

Woman's Question

MAY WOMEN SPEAK?

A BIBLE STUDY

BY A

PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER.

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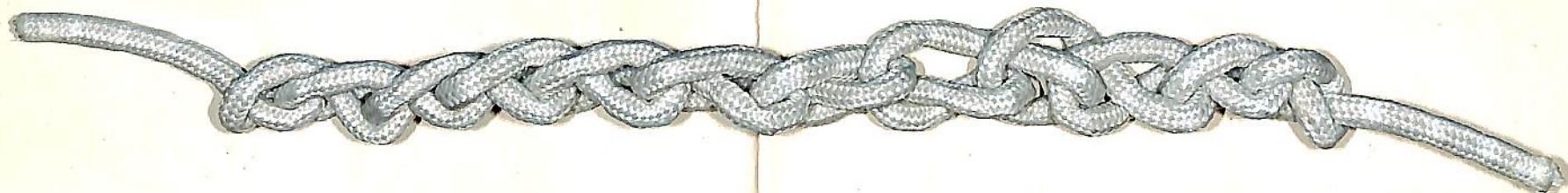
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DEDICATED

TO THE

ECCLESIASTICALLY UNRECOGNIZED (IN THE STANDARDS) DECEASED

Female Missionary Workers

AND SUPPORTERS ABROAD AND AT HOME,

AND TO THE

297 FEMALE FOREIGN MISSIONARIES, AND THE SIX WOMAN'S FOREIGN BOARDS
WHICH RAISED, IN 1887-8, \$295,501.03,

AND TO THE

264 TEACHERS OF THE WOMAN'S HOME BOARD, AND 108 TEACHERS AMONG THE
FREEDMEN, SUPPORTED BY 26 SYNODICAL, 172 PRESBYTERIAL, AND
4221 LOCAL SOCIETIES, BANDS AND CO-OPERATING SABBATH
SCHOOLS, WHICH GAVE, 1887-8, \$226,067.24,

AND TO THE

Faithful Wives and Daughters of the Missionaries,

OF WHICH MINISTERS

177 ARE FOREIGN, 1486 HOME, AND 111 FREEDMEN'S PASTORS,

BY THEIR FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

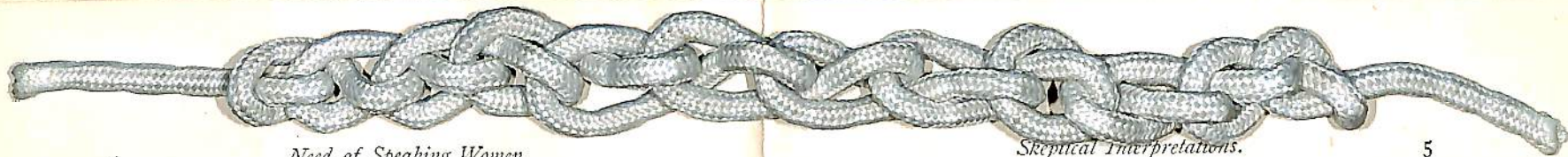
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MAY WOMEN SPEAK?

A COMPARISON of the reports of the various woman's missionary societies of the Presbyterian Church would indicate that not less than 15,000 women are elected as officers or members of these missionary societies, and so may be called upon to preside, to speak, or to read papers before an assembled company of Christians. In a growing number of cases these are liable to be mixed assemblies. A comparison of the reports of the women's meetings in other Presbyterian denominations also shows that these societies among them are rapidly increasing, both in numbers and importance. The Covenanter Synod has approved of the ordination of deaconesses in their churches. Probably 25,000 women in the Methodist Episcopal Church are also officers or active leaders in such associations.

The traditional public opinion of the Presbyterian Church, certainly until within the last half century, has been that the Bible definitely made it improper for a woman to either speak or pray in a mixed assembly. On the other hand, as by the providence of God, this large body of women find themselves continually thrown into situations, in which, except for that impression of the teaching of the Bible, it would clearly be their duty to take part in a mixed assembly, or at least to allow men to be present in the audience at their public meetings and listen to their papers and addresses. A little observation on the part of anyone will show, that the consciences of very



many of these noble women are greatly troubled with perplexity. The call for workers in the heathen world, in Utah, in the Indian tribes and elsewhere, seems to be imperative for activity on their part. The blessing of God seems to be upon their labors, as indicated by the amount of money they raise, the numbers and ability of those who are offering themselves as missionaries, and especially and peculiarly the suitability of these female missionaries in certain departments of the home and foreign field. Activity and energy means the multiplication of these occasions of conscientious embarrassments. If this interpretation of Scripture is correct, and there is Divine authority specifically prohibiting any woman under any circumstances and in every place from speaking where a man is present, then unquestionably the church ought to prevent their doing so, and visit church censure upon those who may at any time be guilty of the same. To the study of this question, the writer came with all the prejudices likely to be derived from the ancestral assumption of the unscriptural behavior of any woman who addressed a mixed assembly. But in that study it was not long before it became evident to him, that the same rules of interpretation which were used in finding out the meaning of the word of God on other subjects, would utterly fail to support any such position. What the writer's present view is, will be clearly indicated in the progress of this study of the Bible as to the position of women *before the fall, by the fall, in the Hebrew church, and under the Gospel.*

