

attempt to do a work which is only sufficient for or . All this indicates but too clearly that the "Shepherd and Bishop of souls" is not having sole direction of the diocese of the world. What humiliation and prayer to God this unhappy state of things calls for ! Certainly, if the Saviour bids us pray that the Lord will thrust forth laborers, He binds Himself by this very injunction to send laborers and to place them where He would have them.

Here then is a large demand for faith ; not only in asking, but equally in receiving. The same Scripture which enjoins us to ask, reveals the unending Lord as bestowing. "When He ascended on high . . . He gave some apostles, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and some teachers." But what a fine spiritual discernment it requires to recognize His gifts when He has sent them ! Natural sagacity and business prudence are not sufficient here. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." It requires a very discriminating faith to read the Divine credentials of applicants for service. We have often thought that the history of rejected missionary candidates would make a most interesting book ; not less interesting than the history of rejected manuscripts, out of some of which such literary fortunes have been made. A venerable secretary opened this subject slightly at a recent conference, touching on it just sufficiently to remind us that some of the most eminent and successful laborers on the foreign field were at the outset refused a commission by their boards. It is a historical fact that William Milne was denied an appointment as a missionary, and was sent out to China only as a servant to Dr. Morrison, asking that he might be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, if only he could reach his longed-for field. And yet Milne, from being a servant, became such a master-missionary that history speaks of him as "that excellent man, whose talents were surprising, whose labors were incessant, whose whole life was devoted to his Saviour." We could mention several missionaries of the very first rank in our day whose experience has been similar—rejected once, twice, or thrice before getting their appointment. Nowhere is the discernment of an enlightened faith more demanded than in the examination of candidates. The prayer, "Lord, send forth laborers into Thy vineyard," needs to be supplemented by another : "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show us which of these Thou hast chosen." In this important decision there is great danger that the physician's certificate may outweigh the Master's credential, and the college diploma outrank the Spirit's call. Experience proves that the decisive qualification is not to be found in culture or in the absence of culture ; in physical health or the absence of physical health ; in great natural talents or in the absence of great natural talents. Probably the truest criterion is in the deep, serious, unshaken conviction of a Divine call in the heart of the candidate himself. With such conviction the most unprepossessing applicants have often proved mighty under God as missionaries of the cross ; without it those of the highest talent and culture have proved a failure.