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Pulpit Criticism.

WITH

◀ ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE ▶

A WEEKLY SHEET.

BY DAVID EDWARDS.

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ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,

CORNER OF KING AND SIMCOE STREETS.

The service at this Church was conducted by the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, on the morning of the 17th inst. Inasmuch as our lot is cast in the midst of "a waste, howling, (Ecclesiastical) wilderness," the occasional occurrence of an oasis therein, is the more refreshing, and so far as one may judge from a single service, one need not hesitate to pronounce St. Andrew's a comparative oasis. The passage of Scripture which meets one's eye on entering the Church, emblazoned as it is on the wall, immediately behind the pulpit, would appear to express the aspiration of minister and people, and the hymns, and prayers, indeed the service as a whole, may be said to have been in harmony with the passage referred to—"Holiness becometh thine house, O Jehovah, for ever"—Even oases however, may be presumed to have their barren spots, their patches of sand, &c., and we are free to acknowledge that the abomination styled "an anthem" is as *sand* in our eyes; it occupies a relation to the rest of the service, corresponding to that occupied by the ballet in an operatic performance, and we venture to regard the toleration of such a display in a Presbyterian Church, as a piece of unworthy truckling to the fashion of the nineteenth century. The first portion of Scripture read during the service, and that without comment, was Psalm xxxiv, a Psalm, the interest of which will be enhanced to Biblical students, by comparing it with Psalm lvii, and cxlii, Psalms which were composed under circumstances, corresponding to those which led to the composition of the thirty-fourth; one of the most interesting features of the Psalms is their intended applicability to David's greater Son,

according to his own declaration (Luke xxiv, 44)—“All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the . . . Psalms, concerning me.” It will be well for those who are accustomed to read them, that they should reflect that they were doubtless a constant subject of the Lord’s meditation, and that, as regards this particular Psalm, the declaration of the twentieth verse—“He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken”—would be connected by the Messiah, with the corresponding typical command in Ex. xii, 46, and in Numb. ix. 12, respectively; the declaration of the twenty-first verse of the thirty-fourth Psalm receives at least one of its culminating illustrations, as recorded in Matt. xxvii, 25. One might have expected a Hebrew scholar, when reading this Psalm, to render the former part of the third verse—“They looked to him and were *cheered*,” instead of “were lightened”; a similar remark might be made with regard to that portion of Ez. xxxiv, which was read subsequently; when, in the authorized version, one finds such a word as “broken” (v. 16) applied to a sheep, and one happens to know that the word should be rendered “torn,” one is apt to consider that it is the province of a scholar to say as much; and when again we meet with such a promise as that “one shepherd will be set over the Almighty’s Israelitish sheep.”—(v. 23) and that shepherd is to bear the name of David (the beloved), and this is promised long after the death of the king, one is entitled to expect that something shall be said relating to that, “plant of renown” who is to be “raised up for them” (v. 29), even David’s greater Son; any one acquainted with Hebrew may see that the title “Lord

God,” so constantly occurring in Ezekiel, is equivalent to Jehovah-Jesus, and that there is no word in the original to correspond with the English “God”; this becomes the more interesting when it is perceived how largely the sentiment expressed in v. 16—“I will feed *them* with *judgment*,” is characteristic of the book, and corresponds with the mission of Him who declared that “*for judgment*” he had come into this world (Jno. ix, 39), and again, that “the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son,” “and hath given Him authority to *exercise judgment*, because he is the Son of man” (Jno. v, 22, 27); the word rendered “Lord,” in Ezekiel, and connected with the name Jehovah many times, when dissected, will be found to mean—“God in judgment”; we will only add that Psalm ii. 9-12, is a portion of Scripture which discloses similar teaching. Mr. Macdonnell however, merely connected Ezekiel xxxiv. with John x, as conveying the idea of the pastoral relation of the Lord to his people, and this was also the subject of his sermon; the tenth chapter of John, when severed from the three preceding verses, is as a body deprived of its head; the 14th verse, and part of the 15th become so much more intelligible if read as follows, that we present the amendment accordingly—“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and men know me; even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father.” The threefold declaration also with the *reading* of which, the “lesson” terminated, is too striking to be passed without notice—1. “I lay down my life for the sheep.” 2. “I lay down my life that I might take it again.” 3.

