

ARTICLE IX.

THE PRESBYTERIAN DIACONATE.

The nature and functions of the Diaconate, as part of the Presbyterian polity, have lately become a subject of discussion in our Church, with special reference to certain reformatory movements “for a change of the plan of conducting the benevolent enterprises of the Church.” The proposed reform involves, as its justification, a novel theory of the nature, and a vast extension of the scope, of the diaconal office. It is this use of the new doctrines that has impressed the writer with the necessity of endeavoring, according to his ability, to stay the tide of what he considers an unscriptural and impracticable speculation. An article in the last number of this REVIEW, together with certain resolutions docketed by the Synod of South Carolina at its last meeting “for consideration” at its next, will be taken as presenting in its clearest and strongest form the scheme that is here opposed. It is a pain and grief to enter into controversy with the distinguished and learned author of those papers, at whose feet it is a delight to sit and learn ; but the very reverence and authority which he is justly awarded by all, and by none more sincerely and fully than by the present writer, constitute the reasons of this public opposition. If it were not for the weight of *his* name and the eloquence and ability of *his* advocacy, this article would never have been written.

I.

It is affirmed “that the deacon belongs to a different order from the elder; from which position it follows, *first*, that the higher office of presbyter does not include the lower office of deacon ; *secondly*, that those two offices should be kept distinct.” It is to be hoped that the Synod of South Carolina will reject this “*resolution*,” if not for its bad doctrine, at least for its bad logic, which is the matter just now under review. Its plausibility is first derived from a disregard of the two logical quantities of extension and intension, and a consequent confusion of the con-

cepts, which are viewed *extensively* in the premises and *intensively* in the inferences. But, before the dry bones of logic begin their rattle, it will be profitable, perhaps, to illustrate what is meant by the statement that the higher office or order *includes* the lower. Take, for instance, the different orders of the English nobility, Duke, Marquis, and so on down to Baron. Each higher order, whilst it contains in its differentiating marks and functions which determine its rank and distinguish its office in the scale and works of nobility and are wanting to the lower, has all the offices, rights, functions, etc., of all the lower—to use the language of logic, *connotes all their mark**; the members of all the orders meet and sit and work and vote as equals, constituting the House of Lords. In that court, each higher order lays aside its *distinctions*, and takes the status of the lowest member; the Duke *there* is only a Baron, though he keeps his distinct name. This common character and office gives them the common name *lord*. *Church-officer* is the common name of Presbyters and Deacons. It may likewise be affirmed that, in any *system*, of orders, of which higher or lower may be predicated, there must be this involution of the marks of the lower in the higher. Otherwise they would not be a system—they would be in different worlds. Presbyters and Deacons are orders *of the Presbyterian Church*, one ecclesiastical world, in which and of which both the reviewer and the reviewed “live and move and have their being.”

Now, it is in the sense of the word illustrated above that it is maintained that the office of the Presbyter comprehends that of the Deacon. If the order of Presbyters be taken in the logical quantity of *extension*, then it does not include but necessarily excludes the Deacon's; and so, of all the orders which have been named and all that have not been named, it must be granted that it “follows” that they are coordinate and coexclusive. The order of dukes or earls, or colonels or majors, or bishops, or popes, might be extended to infinity, and still, nothing would “follow” but dukes or earls, or colonels or majors, or bishops or popes in dreary and endless succession. In like manner, animals and rational beings are coexclusive orders. The one does not necessarily include the other. There are animals that are not rational

beings ; and there are rational beings that are not animals. But change the view to that of an *intensive* concept, and forthwith we have a rational animal, and he is called a *man*; and this illustration, by the laws of association, brings us back to logic. But these very concepts, *man* and *animal*, are illustrations of the extreme slipperiness of logic, so slippery that it can only be held fast by predacious teeth. Man, in the logical quantity of intension, is of a higher, or, to speak the language of logic, a *deeper* order than animal; on the other hand, animal, in the quantity of extension, is of a higher, or *wider* order than man. Now we ask the reader to recall and apply the logical tests which discriminate these two quantities. An intensive concept *contains in it marks*, or attributes, that are *not partes extra partes*, but permeate the *substance* which connotes them. An extensive concept *contains under it objects* which are *partes extra partes* and constitute the *group* which *denotes* them. The test words are italicised. Intension is *depths* extension is *width*. The former is a synthesis, and the latter an analysis. The former is an indivisible unit, and the latter a divisible sum of units.

