

WHY THE DEACONESS WORK DESERVES SUPPORT.

BY REV. A. J. BUCHER.

THERE are three reasons why the deaconess work deserves our most enthusiastic sympathy and support.

1. *Because it is bound to succeed.* By lending it a hand we are not setting out for a journey on a sinking ship. We are not making deposits in a bank which is liable to fail. But we are promoting a cause upon the face of which God Himself has put the indelible seal of success. This movement cannot fail nor be restrained, because it is God's work; because it has grown out of that faith which is the victory that overcometh the world; and because it is a fruit of that divine love, the gentle power of which is as irresistible as the warmth of the vernal sun or the fructifying inundations of the River Nile. Love, the motive power and the origin of this work, is the all-conquering power in the universe and in history. Whenever, in the course of the centuries, there has been a decline of Christianity, it was due to a lack or decrease of the first love in the Church. Of this love the deaconess movement is a glorious revival, which even the world, though it does not believe in revivals, hails with delight and gratitude. Any merchant is sure to succeed if he can put an article upon the market for which there is a real general demand. What is the one great, universal demand throughout our poor, suffering humanity? Whether they acknowledge it or not, it is love, that divinely practical love which Christ Jesus brought down from heaven into this cold world, and diffuses throughout the globe through his devoted followers. And because the deaconess movement is meeting this great, universal demand, it is bound to succeed. Christ himself, the greatest of all philanthropists, the Divine Friend and Lover of suffering mankind, is in it. The world will and must feel through it the throb of His great, compassionate, loving heart, and the touch of His tender, healing hand. Very correctly Napoleon de-

fined the secret of the marvellous success of Christianity when he said, at St. Helena, looking over the ruins of his shattered empire: "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne and I have founded empires. But upon what did we rest these creations of our genius? Upon force! Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love; and therefore millions of men would die for Him at this moment." Being God's work, and a fruit of faith and love, the deaconess cause is bound to succeed. Again, we ought to support it,—

2. *Because it opens for the Christian woman in this age of emancipation an unbounded field of blessed, Christlike activity*—an activity as to the Scriptural lawfulness of which there is no difference of opinion whatever. No New York and Cincinnati side to this question. Here the careful, conservative German Christian fully agrees with his more impulsive and progressive American brother. The Teutonic woman does not covet a seat in General Conference, nor the episcopal ordination and consecration to the ministry. She is rather inclined to follow the example of that noble countrywoman of hers, the indirect founder of American Methodism, Barbara Heck, who, with her burning heart, went to Philip Embury, and other capable men, and made them preach and lead in Church matters. She may be considered timid and slow on the account, but she is not slow nor timid to sacrifice her all if called by God into the service of self-denying Christian charity. When the cholera broke out at Hamburg last summer, our deaconesses were the very first to present themselves in a body to the authorities for any and every service—one of them at the cost of her youthful life. While there are no specially ordained female preachers and evangelists in German-speaking Europe, there are thousands upon thousands of holy women, many of them having stepped out of