

to one and the same individual. Such was the opinion of the fathers of the Reformation, of Luther and Calvin and Knox; such was the opinion of Cranmer and Cressher, those brilliant ornaments of the Church of England in its earliest days. Such was the opinion of such talented and scholarly men in this century as Whately, Alford and Stanley; such is the opinion of such erudite Biblical scholars in our own day as Elliott and Lightfoot, and, let it be added, such must be the opinion of every Greek scholar who reasons fairly and without prejudice or preconception. Calvin thus writes: "In giving the names of bishops, presbyters and pastors indiscriminately to those who govern Churches, I have done it on the authority of Scripture, which uses the word as synonymous; to all who discharge the ministry of the Word it gives the name of bishops." This is the lucid opinion or conviction of Whately: "Successors in the apostolic office the apostles have none. As personal attendants on the Lord Jesus and witnesses of His resurrection, as the dispensers of miraculous gifts, as the inspired oracles of divine revelation, they have no successors. But as members, as ministers, as governors, of Christian communities, their successors are the regularly admitted members, lawfully ordained ministers, regular and recognized governors of a regularly subsisting Christian Church." The first deacons of whom we have any account are those who, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, were appointed shortly after the Day of Pentecost. In his first epistle to Timothy, Paul enumerates the qualifications which those who were to be elected deacons were to possess. Deacons were, in the first instance, chosen to manage the affairs of the poor, to receive contributions which were made in behalf of the poor, to distribute such contributions to proper persons, and doubtless to accompany their acts of charity with exhortation and prayer. In our larger congregations, and especially in our towns and cities, there are deacons whose functions is to look after the poor and after the collections of the Church or congregation; and, when a proper division of labour exists, to accompany the elder, in visiting the families of the congregation. From the office of the diaconship very great benefits can manifestly accrue to the Church and congregation. Those who hold the office in question are in a very favourable position for gathering useful knowledge and experience, and for becoming eligible for promotion to the higher honour of eldership, whenever a vacancy occurs, or whenever it is desirable to increase the number of elders.

In addition to 1 Timothy v. 17, which deals with elders, there are two other passages to which it will be advantageous to make a brief reference. Paul thus writes in an epistle to Christians. "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity, he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." It is evident that the apostle is here adverting to the various functionaries in the Christian Church when he wrote his epistle to the Romans. There is at least a very large measure of plausibility in the contention that Paul had deacons in contemplation when he said, "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." Such is a succinct account of the purposes for which the office of the diaconship was established. There is likewise a large measure of plausibility in the opinion that when he says, "He that ruleth, with diligence," i.e., let him rule with diligence, he is referring to those who had to do exclusively with the government and discipline of the Church—to those who had nothing to do officially with preaching—those who therefore correspond to the elders in the Presbyterian Church, or to ruling elders, as they are sometimes designated, to distinguish them from preaching elders or presbyters. "And God hath set some in the Church: first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." There can be little or no doubt that Paul, whose words have just been quoted, is employing here abstract for concrete terms, and that accordingly we are at liberty to alter his phrases from helps, governments, into helpers, governors. There seems to be adequate reason, therefore, for surmising that, by helpers, deacons are intended, inasmuch as in the ren-

dering of assistance to the poor (therefore to the apostles themselves, whose labours were thus materially lightened) the very essence of the diaconship consisted. Nor need we have any hesitation in regarding the word governors in the citation before us as indicating a class of office-bearers whose functions were the government and discipline of the Church, whose duties were limited to the government and discipline of the Church, and who correspond very closely to the ruling elders in our Presbyterian Churches. It is not necessary for us to maintain very strongly that the words of Paul, "He that ruleth, let him rule with diligence," "God hath set governments or governors in the Church," justify beyond contradiction the having and the upholding of the office of ruling elders in the Presbyterian Church.

(To be continued.)

'THE SUPERNATURAL IN REVIVALS.'

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The history of the Church has always shown that any forward movement is sure to meet with opposition, and that God, faithful to His promise regarding the wrath of man, is sure to overrule that opposition for good. The bold scoffing of open enemies and the cold criticism of professed friends have brought to the front able defenders of the great modern revival movement, which the present generation is privileged to witness. Such, Dr. Townsend, of Boston, shows himself to be in his recent valuable work on "The Supernatural Factor in Religious Revivals." Called forth by the success of the Parker School of Naturalism, the Boston adorners of "culture," he proceeds, with the calm dignity of a Christian philosopher, "to collect, impartially, facts relating to revivals, with a view of showing therefrom the more obvious deductions, and of testing the modern revival and religious methods." In the outset he endorses the Parker dictum, "A revival of religion in this nation is the pressing need of the hour," but that it is to come "little by little . . . from long-continued peace and the faithful adherence to industrial pursuits and virtuous living," is a delusion evident from philosophy and experience. "If revival must come 'little by little,' and so 'little by little' that no perceptible advance is made in thirty years (since the utterance of the Parker dictum) then all living must die without the sight of the longer-for-reformation; while the existing sloughs and slums of political and commercial corruption and dishonesty, of social infidelities and insecurities, of thieving tramps and brutal murderers, must last until the grave shall shield us; nay, God only knows how much longer." No, history shows that revival, like conversion, is often sudden and mysterious, like a mighty rushing wind. It must be the work of a Sovereign God who chooses His own times and seasons, His own methods and agencies. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." As "the wind bloweth, where it listeth." Often suddenly, ever sovereignly, having now a fisherman from Galilee, now a graduate from the school of Gamaliel, sometimes an Edwards, sometimes a Moody, but ever the same old Gospel faithfully preached, not only in the great congregation, but "in season and out of season," "night and day," "from house to house," "every man to his brother."

