THE

ANNUAL SERMON,

BEFORE THE

BISHOPS, CLERGY AND LAITY,

CONSTITUTING THE

BOARD OF MISSIONS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES,

DELIVERED IN

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, NEW-YORK,

ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1840.

BY THE REV. W. R. WHITTINGHAM, D. D.


of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED AT THE MISSIONARY ROOMS,
281 Broadway.

1840.
O Almighty and good God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou who hast straitly commanded us that we should pray Thee for laborers in thy harvest, that is, for rightly furnished preachers of Thy word, we pray Thee of Thy free mercy that Thou wouldest send us rightly furnished teachers and ministers of thy divine word, and give to the same Thy wholesome word in heart and mouth, that they may truly do Thy behest and preach nothing contrary to thy holy word; so that we, being through Thy heavenly eternal word warned, taught, fed, comforted and strengthened, may do that which is pleasing in Thy sight and profitable unto us. Give, Lord, to Thy Church, Thy Spirit and godly wisdom, that Thy word may run and grow among us, with all joyfulness, so that it may be brought forth, preached, and Thy holy Church thereby bettered, to the end that we, with firm faith serving Thee, may continue steadfast to the end, in the profession of Thy Name, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Kirchenordnung in meiner gnädiger Herrn der Margraven zu Brandenburg u. s. w.
M.D.xxxiii. fol. 47. vers. fol.
"Then saith He unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

We all believe in the particular providence of God; that He watches over, governs, and directs each one of those whom He deigns to call His children; that, as the Father of the whole family in heaven and earth, He provides not only for all, food convenient and necessary shelter, but for each, according to his need, that which is best for the individual, and tends most to his probation, correction, or perfection. This is too plainly revealed to us by our blessed Lord to be for a moment doubted. It is confirmed, too, by the individual experience of every believer: and you might as well attempt to persuade the true Christian that there is no Divine government of things sublunary, as that he himself has not seen and felt the guarding and guiding hand of God shaping his course through grace to glory.

Yet there seems to have been for ages a growing indisposition to recognize this direct superintendence and control, where, if anywhere, it might be expected, from the nature of the case, to be pre-eminently influential, and most conspicuously discernible,—in the Church of Christ. 'God ruleth over all and each,' seems to be the prevailing belief, 'but it is as individuals and aggregates of individuals, in conformity with general laws, moral, spiritual, and physical; as for His Church, that is in a distinct and different relation; for it we are to expect no other guardianship and guidance
than results from the operation of providential rule upon the
individuals who are its members."

Observe; I do not say that such a startling paradox is
openly avowed. It is too much to ask even of the puny
faith of our age, that it should own God absent from His
Church as such, and trace the grace and truth of which it is
the keeper, in every other direction except its course, through
every other channel but its being. Nevertheless, we do
seem disposed to acquiesce in what we dare not avow, and
suppose that like a piece of exquisite machinery, the Gospel
of Christ Jesus, embodied in His Church, and transmitted
in His ordinances, goes on through the revolutions of time
to gather in the elect to the Lord's eternal garners, with no
other interference than the original supply of the moving
power. The ministry once sent out, the sacraments once
instituted, the Scriptures once given as the infallible and
sufficient norm of doctrine, we seem to think that God has
done His part, and left the rest to man. If the ministry be­
come perverted, the sacraments abused, the Scriptures buried,
or wrested to the destruction of the simple, we cry out, justly,
against man's unfaithfulness and wickedness; but are satis­
fied with that: we read no lesson in the history, look for
no results, expect no indications of a superior Wisdom and
Mercy working under and against the evil of man's doings
and devices. If emergencies occur when the gates of hell
seem strong against the bride of Christ, we begin to count
her resources in the zeal, fidelity, and energy of her children;
or to mourn over the too plain traces of disunion, lukewarm­
ness, and vacillating unbelief, as tokens of approaching
ruin; all the while knowing that her Maker, who is her
Husband, sitteth in the heavens, laughing His foes to scorn,
but forgetting or not believing that her children are His
children, her treasures His gift and property, her foes and
spoilers His enemies. If, on the other hand, the spread and
increase of the Church place it in perplexing circumstances,
that threaten danger, the more terrible because indefinite and
contingent, the maxims of worldly policy are applied; we
calculate and compute, that we may so compound or com­
pensate the forces bearing on its new position, as to insure
stability; we look forward instead of backward, unmindful that God has given us memory, not foresight; and make rules instead of keeping them: the saying that passed for a proverb in Israel of old, "In the mount it shall be seen," is no longer the maxim of the Church legislation and Church practice: 'if we provide not,' is our feeling, 'there will be no provision; if we foresee not, there will be no guidance; if we guard not, there will be no security.'

