

this inordinate love of riches, simply, we CANNOT be saved by our own power. Left to ourselves we should fail utterly in the attempt to combine the love of God with the deceitfulness of earthly mammon. But we are not left to ourselves. The salvation of the soul in the midst of earthly riches requires *a spiritual miracle*, a miracle of the grace of God. But so far from miracles being rare, we live in the midst of them. Without them no man could be saved at all, least of all any man who has so much about him as the rich have to make this world sweet and easy. Souls are saved, men enter into the heavenly kingdom, in spite of difficulties humanly insuperable, and only because nothing is impossible with God.

F. W. FARRAR.

---

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER V. VERSES 1-16.

THE Apostle continues his practical advice to his son Timothy, and suggests the principle upon which the Church at Ephesus should administer its eleemosynary funds. The indiscriminate and boundless liberality of the Church at Jerusalem in the first gush of its Pentecostal life produced such extreme and agonizing want, that the Apostles were fain to secure help from the converts in Philippi, Corinth, Galatia, and Antioch, for the poor saints in Jerusalem. It does not seem probable that other Churches adopted, or were encouraged to adopt, the principle of virtual communism. Still, He who claimed to be the Judge of the widow, who by the

lips and deeds of the Divine Lord lavished special love on those who were bereft of their earthly sources of succour and protection, gave special charge from the first concerning the "widows" who had found their only rest and all their hope in Him; and the justice of their claim upon the Church was recognized by Paul. He analyzed and adjusted these claims, however, with due regard to ordinary prudence and domestic responsibility.

Before he discussed this question he reminded Timothy of his relation to all classes in his flock :

*Verses 1, 2.—Do not sharply reprimand an elderly man, but exhort him as (you would) a father; (exhort) the younger men as brethren, the elderly women as mothers, the young women as sisters, with all purity.* From Chrysostom's comment to the present day it has been perceived, even by Roman Catholic Expositors (see Mack) as well as others, that the Apostle is not speaking of ecclesiastical officers, but of the different ages and sexes of the members of the Church. Let the family relationship be sustained by the young Pastor to those whom he may be called upon to teach, reprove, and exhort; let him treat the elders as his father or mother, with the reverence and consideration due to hoary hairs and long experience of life; let him treat the younger people as his brothers or sisters; let him be reverent, cautious, earnest, manly, brotherly, chaste in all his thoughts, and never let him assume a tone which would be inconsistent with these dear relationships.

Arrogant or sharp rebuke, a domineering or

haughty spirit,<sup>1</sup> a readiness on the part of a young Pastor,—even though he be the Apostle's own representative,—to trample upon the tender feelings of others, in the flush of official responsibility, or any eagerness to assume more than the position of a son or a brother in the Lord, is here strongly denounced by St. Paul; and the injunction is not valueless to-day.

*Verse 3.*—*Honour those who are widows indeed.*<sup>2</sup> The honour probably was that of being placed on the roll of persons specially entitled to the alms of the Church. Destitution and loneliness are the conditions of the "honour" which is especially due to the veritable widow. Treat with reverence those who are thus thrown upon the tenderness of God. "Support" would depart too widely from the meaning of the word (*τιμᾶν*), but it would be fair to translate it, if possible, by a term which should express the practical form in which the honour thus cherished should find expression.

*Verse 4.*—Before St. Paul describes the "widow indeed," he throws light upon the subject by his advice concerning the class of widows who ought not to be thrown upon the liberality of the Church.

*If, says he, any widow have children or grandchildren,<sup>3</sup> let them learn first, as a prime duty, to*

<sup>1</sup> *Ἐπιπλήττειν* is not used elsewhere in the New Testament, but is found in Eustathius on Homer, and is employed in this sense in Josephus and Polybius.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. I Cor. xiv. 25, Gal. iii. 21, for this use of *ὄντως*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ἐκγόνα* is used in the LXX., Deut. vii. 13, and elsewhere for descendants: the translation, English Version, "nephews" is in the older English usage of that word. See quotations from Chaucer, Sir Thomas More, John Locke, in "Richardson's Dictionary," where "nephews" is used as "nepotes," for descendants.

