

larger employment of women in the work of the church, not irregularly as a sort of "free lance," but in connection with and under its direction and authority. The book consists of five distinct papers, one on the "Biblical aspects of the ministry of Women;" a paper read at the Church Congress in 1883 on "Deaconesses;" a speech on "The Church ministry of Women," delivered in Convocation in July, 1884; some historical notes on "The Primitive Diaconate of Women," presented to Convocation at York, April, 1885, and a speech on the subject at the same meeting. The first paper is the most important, putting, as it does, some New Testament facts in a fresh light, and evolving truths which were lying there perhaps unthought of. The writer selects three illustrations of the religious ministry of women from the Gospels, three from the Acts, and three from the Epistles. From the Gospels, Anna, Martha and Mary, and the Galilean women. He dwells upon these in their relation to the Saviour, and speaking of Galilee says: "Why such high honour should have been assigned to Galilee in the first planting of the Gospel upon this earth we may not be able fully to explain. \* \* \* But the point before our notice is that this general glory of Galilee is expressly connected with women; both early and late we see Galilean women "ministering to Jesus." From the Acts he takes Dorcas, Lydia and Priscilla as his types and illustrations. From the Epistles we have Phœbe: of her the writer says: "The Bishop of Durham has remarked that Phœbe has as full right to be termed a 'deacon' as have Stephen and Philip. But \* \* \* neither Stephen or Philip is ever designated as a 'deacon,' whereas Phœbe (misprinted Priscilla in the book,) is distinctly so designated, Romans 16: 1 2, revised version margin. Further, he takes Euodias and Syntyche, Phil. 4: 2, of whom he concludes that they were "most probably members of the Diaconate," as the Apostle says that "they laboured with me in the gospel," and not only with himself but with Clement, and with the rest of his fellow-workers. The last illustration is from 1 Tim., 3: 11, and refers to the qualifications which are there set forth as recommendations for the Female Diaconate. The conclusion that the writer draws from his study of the New Testament presentation of the subject we may best give in his own words, slightly abridged. He says: "Thus

from amid scenes named in scripture we have gathered instances of the loving, faithful devotion of women to Christ; from various places visited by Christ's Apostles we have collected instances of the early establishment of a Female Diaconate in the Church. I venture to add Rome; for I cannot but believe that some of those who are named in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, must have belonged to the Diaconate. This thought was in my mind, when, a few years ago, I saw the names "Tryphena and Tryphosa," Rom. 16: 12, on monuments belonging to 'Cæsar's household.' However this may be, we cannot doubt that we have had before us a great principle of the New Testament, unobtrusive indeed, but pervading, and therefore demanding the most serious study."

The ideas and conclusions of Dean Howson as stated above are repeated and enlarged upon in the four papers additional, and it is interesting to note from his casual remarks with reference to his Church and to many of its dignitaries, how large a number had been won over to view the subject as he did; and although the possibility of a Romanising tendency was felt and deprecated by some, yet it was further felt that this need not be, that "vows" and "celibacy" and "sisterhoods" were not by any means involved in the prosecution of the idea, but that an organization of holy, earnest women, who should do work among the sick and needy especially of their own sex—work which men largely cannot do—would help the preacher and pastor, be a blessing alike to the church and the world.

How do these things bear upon us, do they affect us at all? Yes, much, very much. It cannot be doubted that the churches of every name, we certainly among the rest, have not used as we might have done the agency of women in our work. They are among the most devoted and successful of our Sunday school teachers; they visit and help and minister, but all is done in their private capacity without any authority or countenance even from the church. Why cannot we have in every church a Female Diaconate, not necessarily nor primarily the wives of the Deacons, but of the women who are the most suitable, who should go on their missions of love in the name of the church, who would be recognised and welcomed as its agents? Would not this be a gain? we think it would. Spasmodic or inter-