To a very large extent the prejudice against the speaking of women in public was generated, and is now maintained by the attitude toward the Bible taken by the earlier female speakers on the subject. They generally conceded that the Scriptures condemned their speaking and they defended their

speaking by attacking the inspiration and authority of the Bible, and so many of them drifted far over into infidelity and atheism. This is a grievous fault also in many evangelical writers. Intimations are thrown out that there is a difference in the inspirational authority of various portions of the Bible; that certain statements are not as binding as certain other statements when both are interpreted with equal fairness.

Now, so far as this study is concerned, every such view is wholly repudiated. The Scriptures are plenary inspired. They are the final authority on all questions of doctrine; and they are to be interpreted by the same rules which are employed to discover the meaning of laws, contracts, wills and other documents. The same rules which apply to the interpretation of duty as to the Sabbath, as to murder, as to the parables, as to the various instructions given to the various churches, are to be applied in the study of this question. Neither this subject nor any other subject has any peculiar rights when we come to read the Bible. The Old Testament will help us to understand the New, and the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. The whole is the divinely given, consistent and only authoritative statement of God's will and plan of grace. Undoubtedly to a very large extent the conclusions which anyone will reach will depend upon the principles of interpretation which are adopted; but a method of reasoning on this subject which is held utterly inapplicable on precisely similar questions, ought not to be used. On this principle the general rules of interpretation, applicable alike to Scripture and to legal documents, will be applied in the present investigation.

One or two of these rules, however, are so important that

they may well be mentioned at the outset. The first of these is called "the rule of harmony," or consistency. In Horne's Introduction, vol. 2, p. 338, this rule is stated thus: "The whole system of revelation must be explained so as to be consistent with itself. When two passages appear to be contradictory,—if the sense of the one can be clearly ascertained, in such case that must regulate our interpretation of the other." Again: "When any doctrine is manifest, either from the whole tenor of Divine revelation or from its scope, it must not be weakened or set aside by a few obscure passages." These rules have been quoted, adopted and restated by almost every expositor since, and they have been employed in the whole history of the Church. The same rule holds in the courts in the interpretation of legal documents. In Blackstone's Commentaries, book 2, p. (380), it is thus stated: "The construction must be made upon the entire deed, and not merely upon disjointed parts of it, and therefore every part of it should be, if possible, made to take effect, and no word but what may operate in some shape or other." In book 1, p. (60), note 12, the same rule is applied to the construction of statutes, namely: "It is an established rule of construction that statutes upon the same subject must be construed with a reference to each other; that is, that what is clear in one statute should be called in to aid and explain what is obscure and ambiguous in another." In the same note the same rule is stated with reference to the interpretation of wills: "The whole of a will must be taken under consideration in order to decipher the meaning of an obscure passage in it." Numerous illustrations of the effect of this rule on various other questions beside the one now immediately in hand will be presented in the course of this study.

Another distinction that is thoroughly supported by the

Bible itself is between the mechanical, formal, literal or technical command or prohibition, and the vital, essential and substantial thing commanded or prohibited therein. It was to affirm this last or vital mode of interpretation that Christ uttered very much of what is contained in the Sermon on the Mount, on the subjects of murder, idolatry, oaths, alms, prayer, fasting and the like. "Of old time" they had been accustomed to the mechanical method of interpreting the law on these subjects; and so, while keeping the letter, had broken the spirit. His sermon reestablished the doctrine of the vital essence of these commandments, and taught that whatever looks toward or makes for a violation of them is vicious; and that whatever makes for or tends to the glory of God, the promotion of worship in spirit and in truth, and the salvation and holiness of men, is to be promoted. In other forms of words this same principle is taught by Samuel to Saul, I. Sam. xv: 22, and by Hosea vi: 6, which last is quoted with an illustrative application by the Savior in Matt. xii: 7. This rule also will be illustrated further on in this Bible study. Other rules of interpretation will be incidentally applied, and for their confirmation and justification their use in other matters will be cited. All that any one can ask is that the rules of interpretation shall not be interpreted more harshly and narrowly when applied to the questions of woman's work and opportunities, than they are when applied to the duties of men.

To understand the New Testament well it is best to begin with the Old, and bring our minds to the reception of the New Testament after thoroughly saturating ourselves with the spirit of the Old. The Old Testament was the preparation for the enlargement and freedom of Christianity in the evangelization and activity of New Testament times. At the

outset, therefore, it is well to note the aspect in which woman stands to both God and Adam previous to the fall.