*shew piety towards their own household.* Some Expositors have supposed *χήραι* to be the subject of the verb, and that the widows are to “shew piety” and return compensation to their forbears by generosity to their descendants. This idea is strangely inapposite, and the advice, in a multitude of cases, impracticable. The simple fact that the widows should have children *dependent* upon their love and care augments their destitution, and certainly does not exclude from the charity of the Church. Moreover, the forms of expression descriptive of their duties are incongruous on this hypothesis. *Εὐσεβεῖν* is not wrenched at all from its natural meaning if it is supposed to refer to filial piety of children towards a widowed mother, but it would be strained in meaning if made to describe maternal duties. So with the second clause. A widow would hardly, *because* she has children and grandchildren, be burdened with the duty of requiting through them her obligations to her own ancestors. This was, however, the interpretation of Chrysostom, and is adopted by Huther and others. I admit that there is an ancient reading<sup>1</sup> which would favour the interpretation, and that some difficulty attends the supposition that the “children or grandchildren” are the subjects of the verb, “let them learn” (*μανθανέτωσαν*), for we should have expected the word (*αὐτήν* and *αὐτῇ*) “her” to have taken the place of “household” and “forbears,” which is not the case. Still, it is far more congruous that the widows should be supported by children or descendants who are able to

<sup>1</sup> *Μανθάνετω* has no diplomatic value, though it is followed by the Vulgate, which here translates, *discat*.

do so, than that a widow who is burdened with home cares should be here solemnly charged to take care of her own family. I conclude, then, that the Apostle bids the children and descendants of widows to requite their tender love with filial reverence, and to be ashamed to cast their relatives upon the charity of the Church. *For this* devout compensation of maternal love, he adds, *is acceptable before God.*

*Verse 5.*—*But*, in contradistinction with the widow who is surrounded with children and grandchildren, there is *she that is a widow indeed, and has been left desolate*, “alone,” with none to cheer her solitary life or minister to her comforts, *hath placed her hopes in God, and abides or continues in prayers and supplications by night and by day.* The abiding in prayer and supplication is more than offering ejaculatory, formal, or occasional prayer. The expression suggests some comprehension of the meaning of our Lord’s words, “that one ought always to pray, and not to faint.”<sup>1</sup> “Prayer” and “supplication” have already been (Chap. ii. 1) compared, and the usage of the two words discussed. Like Anna, who served God in fasting and prayer *through*<sup>2</sup> day and night, and was utterly devoted to the worship of the Temple, the “widow indeed” is supposed to have cast herself upon the protection and Fatherhood of God, and *by*<sup>2</sup> night and day to be occupied in devout exercises.

<sup>1</sup> Τὸ δεῖν πάντοτε προσεύχεσθαι (Luke xviii. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Observe the usage (Luke ii. 37) of the accusative as denoting *duration*, and, in this place, the genitive as indicating *occasion*. The worship of heaven gives “day” before “night” as the prominent idea, though it is curious to find “night” spoken of at all. (Rev. vii. 15.)

*Verse 6.*—*But*, on the other hand, *she*, *i.e.*, the widow, *that lives deliciously or riotously* (this word<sup>1</sup> is a rare one, and suggests extravagance, luxury in dress and desire) *is dead while she lives*. Wettstein quotes from the “Antigone” of Sophocles two lines, in which the use of a similar comparison betrays a strange difference of moral purpose and teaching. They are these: “When men abandon pleasures, I do not reckon that such a one lives, but I consider him a living corpse.”<sup>2</sup>

*Verse 7* contains another instance of the private character of this Epistle. Again and again the Apostle reminds Timothy that he is not merely laying down principles, but suggesting the very matter of his special instructions.<sup>3</sup> *These things* (with reference to the character of the “widows indeed,” a portraiture heightened in colouring by the contrasted picture of the living and bedizened corpse) *command, that they*, *viz.*, such widows, *may be irreproachable*,<sup>4</sup> not unblamed, but unworthy of censure, even should the sharp tongue of slander be put out against them; a thing which was likely enough to occur in a crowded city like Ephesus.

