

The confusion in the popular mind on the nature of the distinction between them is already sufficiently great without our doing ought to render it greater. The writer, therefore, is conscientiously opposed to all such names and offices as lay missionaries or scripture readers. He thinks, however, that a lay assistant as such might be employed in every town parish with the most beneficial effect.

If the territorial limits of each parish were defined, a young man of respectability and intelligence might be engaged for some sixty pounds per annum, whose ostensible character should be that of a parochial church book agent, as beside the good arising from the work suggested by the name of his office, it would afford a sufficient and acceptable reason for his visits to the parishioners without the appearance of unauthorised intrusion. He should endeavour to sell at fair prices Bibles, prayer books, and sound publications of a religious character; and such profit as should accrue from the sale, should be his own perquisite.

His field of operations should of course, be the parish with which he is connected. He should leave no street, court, or lane, until it had been thoroughly visited, and a record made of all the inhabitants, with such particulars as he could gather regarding their religious opinions, characters, and circumstances.

It should be his duty to afford every information to the families visited, concerning the parish church, the hours of services, Sunday and day schools, the names and residence of the clergy, with their willingness to minister to any one needing their services, and in cases of poverty, sickness, or affliction, to report them to the parish priest without delay.

He should be expected to be present in the Sunday School, provided with a complete register of all the children, with their names, ages, and places of abode. A list of those absent should be made by him, and his invariable work on Monday (and if necessary on Tuesday) should be to visit the parents of those children, ascertain the cause of absence, and exhort them to regularity.

In cases where books or tracts were not likely to be purchased, he might be furnished with some of the latter for distribution.

On Saturday, a day when all visitation of the poor should be abstained from, his duty should be to enter fairly in books, to be kept for that purpose, a report of the week's work. These books should be indexed, one for the names of the families, the other with the names of the streets, and each name should be entered in both books.

With such an assistant, constantly revolving round the parish, the clergyman would obtain a hold upon it which could not otherwise be obtained, a large amount of valuable time would be saved, and his pastoral visits would be directed to those quarters where they were most likely to be efficient.

The remarks and suggestions which have now been made on this very important subject, have, notwithstanding all attempts at brevity, extended far beyond what the writer originally anticipated or intended. He must, therefore, relinquish the purpose previously expressed, of adverting to that difficult department of pastoral ministration—the visiting of the sick—a duty of imperious obligation, to treat of which with point and clearness, and yet more to discharge which with proper effect, demands a wisdom, tenderness, skill, and devotion, to which the writer is not presumptuous enough to lay claim.

As regards that part of our office which has been treated of; it is impossible (if the writer may

judge by his own experience) to be too careful of the spirit in which it is fulfilled; there is a strong tendency to allow it to sink down to the level of a duty which we dare not neglect, but which we reluctantly perform, instead of regarding it as a labour of love to be gladly undertaken out of regard to the souls for whom Christ died.

Not to be weary in well-doing, is a scriptural precept which very strongly applies to this department of our work, and the only way to avoid such weariness to which our poor, weak, worldly hearts are so prone, is to maintain, by all proper means, a deep and lively sense of the priceless value of the souls committed to our care, and of the weight of responsibility devolving upon us.

There are two or three methods which, in the judgment of the writer, should tend to produce these results.

The first is the frequent study, after the Holy Scriptures, of good, earnest-toned books on the duties of the ministerial office. Among the many difficulties and discouragements with which we are encompassed, it is one of the most hopeful signs of the times that so many of such books should be written, and that they should be so eagerly read.

Brydges's, though a somewhat out of date, and very distinctly belonging to the lower school of theology, contains, especially in the earlier portion, much that is useful. Evans' Bishopric of Souls is invaluable. Munro on Parochial Works, though mostly adapted to England, has much that is excellent, his sermons on the responsibilities of the ministerial office are very searching and awakening. Blunt's Duties of the Parish Priest; Hegati's Ember Hours; and last, and perhaps best of all, the Bishop of Oxford's ordination addresses, are books that we should often read, and being so read, they could hardly fail to rouse us to that diligence and labour that becomes our office.

