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ARTICLE I.

## THE DIACONATE.\*

The Committee appointed last year to report to the Synod, at its present meeting, on the subject of the Diaconate, respectfully present the following paper:

The Committee in taking up the subject referred to them have acted under the impression that the purpose of their appointment was not that they should attempt an exhaustive treatment of it, but should consider it in certain aspects in which either principles underlying the diaconal office may be developed, or theoretical differences be discussed, or the points indicated in which our practice is defective. Accordingly, we propose, after a brief statement of certain assumptions in reference to which there is universal agreement among us, to submit the results of our reflections under the following heads: first, The Relations of the Diaconate to the Presbyterate; secondly, The Scope of the Deacon's Functions; and thirdly, The Sphere of his Operations.

\*This paper was presented as a report to the Synod at its recent sessions at Spartanburg, and appears in the REVIEW in accordance with a request of that body. It will be observed that the report was a partial one, discussing only the first head of the general scheme of topics which it proposes to cover. The Committee were directed to submit the remainder at the next sessions of the Synod.

surprised at certain conclusions which he reached in regard to the nature of the Church's mission, and in regard to the rights of ruling elders. We will mention a few of them as specimens.

(1). A body which is authorised to make a form and polity for itself cannot be expected to make the Bible the rule of faith and practice in the sense of the sixth section of the first chapter of the Westminster Confession. Its discretionary power must needs be very large, so large, indeed, as to be limited only by the prohibitions of the Bible. We confess ourselves unable to see any difference in principle between the position of our author upon this point and the position of the anti-Puritan party in the Church of England in the reign of Elizabeth.

(2). If the ruling elder be what Princeton said he is, then doubtless he has no right to lay on hands in the ordination of a minister; and it is difficult to see what right is left to him, except that of informing the "clergy" what the wishes of the people are.

But we are engaged in an ungracious task, and hasten to conclude. We have a great veneration for the memory of Dr. Hodge as a noble champion of that truth which lies nearest to the salvation of a sinner. His name deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance in the Presbyterian Church as a theologian. And we sincerely regret that we cannot respect him as highly as an Ecclesiologist. But, *non possumus omnia*. T. E. P.

*Some Elements of Religion: Lent Lectures, 1879.* By H. P. LIDDON, D. D., Canon of St. Paul's. Second Edition. Rivingtons: London, Oxford, and Cambridge. 1873.

Since his famous Bampton Lectures on the Divinity of our Lord, the name of Canon Liddon is known wherever English is read and the Redeemer honored. At home he is equally celebrated as the London preacher who in the estimation of many most admirably combines weight of matter with impressiveness of delivery. It was therefore with strong expectations of what Plato calls a banquet of reason that we betook ourselves to the perusal of this neat volume: nor were those expectations wholly disappointed. These Lectures were delivered in St. James's church,

Piccadilly, during the Lent services of 1870. This accounts for the fact that they are in form, and to a certain extent also in substance, of a popular rather than a scientific character. They are moreover published in the midst of pressing cares without material revision, under the judgment that they had already proved useful in the shape first given them, and that

"Un sou, quand il est assuré,  
Vaut mieux que cinq en espérance."

There are six Lectures, one for each of the six Sundays in Lent. The *first* is on the Idea of Religion; the *second* on God, considered as the Object of Religion; the *third* on the Subject of Religion—the Soul; the *fourth* on the Obstacle to Religion—Sin; the *fifth* on Prayer, regarded as the Characteristic Action of Religion; and the *sixth* on the Mediator, contemplated as the Guarantee of Religious Life. The foot-notes are as interesting and valuable as the text. These may be said to be select rather than numerous, and to be discerning and apposite rather than remote in their reference to the matter in hand. They are rich in apt quotation and pondered learning, and bring the scattered rays of many cross-lights to bear upon the subject that in the given case happens to be under treatment. In the first Lecture the author emphasizes the significant fact that religion to-day more than ever before is a matter of general scrutiny. This is all the more remarkable as religion, though never before so universally safeguarded as an idea, was perhaps never before more widely opposed and denounced as a reality. Where are we to look for the explanation of this fact? Is it that this period in which we live is one of transition? "Is it that as of old, barbarian invaders, who will without scruple devastate the precincts and sack the interior of the temple, are pausing involuntarily, spell-bound, almost terrified, upon the threshold of the sacred shrine?" Is it due to the æsthetic feeling? Is the present notice that is taken of religion, even by a godless world, at bottom owing to social, to political, to selfish, or instinctive causes? Allowing as he does some force to these and other secondary influences, Canon Liddon finds a deeper reason for the phenomenon in the wider conviction that religion is an indispensable part