*Verse 8.*—*But if any one* (*i.e.*, not merely one who has a widowed mother dependent upon him, but any professed believer in Christ) *does not make provision for his own* (dependent relatives of any

<sup>1</sup> Σπαραλᾶ is one of the sins of Sodom and of her daughters (Ezek. xvi. 49), and is associated (James v. 5) with τρυφᾶν, a word of similar import.

<sup>2</sup> Soph. Antig. 1165–67.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Chap. i. 18; ii. 1; iii. 14; iv. 6, 9, 11; v. 21; vi. 2, 13, 17; 2 Tim. ii. 2, 14; iv. 1; Tit. ii. 1, 15; iii. 1, 8.

<sup>4</sup> This is the difference between the two words ἀμειπτος and ἀνεπιληπτος.

degree), and especially for his own household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. This is strong language, and we find in it a "counsel of perfection" that shews how deeply and practically the Apostle had entered into the mind of Christ. The form of the conditional sentence<sup>1</sup> shews that he was dealing with no doubtful or conjectural case, but with a matter of fact. The word rendered "his own," is that which is used in John xiii. 1 ff. for those who were brought into close fellowship with Jesus; and it is used in a broader sense in John i. 11, where the words "his own" refer to the people whom He came to save. The second phrase describes the members of the same (*οἶκος*, or) family. Mack supposes, from its use in Gal. vi. 10, Ephes. ii. 19, that it refers to all members of the household of faith, this would give to the injunction such enormous breadth as to deprive it of force. A denial of "the faith" is involved in practical neglect of the responsibilities of home life. If so, then "faith" may be repudiated by other than intellectual processes. Moreover, we learn that an acceptance and a confession of the faith carries with it, as an inseparable adjunct, both love and sacrifice. The faith of Christ ought to make a man a more faithful husband, a more loving father, a more dutiful son. Should it fail in any case to do this, we are here distinctly taught, not that we might as well have intellectually rejected the faith, but that we have, as a matter of fact, *denied* it, and are "worse" than those who have never professed to believe in the living God or in the loving Christ. Even the precepts of Heathen

<sup>1</sup> *Εἰ οὐ*, with the indicature on both protasis and apodosis.

philosophy will carry one who does not believe in Christ to the practical recognition of these obvious duties. It is a wretched thing, doubtless, from the standpoint of the Apostle to be "without faith," to be an "unbeliever;" but there is something "worse."

*Verse 9.*—*Let a widow be enrolled*, or put in the catalogue or list. Alford translates "Let a woman be inserted in the catalogue as a widow," on the ground of the emphatic position of the word *χήρα*, which is thus the predicate, and not the subject, of the verb. Ellicott virtually agrees. The sense is much the same. Now there is no difficulty as to the general meaning of the word *καταλέγειν*, which simply means to enter in a list, *conscribiren*. But great difference of opinion prevails in determining the nature of the roll, catalogue, or list here referred to. I will state briefly the different opinions. Many Expositors, after the lead of Schleiermacher, and on different grounds, have urged that this "catalogue" introduces a perfectly new theme, that it refers to an *order* of deaconesses, of women devoted to the service of the Church, whose moral fitness, however, the writer of the Epistle had already discussed in Chap. iii. 11 *ff.* Schleiermacher argues, from this hint of the ecclesiastical constitution thus supposed to exist, a later date than the life of Paul for the composition of the Epistle. Mack, on the other hand, finds apparent confirmation of the idea in the Theodosian Code, where there occurs a late interpretation of this very passage in the Epistle: "No woman, unless she has attained sixty years, according to the command of the Apostle, is taken into the sisterhood (*consortium*) of deaconesses." Baur and De Wette