Woman was made as a "helpmeet" for man and as part of himself, and there is not one single word, previous to the fall, indicating bondage, or servitude, or any inferiority other than official subordination. It would be a marvelous thing if, in order to furnish our first father with a companion, he should be furnished with an inferior; or that, in order to provide him with a slave, he had been furnished with a part of himself. Was she a helpmeet for him if she was not able to assist him in his social duties? It might not be that the man would be satisfied with an inferior as a companion; much less would that companion feel content to be looked on as an inferior. So when woman was brought to Adam the name he gave her was precisely the same name by which he was himself called, with the single distinction of sex. In Hebrew *ish* is man, and the name Adam gave to woman was *ishah*; precisely as we say prophetess, or deaconess, or duchess. But what is still more remarkable is that when God came to name them He called them both by the same name—Adam. Gen. v: 1, 2: "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and called *their name, Adam*, in the day when they were created." In all the account thus given of that estate wherein man was created, from which he fell by sin, and to which he is to be restored by Christ, there is no hint of any liberty given to man which was denied woman.

In the history of the fall there is that in the sentence of punishment, which is generally assumed to be final and conclusive as condemning woman to this condition of subjection: "And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Now it is not to be doubted for a moment

that this punishment has come upon the sex wherever the race has been left in its sin. But it is a very vital question whether, when a plan of salvation was provided for the race, it was so provided that it tended measurably to relieve the race from every other form of the curse, and yet required the Church of God to make it part of its responsibility to enforce on woman this part of the curse. It is not easy to see why the redemption of Christ should be held as delivering man even in this world measurably from the punishment of his sin, and have no effect in relieving woman from this part of her punishment for her sin. If the Church is required to enforce this subjection on woman, then by impartiality the Church is bound to see to it that no man shall eat his bread except he has earned it by "the sweat of his face." It is also somewhat significant that at the fall the promise of a seed who should bruise the serpent's head was made to the woman, and nothing said of it either of man or to man. The intimation of a redeemer was in accordance with the historical fact that the Redeemer was born of woman. He redeems womanhood.

The influence of the redemption* in tending to measurably relieve the whole race from the curse of sin, presents us with an unequaled illustration in what has occurred in the case of woman. In every barbarous nation woman has been man's slave. She did the work, she carried the burdens, she cultivated the field, she made the clothing and cooked the food; while man, her master, did the fighting and hunting. If she was not thus a "hewer of wood and drawer of water," she has been hidden away in some harem or zenana and herded for man's passion. In every place where the Bible came, its influence was to lift woman out of this degradation into her primeval condition of man's equal. Whether the contrast is



made between ancient nations, such as the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Canaanites or Greeks, and the Hebrews of the olden times; or between Greeks, Romans, Mohammedans, Buddhists or African barbarians, and Christians in modern times,—precisely as the religion of the Bible increases its influence, in that proportion man takes the burden of toil in his just share, and gives woman her just share in the opportunities and privileges of society, literature and religious life. For this well-known feature of history there is but one explanation; namely, that the redemption of Christ is bringing back woman, as it is man in lesser or larger measure, to the condition which shall be reached by both when Paradise is regained.

Through the patriarchal age the church was largely the creature of circumstances and of the individual leadership of prominent persons. The Scripture record is so brief that the position of woman is not sharply indicated. Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, the daughters of Jethro and the rest, however, seem to have met and conversed with all modern freedom and modesty with men. When, however, we come to the organization of the Ceremonial Economy, the light becomes decidedly clearer. In the organization of that Hebrew nation, we find men and women prophesying and speaking, according as the praise of God and the will of the people seem to require. Women in their different positions are found as men are, some good and some bad, and others sometimes approved and sometimes condemned. Surely it can not be argued that because prophetesses were sometimes false to duty, and obstructed the growth of true religion, that, therefore, all women are to be condemned; any more than we are allowed to argue that because Moses and Aaron were both prohibited from entering the promised land, and Eli failed in his

duty, and false prophets appeared in the time of Jeremiah, therefore no man should be allowed to speak in the name of the Lord. Along beside Moses, the law-giver, Aaron the priest and Joshua the general of the army, there is also, as type and sample of woman and her work, Miriam the prophetess. If Miriam was not admitted to the priesthood, neither was Moses nor Joshua allowed to offer sacrifices. To deny that Miriam uttered any thing in the presence of the mixed assembly is plainly to contradict the story of her triumphal singing at the Red Sea. Whether all Israel heard it or not, it is by the Spirit's direction recorded for all subsequent learners. She had a conspicuous part in the preservation of her younger brother when a child, and was called to show her Hebrew sisters their place in that new economy which was organized at Sinai. She had the weaknesses of her brothers, and was smitten with leprosy for ambition to take a particular part assigned to another. The question of sex, however, was not involved in the reproof. Not one single word is said to show that the fault was due to the fact that she was a woman, and that what she did would have been right enough for a man. She had overstepped the bounds of propriety of womanhood no more than Aaron had overstepped the bounds of propriety of manhood. The estimate in which she was held by Moses and the people (peradventure also by God himself), is shown in that, until she was cleansed of her leprosy, the cloud was not lifted from the camp, nor did the people march from the spot where they were then resting. In the building of the tabernacle she and her sisters in the nation did their work in furnishing the hangings and the ornaments of the tabernacle, and when she came to die it is recorded as a notable event. Seven centuries later, God speaking by Micah, vi: 4, names

her as one of those by whom he had brought this people out of Egypt.

