

offerings of christians at first were large, though the amount contributed was optional, at least to some extent. In fact the way in which the greater part of it was raised is mentioned, for it was to consist of offerings on the "first day of the week as God had prospered them," (1 Cor. xvi. 2,) the proportion which they were expected to contribute being probably one tenth of their worldly gain. Moreover, special collections were made on special occasions, as when the Macedonian and Corinthian Churches sent a contribution to the christians of Judea during the famine which had been foretold by Agabus, as it is written in the Acts, St. Paul himself mentioning the subscription in 2 Cor. viii. Perhaps then as now collections were made for special funds on special days. Perhaps the Widows' fund, and the Clergy fund, and the fund for Missionary purposes were made the objects of special appeal. But in whatever proportions it was raised the general fund was large and the pay of the clergy ample, as appears from the oft mentioned requisite of a minister that he be "not greedy of filthy lucre," (1 Tim. iii. 2,) and the caution against the conduct of those who entered from corrupt motives into the ministry thinking to make a "gain," (1 Tim. vi. 5) of godliness.

Now, my brethren, I have brought forward these particulars, which you will observe rather afford proof that a system existed, than enable us to follow it into exact details, not because they are the only proofs that in early times the church had a fund out of which the various charitable and necessary expenses were paid, and distribution made to the necessities of saints, for in fact, early history will teach the same with more clearness and distinctness. But I think it is well for us to notice that we have scripture warrant that such an organization did exist, and that we are not by our efforts now departing from the Apostolic method. And thus when we remark on St. Paul's order that the Elders who rule well, be counted worthy of *double*, which is probably a way of expressing *liberal* pay, (an expression derived from