In challenging this disposition as the unbelieving tendency of a faithless generation, I am far from losing sight of the unquestionable fact, that God's plans are wrought out by man's agency, and that His providence works by, not without, wise counsel and strenuous exertion on our part. It is true that the Gospel system is a machine of wonderful adjustment and self-moving power; that the bride of Christ is to be borne in triumph over the necks of her enemies by the successful efforts of her zealous and faithful children; and that in her onward progress she will ever take counsel for the future of the past, and remember Who taught her to say, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." But these truths are subordinate to the one great truth, that He who has called us, is ever with us to maintain, support and control the operation of the secondary and instrumental causes by which He makes His presence known. When Jesus slept in the vessel on the sea of Galilee, and was awakened by His disciples with the cry "Lord, save us: we perish;" it was not for toiling in rowing, nor for spending strength in buffeting the tempest, that the Lord rebuked them; but His expostulation was, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" He chose to sleep that the storm might try them. They did right to labor at the oar, and strive to hold the vessel on her way. They failed, in not believing that their Master cared for them, while His bodily sleep concealed from them His knowledge of their condition.

This combined recognition of human agency and Divine disposal, is perhaps nowhere more remarkable than in my text, considered in its historical connexion and full import.

"Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the
LORD of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.”

The same address was twice made by our blessed LORD, at a considerable interval; and both times in circumstances tending to point to the same construction.

St. Matthew, in the words just read, records the first occurrence. It was after the election and commission of the twelve to be personal attendants and apostles of their Master, but preceded their first mission on a circuit of separate ministration. Their office had been already given them, many months before; they were now to be sent, as it was on trial or apprenticeship, to prepare, by the discharge of a temporary and local commission, for the work that was before them when they should have received in full the trust of the ministry in the Church of CHRIST.

The Saviour’s injunction in the text, then, could have had reference neither to the first appointment, nor to the final full commission of the apostles. It grew, the inspired historian tells us, out of the spectacle before the adorable Redeemer when He uttered it. “When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the LORD of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.” It was followed up by the special mission of the twelve “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” to cast out demons and heal diseases, and proclaim the kingdom of heaven as at hand. The destitute condition of the people, and their willingness to receive relief, prompted the LORD to institute a special effort for their relief. In contemplation of that effort, and of its occasion, He enjoined the prayer for laborers in so plenteous a harvest.

The second occasion for the same injunction was the similar mission of a greater number on a larger circuit, only a few months before the close of our Lord’s ministry on earth. His own face was then for the last time set towards Jerusalem, on His way to fulfil the will of HIM that sent Him. Every where He was announcing distinctly the nature of
His mission, and the approaching term of its accomplishment. Intense interest was awakened by the announcement. To avail Himself of this, He chose, while He retained the twelve to be witnesses of His closing ministrations, to commission other seventy to go two and two before Him, to the towns and villages in the neighborhood of His own course toward Jerusalem. Before He sent them out, He prefaced instructions almost the same with those previously given to the twelve on the like occasion, with the identical words that had then preceded those instructions. Again there was before Him a plenteous harvest. Again about Himself to send forth laborers, He again enjoined the disciples to pray that laborers might be sent. The occasion and the mission, as before, were special, and as before, to them the injunction of prayer had reference, not to the official authorization of the persons sent. For the mission of grace and truth there was no need to pray. It was already begun, and bringing forth its fruit. God had sent forth his Son in the fulness of His own appointed time, and in Him had made complete provision for the ministry of reconciliation. To the ends of the world, and as long as time should last, that ministry was sure to be extended. Not for such extension, then; still less for its origination; but for its direction on special objects, it was our Lord's command to pray—to pray to Him, as Lord of the whole harvest, for a given part—to pray to Him, as Head and Fountain of ministerial gifts and graces, that multitudinous channels may be provided for a copious supply.