The time when Israel had the largest liberty in the selection of the leaders was the period of the Judges. This intervened betwixt Joshua and Saul. Moses and Aaron were divinely appointed, and when the kingship was set up it was presumably a kingship descending according to the right of primogeniture. During the days of the Judges, however, it was a question of providential indication and the people's recognition. Now, in that period Deborah held precisely the same position while she was judge, that Gideon and Ehud and others did when they were judges. Judges iv: 4 specifically negatives the statement often made, that Deborah was called by God for a special emergency, and raised up for one single conflict. Barak was the general of her army, precisely as Sisera was general of Jabin's army. She judged Israel before that war, and she judged Israel after that war. Not a hint is given of any obstacle in the way of her so doing on account of her sex. She sent and called for Barak, as Moses called for Joshua when he fought Amelek. It is hardly to be conceived that her song of praise, which is recorded in Judges, fifth chapter, was not uttered in the presence of the people. It is certain that it is recorded for the instruction of all ages and sexes until this day.

In following on down the line, note should be made of the incorporation of Ruth the Moabitess, and probably of Rahab the Canaanitess, into the ancestry of the Messiah. Solomon received the Queen of Sheba with royal recognition, and not a protest or hint is uttered of any impropriety in her official position or her visit of faith to the King of Israel. The position of Esther, and last, but by no means least, the work of Huldah the prophetess in identifying the sacred record,

are also without a word of condemnation. When attention is turned to the instances of false prophetesses, it is to be noticed that they are condemned for what they did and said, and not for the fact that, though women, they took the responsibility of speaking as prophets. In Nehemiah vi: 14, an account is given of the prophetess Noadiah, who joined Sanballat in obstructing the building of the wall of Jerusalem; but she is condemned for what she did, and not for the fact that she was a woman, since other prophets (men) are named with her. So in Ezek. xiii: 17-23, we have a terrific denunciation of the "daughters of thy people which prophesy out of their own hearts." But that denunciation is again leveled at what they did by way of the destruction of "souls that should not die, and in saving the souls alive that should not live"—by their lying to the people that heard their lies. The whole tenor of that utterance shows that it was not an unusual thing for women to teach the people. When women taught the people righteousness, it is recorded without any indication that it was an exceptional case; and when they taught people iniquity, they were denounced for the iniquity which they taught; as lying prophets among the men were equally denounced.

Two notable passages in the Old Testament indicate the Divine expectancy with regard to the future church, as well as the view of women's work entertained by those of that day. In Ps. lxxviii: 11, when the inspired poet is picturing the prosperity of the kingdom, he says: "The Lord gave the word, the women that published the tidings are a great host." If this is not prophetic but historical, as some assert, then it proves that in that age women in great numbers spoke with freedom, and were praised therefor instead of silenced, as some would do now. So in Joel ii: 28, 29,

this work of woman under the outpouring of the Spirit is specifically predicted as an Old Testament expectation. In that coming work the daughters equally with the sons, and the handmaids equally with the servants, are to share in the Divine power, and participate in the blessed activity.

Upon the whole survey, therefore, of the Old Testament, we find not one single word of prohibition or reproof put upon women for any activity of labor, speech or usefulness into which they may be called by the providence of God, and by the appreciation and request of his people. In the building of the tabernacle and the instruction of the freedmen of Egypt in that Sinaitic wilderness, she is active and useful. She judges the people with success when settled in Canaan. She is chosen of God, as occasion serves, to reveal his will and answer for him the inquiries of his servants. She falls into sin, and is punished or reproofed according as the Divine judgment directs; and to her, at the fall and onward, is given equal promise of deliverance from the punishment of her sin even as is given to man. Her rights are legally recognized, as in the case of the daughters of Zelophehad; and in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, in the days of Nehemiah, women took their part. Neh. iii: 12: "And next unto him repaired Shallum, the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, he and his daughters." The struggle of some commentators to evade the force of that last passage as a proof of woman's simple, actual, physical toil, furnishes a remarkable illustration of the possible prejudice which may be injected into a commentary through the preconceived opinions of its author.*

* It is objected to this argument in favor of women speaking because they were used as God's mouth-piece in Old Testament times, that this same line of reasoning would require of us that we should ordain Asses as well as men and women. God

Whatever may be true about women speaking now, it is absolutely certain it was not wrong down to the Apostles' day. If, in the New Testament, woman is not allowed to do what the providence of God and the call of his people seem to indicate, then we have found one point in sharp distinction from all others, where the New Testament is narrower, more restricted and more in bondage than the Old Testament. The general theory has been that, with the coming in of the New Testament, old burdens were taken off, and liberality and enlargement granted to the Church. On this principle its friends defend infant baptism. On this principle of enlargement the gospel is shown to be sent to the Gentiles. Whatever, therefore, may have been the actual frame of mind in which the New Testament converts from the Jewish church entered upon their work, Scripture gives no reason to believe that they would for a moment think woman was not at liberty to speak whenever God bade her, and the people were willing to hear her.

