

I propose this morning to draw your attention to certain facts connected with the Church in this Province, especially in their bearing on the condition of our College, to endeavour to account for them, and to point out the way by which the present state of things may be improved.

The sentence from the First Lesson for the day has furnished me with the key-note, showing as it does the existence of a state of things in the days of Nehemiah not very dissimilar from our own, although probably we shall find that the causes are not altogether the same. We learn from the chapter from which our text is taken that on his second visit to Jerusalem Nehemiah found many of the salutary regulations, which he had formerly introduced, neglected, and many gross abuses tolerated by those who ought to have set a better example. Particularly, he tells us, "I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then contended I with the rulers, and said, why is the house of God forsaken?" There was no lack of men able and willing to do their work; but owing to the culpable negligence or worse than negligence, of others they had been obliged to turn their attention to other employments in order to secure a livelihood. The enforcement of the payment of the tithes and the administration of the supplies thus obtained by faithful men, was accompanied by the return of the Levites to their sacred duties. It is to be feared however, that it was only for a short time, for in the next generation we hear the prophet Malachi indicating a return to the former abuses: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say,