It is hardly safe to attempt at all to discriminate between the gracious words of our Redeemer; but if it were, assuredly a command like this, so solemnly and distinctly given, in the very same form, on two several occasions, would claim no slight pre-eminence. Wherever circumstances resembling those in which first the twelve, and then the seventy, were sent out, exist,—and where, since the day of Pentecost, has not the Church as a whole, been in such circumstances? and where is a faithful, lively branch of the Church Catholic that does not find itself in such circumstances?—wherever they exist, surely the first prompting of a true disciple's heart would be to obey his Lord's behest, and fall on his
kneels and pray that *then* and *there* the Lord of the harvest would send forth laborers! How can we avoid the conclusion? Expressly recorded as the Saviour's words on both occasions have been, by two inspired historians, it is beyond a doubt that they have been placed on record for the profit of His Church. They are plain. They admit no other application than that which has been made. Limitation or evasion, were it sought, it would be impossible to find. Wherever men need the Gospel of life, and have it not; wherever the Church has a door open before her and is unable to go in and take possession; wherever the sound of the Gospel has outrun its power; wherever there are multitudes to be called, or multitudes called only, but giving no proof that they are chosen; there, so long as the words of Jesus stand recorded in sacred history, the duty of His Church seems plain.

Yet history appears to indicate something almost like a general defection of the Church from duty on this point. Timidly and hesitatingly should a charge so grave be uttered; but with what research I have been able to make, I cannot find that the prayer to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers has ever been incorporated, as the need of the Church and the injunction of its Head alike seem to have required, in the ordinary, stated forms of supplication.* On the providential ends for which this seeming dereliction from plain duty has been suffered, I dare not speculate. It is incredible that the Church of the first three centuries partook in it. The fragments of its formularies that we possess are too few to warrant any inference of their resemblance, in this respect, to those of later times. It may be, that among the other injurious effects of assumed protection of the Church of Christ by the civil powers, the solemn appeal to God for interference in behalf of His own body, was omitted, as no

---

* The only exceptions that are known to the writer, are, an excellent collect in the Liturgy of the Churches of Brandenburg and Nuremberg, set forth in 1533; and two expressions incorporated in prayers contained in the Liturgy of the Church of Neuchatel, set forth in 1713, by the care and efforts of the celebrated Ostervald. The former is one of the sources, the latter one of the fruits of our own Liturgy, which yet contains not a vestige of the prayer in question.
longer needful. Seduced by sight, the frail depositaries of covenant mercies chose to lean on the arm of flesh, and trust to the attractions of influence, respectability, and wealth, and to the vigilant energies of their temporal governors, to secure supplies for the Christian ministry. If so, they had their reward. Temporal inducements did multiply the numbers professing to minister in the name of Christ; but they partook of the evil root from which they sprung. No longer sent forth by the Lord of the harvest in answer to His Church's prayer, they were no longer His servants, though clothed with His commission, nor did His work, though laboring in His field. A mongrel offspring of an adulterous intercourse between the spouse of Christ and Mammon, their deeds evinced the nature of their descent, and to this day we rue the corruptions that secularity connived at or introduced, when the Church was made the harbor for the indolent, the timid and the dependent, or the arena for the ambitious aspirant after wealth and honors.