The following is an example of the defective logic in one respect, under which the argument of the other side is laboring:

Whatever has parts is divisible ;

The human soul has parts;

Therefore, the human soul is divisible.

Assuming that there are only two orders in the Presbyterian Church, it is here claimed that the following is an exact logical parallel:

One ecclesiastical order excludes the other ;

Presbyter is one ecclesiastical order ;

Therefore, Presbyter excludes the other, that is, the Deacon.

If “parts” and “order” have the same quantity throughout their respective syllogisms, the conclusion is inevitable. There is no other possible defect in either. But, having a clear immediate intuition of the untruth of the first conclusion, every one immediately sees that the major means, “Every group of objects that have a separate existence, is divisible;” but the minor means, “the human soul is a unit, containing in it all pervading

attributes;” and that the conclusion ought to be, “therefore, *nothing follows.*” Is it meant, then, that the untruth of the second conclusion is as plainly absurd as that of the first ? By no means. This would be an imputation offensive to the last degree. The only justification of this essay is that the second conclusion is *not* plainly absurd, but flows legitimately from the premises taken in one sense throughout, and expresses a truth—it truth, however, that is of no relevancy whatever to the extension of the office and functions of the deacon, and the reform, in head and members, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The trouble is that, because it is true in one sense, its untruth is not perceived when used in the other.

Let us, therefore, test the concept “ecclesiastical order” in the two quantities, by the insertion of the test words, “group” and “unit.” “One group (ecclesiastical order) excludes the other; the group of Presbyters is one group; therefore, the group of Presbyters excludes the group of Deacons.” Very good logic, but very barren consequence. It means that the group of Presbyters, A, B, C, D, E, F, does not include the group of Deacons, M, N, O, P. Who ever denied it ? It is universally admitted that on the roll of Presbyters there is not the name of a single Deacon. Now take it the other way. “One unit (order) excludes the other”; Presbyter is one unit or order; therefore, the (order) Presbyter excludes the (order) Deacon. True indeed, but who ever affirmed that the *order* of the one was the *order* of the other? or that Rev. Mr. P. was Deacon D ? or that there was not as clear a distinction between them, as that between a ten-foot pole and a yard-stick? Is it then charged that any one wishes the Synod of South Carolina to *adopt* such truisms ? *Far from it.* But it is claimed that these are the only legitimate inferences from the premises, take them either way. When the concepts are confused, and one appears in one premise and the other in the other, there is no inference at all, not even a *non-sequitur*. The propositions, “one group of separate objects excludes another,” and “one Substance excludes another,” will not even lie in the same syllogism.

Now, it may be objected, that the reviewer has thrown out of

the account the term "office," which appears, according to the published "resolutions," in the conclusion, and therefore ought to be supplied in the premises. He did so undoubtedly, and also justly. It is unrighteous, according to the ethics of logic, to allow "office" and "function," etc., a *conscious* existence in the argument. They are simply principles of classification, and, when they have done duty there, the concepts which they have created have an independent existence, and are the raw material on which logic *begins* to work. The *office* merely informs us what objects the group denotes ; the *functions*, what subject or substance connotes them and reduces them to unity; but the group is a group, species, genus, order, or some other *classified* collection : and the unit is a unit, undivided and indivisible. Logic, in any given case, does not and dares not take notice of the *principle of classification or the natures that are unified*. As it is suspected that the importation of these terms into the syllogism, especially into the unexpressed parts of it, produces the confusion that is felt on all hands, and creates the possibility of difference of opinion, permission is implored to illustrate what is meant. Take the concept *man* in the quantity of extension. The objects that it denotes may be classified thus: Caucasian, Mongolian, African, etc., on the principle of *race*; or thus: lawyers, physicians, clergymen, etc., on the principle of avocations. There are hundreds of principles according to which the objects may be constituted ; but the syllogism, as such, is perfectly unconscious of the principle of classification. It simply takes *man as a group of objects*. On the other hand, take the concept *man* in the quantity of intension ; and then the marks that it connotes are, say, rationality and animality, or any other functions or attributes, or all-pervading elements that analysis will give; but still, *man* enters into logic as a *synthesis* or unit. But the syllogism is totally unaware of the principle of the analysis. Man intensively conceived is a unit, the ideal man, or *one man*, or *any man*, taken as the vicarious representative of all men. Now, this being the case, how can there be any other result than a break-down of the reasoning when thus overloaded? There is no *office*, as such, in

the premises, nor *any functions*, as such, either; and there cannot be any in the conclusion.