of man's moral and mental outfit. Two causes have deepened this conviction in modern times: *first*, the *subjective* spirit of the age, following the leading of the German idealists, and especially of Schleiermacher, which has been carried, indeed, so far by Feuerbach as to have conceived of all existing religions as but the creations of human thought; and *second*, a profounder study of history. These causes special to the time we live in, do, however, only reinforce the reasons for the sway of religious reflection which are always operative. One of these is the certainty that every one of us must die. From this the Lecturer presently comes up to the question, "What is religion?" This he answers by showing that it is not a *mere* form (though the highest and purest) of feeling. This was the view of Schleiermacher, and he might have added of Morell. Neither is religion a *mere* form of knowledge. This too is evinced and illustrated. This (or something near it) was the view of the Gnostics and of such recent thinkers as Hegel. Nor is it enough to say that the essential thing in religion is morality. This was the view of Kant. The true answer is then given. It is that religious life is more than feeling, more than knowledge, more than obedience to a moral code, and yet it involves all these. "Religion is feeling; it is mental illumination; it is especially moral effort; because it is that which implies, and comprehends, and combines them all. It is the sacred bond, freely accepted, generously, enthusiastically, persistently welcomed, whereby the soul engages to make a continuous expenditure of its highest powers in attaching itself to the personal source and object of its being."

Dr. Liddon refers to the notion of Cicero that religion is that anxious habit of mind which cons over and over again what relates to the divine. He himself evidently inclines more to the notion of Lactantius, who connects religion with the idea of an obligation by which man is bound to God. This, as he points out, is in substantial harmony with the phraseology of Scripture. Religion is a covenant and at the same time a communion. But what are the characteristics of a true religion? It must be mysterious. It must be definite. There are weighty arguments and fine remarks under this head. The definiteness of the New Tes-

tament is strikingly signalized. It must be positive. The unfruitfulness of religious negations is well brought out, while it is cheerfully admitted that even a true religion has important negative aspects. It must furthermore be absolute. Would any sane man die for what was only "relatively true," in the sense of the sceptic? Yet religion is not absolute in the sense of Theodore Parker, and precisely because Christianity is not relative in the sense of a partial, merely preparatory system, but a universal and perfect one.

This is a crude statement of the main drift of the first Lecture. It takes no note of the amplification of the points of the delicate *nuances*, of the rich dress in which the thought is clothed. An interesting testimony to the importance of religion is given from the lips of Sir Robert Peel. Dr. Tholuck is reported as saying to Dr. Pusey that the higher criticism having done away with Christianity was just then earnestly insisting upon the necessity of taking regular exercise.

We cannot analyse the remaining Lectures minutely. The soul's thirst, our author proceeds to show, cannot be satisfied by heathenism, or by materialism. The human mind recoils from Atheism. The thought of God is latent in the breast of man. The cosmological and teleological arguments are carefully stated. The Lecturer then goes on to point out how God is banished from the world by Deism, and buried in the world by Pantheism, and how Pantheism relapses back into Materialism. This part of the book is especially able and impressive. A noble passage, that has been often cited, is quoted both in English and Latin from the Confessions of Augustine. It is the one in which that father tells us why nature was to him so beautiful, by telling us how nature had led him up to God. God is more than the highest intelligence; being an inference also of the practical reason. There is a discussion of conscience, which is proved to be not a product of education. God is a postulate of conscience; and the identity of the God of conscience and the God of nature is certified by miracle. It is conclusively demonstrated that the dignity of God is not compromised by miracles which attest his morality. *Man* is next considered; the sense of personalty; the spiritual