If it is said that this brings us to the study of the New Testament, with a certain pre-occupation of mind favorable to the prominence and activity of women, this is undoubt-

used Balaam's Ass to reprove the Prophet. This attempt to overthrow the argument by a *reductio ad absurdum* is surely an ignominious failure. Balaam is not held up in Scripture as a model for our imitation, and all those who are willing to class themselves with him are welcome to do so. Balaam's effort to despise God's instructions because God did not adopt the channel of communication which Balaam approved, was part of his sin. There are those in the modern Church who believe that God ought to be heard by whomsoever he may see fit to send his word. They think God ought to be allowed to choose his own messenger, whether it should be a brute beast, an overshadowing cloud, or a burning bush. The only question is, has God really spoken? And if God has now, by his miraculous power, chosen brutes for preachers, only Balaams and their brethren would refuse to hear. If it is said that in modern times the proof of the Divine authority is not as clear as in Balaam's case, it is respectfully submitted that Ecclesiastical Courts are much more liable to ordain Asses when they are ordaining men than if they were ordaining women.

edly true; but it is a pre-occupation of mind found in, and fairly derived from, the Old Testament Scriptures. It ought not, however, be pushed too far, nor, on the other hand, restricted too closely. The number of the women thus prominent in Old Testament times is not large as compared with the number of men mentioned; and on the other hand, undoubtedly the extreme seclusion of women which was common in surrounding nations, would have its influence, both conscious and unconscious, upon the Hebrew people in limiting woman's activity. The description of woman and her vocations, found in Solomon's Songs and in the last chapter of Proverbs, while in the one case allegorical and in the other theoretical, is yet a pretty fair statement of woman's position. To surrounding nations, where wives were disposed of without being consulted by their parents in the contract of marriage, the courtship described in Solomon's Songs, and the ante-nuptial affection there presented would be absolutely incomprehensible. There is nothing like it in classical literature. The bride-elect goes about the streets, converses with those she meets, and speaks of and to her espoused as if the relations of the sexes then were quite as open and above-board as they are now. So the ideal woman described in the last chapter of Proverbs rises early, labors with strength, manages her household, gives attention not only to domestic matters but external matters connected with the whole family, buys a farm, owns her own merchandise, relieves the poor, fears not the winter's snow-storm, manufactures home adornments and personal attire, is a manufacturer of linen, an element in her husband's reputation, enjoys the result of her own executive ability and activity, receives the affection and praise of her husband and children, and "openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her

tongue is the law of kindness." In short, the description of womanhood in that last chapter is precisely such a description of woman adapting herself to her providential circumstances as wife, widow, or manager of her own property, as would fit in well with modern Christian society.

On entering upon the study of the New Testament, we must remember the difference between womanhood in the Hebrew nation and in heathen nations. It will be well, therefore, to look first at the four gospels and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and such accounts in the Book of Acts as describe the presentation of Christ's life and gospel to the Jews, and afterward to the representation of that same life and gospel to the heathen nations. This distinction is necessary, if the rule of interpretation by which Scripture documents and other writings are to be interpreted in the light of their authors and of those to whom they are addressed, is to be applied in the present study. At the very outset, therefore, it is to be noted, that we have here as in the Old Testament, the record of the utterances of two women, the blessing of Elizabeth upon Mary, Luke i: 42-45, and the magnificat of Mary in response to the affectionate salutation, Luke i: 46-55. So when the infant Jesus was brought to the temple, the prophetess Anna is found seemingly as a resident there, a widow of four-score and four years. The account, Luke ii: 37, 38, indicates that it was for a long time her habit in the temple to speak to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. After the Savior entered upon his public ministry, the number of women who are brought to our notice is very considerable. Their activity manifests a freedom of intercourse with the Savior, with the disciples and with the Jewish public, such as is found among the Jews at the present day, and among Christian people. The relation between man and