But it may be objected, secondly, that this paper omits without warrant the important qualification, "higher" and "lower," which expresses the relation in the inference that subsists between the office of Presbyter and that of Deacon. True indeed, but with a purpose, and to our own damage so far. The intention was to exhibit the only possible cases of exclusion that pertained to the orders in any relation, and thus show the want of any relevancy on the part of those cases of exclusion to the matter in discussion. For this purpose the words were simply unmeaning. Taken in the one case they simply mean "more" and "less" objects, in the other case, "more" and "less" natures. It is perfectly plain that *any group* excludes *every* other group, and *any* unit, every other unit. A group of five will exclude a group of ten, and a brass coin will exclude one of gold.

Having accomplished this task, the damage to ourselves will now be repaired by the restoration of the banished relation, which will give us the only case of inclusion that exists—the only one that is wanted or contended for. The *higher* office is that which has the nature of the lower and one or more natures besides. Now, if the word *higher* can in any sense be predicated of the presbyter and his order, it is the sense we claim for it when we say, the higher office or order is that of Presbyter, or the Presbyter is the higher officer of the Church.

The standing illustration of inclusion, or rather involution, as the terminology of logic here requires, is the comprehension of animality and rationality in man: man is higher (or deeper) than animal, *because* he contains in him "animal" *and something besides*. Though a unit, he has *two* natures. This intensive meaning is, observe, the only *possible* one applicable to the case, whether applied to order or office. The higher order or office is the one that comprehends *the nature* of the lower order or office, together with that other nature which is its mark of distinction. And observe, again, this distinction of "higher" and "lower" *must* be made, or we have only one order, and Presbyter-Deacon. We have thus reached the first halting place after having

travelled over we know not how many parasangs of logic. Let us halt and sum up. *First:* the only two meanings which it is possible to assign to the statement, “one ecclesiastical order, either higher or lower, *excludes* the other,” are such truisms and so utterly unfruitful, that no man would think of contending for them. *Secondly:* that the meaning, taken in *extension*, of the statement, “the higher ecclesiastical order *includes* the lower,” is a flat contradiction, which no man would think of affirming. *Thirdly:* that the meaning, taken in *intension*, of the proposition, “the higher ecclesiastical order *includes* the lower,” is the one for which the writer is contending—the one held by the whole Reformed Church, and every other too, to wit, that *the Presbyterian, besides his own personal nature, has the nature also of the Beacon.* *Fourthly:* that the occasion of mistake is the neglect and consequent confusion of the logical quantity of the concepts that enter into the argument.

II.

Issue is formally joined with the author of the REVIEW article on the logic of the following argument: “Either a spiritual officer was charged with the temporal business of the Church apart from the care of the poor; or no officer was charged with it; or the deacon was charged with it. The last supposition is the only one that is reasonable.” On the contrary, we maintain the second supposition, *i.e.*, that *no officer was charged with it*, as the only one that is reasonable. There are some things common to ecclesiastical and secular corporations, and it is precisely those things that the Church, not as a church but as a secular corporation, is to cure for under the light of reason, and according to the civil and social institutions of the land. The word gives her no officers, no instructions, and no commands for such business; and she needs them not, no more than a banking firm or a railroad company. We mean those very interests which the proposed reform in manners and the proposed enlargement of doctrine would transfer to the deacons, such as the treasurer’s duties, endowment funds, and, in general, all business