have, notwithstanding their theories with reference to the authorship of the Epistle, repudiated this interpretation, and shewn that the known duties of deaconesses in the early Church must have been utterly incompatible with an age of sixty years. Moreover, virgins were elected to this office, and they were not forbidden to marry, as the women placed in this catalogue would appear to have been. Another hypothesis is far more probable. It is that the "catalogue" was a list of *presbyteræ*, rather than of *diaconissæ*, of elderly "widows," who were at this period of Church development entrusted with duties far more akin to those of the presbyter than the deacon. Here Mosheim, Grotius, Wiesinger, Huther, Ellicott, and Alford are in agreement, while Mosheim endeavours to shew that there are other indications of the existence in apostolic times of such an order. De Wette will not allow that the passage before us establishes apostolic precedent in this respect; but he admits the probability that, at an early date, holy women did take upon themselves a vow of perpetual widowhood, and did perform important functions in the Church. The proof, however, of such an order of ecclesiastical women, ordained to sacred duties, can only be found at a very much later date, and it is strongly against the supposition that the early Greek Expositors knew nothing of its existence. It should also be observed that nothing is said of their duties to the Church, and every remark rather justifies the duties of the community to them, than theirs to the community.

The third view commends itself far more forcibly

to my mind ; it was held by Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Jerome, and by Erasmus, Calvin, Neander, and latterly by Fairbairn, viz., that the Apostle is simply giving definite and exclusive directions about the widows who are to be thrown *entirely* on the sustenance of the Church. It is objected that he has already defined their moral characteristics in the fourth verse. He has indeed given some hints, but not very definite or final ones, on this subject, being led on to say, parenthetically, some strong things about the duties of those who have widowed relatives, to provide for them. He has not dropped the theme, and there are further elements in the question, such for instance, as the age, antecedents, and probable future of those who should receive their entire maintenance from the Church, on which he proceeds to enlarge. It is said that the minimum age of sixty years is a harsh measure of exclusion from sustenance, and that younger widows might be exposed to even greater privations. That is perfectly true ; but, then, the Apostle strongly advises the younger widows to admit second nuptials, and to avoid the temptations of celibacy. The antecedents again, it is said, seem to apply to those who were possessed of private fortune, and therefore inapplicable to those who were seeking the alms of the Church. This circumstance would only augment and aggravate the pain of poverty and desolation, and it should be remembered throughout that the Apostle is merely considering the case of those who are, by the death of their natural protectors, become desolate and destitute. It does not follow that women thus "honoured" and provided for, should not, as far as

strength and life would allow, perform loving duties to their younger sisters; but the argument and advice include consideration rather of their claims than of their functions, and wisely limit the benefactions of the Church so as to preclude the dangerous element otherwise likely to have been unceremoniously obtruded upon them. Paul set his face as a flint against idleness and extortion, and if the Church at Ephesus, in following that at Jerusalem, was arranging "a daily ministration" for every widow *per se*, he pointed out its perils, and gave practical financial advice. He did not counsel Timothy to shut up the compassions of the Church to any suffering or destitution, of man or woman, widow or virgin, but he would not counsel the creation of a list of permanent beneficiaries, except under the following special and stringent conditions.

*Let a widow be enrolled on the list who is not less than sixty years, the wife of one husband.* The construction of the first of these clauses is unusual, but perfectly intelligible, and has been sufficiently discussed. It is said by Ellicott, Alford, and others that "contemporaneous polygamy" is here quite out of the question, and therefore nothing else can be meant than widows who were *univiræ*, and that thus the corresponding qualification (Chap. iii.) of bishops and deacons must be taken to be St. Paul's condemnation in their case of second marriages. If it were so, surely St. Paul's undoubted admission of second marriages—without the slightest vestige of taint or slur (Rom. vii., 1 Cor. vii.), together with the advice given in Verse 15 to the younger widows—makes this interpretation of the passage very doubtful. I

admit that a condemnation of *polyandry* is out of the question, just as a condemnation of *polygamy* in the third chapter is not conceivable; but it seems to me—with Huther, Bengel, Fairbairn, and others—to be far more probable that, in each case, St. Paul is laying emphasis on connubial fidelity and unblemished purity of manners during married life. The Roman matrons did pride themselves on being *univiræ*, and thus protested against the fatal facility of divorce, as well as other evils incident to Pagan society. The argument deduced from these expressions in favour of ascetic depreciation of the married state is altogether forced, so long as we possess elsewhere the opinion of Paul as to the sanctity of the connubial relation and his positive recommendation of second marriages in certain circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