woman is precisely such as those which are common in our churches and communities, on the occasion of the intercourse at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, with the Samaritan woman at the well, with Peter's mother-in-law at his house, at the funeral of the widow's son, at the table in the Pharisee's house, with Christ's relatives in the midst of the crowd where Christ was speaking, at the raising of Jairus' daughter, at the cure of the woman with the issue of blood, at the approach of the Syro-Phœnician woman, at the request of Zebadee's wife for her two sons, at the home of Martha and Mary, at the raising of Lazarus, at the healing of the infirm woman on the Sabbath day, in the parables of the importunate widow and the lost piece of money, on the approach of mothers with their little children, in the presence of the widow's gift of her mite, and with the sisters at Bethany. Remembering the freedom with which women in all these cases mingled with the public, and conversed with Christ and his disciples, and the disciples with them, we are able to get some intelligible impression from the statement in Luke viii: 1-3. This is a report of a preaching tour which the Savior took, accompanied by his disciples and certain women, whose names are given. It is, of course, conceivable that the phrase, "ministered unto him" (Revised Version, "unto them,") "of their substance," means that these women went along merely as housekeepers, and to pay the bills; but it will seem to others that, as nothing is said of the twelve disciples co-operating in the preaching as occasion served, and yet that they undoubtedly did, it is equally undoubted that these women participated in the conversations of that journey, with the freedom indicated by the other instances already referred to. The Savior's example is not doubtful in another case. It was a mixed audience that

followed him, as he went to heal Jairus' daughter, Matt. ix: 18-26; Luke viii: 41-56. The woman with the issue of blood objected to speaking in the presence of others. The Savior compelled her to "give her testimony." How can it, then, be wrong for women to speak of what the Lord has done for them in the most public manner?

When we come now to the close of the Savior's life, this same modern form of Christian intercourse is manifested. The women went with him from Northern Palestine to the Passover, followed him to the crucifixion, assisted in his removal from the cross and the deposit of the body in Joseph's tomb. They are there again the earliest of all on the morning of the resurrection, and have no hesitation in hastening to the disciples to report the joyful, but disbelieved, tidings. To Mary, as she lingered heartbroken at the tomb, the Savior made himself known first of all, and by her sent his message of reassurance to his disciples, with a reminder of his appointment to meet them in Galilee. On the night of that resurrection-day, he met with his followers, and gave them the first instructions after the resurrection concerning the proclamation of his gospel, as is found in Luke xxiv: 45-49. That first instruction was addressed to more than the Apostles. At that time the promise of the descent of the Holy Spirit was renewed, and the company was directed to tarry at Jerusalem until it came. Whether women were present when that promise was given or not, we shall hereafter see that it is specifically stated that they were present when it was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Perhaps the most formal address of the risen Savior to his New Testament Church was on the occasion of the interview in Galilee. That seems to be the occasion referred to by Paul, when "more than five hundred brethren" met the Savior,



and it will hardly be doubted that women were present also then, and shared the address given on that occasion. The substance of this address is found in Matt. xxviii: 16-20. Verse seventeen shows that there were certainly others besides the eleven present on that occasion. This was the first occasion upon which the most had seen him, as is indicated in the first clause, but it was not the first for the eleven. We can not believe that by this time any of the eleven "doubted." The command of verses nineteen and twenty is the divine obligation laid upon the whole church for the evangelization of the whole world. The part of each one in the accomplishment of that command, whether man or woman, is to be indicated by the voice of God speaking in his providence, by way of opportunity and success—speaking by his spirit to the conscience and the heart of the individual, and speaking through the church by its invitation and commission. It is thus to be noted, that as in the Old Testament, so in these biographies of Christ, given by the four evangelists, no word or hint is found expressing disapprobation of womanly activity.

The day of Pentecost was the symbolical day of the New Testament Church. The events of that day, and of the few succeeding years, bear to the New Testament Church much the same relation as the Exodus and Sinaitic history bear to the Old Testament Church. The second chapter of Acts thus becomes of central interest in this whole study. In verse fourteen of the preceding chapter, we are informed who those were who were accustomed to meet together at Jerusalem since the crucifixion. Judas was probably the only South country Jew among the disciples. Most of those mentioned in verses twelve and fourteen were North country Jews, and it is therefore quite natural that they should

reside together while at Jerusalem. This was the custom of Jews from a distance when they came up to the great feasts. Some commentators believe that even more than the hundred and twenty spoken of in Chap. i: 15, were present at the Pentecostal prayer-meeting, and received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and gift of tongues. But probably no one holds that the phrase, "they were all together in one place," includes less than those mentioned in Chap. i: 14. It is thus put beyond doubt, that women were present at that famous prayer-meeting. As to the extent of that gift, and of that New Testament impulse which came with the "power from on high," Peter's exposition of Joel's prophecy puts the matter beyond all possible controversy. His phrase, "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," links as inseparable the Old Testament expectation and prediction with this New Testament fulfillment, and the Divine purpose therein. Quoting Joel's words, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit and they shall prophesy," he pointed, for its explicit fulfillment, to the men and women as messengers of God, who had issued forth from that upper room, filled with the Holy Ghost, and testifying to the truth as God's witnesses. No words can make the meaning of Peter's address on that occasion any plainer in its bearing upon this subject. Sons and daughters, servants and hand-maidens, are united together without discrimination in the gift, and without distinction in the duty. Moreover, no hint is given that any complaint is made on the part of the Jews gathered from all the ends of the earth, that women were thus active or thus blessed. Such had been the dealing of God with women in all their national history, that there was no reason why any of them familiar

with their own history should be surprised at this now. That promise and that baptism were not for one generation, but for "your children and to all that are far off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Chap. v: 14, gives us the legitimate outcome of this blessing upon these workers of both sexes: and "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."

