

corruption, as the good odour of Christ, like the censer between the living and the dead. Such is the perfection of the priesthood, and the excellence of its calling is summed up in a few words by Peter of Blois: "A priest has the primacy of Abel, the patriarchate of Abraham, the government of Noe, the order of Melchisedech, the dignity of Aaron, the authority of Moses, the perfection of Samuel, the power of Peter, the unction of Christ." (Serm. lx, ad Sacer. Opp.).

Well might poor human nature shrink from the weight of such honours, and standing appalled before the awful responsibility of so august a calling exclaim "Grandis sacerdotis dignitas sed grandis ruina!" Well might one ask himself in fear and trembling. — And if I should fall, what could be greater than that fall? To stand upon the pinnacle of the Temple needs a supernatural poise and fidelity not to fall, and can I count upon the extraordinary assistance such fidelity supposes?

If the responsibility and dangers of the priest be great, the graces vouchsafed him and the helps wherewith he is surrounded are incomparably greater. It was God Himself who called him to His service, for none must venture on the threshold of the Sanctuary unbidden. — "Neither doth any man take the honour to himself but he that is called by God as Aaron was." (Hebr. v. 4). But once he has heard and dutifully heeded the voice from on high, he is no longer merely the servant, but becomes God's friend; of this we have Christ's solemn assurance: "I will not now call you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have learned of the Father I have made known to you. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, that you should go and should bring forth fruit." (S. John xv. 25, 16).

Cardinal Manning referring to these words, remarks: "To have been chosen by Him out of all the world is by