

preach. "The poor ye have always with you" and must be cared for. And as the work began to expand, the faithfulness which ever prompted them in doing the work in keeping with their mission, made them feel that, however essential the work of administering the funds from the common purse might be, they had a higher function to discharge. They gave instructions that seven men be selected for the work of caring for the poor, and added: "We will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word." (Acts 6.4) Hence the institution of the office of Deacon so far as the occasion is concerned was due to the exigency of ministering to the widows. But the *Source* is the Apostles; "Whom we may appoint over this business."

Tradition tells us that the sphere of the work of the different Apostles was very extended. It is the Apostle St. Paul with whom the Acts is most taken up. The method of the others could hardly have been very dissimilar from his. It cannot be unfair therefore to take him as a type of the Apostolic worker. What then was his method as recorded in the Acts? Take his first journey. We find him going from city to city planting congregations and on his return to these places he (χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαν) "ordained them elders (Presbyters) in every Church."

On his last journey on his way to Jerusalem he sent from Miletus and gathered the elders of the church at Ephesus together, and gave them a last charge as Overseers of the flock of Christ.

Let us now notice the source of this office of Elder or Presbyter. Whether the prototype of this office be the President of the Jewish synagogue or no, does not concern me here. It is sufficient to say, he did not assume the office of the Christian Presbyter without having been ordained by the Apostles.

We see then from the Acts the offices of Deacon and Presbyter well established; and we see further that they derived their power to exercise these functions from the Apostles. We see also, and must not allow this to be unnoticed, the office of Apostle.

The Apostles could not live for ever, and they knew this. They exercised certain functions in common with the Elders, (St. Peter calls himself a "fellow-Elder"), but they also discharged functions which