In Acts viii: 4, we are told that those who "were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." That women were included in this is evident from the preceding verse, which definitely states that Saul, as he made havoc of the church, entered into every house, and, hailing men *and women*, committed them to prison. If the women were not active in the work, there would have been no possible reason for his persecution of them. Of the efficiency of the preaching of those who were scattered abroad at this time, Acts xi: 19-21, gives us a full account. We are further given an insight into the part which women took, both for and against, as we read of the persecution aroused against Paul and Barnabas when at Antioch in Pisidia. After the account of his sermon, chap. xiii, and the effect of the word on the Jews, and of the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, verse fifty explains the course the Jews took to prevent their further efficient work among the Gentiles. In that struggle the devout and honorable women of the city took an active and energetic part in the spread of the gospel. No very large number of forms of activity were open to women in the Gentile countries to which the disciples were driven, but, from the allusions to their efficiency in various epistles, it is manifest that in some form of Christian labor they were busy in the work of the Church. At Caesarea, Philip's four daughters seemed to have been well-

known prophetesses, Acts xxi: 9, and to have given themselves to that form of activity. The work of Priscilla was quite marked. She is mentioned with her husband, Aquila, Acts xviii, as having been driven from Rome with the other Jews, and resident for the time being at Ephesus. There they took the eloquent Apollos into their homes and "expounded unto him the way of God more carefully." This same Priscilla is included among those to whom Paul sent special salutations in his Epistle to the Romans. Paul mentions her also in his First Epistle to the Corinthians and his Second Epistle to Timothy. Priscilla is mentioned first, as if she was the more active of the two, in Rom. xvi: 3, II. Tim. iv: 19, and, according to the Revised Version, in Acts xviii: 26. In the Epistle to the Romans they are described as being his "fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own necks, unto whom not only I gave thanks, but all the church of the Gentiles." Paul's salutation is also sent to the "church that is in their house." In that last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans a large list of women receive Paul's special salutations and commendations, and to many of these names special clauses of praise are to be added.

This Epistle to the Romans is a well-known systematic statement of Christian truth. Eleven chapters are doctrinal and the last five are practical admonitions. In all of these practical discussions no warning is made against woman's work, but, on the contrary, great stress is laid upon it in the last chapter. When now we remember that the position of woman among the Romans was not nearly so secluded as among the Greeks, but, though not equal, was very much more like her position among the Jews, we have the reason for the similarity of the references to woman in this epistle to



the Old Testament treatment of the same subject. The Epistle to the Hebrews is an exposition of the gospel of Christ as a fulfillment of their Old Testament Scriptures, and as in the Old Testament, in the Gospels and in the Epistle to the Romans, so here, there is no suggestion of any restraint laid upon any form of womanly proclamation of the gospel.

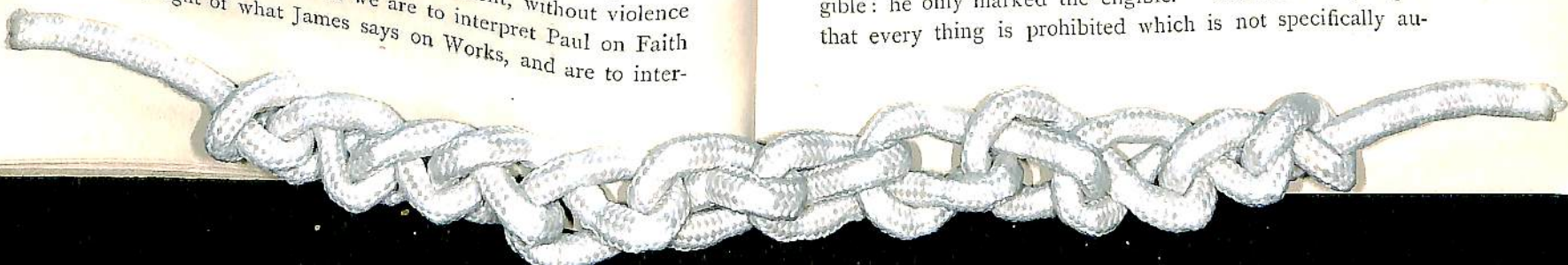
This brings our study to the consideration of the two famous passages which are the sole reliance of those who insist on forbidding women to speak. These are I. Cor. xiv: 34, 45, and I. Tim. ii: 11, 12, being two chapters out of the 1189, or four verses out of 31,173. In all these other 1187 chapters, or 31,169 verses, not a single instance is found where a woman who spoke the things which were right and true is condemned because, though proper in a man, they were wicked in a woman.

