**27. Let a woman be enrolled a widow,  
who is not less than sixty years old, the  
wife of one husband** (compare ch. iii. 2.  
Here, as contemporaneous polygamy is out  
of the question, and thus one element of  
difficulty in the other case is eliminated,  
we can hardly understand any thing other  
than that the *aged widow* spoken of should  
*have been* the wife of only one husband:  
i.e., not married a second time. So that  
the parallel expressions here and in ch. iii. 2  
will be consistently interpreted), **having a  
good character** (testimony from without,  
compare ch. iii. **7) in** (the element or region  
in which that *testimony* is versed) **good  
works ; if** (the conditions have as yet been  
expressed by participles in agreement with  
the noun : the construction is now changed  
for the hypothetical) **she at any time  
brought up children** (her own ? or those of  
others? If [1], the *barren* might seem  
hardly dealt with: if [2], the word must  
be somewhat forced aside from its ordinary  
meaning. Still this latter, considering that.  
*entertaining strangers* is the next good  
work specified, seems most probable), **if  
she** (at any time) **entertained strangers**  
(practised hospitality. This clearly points  
out a person above the rank of the poor and  
indigent : though Chrysostom pithily replies, “Even if she be poor, she has a house. For I don’t suppose she dwells in  
the open air.” One is glad to hear that  
all the Christian widows at Constantinople  
were so well off. But it can hardly have  
been so in the apostolic age. Compare, on  
the subject of hospitality, ch. iii. 2: Tit.i. 8:  
Rom. xii. 18: Heb. xiii. 2), **if she** (at any  
time) **washed the feet of the saints** (this  
may be an expression intended to signify  
performing the humblest offices. **Still, we  
must not dismiss from our consideration the**  
  
external act itself: as Theodoret reminds  
us, it was an ancient practice among  
Christians: see John xiii. 14, and note, in  
which, though a formal ceremony in obedience to our Saviour’s words is repudiated,  
the principle of humbly serving one another,  
which would lead to such an act on occasion  
presented, is maintained), **if she** (at any  
time) **relieved the distressed** (not merely  
the *poor,* but those afflicted in any way),  
**if she followed every good work** (Chrysostom, in his fine homily on this passage, cited above, says: “ What is the following  
every good work? It is, for example, the  
going into a prison and visiting the prisoners, the visiting the sick, the comforting the distressed, the soothing those who are  
in pain, the contributing in every way all  
that is possible, and declining nothing that  
may tend to the well-being and refreshment  
of them that are our brethren.” Bengel’s  
idea, “ that it is the part of those in high  
station, and of *men,* to *set the example* of  
good works, and of women, to follow, in  
helping on as much as they can,” is ingenious but wrong. For the expression, “ *to follow good works,*” is used in Greek of  
those who do them as a pursuit of life,  
without reference to any relative priority).

**11.**] **But younger widows decline**  
(to place on the *roll,* see above on ver. 9:  
not ‘avoid,’ *for fear of scandal,* as Chrysostom in the homily above cited : nor both of these combined, as Huther : nor ‘ decline  
as objects for the alms of the church,’ as  
some above): **for when they shall wax  
wanton against Christ** (their proper bride-  
groom), **they desire to** (the A. V. has  
utterly confused the sense by rendering “they  
will marry,” as if it were a simple future)  
**marry** (again); **bearing** (on themselves, as a  
burden: see Gal.v.10)**a judgment**(from God: