

a rescue, because the father of the child or some one nearer to him than I was did not spring forward for the purpose. If I could have saved him and did not, what of my conscience then?

BUT some consciences are very elastic,—no, that's not the word, for an elastic thing goes back into its place when the strain is removed—they are the rather like putty, you can put them into any shape and they will keep it. They can be put into shape to do things in private that they would denounce as wrong in public; to do things away from home that would be heinous at home, and to do themselves what they would solemnly shake their heads at in others. Shakspeare was only half right when he said, "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." It depends on the kind of conscience, for some with their putty consciences can do things that with a different conscience they would shrink from.

If it were not too solemn a thing for lightness, how we might paraphrase that 25th chapter of Matthew. One suggestion will give a clue to the whole: "I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat," and the query comes, "When saw we thee an hungered," and so on, and the crushing reply of the Judge is, "ye did it not to one of the least of these." Imagine if you can, the condemned saying, "But, Lord, there was somebody nearer than we were, our consciences would not permit us to do it!" Revolting as this may appear so put, it is actually what, if the "conscience" plea is true, men are saying and doing to-day.

WOMAN'S WORK IN THE CHURCH.

It is always interesting to note that subjects which are attracting attention amongst our own churches are also up for discussion in other Christian organizations, and we have been more than pleased with a work on the subject named above from the pen of the late Dean Howson,—in fact he died before publication, and his son has prefixed a short biographical sketch, appreciative, filial and well-deserved. The title of the book is "The Diaconate of Women in the Anglican Church." In one aspect, and an important one, it is disappointing; you fail to get, clearly stated, the author's idea of what the Diaconate of either men or women includes. He speaks of nursing the sick as

"true Deaconess work." The mission of Phoebe from Corinth to Rome "illustrates the duties that a Deaconess in the church may be called upon to discharge;" again, "a Deaconess is a woman set apart by a Bishop under that title for service in the church." But what service? The Dean felt that a distinction was needed, and so he writes: "it seems proper to say more precisely what is intended by this word 'Deaconess.'" Good, but unfortunately he does not state what was intended, but simply goes on to say that it is a grand attempt to restore what the church has lost, "an organised body of women helpers." Again the writer asks, "How much should be included under the Church Diaconate of Women?" and he replies: "it is a question not of principle but of detail, and they are to be ready for service whenever they are needed," and the needs are very various. Once more: "What kind of work was assigned to them, in what relation did they stand to the Presbyterate and the Episcopate?" "The only reply is, that research into the primitive facts relating to the women who were Deacons will be pursued to greater advantage if they are combined with enquiries into all that relates to Deacons of the other sex;" and he significantly adds, "Some modern mistakes on this latter subject are likely to lead us astray. Our present Deacons are not the Deacons either of the Prayer Book or of the Primitive Church." When we remember that the Deacons of the English Church are a sort of half-fledged Priests we see the force of the remark. It is not difficult to trace the thought of a Diaconate more in accordance with Congregational than with Episcopal practice. The good Dean was, however, between Scylla and Charybdis, he had contended for the identity of the office whether used by male or female, therefore if it was Ecclesiastically Ministerial and a step to the Priestly, then women might be Ministers and even Priests; on the other hand, if the office was only secular, then the Deacons of the Episcopal Church were out of their place, and should only be doing the work assigned to lay-helpers! With such difficulties on either side, with the certainty of giving offence to one or the other section of his hearers if he spoke more definitely, the writer had to be vague.

Having said this much as to the foundation weakness of the book, we may cheerfully and gladly say that it is an earnest plea for the