Secondly—There is great need that we should be more devout in our supplications to Him who is the Great Shepherd and Bishop of all our souls, that he would grant unto us such measures of His own Spirit, as will make us able ministers of the New Testament, for who, in the painful conviction of his own weakness and unworthiness, has not felt that it must be a power that is more than human, that can enable us to fulfil so weighty a work as that to which we are called.

The love of Christ must constrain us to love and labour for those whom He has redeemed, or else our work will grow cold and formal, but that love can only be made to glow with a calm and steady radiance by the breath of the Divine Spirit shed upon our hearts in answer to our earnest supplications.

We are full of weakness however, we know what is right but we often fail in its performance, we want help in almost every thing, and in nothing more than in our prayers for our people. Evan's in his Bishopric of Souls tells us that the parish priest comes in from his clergy's work, with his heart and mind full of the needs and dangers of his flock, and falling down before God pours forth in unpremeditated words his earnest intercessions on their behalf. He asserts that forms of prayer are insufficient for such moments and serve to hamper rather than to help us. Doubtless there are such moments, and he can be little in earnest in his awful work who has not experienced them, but at all events for us feeble and less ardent souls—these moments are the exception and not the rule, and wearied and jaded with long continued labour, we often need the help that earnest and holy forms provide; of this kind of help—however the clergy have comparatively little. Holy Offices are more valuable for their admirable arrangement of scripture

bearing upon our duties than for the forms of prayer which they provide. In Bishop Armstrong's beautiful little manual however, called "The Pastor in his Closet," we have an aid to our devotion which no clergyman should be without. If those beautiful prayers could be slightly re-cast, and if evening devotions could be added to them breathing the same spirit of devout humility and loving tender care for the immortal well-being of Christ's Church and people, and the same anxious desire for grace, to enable us to fulfil our duties toward them it would be a gift for which no parish priest could be too thankful.

Lastly, to keep us alive to the greatness of our work and to obtain the grace which is necessary to do it, we need, as has been well said, "a broader and deeper stream of prayer than can flow from our own souls." We very urgently need the prayers of our people—but this blessing which they have it in their power to confer upon us, we receive, it is to be feared, but sparingly. This sad truth that our people are more disposed to criticise than to pray for us, may in some degree be attributed to the too general neglect of the Ember seasons, and it has often seemed to the writer, that if some special forms of prayer were distributed among our people and earnest exhortations to use them on our behalf during these seasons, were addressed to them, that many of the more devout and stable souls might be led to perform this duty on our behalf who now from mere forgetfulness neglect it.

If moreover, in these days when special and additional services are being suggested, the Bishop with the sanction of the Synod would frame a form of prayer for those times, having as much reference to those already at work, as to those about to be ordained, a point and force would be given to them that would tend much to the spiritual welfare of both priests and people.

DIOCESE OF MONTREAL.

A general confirmation was held in Christ Church Cathedral, for the city of Montreal, on Sunday 24th March, at afternoon service. All the clergy of the city were present. By far the largest congregation ever gathered together within the walls of that fine building, were assembled on this occasion; and great numbers were obliged to go away, being unable to find even standing room; owing to the careful arrangements made, and the assistance given by the several Clergy, the Churchwardens, and some members of the vestry, the most perfect order was preserved throughout; and the candidates for confirmation were enabled to take their places to receive the imposition of hands from the Bishop, and return to their seats without the least confusion. They occupied the pews in front of the reading desk, in the centre of the Church, and seemed to be much impressed with a sense of the importance of the ordinance of which they were about to become partakers. There were 311 in all: from the Cathedral, 115; St. George's, 86; Trinity, 60; St. Stephen's, 27; St. Luke's, 15; and from the Garrison, 9; of whom 125 were males, and 186 females. This is a very considerable advance on the numbers at any previous confirmation for the city. At the last general confirmation held 19th September, 1858, the numbers were 201. Before the imposition of hands, the Bishop delivered an address to them, briefly pointing out the meaning of the rite, and earnestly exhorting them to watchfulness and prayer, that they might walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. His Lordship's address was distinctly heard in every part of the building, by all present, and seemed to be listened to with much attention. This is the commencement of the fourth