But in the earlier days of suffering and triumph, of persecution and victorious faith, it is hard to believe that the words of their Lord were not kept in the mouth of his followers, and that we may not see an answer to His commanded prayer in the wonderful rapidity with which the sound of the blessed Gospel of salvation spread abroad into all lands, and its words to the end of the world. The more closely we prosecute our researches into the early history of the Church, the more reason we find to believe that the extension of the Gospel attained its broadest limits for the most part before the connexion of the civil power with the Church, and always unaided by that power. The arm of flesh has uniformly paralyzed the Church by its withering touch. To outward view she may have borne the deceitful appearance of a healthful state; but it has been the plethoric habit of disease, inert and torpid, the result of stagnant humors, and the occasion of foul corruptions or deadly maladies. Her healthy growth has been when absence of civil sanction and legalized endowment left membership to the uncontrolled choice of those who joined her, and made it an act of faith and self-denial. In such circumstances, the support of the
ministry; even where the whole community makes profession of the faith, is scanty and precarious in proportion to the preponderance of sense over faith in the majority of visible members of the Church, and the resulting indisposition to sacrifice things of present value, merely in order to complete arrangements that have reference exclusively to eternity. But to carry on the work of self-extension,—without which no Church of Christ can be considered as fulfilling all its functions and obligations—to do this, where all depends on the free will and openness of heart of the multitude, is indeed a test of faith working by love and zeal.

It is where that effort is going on, that the need is felt for which the Saviour made provision in my text. Inducements from without there are none, to bring men forward to the work of aggression on the territories that remain to be possessed. Labor is the least of their hardships. Neglect, inadequate provision for their wants, indifference to their success, are all to be anticipated. Who can be expected to volunteer to their encounter, unless propelled by something other and higher than ordinary motives? There must be a compulsory sense of duty, a voice from on high denouncing woe to the recreant, to urge men on to seek poverty, contempt, and suffering. The harvest may be white, but laborers will not go forth to reap, with such reward before them, until the Lord of the harvest thrust them forth.

This, it is observable, is precisely the import of our Saviour's expression in His direction for the Church's prayers. On both occasions of His giving that direction, the term used by the two evangelists who record it, is one not elsewhere employed in any similar connexion. It implies, not simply mission, nor permission, nor yet commission, but constraint, involuntary action under the control of superior force. It has not reference to the ordination of those for whom we are taught to pray—to their selection for the work, the mode of their commissioning, empowering, or authenticating; but to the impulse by which they are brought within the operation of the provided plan—that inward and providential drawing and direction by which the individual is impelled and guided to offer himself for choice and commission; and to the emis-
sion, by which, whether mediately or immediately, the operations of the individual are directed on some certain sphere. Thus was Paul 'thrust forth,' when he was constrained to preach the Gospel, necessity being on him, and a wo if he preached it not; and again, when he and Barnabas were separated by the command of the Holy Ghost to the work of announcing to the Gentiles the glad news of their fellowship in the grace of Christ. In this last instance, precisely as on the occasion that first called forth our Lord's injunction, the emission on a particular circuit of duty is the subject of prayer and divine interposition. The prophets and teachers of the Church at Antioch feasted and prayed, and then "the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Ordained already "an apostle, not of man, neither by man," but by the Lord Christ himself, Paul was now thrust out into the harvest white before him, just as at first the twelve, and then the seventy, previously chosen and commissioned, were thrust forth into their several harvests. All constrained in the first place to follow Christ, and so offer themselves for the ministry, they were afterwards again constrained to go and announce Him on their several circuits. The providences were distinct, and were yet more distinct from the commission with which they were connected.

I consider, therefore, that the injunction of our Lord is precisely fitted to meet the exigencies of a Church barely able to sustain itself, and unable, for want of men and means, to fulfil the Divine command, Go forth and conquer. To such a body He says, 'Why art thou disquieted and fearful, O thou of little faith? Look to me! I know thy need, I am able to supply it. Laborers are wanting, but there is no hire: I will thrust them forth, under a constraint that shall preclude the need of all other inducements, and counteract the force of all discouragements. A harvest is ripe, but there are none to reap it: I will thrust forth laborers thither, and cause those who bear my Name to direct their steps into the wilderness, that it may become fruitful, and to the desert, that it may blossom. But my interference must be sought,
My presence must be recognized. My overruling and alone sufficient power must be made your confidence.

Fathers and brethren! Is not this the lesson that our Lord is teaching us, in a language hard to be mistaken? Our past history is one long list of blessings. Our present condition, viewed from any point, in any aspect, is a theme of equal wonder and adoring gratitude. But our blessings have brought with them duties and responsibilities, that almost weigh us down. At home and abroad; within ourselves, on our borders on every side, and at the farthest ends of the earth; we find claims on our exertions, transcending not our abilities only, but abilities immeasurably more than ours—work every where to do, and nothing to do it with.

