

cause. The use of gunpowder was retarded there by a couple of centuries.*

When we come to more modern times we find that wonderfully little change has taken place. Till recently the absolute separation of the priesthood from the populace was secured by the office being hereditary, and by marriages with other than priestly families being prohibited. Those who were born priests were practically compelled to remain in the clerical ranks all their lives. The celibacy of the clergy is more forcibly repudiated by the Greek Church than by Protestants, for every priest must be married before ordination, though he is not permitted to marry a second time if left a widower. The parish priests, with whom we have more concern, are known as the white clergy, and may engage in manual labor with honor, but not so the monks, styled black clergy, with whom they maintain a constant rivalry. The white priest considers that he works to earn his livelihood, but that his brother of the monastery is a lazy pauper, content to live upon alms which ought to find their way into the pocket of the parish priests. The Russian priest may be a simple peasant, who follows his calling as he would a handicraft, exercising no more influence upon the community than if he were the village carpenter or barber, and enjoying no more respect than they might command. He may be absolutely devoid of general education, perhaps unable even to read the Scriptures. If he has a due acquaintance with the prescribed routine of ceremonies, and can perform the rites demanded by his parishioners, he is considered fully qualified for his post.

In the list of his duties the propagation or even the teaching of the Gospel finds no place. The whole business is as dead a formalism as is to be found, probably, in any religion under the sun. Certainly there are many creeds in which the name of Christ is unknown, in the practice of which very much more fervor is displayed. It is only in the superstitious, conscience-stricken people that earnestness is to be found, but then, alas ! how misdirected ! As to the personal characters of these pastors, no evidence could be quoted with more effect than that given in a secret government report some years ago by an orthodox Russian, "celebrated for his extensive and intimate acquaintance with Russian provincial life." He says : "The people do not respect the clergy, but persecute them with derision and reproaches, and feel them to be a burden. . . . The people shun the clergy, and have recourse to them not from the impulse of conscience, but from necessity. . . . Because it forms a class apart ; because, having received a false kind of education, it does not introduce to the life of the people the teaching of the Spirit, but remains in the mere dead forms of outward ceremonial ; . . . because the clergy itself continually presents examples of want of respect to religion, and transforms the service of God into a profitable trade. . . . Is it possible for the people to respect priests who spend their time in the gin-shops,

* Stepniak.