*Verse 10.*—*If she be well reported of in respect of good deeds* (not only that there is nothing against her, but that her kindly beautiful actions must plead for her); *if she have brought up children* (not necessarily, from the choice of the word,<sup>2</sup> *her own* off-spring. She is not to be excluded by the simple fact of non-maternity, but only by the absence of a womanly heart of love towards children); *if she have entertained strangers*<sup>3</sup> (this does not necessarily imply that

<sup>1</sup> An interesting article in Dr. Smith's "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," on "Digamy," shews at length how, early in the Christian Church, for the clergy of all ranks, second marriages were condemned, and recites the opinions of ecclesiastical writers as to the sin of second marriages among the laity. Thus Tertullian inveighed against them in his two books, "Ad Uxorem," in his treatise, "De Monogamia," &c. Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen, but not Augustine, adopted the same view. It is clear that the conciliar decisions in the same direction were based on an intensifying asceticism engrafted on Christianity.

<sup>2</sup> Ἐτεκνοτρόφησα.

<sup>3</sup> Ἐξενδοδέχησα.

she must have suffered a great reverse in her fortunes; for, it may be asked, Who are so hospitable to the poor and destitute, as those who are poor themselves? The willingness to serve, the spirit of sacrifice, and a loving trust in human nature are involved in this grace. It entered into Christ's own ideal representation of his own sheep (Matt. xxv. 35), and in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chap. xiii. 2) a like expression is gilded with noble recompense); *if she have washed the feet of saints* (this refers to an Oriental method of entertainment, which, however, was generally rendered by menials. It had become, however, a proof of immeasurable love and deep humility when observed by the Lord Himself (John xiii. 1-10) on the night of his Passion. In this recommendation the practice need not be taken in the letter so much as in the spirit, which would render loving, even menial, service, if required, to one of the least of his disciples); *if she have relieved* (have been sufficiently strong, *i.e.*, to ward off a danger from) *the distressed*; *if she have followed after every good work* (has been *ready* to do even that which her strength would not allow her to accomplish, being in sympathy with all holy service); then let her, in her widowhood, be placed on your list of sacred honour. She is given to you as a precious bestowment of heavenly love; her loveliness of character and her goodness, her sorrowful history and her need, are claims you must not dare to trifle with. They are urged upon you by Him who is the Judge of the widow and the Father of the fatherless.

This ideal of holy living ought not to be passed by as a mere exegetical puzzle, or as a *crux* of

ecclesiastical controversy. It is a cabinet portrait of practical Christian life, and it sets in its jewellery of heaven an ideal picture drawn by the hand of an heroic master. The features he portrays include all godly self-restraints, a deep devout regard for the young and helpless, a profound self-forgetfulness, self-humiliation and generosity, both skill and promptitude to do the right, as well as eager search both after the objects of love and the reasons for sacrifice.

*Verse 11.*—*But younger widows decline to put on your roll.* Paul did not say that such might never be recipients of any alms from the Church, but he considered it undesirable to give young women the recognized position of those who were espoused to Christ and *entirely* dependent on his Church. The claims of the elder, as well as the responsibilities that might easily, in certain cases, arise out of them, were unsuitable to the younger women. Baur here labours hard to identify the widows (*χήραι*) with virgins (*παρθενοί*) of early Church history and with an order of unmarried women such as that which is referred to in one of the most dubious of the letters of Ignatius. On this hypothesis Baur considers that he has another argument against the Pauline authorship of the Epistle. There is no need whatever to press this possible identification.