In the East, a door is opening by which faith and love may be rekindled in its neglected churches, and awakened to new life and vigor, for a new onslaught upon the varied forms of error and superstition that there overrun so large a portion of our race.

Africa stretches forth her hands to us, for liberty and blessing—poor oppressed Africa, whose sons have so large and strong a claim upon every sympathy that can move the man and Christian. There, before this time, we ought to have had our bishops sent forth in sufficient number to begin a line which the Redeemer's presence should make instrumental for the recovery of that lost continent to His sway.

Texas, our sister of yesterday, is ready for the Church, in its full beauty and glory; and who shall account for the souls that may perish before she is provided?

South America, bound to us by so many social and moral ties, is groaning under the results of ignorance and superstition, developed in a liberty for which it was not ready. The Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel, can save it from utter ruin, and restore energy and order to its anarchical social frame. We have the precious remedy, and know its use, but sit by in indolent unconcern, and see how

\[
\text{jam proximus ardet}
\]

\[
\text{Ucalegon,}
\]

without a thought that our homes may kindle too, in the
same deadly conflagration, for default of timely and bounden exertion on our part, while it is yet confined to the sister continent.

Nay, is there not in our very homes a field of exertion, varied and broad enough to appal the most sanguine, who is content to base his plans and expectations on the admeasurement of our own resources? On the outskirts of our country, the exiled Indian nations roam in helpless ignorance and degradation, outcasts from civilization and religion. The white man spurns them from his threshold, and when their thinned tribes seek the forests to which they are driven off, we are content to plead their poverty and misery, and unsettled habits, as a reason why the decent and sober clergyman should not be expected to follow them in a hopeless Quixotism of missionary zeal. Next to them, the thousands of our pioneering half-savage borderers of civilization come in view. They too are thinly strown through forest, and swamps, and prairie, and have no relish for a religion of which they know neither the form nor power. They cannot be gathered into congregations. They will not build churches while they hardly care to shelter themselves from the elements in their rude temporary cabins. None thinks of them, as the aged apostle did of his apostate catechumen, when, in his decrepitude, to save that one perilled soul, he took horse and followed the wanderer out into the wilderness. Our plan is, to let population thicken before we attempt to minister to its spiritual necessities. Wait till there are neighborhoods, and men can be got together, and organize, and worship decently and in order,—and in the meanwhile the souls of the present generation go to their last account unsaved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and their blood is on the head of—whom, brethren, but those who had the Gospel of the Son of God, and saw them perishing for lack of it, and went not to urge it on them?

Still nearer, the new settlements present themselves, where men have waited until society, cemented without the bonds of spiritual union, threatens to become a curse instead of blessing—where the many know of a Saviour but to grace an oath with the profanation of His name, and scoff alike at
His errand of redemption and the holy law which He died to render honorable—and the few who long for His salvation, almost hopelessly plead for help to do what they are unable to accomplish single-handed—maintain the Lord's testimony and set up His tabernacle, in a careless and ungodly generation. These ask us for the bread of life, and we give them stones, or, worse, a serpent. Luxuries and false refinements, the mysteries of fashionable vice, and the abominations of a worldly code of honor, the arts and trickeries of traffic, and the seducing poison of a polluted literature, we send them by every steamboat or railroad car: but the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, the depository of grace and salvation, is a stranger to them, because the communication of its privileges not only holds out no prospect of worldly gain, but must be effected, if at all, by effort, and sacrifice and self-denial, nay, even—and self-devotion to an arduous work.

In the southern portion of our country, the millions in slavery have never yet received due attention to their spiritual interests. Believing, as I do, that in the average their position is even more favorable for the development of the religious principle, when properly cultivated, than that of the lowest class in a free community, and that of all the forms of Christianity, the primitive catholicity of our institutions is best adapted for their needs and training, I dare not exculpate our Church from heinous guilt concerning them, in that so little especial attention has been given to their instruction, as a missionary duty. Have we ten laborers among two millions of them, at this moment?* Access is freely offered—nay, the workman's hire is tendered, and in many cases liberally and with earnest eagerness—but where are the men?