that refers to the acquisition, disposal, management, and custody of property and cash. These four marks we will connote by the word *secular*; or, to define “secular” by a practical test, we would say that all business is secular which requires the official concurrence of a *civil magistrate* in order to undertaking and managing it. Reason, as it scrutinises the Church in its two aspects, as a civil and ecclesiastical body, immediately infers, (or rather suggests irresistibly,) that its officers and functions and whole nature, *are different in kind*. In the one case the Church realises the idea of grace and charity, recompenses faithfulness with ecclesiastical rewards, punishes misconduct with the withdrawal of church privileges and the infliction of church censures, and judges all questions by the light of the word, and is equipped with special endowments of grace for the discharge of these functions. Now reason manifests that the Church thus viewed *involves a constitution different* from that of a civil body. She is different in matter, nature, orders, offices, functions, and ends. And, furthermore, this necessary difference is all-pervading and all-informing. Its business, energies, officers, duties, and actions, *temporal and spiritual, are ecclesiastical all through*. Nay, more, there is not a single thing predicable of the Church in the aspect of which both *temporal and spiritual* must not also be predicated. The distinction is totally irrelevant. From her constitution down to the last action of her energy, the Church of Christ as not of this *world*, contains in it the marks of temporality and spirituality. In this discussion the words are of no weight, but of great misleading power.

Let the reader now turn the eye of reason, that of immediate perception, and that of immediate belief, and inspect the Church as *contained in the world*. This is precisely parallel to the view of man as contained in animal. Now, as *man's* animal welfare depends on his conformity and obedience to the law of animality, so it is immediately seen and felt that the *Church's* secular welfare, in temporalities and spiritualities, depends on its conformity and obedience to the law of secularity; and, as the degree in which man's rational nature is properly served by the animal is determined by the degree of that conformity and obedience, so

the degree in which the Church's ecclesiastical nature is properly served by the secular will be measured by the degree of this conformity and obedience. We need not reverse the illustration ; nor need we draw at full length the Church's portrait in this regard. She is simply a corporation in the world, and, like similar secular bodies, has business which brings her before the civil magistrate, who is ordained of God to realise the idea of justice according to the light of nature—that revelation which God has made as the King of kings, in the books of Nature, Providence, and the Human Soul. And this light is *sufficient, and* will avail to its ends according to the same law by which the light of Revelation avails to its ends—the law of faithfulness. “To him that hath shall more be given:” “from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.” Reason certainly seems to say that when a function carries the functionary before the civil magistrate, *there* is the distinctive mark of secularity, and both the performer and the performance are secular, and each belongs to a secular order, and all the orders belong to a secular system. Everything in which the Church requires *security*, as the bonding of a treasurer, or of a custodian of funds; everything in which it requires a *deed to* be given or received, as when the Church buys or sells property ; everything in which she appears at Caesar's tribunal, as plaintiff or defendant, is an act which she performs in her secular capacity, just as truly as perspiration is done or suffered by man in his animal capacity. What warrant has an ecclesiastical tribunal to send her ecclesiastical subjects, *as such*, to him who wields the sword of justice? No more than a civil tribunal has to send his subject, *as such*, to him who wields the pastoral crook. The Church must have, and obtain, and appoint her officers for secular business on the same principles on which any sound secular corporation would do the same things, if she would ever reap the reward of doing all things “decently and in order.”

And this brings us to the last logical knot, in those knotty resolutions, that needs untying, though it deserves cutting. “The deacon belongs to a *different* order from the elder; from which position it follows,” etc. The writer italicises the knotty word.