nature of the soul; the estimate that the Lord puts on the outward and inward elements of human nature. The theory of the soul's preëxistence is fully presented and refuted. The rival theories of Traducianism and Creationism are exhibited with unusual clearness, and we know not where to find a better account of the matter in English from the view-point of a creationist. The destiny of the soul, immortality, the resurrection, are discussed in a manner worthy of the theme. There is considerable space devoted to a philosophic examination of the subject of suicide. Our business is to save our souls. There is therefore an awfulness no less than a blessedness in life. Then our author treats of sin. He follows the traces of its recognition in Judaism and heathendom, in the melancholy of Werther, and in the Pessimism of Schopenhauer, as well as in the threnody of Paul over creation's anguish, who, however, alone sees light on the distant horizon. The awful problem is then dealt with of the origin of moral evil, of which the reverend Lecturer says: "Our path lies between the temptation to extenuate the idea of evil, and the temptation to tamper with the idea of God." The falsity and worthlessness of Spinoza's theory is made evident. The theory of Dualism is then admirably discussed, and is rejected. Sin is tracked to its lair in evil desire and the selfishness that originates in a corrupt heart. It is further shown that sin contradicts eternal law, lifts itself in opposition against the self-existent nature of the infinite lawgiver, and abuses the generosity of a boundless and divine benefactor. There is a valuable analysis in the notes of the Hebrew words for sin. Paul and Augustine are shown to be in harmony in what they say about the reasons for the permission of sin. It is religion's task to grapple with sin. The "philosophies" vainly ignore or belittle it. Jesus teaches what sin is and what it leads to, and is himself the only atonement for it, the only victor over it. There is a thorough discussion of prayer, as the characteristic action of religion. Serious prayer, it is argued, so far from being "sentimental," is a form of hard work. This view is perhaps pushed a little too far, and might seem to squint towards monachism. There is little if anything, however, to except to in the author's language.

Prayer implies and teaches that "God is really alive." Prayer is far more than mere petition, yet in the lower sense is shown to be reconcilable with the principles of enlightened reason and the mandates of natural law. The author leans towards the possibility of a miraculous intervention. This is virtually the position of Mozley. This is a grand chapter. The most attractive of all the Lectures is the last.

H. C. A.

*A Blow at the Root of Modern Infidelity and Scepticism; or, Huxleyism Analysed and Criticised.* By THOMAS MORROW, J. B. Lippincott & Co.: Philadelphia. 1878. Pp. 60.

Mr. Morrow is engaged in a most important work. This pamphlet, he informs us, is the condensation "of a more elaborate and more extensive work,"\* and is designed to give a summary view of the alleged discoveries of men of science, such as Darwin, Tyndall, and others of less note, but especially of Prof. Huxley, whose name he introduces, as represented by "Huxleyism" in the title of the pamphlet, because he embraces nearly all the "suppositions and theories of scientific scepticism." Mr. Morrow proposes to show, in his larger work, now ready for the press, in fuller discussion, what he here summarily sets forth, "that the arguments of the Professor (Huxley) and others in favor of Evolution are utter failures;" that "all the suppositions, hypotheses and theories of scientists, biologists, and geologists, in opposition to the Bible, have their ultimate and *only* foundation in the *supposed* chronological records of geological strata;" that "by their own statements, the existence of such chronological records in geological strata is a fivefold impossibility," and that "Prof. Huxley himself admits, and repeats with emphasis, that there is not the slightest proof of the age of strata."

These are bold and confident words. We do not profess to enter into that minute and careful examination of this little work, by which we might give a positive endorsement of Mr. Morrow's views. Yet we have no doubt of the entire honesty and fair dealing

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\*Morrow's Thesaurus: Containing a collection of Facts on Geology, Darwinism, the Bible, and Modern Scepticism, with Appendices A, B, C, D.