*For when they have come to wax wanton against Christ, they desire to marry (again).* There is uncertainty as to the text,<sup>1</sup> but we have little difficulty in preferring, with the Received Text, the sub-

<sup>1</sup> The reading of the Receptus is *κατασχημάτισαι*, which has  $\aleph$ CDKL in its favour.

junctive to the indicative mood.<sup>1</sup> The word used signifies the leading of a fast, lawless, ungovernable life. The element of licentiousness is involved in the word, but not necessarily or always so. Palm and Rost say that the verb, with the preposition (*κατα*), denotes, "to behave oneself haughtily against another."

Under strong worldly influences the younger widows would be tempted to become disobedient to their Master and Husband, Christ; and, under these circumstances, they will wish to marry, and will thus exclude themselves from the catalogue of widows to be honoured as "widows indeed."

*Verse 12.*—*Having* (bearing about with them) *a judgment*<sup>2</sup> *that*<sup>3</sup> *they have broken their first faith*, not their vow of widowhood, but of consecration to Christ. The "honour" given to the widows was one which made them the sacred charge of the Church; it must be conferred after long experience and careful inquiry. The younger widows could not have the same tests of character; they were exposed to greater temptations, not simply to break a supposed vow of widowhood, but to rush into worldly pleasures and sins, and thus trifle even with the covenant they had made with Christ.

*Verse 13.*—There are further reasons given for their non-admission on the roll. *Moreover, they*

<sup>1</sup> Alford here differs from Ellicott and Tischendorf, edition 8. But even when *εαν* is coupled with the subjunctive, it does not always, in New Testament Greek, suggest the probability of the occurrence of the circumstance named in the condition. See Jelf, "Greek Grammar," § 484.

<sup>2</sup> Not *κατακρίμα*, "condemnation," but *κρίμα*, "judgment."

<sup>3</sup> The *ὅτι* is not causal, as it would have been if *κρίμα* had been used in the sense of *κατακρίμα*.

*learn, going about from house to house* (of the members of the Church), *to be idle*.<sup>1</sup> Having no need to exert themselves and no home cares, they would be tempted by the charity of the Church to waste their own time and that of others; *and not only idle persons, but frivolous talkers and busybodies, speaking, perhaps chattering,*<sup>2</sup> *things which they ought not—* things which are not fitting.

*Verse 14.*—*I give it therefore* (since these things are so, the significance of οὖν) *as my counsel* (this word expresses more than a mere wish, or an opinion that it would be advisable<sup>3</sup>) *that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the house.* This advice, or counsel, shews that Paul cannot be throwing even the faintest slur on a second marriage. Jerome and Augustine, hampered by the ascetic tendencies which subsequently influenced the Church, were careful to urge that this advice does not create a permanent law, and that all which the Apostle meant was that a second marriage was better than licentiousness. On the contrary, there is no reference even to licentiousness, in the ascetic sense of the word, but a warning against frivolousness, idleness, and talkativeness inconsistent with the responsibilities, sedateness, and sobriety of those who

<sup>1</sup> I take it as proved that *μανθάνουσι* must be taken to govern *ἀργαί*, not *περιερχόμεναι*, notwithstanding the awkwardness of the expression. Winer quotes a similar usage of *μάνθανειν* with *σόφοι*, from Plato, *Euthyd.* 276 b.

<sup>2</sup> The classical distinction between *λάλειν* and *λέγειν*, that the former includes the inarticulate language of lower animals, the latter confined to the speech of man, is not maintained in the New Testament. Still, there may be the hint contained in the word.

<sup>3</sup> *Βούλομαι* and *θέλω* are difficult to discriminate, though the former has the element of deliberation often involved. It is far less frequently used by St. Paul than the latter. Cf. the two verses, 12, 14.



are, or ought to be, the living expression of the sanctity of the Church. The Apostle would have these widows *give no occasion to the adversary for calumny*. The adversary need not mean the devil,<sup>1</sup> and there is no necessity to connect the "adversary" with the "reproach," thus making the calumny, or reproach, the essence of the adverse action. That this advice was not needless, he adds,—

*Verse 15.*—*For already some have been turned aside after Satan.* The class, as a class, are exposed to special danger. Certain ecclesiastical arrangements have aggravated their temptations, and, as a matter of fact, certain women have, by reason of the very listlessness fostered by the authorities, become a scandal to the Church.

