

saw the Apocalypse" of that eternal consummation "to which the whole Creation moves." "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them and be their God: and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more: the first things are passed away. And He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold I make all things new." There will be no Anarchism there, for society will be moulded on love; there will be no refusal of authority, for authority will everywhere prevail in love.

Let us therefore silence in ourselves and discourage in others that vindictive spirit which calls for vengeance over the dead President's grave. Let us remember that we are all of us who are members of Christ's Church pardoned law-breakers, that we have been saved by the love of the God whose government we have opposed, that we are unworthy to claim or to expect the grace which folds us in its everlasting arms and will never let us go. Subjects of His kingdom, we are working by His Spirit to assert and extend throughout the whole of His world that authority of love which, wherever it prevails, unites all men as brothers in the common bond of love to each other and to Him, and kills at their root the hideous growths of lust and passion which in so many directions overrun the fair garden of life.

F. B. MACNUTT.



ART. VII.—PATRONAGE IN RELATION TO THE SUPPLY OF CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS.

A CORRESPONDENCE in the columns of the *Record*, originated by one of the best known and most learned members of the Evangelical School, suggests a possible reason for the falling-off in the supply of candidates for Holy Orders. It is a cause which, I think, has been very generally overlooked, and yet one which should have seemed more or less obvious. Broadly speaking it is this: that the present system of patronage warns off from the ministry many young men who themselves know, or whose parents know, that they lack two important aids to advancement—means and powerful connections. As discussed by Dr. Henry Gee and others, the allegation is made only in a restricted form. It is the Evangelical School which is said to be losing recruits, and the persons upon whom it is sought to lay the responsibility for its losses are the trustees who administer so much of the patronage in Evangelical hands.

Into the truth or falsity of this accusation I am not now prepared to go; others with a wider knowledge of the work done, and the men affected by it, must discuss this part of the subject. The only comment upon which I can venture is this: that whether the accusations be true or false they have certainly been made with every sign of confidence for many years, and that some of those who most bitterly urge them are not clergy disappointed of their own hopes (as an anonymous correspondent of the *Record*¹ so charitably suggests), nor their kinsfolk and acquaintance, nor even clergy at all, but merely laymen deeply concerned for the welfare of the Church of Christ in the parishes affected. Beyond this—a piece of personal testimony which many, I think, can corroborate—it is not for me to go.

It may very well be that some little loss has been occasioned in this way, but, numerically at any rate, I do not think it has been the greatest loss. Is it not probable that the falling-off may be more fairly traced to the modern changes in the law and in the administration of Church patronage? To put the case more exactly, is it not possible or probable that the chief loss in men is the loss of those whose friends would in other days have purchased livings for them when they had been two or three years in Orders, or would, without any particular regard to their experience or personal fitness, have presented them to a friendly living at the first vacancy? I submit that actual acquaintance with the sources from which the ranks of the clergy used to be supplied will prove this is the way in which the Church has lost and is losing a large number of candidates.

The Benefices Act will account for much of that loss. Whilst the Liberation Society exultingly proclaims that the Act has been ineffectual, other people are aware that its restrictions have proved quite as efficient as its promoters expected. It was not meant to make the sale or purchase of advowsons impossible, but only to deprive such proceedings of what were regarded as their worst characteristics. Especially has it been fruitful in preventing the acquisition of benefices which were immediately to be bestowed on some young relative. But there have been other influences at work. Public opinion has grown more sensitive in regard to the uses of patronage. Where a quarter of a century ago a father would have had no scruple about presenting his son, only just admitted to priest's Orders, to any living in his gift, he now hesitates or refrains. Acts of this kind are looked askance at, and the new incumbent, if so placed in possession,

¹ October 18, 1901, p. 1039.

is conscious that people do not much like the transaction. Thus, by the operation of the law and of public opinion, a very considerable change has gradually been brought about. But in the face of that change a good many parents no longer look upon the ministry as the natural career of one son. They do not want to see him pass through a long apprenticeship, and ultimately obtain only a benefice perhaps at a distance from them, and probably one with, in their opinion, an inadequate income. If they cannot make things sure by early purchasing an advowson for him, as they may have bought a practice for his doctor brother, they would rather he sought some other profession.