If the author of those resolutions had written "*distinct*" the *non-sequitur* would have been felt by all and seen by some ; and the *difference* could not have reappeared so plausibly in the inference under the mask of a distinction between *higher and lower*. A *difference* resides in the essence of a thing, and is created by a nature; a *distinction*, in its subsistence, and is created by an *accident*. Two drops of dew are distinct but not different. A quart and a pint of water are distinguished from each other merely by proportion, and each must have the same nature, water. In our previous commentaries on the argument of the "resolutions," it was quietly assumed that the expressed premise said what it should have said in order to have any possible relation either to the argument or the court or the subject in hand. In this we have done him whom we oppose no wrong, for he too evidently takes it in that sense, to wit, that he is speaking of orders which have the same ecclesiastical *nature*. But, "different ecclesiastical orders" *means* the orders of churches differing in *ecclesiastical-polity*, as, Prelatic orders and Presbyterian orders. But the trouble is, that the expression cannot lose the energy of this meaning in logic. *It is felt when it is not seen*. *Of course*, they are perfectly coexclusive, and that too, whether higher or lower or equal; as mutually exclusive as "pound" and "pint." They cannot be compared in the same syllogism any more than judgment can be measured by the peck. In this part of our essay, however, we have need of this plain truth: *different* orders, irrespective of accidental distinctions, are co-exclusive by virtue of their different natures. The Presbyterian Church, as a body that sues and is sued, buys and sells, bonds and is bonded, is a trustee and has trustees, is a treasurer and has treasurers, holds titles and gives titles, goes into the market and the bank and the civil courts—in a word, exercises all the functions of a secular corporation—is as truly secular, in this aspect, as if she were *only of a* secular nature; and is bound, by the laws of reason and logic and conscience and God, to select and appoint and invest with authority her agents,—call them an order or class, or what you choose,—according to their *fitness for the business*, irrespective of their ecclesiastical marks, provided only they be within the organisa-

tion; and this makes them a *different* order from any ecclesiastical class, as such, whether deacons or presbyters or privates: they are a secular order.

Different orders are coexclusive ;

Ecclesiastical and secular orders are different:

Therefore *they* are coexclusive.

The conclusion proves that deacons, as such, cannot be the Church's agents as trustees, treasurers, etc. Of course they may be, and so may presbyters; and so may privates. The spheres do not even *intersect*.

In conclusion, we claim not only to have overthrown the positions taken in the resolutions and the article reviewed, *as far as logic* is concerned, but have made all the positions of the "reformers," in any form in which they can enter into a just syllogism, do good service (δῆλον) for rejecting their services. The higher order includes the lower order in any and every system that is unified by one nature; that is, the office of Presbyter includes that of Deacon. *Any* order of one nature excludes every order of a different nature ; that is, the ecclesiastical office of Deacon excludes the secular office of Treasurer, Trustee, Custodian, etc. The world of logic, however, includes nothing but "concepts," and has a vast population of amazing fertility, and one "concept" has the trick of getting into the place of another, and actually looks incredibly like it, and in many cases is really its child or grandchild, and in many more its twin brother. Therefore permission is asked to give the reader, if he has forgotten or never studied his logic, a little practical advice.

(1.) Hold fast the intuition that the greater (whether higher, or wider, or longer, or more numerous,) includes the less : for example, one yard includes three feet. Apply this principle wherever you *feel* like doing so, and at least ninety-nine times out of a hundred you will do well. Scarcely will any one attempt to measure his appetite with a yard-stick. If in some cases, you misapply it, the chances are that nine times out of ten you will do *better*; for—"is not the life *more* than meat?"

(2.) Hold fast the intuition that a thing is what it is, and not a different thing. Believe that buying and selling are always

just simply buying and selling, and nothing more. Act fearlessly in this belief, and you will be a conqueror; and, if you succeed by a superhuman effort in making a mistake, and “buy wine and milk without money and without price,” why, you will come off “*more than CONQUEROR!*”

(3.) Finally, let us heed the preacher with faith and prayer and vows of obedience, and “the bringing into good effect” of those vows, as he charges us to infuse our religion, not our ecclesiastical marks, *into our business in our daily life*, remembering that “the ploughing of the wicked is *sin*;” but let us also heed with equal devotion of heart and life, that other solemn sermon which is preached to us, as from a pulpit draped in mourning for the (lead. It charges us, by the wrecks and perils of the Church’s property, to infuse sound business—not our professions or trades—into our religion ; for the “wisdom” of the serpent is needed as well as the “harmlessness” of the dove. Let the Church, when her business agent **wilfully** and wittingly disobeys her commands, or fraudulently risks her property, act like a man of sound business sense. Then when “the children of light” have become as wise “in *their* generation” as “the children of this world,” the Church at last may take off the badge of her dulness and indocility which the Master has put on her brow that he may shame her into soberness. Verily, there is a secret holy providence that is the almighty guardian and patron of business that is business, and preaching that is preaching; but business that is preaching, or preaching that is business, it abhors and blasts. The trouble is not that Church officers do business, or business then hold Church offices, but that the business of the Church is not done by business men in a business way.

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