

So also St. Paul, when he addressed the elders or presbyters of the Church at Ephesus, called them also "bishops" or "overseers" (Acts xx. 17, 28; see Rev. Vers.); and, in a sense, they were undoubtedly "overseers" just as our parish priests are overseers of their particular congregations; but it would be a mistake to assume that all elders were "bishops" or "overseers" in the same sense that Timothy and Titus were, because it is plain that the latter were made overseers of the elders themselves, and had the power of ordaining (See 1 Tim. v. 1, 17, 19; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Titus i. 5; ii. 7, 15; iii. 10; see Rev. Vers.), which were the peculiar privileges of the Apostles and are now the peculiar privileges of Bishops. So long as the Apostles lived, and some time afterwards, the three orders of ministers were called (1) "Apostles," (2) "Presbyters," or "Bishops," and (3) "Deacons;" but ultimately—as we learn from an "ancient author," *Theodoret* (who wrote A.D. 440), the title of the Apostle ceased to be used for the first order of the ministry, and those who had succeeded to that office came to be called Bishops, which title was then no longer applied to the Presbyters. *Theodoret* says: "The same persons were in ancient times called indifferently Presbyters or Bishops at which time those who are now called Bishops were called Apostles;" and in his commentary on 1 Tim. iii. 1, after the same statement, he adds: "In process of time the name of Apostles was left those who were in the strict sense Apostles (i.e., sent directly by Christ Himself), and the name of Bishop was confined to those who were anciently called Apostles." Whatever seeming difficulty arises from this different use of the titles of the three orders of minister in the New Testament, is dispelled when we find, as is the fact, that the actual practice of the Church was uniform, and not a trace of any dispute or alteration in the orders of the ministry is to be found in any ancient writer.

It is important for us to know these things, because we are liable to be met with arguments against the scriptural authority of Episcopacy founded on this fact, that in the New Testament the word "bishop" is, as we have seen, applied to those who were merely "presbyters" or "elders," as though the question turned simply on the names used to designate the different orders of ministers; whereas the question, of course, is whether there were in Apostolic times three distinct orders of ministers or not, not whether these orders were always uniformly called by the names by which we now distinguish them.

The Ordering of Deacons.—The order of Deacons is the lowest order in the ministry. A person cannot take the office on himself. He must be called. If we examine the office we shall see that he must be both outwardly called, i.e., by those having authority in the Church, and also inwardly called by the Holy Ghost: and that he can only be ordained to the office by the Bishop.

When the first Deacons were appointed in the Church we find they were brought to the Apostles, "and when they had prayed they laid their hands on them;" (Acts vi. 6.) In like manner, "with prayer and imposition of hands," Deacons are now ordained in the Church of England—by the Bishops who now exercise this apostolic authority.

In this manner the authority which Christ gave to His Apostles after His Resurrection, when He promised to be with them "alway even to the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20), has been and is handed on from age to age by the Bishops of the Church.

Before proceeding with the ordination, the officiating Bishop is required to inquire whether the persons presented for ordination are fit and proper persons, as regards their learning and their moral character, first of the Archdeacon who presents them, and then of the congregation present; so that as far as possible no unworthy person may be admitted to this sacred office.

Then follows the Litany with special supplications for those to be ordained, and other suitable prayers.

After this comes the celebration of the Holy Communion with a special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel. Note the subject of the epistle—the ordination takes place immediately after the reading of the Epistle, and the Gospel is read after the ordination by one of the newly ordained Deacons. The Communion is then proceeded with, and the service is concluded with three special Collects.

Duties of Deacons.—The deacon is usually the helper or assistant of a Priest or Bishop. The first Deacons were primarily appointed to take charge of the distribution of alms: Acts vi. 2, but they also preached and baptized, and St. Stephen, we are also told, performed miracles: Acts vi. 8; viii. 5, 35, 38.

The duty of Deacons is also nowadays to distribute such alms as may be entrusted to them, and to preach (if so authorized by the Bishop) and to baptize, to read the Scriptures and public prayers, to assist in the administration of the Holy Communion, to visit the parishioners, and to instruct the young

in the faith; but they are not authorized to celebrate the Holy Communion, nor to pronounce the absolution.

The Canons of the Church require that a man should ordinarily remain at least a year in the office of Deacon before being advanced to the priesthood.

British and Foreign.

Morton Church, near Gainsborough, has been rebuilt at an outlay of £10,000, the entire cost having been met by Sir Hickman Beckett Bacon, of Thorrock Hall, Gainsborough, and members of the Beckett family.

Archdeacon Denison, though in his eighty-seventh year, was preaching last week at the harvest festival service in Uphill Church, near Westonsuper-Mare.

Bishop Royston, who lately resigned the See of Mauritius, has issued an appeal for the restoration of St. James' Cathedral, Port Louis, Mauritius, as a memorial of the late Bishop Ryan, first Bishop of Mauritius, afterwards rector of Middleham, Bedale, Yorks.