By prolonged and impartial inductive investigation, in view of masses of fact and incident, an argumentative chain of irresistible power is forged link by link, and the twofold conclusion logically established. (1) "Nothing can be clearer, therefore, than that the effective methods sanctioned by all history should be restored." These are, briefly, Gospel preaching by pastors and evangelists (including women, when specially called and qualified), the prayer meeting, the altar and the inquiry room, and personal dealing by individual effort. These are what the Holy Spirit has specially owned in the past, and we have reason to expect will own in the future.

(2) Beware of dependence upon any set of methods, ordinary or extraordinary. Trust in either, or any "arm of flesh," is alike dishonouring and offensive to God. The supremacy of the Holy Ghost must be acknowledged with an "absorbing feeling of utter helplessness and dependence." Then, and only then, will true revival be achieved.

*Messrs. Lea & Shepherd, publishers, Boston.

AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS' FUND.

At the last meeting of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces the following regulations for the management of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund in the Eastern Section of the Church were unanimously adopted:

1. The fund for disabled ministers in the Eastern Section of the Church shall, in the meantime, continue separate, and be managed by a committee appointed by the General Assembly.
2. The fund shall be sustained by annual congregational contributions, ministers' rates, donations and bequests.
3. The invested capital shall not be treasured upon for the purpose of paying annuities in full; and all bequests made to the fund shall be added to the capital, except when otherwise ordered by the testator.
4. Settled pastors, foreign missionaries, professors in colleges, and Church agents shall pay into the fund an annual rate of \$5.
5. When a minister resigns his charge without leave from the General Assembly to retire, but continues in the service of the Church as a preacher, he shall pay into the fund the sum of \$5 a year, otherwise his annuity shall be only in proportion to the time of his service as a pastor.
6. A minister who resigns his charge and joins another Church forfeits all claim to the privileges of the fund. He shall receive back, however, upon application to the committee, half the amount of the personal rates which he paid into the fund. Should he desire to retain his connection with the fund, the Assembly may allow him to do so on condition that he pay an annual rate of \$15, the annuity to be given him, on his becoming aged and infirm, to be in proportion to the length of his services in the Church.
7. The rates shall be paid each year on or before Nov. 1.
8. Persons joining the fund shall pay their percentage according to the regulations passed by the General Assembly of 1877, with interest thereon, from the date of their ordination, or of their becoming ministers of our Church. This rule shall not apply further back than 1877.
9. Any of our present ministers who may neglect to connect himself with the fund before January 1, 1888, cannot be received into connection with it after that date, except by the special leave of the Assembly.
10. Ministers shall be placed on the fund only on application of their respective Presbyteries, after they have obtained leave of the General Assembly to retire from the active duties of the ministry on account of age or infirmity.
11. In making application it is required of Presbyteries to state the age of the person in whose behalf the application is made, the date of his retirement from the active duties of the ministry, and the length of time during which he has laboured in this Church. In the case of a person who is under seventy years of age, the application must be accompanied by a satisfactory medical certificate of ill health.
12. No person can be placed upon the fund as an annuitant unless he has paid the annual rate required of him.
13. When a minister is allowed by the General Assembly to retire after ten years' service in this Church, he shall receive an annuity of \$150 a year, with \$5 additional for every year's service beyond ten years, up to forty years' service, if the state of the fund permit.
14. The case of a minister allowed to retire after less than ten years' service in this Church shall be made a subject of special consideration by the Assembly.
15. When a minister's strength may be impaired, but not so much as to render him wholly unable to discharge the active duties of a profession, the committee may grant him half the allowance to which he would be entitled in case of complete disability.
16. In the case of a minister taken on the fund for sickness, thought likely to be permanent, and afterward recovering his strength sufficiently to engage actively in the duties of a profession, the annuity shall be reduced or discontinued.
17. When a minister who has paid rates to the fund arrives at the age of seventy years, he may claim the privilege of retiring from the active duties of the ministry and being placed upon the fund.
18. In the case of ministers who are entirely dependent for their support upon their regular annuity from this fund the committee shall have power, after careful inquiry into their circumstances, to grant such an additional allowance to them as the condition of the fund will permit; such additional allowance in no case to exceed the sum of \$75 a year.
19. When a minister is removed by orderly translation from one section of the Church to another, he shall, from the date of his translation, pay his rate into the fund of the section to which he is translated, and he shall have claim to an interest in it on his retirement by leave of the Assembly, to the full extent of the period of his pastoral services in both sections.
20. Annuities shall be paid in quarterly instalments, on the 1st July, October, January and April, payments to begin on the first of these dates succeeding the receipts of the Presbytery's application to the committee.
21. These rules may be revised once in every five years.

These regulations have to be submitted to the General Assembly for its approval. The Assembly may, perhaps, refuse to sanction the fourth regulation. Should it see proper to take this course no one in the East can have reason to complain. It is certainly desirable that the ministerial rate should be the same in both sections of the Church. If the Western Section is not willing to adopt the \$5 rate, it is perhaps better that the Eastern Section should not have it. Personally, I am in favour of the \$5 rate, but I do not want to have one rate for the East and another for the West.

A. MCLEAN SINCLAIR.