Of course some observers would say that the men thus lost were not worth having. That is a hasty and unwarrantable assumption. That they assented to what were lawful acts, and acts widely performed, is not a proof that they were unspiritual persons. They often made places for themselves amongst the most useful of the clergy, and rose to distinction by their own merits. Their loss is far from being an unmixed gain.

In spite, however, of this, the absence of such men should in time prove advantageous to the Church; for it means that more incumbencies will be filled according to merit, and that the prospects of men without means are by this much improved. Already there are many signs that private patrons who once, as a matter of course, promoted a relative, irrespective of merit and fitness, now look about in a really conscientious spirit for worthy and suitable clergy. As this goes on, the fact of promotion by merit being largely substituted for promotion by purchase must make itself felt. Men will recognise that there is a field before them, and, if my diagnosis is right, the number of candidates will begin again to increase.

Such an increase might be expected to come from rather a different station in life. Fewer of the men would be the sons of country squires, and of those who have made fortunes in business; more would come from the energetic, striving ranks of the lower middle classes, from which the highest places in the State and in the professions are even now largely filled. Perhaps there would be some loss of tone, but there would be a great gain in vigour and zeal. If the ministry in any way diminished its influence amongst the wealthy, it would almost certainly gain amongst the people. As many of the ablest Bishops of modern times have been of middle-class stock, there can be no fear that in the matter of leadership any change would have to be contemplated or feared.

It may be said that this, after all, is only part of a larger

problem. Let all patronage in the Church be administered with more regard to merit and fitness, then more men will with confidence adventure themselves into the ranks of the clergy. For myself, I believe that this development is even now going on, and that in a few years' time its influence will be apparent.

G. A. B. ANSON.



The Month.

THE coming of October means the beginning of the winter campaign. There are happy signs that the authorities of the Church perceive the difficult position into which the Church has fallen, and are alive to the necessity of facing the facts. The financial condition of the clergy, the continued fall in the supply of candidates for Holy Orders, the widening gap between the two main bodies of the clergy—all these things have found recognition in the addresses of Bishops to their diocesan conferences during the month of October. The Bishop of Carlisle spoke strongly as to the condition of the incumbents in his diocese. The same problem came up at the Lincoln Conference, where a speaker usefully drew attention to the fact that some areas were thickly studded with churches out of all proportion to the needs of the population. No royal road to the removal of the steadily growing scandal was indicated at either conference, but the inevitable appeal to the laity was made by lay as well as clerical representatives. Mr. De Bock Porter's Dilapidations Scheme has been considered in several discussions. The very striking words of the Bishop of Gloucester in addressing his conference must be read in connection with certain sessions of the Brighton Church Congress.

The Congress was but a modified success. Its organizers expected the full members of the Congress to exceed 5,000; they only just exceeded 3,000. The programme had been framed with an eye to the presence of numbers who could not all be accommodated at one set of meetings. These calculations being falsified by events, there were meetings at which the attendance was a mere handful of people. It is impossible to blame the authorities. In 1874 the Brighton Congress had 4,935 members. Who could have foreseen that a Congress held at the same place in the first year of the new century would prove less attractive than the gatherings at such places as Folkestone, Rhyl, Hull, Exeter, Reading, Derby, Bath, or Croydon? Brighton might be pardoned for falling behind London, Manchester and Birmingham; but that it should be inferior to Exeter, Hull, Folkestone, or Rhyl, could have been anticipated by no one. In point of interest the Congress proceedings fairly held their own, mainly because the Subjects Committee had the courage to put really "live" questions before the Congress.

No unpleasant incidents occurred. The Congress is valued just because it provides a free platform for the statement of divergent views. It is not a party gathering, nor a gathering called in support of