The top brick of the spire of the Christchurch Cathedral, New Zealand, was laid on the 19th of August by Bishop Julius, who was conveyed to the top of the spire by a chair attached to a rope.

Her Majesty has been pleased to approve the appointment of the Very Reverend Francis Pigou, D.D., Dean of Chichester, to be Dean of Bristol.

The Archbishop of York, who is an old friend of the British and Foreign Bible Society, has accepted the office of President of its York Auxiliary, and has consented to preside at the Sheffield Anniversary, to be held on the 18th inst.

One new church will be the result of the sale of the site of St. Olave's, Old Jewry. It is proposed to erect it in Woodberry Down, a district of Stoke Newington, on the border of Tottenham, where some of the poorest of the poor live within a few hundred yards of good villa residences.

On Tuesday the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Benson called at Westwood, and made inquiries as to Mr. Spurgeon's condition. It seems that, although he has not been able to take as much nourishment as he required, and therefore remained weak, he believes himself to be better in many respects.

On Saturday last her Royal Highness the Duchess of Albany laid the foundation-stone of the new chancel of the parish church of All Saints, Carshalton. The old parish church is said to have been built about 800 years ago, but as from time to time portions of it were taken down and rebuilt, little, if any, of the original structure now remains. At the ceremony the Bishop of Rochester made his first public appearance in the diocese since his recent illness.

The Federal Courts of the United States have given a decided negative to the question, "May a man plough on Sunday?" This question came first before the civil courts in the State of Tennessee. The decision was based upon the law setting aside one day in the week as a day of rest. It did not touch the religious uses of the Lord's Day. It was held that the Sunday law was meant for the protection of wage-earners and must be maintained.

At the recent conversazione of the Royal Society there was exhibited a set of astronomical photographs which showed how incredibly little the naked eye reveals to us of the wonders of the firmament. They represented a small patch of the constellation Cygnus, or the Swan, a space in which the telescope discerns only 170 stars. But the photographic apparatus reveals 16,206. What is true of this portion of space is probably true of

the whole. So that the eye of photography can recognize more than one thousand times as many stars as the best telescopes. Ere long some other method of research may multiply the number to a still greater extent. The majority of these orbs of light must each one be far greater than our sun and their heat far more intense.

The oldest, and one of the most eminent, of the Evangelical Reformed Bishops of Upper Hungary is Bishop Kun, of Miskolez, and the town a few weeks ago was the scene of unusual festivity in his honour. The Bishop has just completed his twenty-fifth anniversary as Bishop, and the fiftieth since his ordination as minister. In his first pastoral he insists that no Protestant family should be without the Bible, and that elementary schools should be founded in every parish. Bishop Kun is the President-elect of the General Synod, which commences its meetings early next December. With such leaders there is little to fear for the future of Protestantism in the East of Europe.

A meeting was held recently at Brisbane, Australia, under the auspices of the Bible in State School League. The Bishop of Brisbane occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance. On the platform were a number of prominent ministers of different denominations, and also the Colonial Secretary. Three resolutions, affirming the desirability of Bible teaching in State Schools, and pledging the meeting to support the Bible in State Schools League, were adopted almost unanimously, with considerable enthusiasm.

Trinity College, Glenalmond, celebrated its jubilee on the 1st instant. The weather was exceptionally favourable, and all the arrangements were perfectly successful. The gathering, which was a remarkably brilliant one, included nearly all the Scottish bishops and many dignitaries of the Scottish Church. Mr. Gladstone, the sole survivor of the founders of the institution, the Marquis of Lothian, who was its first scholar, and the venerable Bishop of St. Andrews, were among those who foregathered on the occasion. After a special service of the Holy Communion, the foundation-stone of the new wing for the building was laid by Mr. Gladstone. At the subsequent luncheon Bishop Wordsworth said that he had lived to see, from among the earliest pupils, one—Lord Schomberg Kerr—who had risen to become Secretary of State for Scotland, and another—Daniel Sandford—who had become a Bishop of the Church of England. "I venture to quote them as samples, and as proofs, of the success of the system which we adopted—the system of combined scholastic and domestic training, the system of the great English public schools, which we aimed to transplant into Scottish soil."

The Church Congress opened well. The sermons by the Bishops of Manchester and Ripon were listened to by crowded congregations with intense interest. An address of welcome was presented by the Town-Commissioners, and acknowledged by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who said he believed meetings like this would be the means of drawing all bodies of Christian men together, and promoting mutual justice, love and charity.

Family Reading.

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

SPECIAL TALENTS.

There are some talents that a great many people have, such as strength, and there are others that are given to only a few people. These last may be called Special talents, and shall be the subject we are going to think about to-day.

Here are half a dozen boys, and each of them has a talent, or "turn" for a different thing. One has a great fondness for mechanics; he loves to see a clock taken to pieces, and to make out how all the little wheels and springs move. Another has quite a different turn; he delights in birds of all sorts, knows their notes, and their haunts, and has a vast collection of birds' eggs. (Though I am