"I lay it down of myself." The sermon may be described as having been a running commentary on the twenty-third Psalm, which, to our thinking, is the kind of sermon which is supremely needed, and as a rule, is the only kind that is not intolerable. Mr. Macdonnell commented on the fact of this simple and beautiful composition being suitable alike for childhood and old age, and upon the extent to which it had conveyed its solace in times of trial, in all ages and climes; it so happens that this Psalm was used by the writer when, in his pastoral capacity, he first visited a death-bed, and he is able to testify to it having been a means of comfort and support in three similar cases, in his own family. The title by which the Almighty is described in the opening sentence—"Jehovah is my shepherd"—involving as it does, the idea of an endless covenant-relationship, is itself a source of confidence; it is said that sheep would be frightened by the noise of turbulent waters, and in that case there is a tenderness in being led by "still waters," which is not generally regarded. "He refresheth my soul" is perhaps more expressive and suitable than "restor-eth," and doing this for his "Name's sake," is, (or at least may be taken as) doing it for Christ's sake. In treating the 4th verse as relating to the article of death (and not to this world), Mr. Macdonnell observed that "the shadow of death" involved the presence of light beyond the valley, and he cited, in confirmation of "thou art with me," the assurance of the Lord Jesus—"I am with you alway," Matt. xxviii, 20. In illustration of the fifth verse—"Thou preparest a table before me in the

presence of mine enemies, &c." he adduced that portion of King David's history which is recorded in 2 Sam. xvii, where we read of his passing over Jordan (in the same direction that his rejected Son ultimately went), of his going to Mahanaim, the place where "the angels of God met Jacob," and of certain persons bringing him "beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine." David's experience therefore, in confirmation of his faith, would encourage him to conclude his Psalm with the sentiment—"Certainly goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and my dwelling will be in the house of Jehovah for ever"—a sentiment with which the teaching of the Apostle Paul (1 Thess. iv, 17), may be said closely to correspond—"so shall we ever be with the Lord." It is not surprising that intelligent persons find their way to St. Andrew's, for at least they have there some food for reflection, and that is more than can be said of most of the churches in the city.


CATECHISM FOR "THE CLERGY."

Inasmuch as certain persons are styled "priests" by their respective churches, and themselves cherish the delusion that they are such, it may be well to enquire of them, if they are aware that the word "priest" is simply "presbyter" boiled down (so to speak), first to "prester" and thence to "priest"; and further to enquire if they are aware that the presence of a Divine high priest before the throne of the

universe precludes the possibility of any other priesthood being recognized by him; whenever they may become acquainted with these facts, they may possibly learn that there is small reason for them to refrain from acting in concert with other ministers in such a matter, say, as that of attempting to reclaim the inmates of the Reformatory from a career of crime; these would-be priests might also learn their own inferiority to the men from whom they hold aloof, if they were in any degree to act in harmony with them.

With regard to the diaconate (so styled), the supposed "order of deacons," humiliating and saddening as it is to make the acknowledgment, is simply traceable to the same sacrilegious unscrupulousness on the part of the translators of the authorized version of the New Testament, which induced them to put the word "bishopric" (Acts i, 20) into the mouth of the king of Israel (Ps. cix, 8). It is even more humiliating, and more saddening to be obliged to say that when the recent revisers had to deal with the fabrication which oc-

curs in 1 Tim. ii, 10, "*let them use the office of a deacon,*" they have been disingenuous enough simply to shuffle the cards (as it were) and render the passage "let them serve as deacons," although they could not but know that "let them minister, (or) serve," is all that is warranted by the Greek. Simple-minded laymen will naturally ask what is the meaning of all this unfaithful trickery, and the only answer which it appears possible to give to such an enquiry is, that it is traceable to the intense corruption of the professing Church, which led the men who are individually responsible for such proceedings, to endeavour to support the existence of *an order of deacons* by means so disingenuous. If they who pride themselves on their spurious plumage will "examine themselves" and their shallow pretensions, if they will apply themselves to answer the facts here stated, they will find little ground to warrant their assuming the airs of exclusiveness; they may also discover much that will account for the growing unbelief at which they are so horror-stricken.

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