*Verse 16.*—Then, as if to prove that this was the main idea in the mind of the writer, and that he had not been throughout speaking of any ascetic ecclesiastic institute, but of an *elemosynary* fellowship of holy women, he adds—once more falling back on a principle already established—*If any believer, male or female, has widows dependent on him or her for support, in virtue of any form of relationship, such as that of child, or mother, or sister, or intimate friend even, let such relieve them, and let not the Church burden itself, that it may relieve those who are widows indeed.* It did not occur to the Apostle that poor Christian widows could be left to starve, but he was resolutely determined on the question that indiscriminate charity, in cases where the

<sup>1</sup> Leo translates: *Quo inimico ad calumniandum parato nullam præbeant occasionem.* Cf. Luke xiii. 17; 1 Cor. xvi. 9; Phil. i. 28. In 2 Thess. ii. 4, it is used for the "Man of Sin." Cf. Tit. iii. 8 with ὁ ἐξ ἐναρτίας.

Church ought to be seconded by common sense, would lead to universal bankruptcy, serious temptation, and ugly scandal. The great prominence given to this subject leads one to ask for some explanation of the fact that there should have been so many widows in the Christian Churches of Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Corinth. The prominent attention called to them in Jerusalem may be due to the special injunctions which abound in the Old Testament as to the care and consideration which were demanded for them by the Lord. Special laws enacted that a widow's garment should not be taken in pledge (Deut. xxiv. 17). The heart of God seems to yearn over them (Exod. xxii. 22; Deut. xxvii. 19; Isa. i. 17; Jer. vii. 6). Neglect of widows was reprobated, care of them regarded as a religious duty (Isa. x. 2; Mal. iii. 5; Matt. xxiii. 14; *cf.* also James i. 27). But this hardly accounts for the great prevalence of widows in the Asiatic cities. (1) It may have arisen in part from the polygamous tendencies and practices which prevailed, and which must often on the death of one man have thrown a whole harem upon the charity of friends.<sup>1</sup> (2) War and hardship fell at this period with greater relative violence upon the men than upon the women. (3) Considered as a desolate and unbefriended class, many widows would have been among the earliest and most impressionable hearers of the Gospel of love, sacrifice, and sympathy. (4) It is clear that in later days

<sup>1</sup> Monogamy was, indeed, the law of Greece and Rome, and polygamy was not legal at Ephesus or Corinth; but where Oriental customs prevailed great looseness was allowed.

the term "widow" was used to denote those who, though virgins, were ranked among the class of widows. Apart from the passage in Ignatius (*ad. Smyr.* 13), to which I have already referred, Tertullian, "*De Velandis Virginibus*," speaks with disapproval of a virgin enrolled, though only twenty years of age, in the rank of widows.<sup>1</sup> The "Apostolic Constitutions" (Book ii. c. 4) declare that charitable distributions are to be made to necessitous persons, and wisely provides that sometimes a woman who has a husband is to be preferred. The author (Book iii.) expands into details the advice of this very chapter of St. Paul's Epistle, and gives much the same reasons for enrolment and non-enrolment which we have already considered. The bishop's duty is to make provision for the needy, distributing seasonably the oblations to every one of them, to the widows, to the orphans, &c. The widows' functions in the Church are "to pray for those that give and for the whole Church." They are not to teach, nor to discharge any ministerial duty, and they are expressly distinguished from the deaconesses (c. 7), whom they are called upon to obey. These "Constitutions" represent (in Books i.-vii.), according to Bunsen, the Church life of the close of the second and beginning of the third century. They are obviously built upon the injunctions contained in the Pastoral Epistles, and hence help to throw back the composition of the Epistles to a much earlier date. Every reference here to the widows confirms our general view of this passage.

H. R. REYNOLDS.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Epiph. adv. Hær. L. iii. c. 79, § 4*