number of brethren, I, who was already with you and many of those who had not accompanied you, divined the spirit by which you and they were actuated, and was aware that both you and they were, every one of you, valuable and worthy luminaries of the Armenian nation. Nor did I forget that you were beautiful and fruitful trees, who had been transplanted into our neighbour's garden as an ornament not by your free will, but by the force of circumstances, remaining however unanimous in your affection towards your early brethren, and I also remembered that many of them as well as many of you, were and still are occupied with, and are workers in, our national literature and education. You are returning to-day to the garden of your fathers and ancestors to adorn and render it glorious. You do not come by any incentive of ours or at our suggestion, but by your inborn patriotism, and the aid of your experienced and cultivated intelligence. The neighbour's palace was probably large, gilded, and magnificent, and the garden wherein you dwelt was far more extensive, whereas this garden and house into which you have moved is, perhaps, bare, unadorned and rather limited in size and extent; but you well knew that they belonged to you; that yonder you were guests, whilst here you are of the house. Yonder was not your house, whereas this is your home. As beautiful flowers and delicate trees of the Eden of Armenia, notwithstanding that you were situated under different skies, studied with strange stars, and in an uninviting climate, and condemned in your narrow and roomless pots, scarcely receiving the vivifying rays of the sun, to conform to the austere rules of art, you grew and gathered strength, for your seed as well as your root was blessed by the blessed Church of Armenia, for you had been transplanted from the well-garnished paradise planted by God, and watered by four limpid streams. If you were able to grow in those hot-houses, now that you have returned to your native garden, I feel assured that the spirit which inspired Thaddeus Bartholomew, Gregory the Illuminator, the Nerses, and the Vartans, will increase unto you seven-fold grace from above, and strengthen you for the glory of the fatherland of the Armenians and of the National Church of Armenia.

"Now that you have entered the threshold of your ancestral home, let me request you to go all over the building and see for yourselves that it is not changed in any particular. Your elder brethren, who have remained in this house in large numbers, have done their best to keep it standing both in prosperity and misfortune. Winds have,