And lastly, at our very doors, in this great commercial metropolis of our country, and in its sister queens of the At-

---

* This is meant of ministers exclusively or principally devoted to the slave population. Many of our clergy in the southern states give a large portion of their attention to its spiritual interests, with true missionary zeal and devotion, and often with the happiest results.
lantic coast, are there not myriads living and dying in utter, hopeless destitution of spiritual privileges? Do any go out into the highways and compel them to come in? Living, as they do, among professed followers of a Master who thought not scorn to mingle with publicans and sinners, and go about, a homeless wanderer, among the multitudes whom He came to seek as well as save, are they sought with a zeal and diligence in any degree commensurate to the horrible extremity of danger to which they are exposed?

Brethren! I dare not look the answers to these questions in the face! The accountability they involve, and the neglect of that accountability they prove, are too appalling! The blasphemy, and drunkenness, and obscenity, and strife, that pollute the crowded streets and more crowded dwellings of our great cities, go up to heaven in witness against the Church that it has not adapted itself to that form of social life. The desecrated Sabbaths and prayerless homes of our new towns and villages testify to the same lamentable fact. The neglected backwoodsman's lost soul shall appear at the great day to charge us with similar dereliction of plain duty. The slave and the savage shall join him in bearing evidence that they who had the bread of life, and might have distributed it, *did not.*

And why? The Gospel is the same now as when the apostles planted it in Rome and Corinth, on Mar's hill and in the wilds of Scythia, among the polished Greeks and the untamed hordes of Northern Asia. The Church, in its substantial form, is still unchanged, as when it spread like lightning to the bounds, and beyond the bounds, of the then known world. Its ministry, its sacraments, its worship, are as well adapted to the needs of missions now as ever.

It is *men* we want, to extend the Church—men acting, as its founders did, under *compulsion* to go forth to the fields that now lie empty;—men seeking, not inducements to go here or there, not pledges of support, not probabilities of success, not indemnities against privations, or neglect, or destitution, but opportunity to reach their destination and do their work, for all else gladly trusting *God*;—men suffering while detained from duty; and happy only when en-
gaged in its hardest, meanest, most thankless task;—men to whom, with the prophet, 'the word of the Lord is as a fire shut up in their bones, until they are weary with forbearing, and cannot stay';—men who have received of their Master’s spirit, in which He said, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened, till it be accomplished!”

Such men the Church has had; and all that has been glorious and blessed in her history has been their doing,—and why should she not have such again? It is not in man to prosper and glorify God’s work, although he may and do hold it back and deaden it with his own sinfulness and sloth. The difference is not to be sought in any fancied degeneration of the powers and faculties of Christians. Head, heart and limbs are as sound in us as in those who gave theirs so freely up a freewill-offering for the cause in which Jesus shed His blood. What calls for gratitude had they, that we have not? What hope of reward that is not ours? The blood poured out for them on Calvary, flowed equally for us; the exceeding great and precious promises that made them count all sufferings of this present time not worthy to be put in the comparison, are held out to us in all their fullness and reality. And still the same Spirit that supplied them with differences of gifts and administrations, is abiding with His Church, the Author and Giver of every needful qualification for His work. What cause can be assigned, that should hinder us from going forth, indomitable and irresistible, to lay siege to every strong-hold of sin and Satan, and bring them into captivity to the obedience of Christ? If there be any, let it be produced. Until it is, your preacher will believe, and not cease boldly to avouch, that the triumphs of the Church are wanting for no other reason than a want of men, filled, as the martyr Stephen, with faith and the Holy Ghost: and that such men are wanting, because they are not sought in faith of Him who is alone able to raise them up, willing and waiting to do His work, His whole work, wherever it is to be done.

