

the received English version of the Bible (which provisionally I will call authorized) the female diaconate has been obliterated. As I read my New Testament, the female diaconate is as definite an institution in the apostolic church as the male diaconate. Phebe is as much a deacon as Stephen or Philip is a deacon.

"In Timothy the deaconesses are transformed into deacons' wives, in defiance, alike of the natural interpretation of the words and of the suggestions of the context, while in Romans xvi. 1, the colourless word 'servant' is substituted for the more precise term 'deacon' or 'minister.' Until this female diaconate is restored, the Church of England in this diocese will remain one-handed.

"Feeling this strongly I laid the subject before the meeting of archdeacons and rural deans in September, 1880. The result was the appointment of a committee on woman's work, which reported early in the following year. This report recommended the introduction of the office, diaconess."

Deaconesses in the early church were ordained to their office by the imposition of hands in the usual apostolic manner, and the form of prayer used on the occasion is still extant in the apostolic constitutions.

Pliny, in his celebrated letter to the Emperor Trajan, mentions that he thought it "necessary to put two women to the torture, who were said to bear a part in their ceremonies." To bear a part in "the ceremonies" of the church was no little matter in those days.

"Rejoinder" asks for "evidence" that women have received the gift of the pastorate. What "evidence" satisfies "Rejoinder" in the case of men? To use the words of the esteemed editor of THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT when writing on another subject, "a little wholesome impartiality is what we want." Women are pastors in the Unitarian Church, the Universalist Church, the Primitive Methodist Church, and the Society of Friends. The gifts are not wanting; it is the church that lacks wisdom and grace to use the gifts of the whole "body." Women have fed the noblest thoughts of the noblest lives in all ages. Woman has shepherded the most wayward into green pastures and beside still waters, and spoken the words of life even at the borders of the valley and shadow of death.

The fable of the ancient Cebes is still true. Woman still sits at the portal of life, presenting a cup to all who enter, in which diffuses through every vein a poison or a balm that will cling to them for ever. It will not do to tell us in the nineteenth century of "the general sense of the churches." The general sense of churches burned witches to their own great edification and our great amazement. During the years of the Commonwealth there is reason to believe that more witches perished in England than in the whole period before and after. To give up faith in witchcraft was considered in effect to give up the Bible. What about the "the general sense of the church," and the "consensus of the orthodox," etc. Men were burned in France for eating meat on Friday, in 1539, with the alternative clearly placed before them, that they might have the pleasure of being hanged if they repented.

We must not say too much about the "general" or particular sense of the church. Her history is a tangled web of glory and shame.

We will not make our judgment blind; we will accept the truth, but it must come to us with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. In other words we take our orders from the Head of the Church, and not from any "traditionary practice and practical consensus of the orthodox" and fallible churches.

ITA.

A SPIRITUAL MINISTRY.

BY REV. A. F. M'GREGOR, TORONTO.

As compared with the old, the new dispensation is marked by its *spirituality*. The spirit of gospel ordinances is shown to be more than the mere Sinaitic ritual. The ministry of Christ was peerlessly a ministry of the *spirit*, of all his utterances, both in public and in private, He could say: "The words that I have spoken unto you are *spirit* and are *life*."

AN AGE OF IMPROVEMENTS.

That improvements, in schools, are coming upon us to-day is a fact patent to all, and we have creed-menders by the legion among us. But who can improve upon "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," and as His law was enunciated by His speech and interpreted by His conduct? Reverently, may we not, therefore, ask was there ever a clearer head,