

superstitious dogmas and miraculous stories of saints, relics, etc.

The calling of a priest thus became despised. Seminaries preparing young men for church work were deserted, their pupils trying to get into the Universities. The generally not high moral level of the priests continued to drop. While liquor was obtainable, indulgence in drink was very common among them. On some festival occasions the priest was quite forced to get drunk. For instance, on Easter Sunday, after the great feast, the Russians will not touch meat before it has been blessed by the priest. Walking from cottage to cottage, he is everywhere entertained with drink, so that at last he cannot walk without support.

The sermon has never played an important part in the Church services, and if a priest does not want to become suspected, he will adhere to the texts of the sacred literature chosen by the Holy Synod. Not once only have I heard younger Russians saying, "I know he (the priest) is telling nonsense and lies, but nevertheless I like the Church service." And that is characteristic at present of the Church. To the more enlightened minds she has ceased to be a spiritual leader. In some degree she satisfies the religious soul and keeps the people in national unity, but she fails in the greatest thing, viz.: sitting at the feet of the