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OF THE DIACONATE.

THIS is the title of the last Canon or No. 18 of the Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada. The Canon is a model of brevity as modern Canons go, but it may, without violation of its force, be reduced to the following compass as to all that it means:—

A Deacon need not surrender his worldly calling or business (said calling being approved by the Bishop), and every Deacon who shall be given a separate charge shall be under the direction of a neighbouring Priest.

Why was it passed? The matter of ordaining Deacons is in the hands of every Bishop.

The Provincial Synod in this Canon desired to give to the Bishop more liberty in the ordaining of Deacons than could be used under the existing Canons of the Church of England.

Under Canons of 1603, No. 33, the Bishop may not ordain to the Diaconate without a title to preferment. Under No. 34 a knowledge of Latin is a *sine qua non*. Nos. 75 and 76 forbid the following by a Deacon of worldly calling or business, under pain of excommunication. People have been led to misunderstand the object of the Synod of 1880 by the very erroneous use of the term Permanent Diaconate. No such term occurs in the Canon; indeed such a term is ridiculous. The office of a Deacon is permanent so long as the holder thereof remains without advancement to the Priesthood, and that advancement cannot justly be refused to any man who fulfils the necessary requirements. Doubtless one of the requirements would be that he should serve for a term, at the Bishop's discretion, in his office of Deacon without any secular business.

The way having been thus smoothed, have any of our Bishops yet ordained Deacons under the Canon XVIII? And if not, why not? Have there been no applicants properly qualified? The question have there been no applicants is a very serious one, for its answer in the negative will show one of two circumstances. Either that the Church has not sufficient hold upon the affection and zeal of her children to call forth volunteers who will give themselves thus to the service of the Lord for nought, or that the clergy have been afraid to seek such aid from among the earnest and pious of their congregations.

We are not unaware of the sad fact that the hold upon the confidence and affection of their

people is, in some cases, so very slight that certain Rectors and Incumbents fear the creation of a possible rival in popularity. We can only say that where such exists, especially after a lengthened incumbency, the best thing that could happen to the Church would be the severance, of course if possible in an amicable way, of a tie, which means the continuance of stagnation, spiritual sleep, or death in the congregation. We are not referring to the faction which, impelled often by a worldly spirit of the baser kind, is often found in the parishes of the most successful, pious and hard-working clergy, we speak of those cases where clergymen, after years of incumbency, have not gained the confidence of even a respectable minority of their people. If then the fear of a possible rival keeps any clergyman from presenting some earnest, pious and zealous member of his congregation to the Bishop for ordination under Canon 18 to the Diaconate, it argues ill, not for the wisdom of the said Canon, but for the whole discipline of the Church which fails to provide for such a case.

It will not, perhaps, be amiss if we dwell for a few moments on the great need for the increase of our Diaconate. The rapid increase of the Priesthood is at present out of the question. When the Church is thoroughly awakened, and her thousands of wandering sheep brought back to the fold, she will offer the means to support an increased Priesthood. To awaken our present congregations, and to gather in the outcast, the trumpet must be sounded more loudly and more frequently, and in more places than it is heard at present. To go out to the highways and byways, to conduct mission services in remote city and rural districts, to go into the wilderness to seek the lost sheep and "compel" them to come in, is now beyond the possible power of our Parish Priests. The ordinary duties of every parish among us so tax the energy and hours of our present staff of parochial clergy that there is simply no time for extraordinary efforts.

Why are the outcasts caught by the sounding trumpets of the Salvation Army? Because our Priests are too weak-handed to be able to go beyond the limits of their regular congregation, to whom, unquestionably, their first service is due? Why are sermons so wretched and services so cold and listless? Because your Parish Priest has more on his hands of parish work than he can at any time overtake in a month, and much of this onerous load of work is of a nature that could be well performed by a Deacon. Lay Readers have failed, we suppose, because they had no real recognized *status* in the congregations. It is true there is no fear of a Lay Reader being a rival in popularity to a clergyman, for he has little work in common with his Priest. A Deacon, with license to preach without manuscript in the mission house—aye, and in the street, too, if needful—assisting his Priest in the distribution of the Blessed Sacrament, has a position in the congregation which calls for the respect of those to whom he ministers, and calls out whatever there is of nobility in the man's own mind for the discharge of his—not as in the case of the Lay Reader, perfunctory—duties, and leads him by the surest road to a deep and lasting love of his holy office for its own sake, and of him under whose direction he is able to prove himself a living power in the material and spiritual growth of the parish in which he lives and ministers.

THE BAPTIST BIBLE.

AT a Convention of Baptists, recently held at Saratoga, New York, it was decided by an overwhelming majority that the denomination shall no longer support the American Bible Society in circulating the Scriptures, but will in the future circulate only Baptist Bibles. While this step has long been threatening, it was thought by many questionable whether action of the kind would be taken, as it was so strong an admission that the Bible, which has been so beloved and treasured by the Christian world, does not only not teach the Baptist views, but is to be understood as being opposed to them. This, no doubt, had much to do with the delay, but in reality contributed very largely to the result. It is no secret that the more active propagators of Baptist principles found it altogether impossible to satisfy intelligent people that the Baptist doctrines were Scriptural with the Bible as it is, and so the only way to meet the difficulty was to make a Bible for themselves, and maintain that it and not the other is *the* Bible. This they have accordingly done. The New York Times, referring to this action, says:—

"The Baptists, who in point of numbers are one of the largest religious denominations in this country, have resolved to have their own private Bible. By a large majority the Baptist Convention in session at Saratoga has decided that Baptist Bibles only shall be circulated by Baptists, and that the denomination shall no longer support the American Bible Society by purchasing the King James version of the Scriptures.

"The trouble with the King James Bible in the opinion of the Baptists is that it uses the word 'baptism' instead of 'immersion.' Some years ago certain Baptist ministers made a new translation of the Bible, adapted to Baptist views, and it is this version which the Baptists as a denomination propose to adopt. It is the beginning of a movement that may have far-reaching consequences. If the Baptists can have their own Bible why should not the Presbyterians have their Bible with the word 'bishop' uniformly translated 'elder,' and why should there not be a Methodist Bible, from which all texts teaching baptismal regeneration are carefully omitted? The movement may go on until every Protestant sect has its particular Bible, as well as the distinctive doctrines which it is now compelled to draw from a general Bible.

"No consistent Protestant can find fault with the action of the Baptist Convention. There are those who still hold to the absolute infallibility of the King James translation, although the publication of the revised version has somewhat disturbed their faith. The same class of people may still hold to the doctrine that every type-setter and proof-reader of the American Bible Society is infallible, but unless they do hold this doctrine they must admit that the Bible as published by the Bible Society may contain typographical errors and perhaps errors of translation. The doctrine of the infallibility of the King James version can no longer be maintained and devout Protestants must limit infallibility to the original Hebrew and Greek text.

"There is, therefore, no reason why every sect which thinks that its own doctrines are contained in the Scriptures should not have a new translation in which its doctrine may be more clearly expressed than they are in the present version. The only objection which can be made to separate sectarian Bibles is that, as in accordance with Protestant belief the Bible is the only rule of faith, the unenlightened heathen would find it very difficult to find any sure rule of faith among half a dozen conflicting Bibles."

Our readers will see that there is a much more serious phase of the subject even than the immediate results which follow from the action of