Is it not true, that every department of usefulness in the Church is suffering for want of men? From the duties of the episcopate to those of the parish schoolmaster, there is no
sphere of labor for which we have not of late years been accustomed to hear unanswered calls for supply. This is more and more the case under our existing organization. But that organization needs and almost demands, improvements that would give great increase of vigor and efficiency to all its parts, but are utterly precluded because the first requisite would be a greatly enlarged supply of laborers, and those more unreserved in their devotion to the work, more mobile, and less expensive. Our whole missionary system is a poor starveling abortion compared with what it might be were there an abundance of such men as from the second to the fifth century swarmed like bees from every new converted nation, and from many of the older churches, over the lands yet unsubjugated to the Redeemer's sway. For every presbyter that we have in the missionary work, we ought to send a bishop, with his score of subordinate fellow-laborers. Then would the Church go forth in beauty and strength, and not, as now, shrink cowed and abashed, from before the face of rampant wickedness, infidelity, and heresy. Then would her missions be durable conquests, taken in possession once and for ever, for her Master; not, as now, isolated, pining outposts in an enemy's country, left single-handed to an unequal combat, and hourly in jeopardy from assaults against which it is barely possible that they can make good their perilous defence.

What hinders such a change? Will some say, want of means to support such a gigantic scale of operations? Oh, wo worth the day that means—in an apostle's phrase, 'money, the root of every evil'—became a prime consideration with the Church! Did the want of money cripple the operations of Paul, the tentmaker, who a year and a half wrought with his own hands, while he laid broad and deep the foundations of a Church of Christ at Corinth, the chief seat of luxury and corruption? Did the bands that poured from the Anglo-Saxon Church in its first love over the north of Europe stay at home till they had made definite and secure arrangements for supplies? No! it is men we want, not means!—men to whom "God all-sufficient" will be a warrant of maintenance and success, and "God ever pre-
sent" an encouragement to do and suffer any thing for the glory of His name;—men whose numbers, and labors, and fearless independence of human countenance and help, shall do their sure work in commanding the very support which they are ready to do without, from those from whom they have gone forth and those to whom they come;—men whose faith, and love, and zeal, and holiness, shall prove that God is with them of a truth, and kindle in all directions a corresponding faith, and love, and zeal, to emulate and aid their labors in His behalf.

How shall we get such men? I know but one way, that indicated by their Master and great Exemplar—praying for them. Money will not command them any more than it will command the service of the winds. Were the whole treasures of the country at the disposal of the Church, she might multiply bands of hirelings whom lucre could tempt even to the encounter of difficulties and dangers, but not one the more true missionary would she obtain. Schools and colleges, and theological seminaries will not supply them, except in as far as the blessing of the Spirit makes them instruments for the accomplishment of His higher, deeper work. Learning and training will do much to fit the future ministers of Christ for their arduous duties, but cannot replace, still less infuse, that spirit of Christ, without which they will be none of His. To whom shall we look for that, but to God alone? An outpouring of the gracious influences of that promised Spirit, and nothing else, can supply the need of the Church in the pressing emergencies of her present condition.

God forbid that we should undervalue the external call! In proportion as we deem reverently and truly of its high origin, its sacred character and its mysterious grace, we shall be disposed to look humbly but undoubtfully for the Lord's own presence and operation in His Church. But is it not possible to dwell too exclusively on it, and its correspondent qualifications? Not too much! Far from it! That can never be! But too alone, to the exclusion of the prior, and inner, and higher call, that must give the outward designation all its life and worth. Have we with sufficient united earnest-
ness sent up our supplications to the Almighty Disposer of hearts for the extension of such a call, commensurately with the opportunities with which He has blest and charged our Church? Have we besought Him, as for the best boon that He can bestow, to give us willingness of heart to go forth as one man, not, in a worldly sense, counting cost or consequences, to engage in the blessed work of saving souls? Have we laid before Him our necessities, pleading His own engagement to supply them implied in the very command to pray to Him for laborers, with undoubting faith, and faith reposed in Him alone? Till we do so, surely all Christian experience certifies us, that our toils and cares must be in vain! God will not bless secondary causes, while men trust in them! May not their inefficiency be owing to our forgetfulness of this? May we not be too busy in devising plans, and contriving means, and not enough so in humble importunate prayer for that interference which is able to render both needless, except as evidences of our zeal and love?

Fathers and brethren, let us strive more and more to realize the fact that God is with us, of a truth! Let us be bold, and go to Him with confidence, and plead His name's sake and His truth, for the discharge of the debt in which He has bound himself to us, to give us men after His own heart to do His blessed work in the rich field that lies before us, white for the harvest!