Undoubtedly, taken alone without any consideration of the other scriptural statements concerning woman, these passages would prohibit any and every woman from speaking in any church or religious assembly. If, however, God's word is to be accepted as a harmonious and unified revelation of his will, and is to be dealt with upon this subject, as it is dealt with on every other subject, then these statements can not be interpreted as prohibiting what is elsewhere *authorized, approved of, and practiced*. If in this matter we are to do with the Bible as the courts do with contracts, laws and wills, then the whole Bible is to be construed as Smith's Manual of Common Law, page 72, states, "upon the entire instrument, not merely upon particular words or parts; so as to give effect, if possible, to every part and every word, as well as to the evident object and intent, without violence to any word or part." If we are to interpret Paul on Faith in the light of what James says on Works, and are to inter-

pret the Sixth Commandment in the light of the directions given in specifying under what circumstances life should be taken, see Deut., chaps. 13 and 21, then that same rule, applied here, will compel us to such an interpretation of these passages as shall not make criminal what is elsewhere commanded. *Whatever, therefore, we may elsewhere find in Scripture as allowed to be within the privileges of womanhood, can not be understood as forbidden here.* Whatever is prohibited, it is something which is not elsewhere authorized and illustrated by approved examples.

When Christ was preaching he found women speaking, like Elizabeth, Anna, His Mother, those that traveled with him, the woman of Samaria, and those who were present at the time of his crucifixion, and in the Assemblies after the Resurrection. And no one reading any or all of his Biographies would for a moment suppose that in any case this met with his disapprobation. Whatever, therefore, Paul prohibited, he did not prohibit what the Savior found extant, and did not condemn; but rather approved, encouraged, and, in the case of the woman healed of the issue of blood, absolutely required.

Even this, however, is too restricted a rule to be defended either by Scripture or by the practice of the Church. The rule, as stated above, would limit woman's work to those particular things in which there is either explicit statement or fair inference in Scripture, showing that she is therein specifically recognized as within her sphere. In other words, it would be consenting to the theory that "whatever is not specifically authorized in Scripture is thereby specifically prohibited." Some claim that Christ "did not mark the ineligible: he only marked the eligible." Therefore they argue that every thing is prohibited which is not specifically au-



thorized. If this method of interpretation is correct, then both in Old Testament times and New Testament times the Church of God has taken a liberty which was utterly unwarranted. If this rule is correct, then we must cite specific cases and proof passages before we are authorized to establish a Sabbath school, a young men's Christian association, a temperance society, a union relief association for the benefit of the poor; build hospitals, asylums or orphanages; found and conduct theological seminaries, install pastors over particular churches, re-ordain a lay elder when he enters the ministry, or take up collections for home and foreign missions. The collections mentioned in Scripture are for the poor inside of the Church; and if the rule proposed to be established here is admitted, that nothing is allowed which is not specifically authorized, then by directing for collections for the poor saints, and omitting to mention collections for foreign missions, these last are prohibited by silence.

This narrow rule is directly contradicted by the Savior and the Apostles at the very center of the New Testament system. This rule was not good in the rigid economy of the Ceremonial law. The Feast of Purim was founded in Old Testament times by the authority of a woman, Queen Esther, and the Feast of Dedication was established after the close of the prophetic period. Neither had any Divine authority. Presbyterians hold that the New Testament Church was organized on the basis of the Jewish Synagogue; and their theory of the ruling eldership is built largely upon the position of the elders in those synagogues. The Savior and his apostles attended those synagogues, addressed audiences in them, and, so far as either word or act could go, endorsed and approved of them. "In these synagogues our Lord worshiped in his youth and in his manhood. They were

the scenes of no small portion of his work. In them were wrought some of his mightiest works of healing. In them were spoken some of the most glorious of his words." But no record is given in the Old Testament of the authorization or origin or organization of these same synagogues. They were established in the rigid Old Testament economy, under the liberty of the people of God to adopt such means of grace as were promotive of piety.

But we meet the same thing in a yet closer question of New Testament services as connected with unauthorized Old Testament practices. The very sacraments of the New Testament are built upon Old Testament usages, which usages had absolutely no Divine authority. It is admitted on all hands that baptism was a form of service extant before the time of either John the Baptist or of Jesus Christ. No doubt washings with water were part of the Old Testament ceremony, but they affected altars and persons as part of a different ceremony, and were not the service of baptism which was extant when the New Testament economy began. At that time baptism seems to have been part of the service for the admission into the Jewish nation of proselytes from the Gentiles. It may have been used on other occasions, but it certainly was used then. For that baptism, however, no authority is furnished in the Old Testament. It was in existence as a human ordinance appropriate for the purpose employed by John the Baptist, and made by the Lord Jesus Christ a sacrament of his New Testament Church. If nothing is allowed except what is specifically ordained, then Christ took a criminal institution, and, without condemning its criminality as unauthorized, adopted it as a sacrament of his New Testament Church.

Precisely this same thing is true of the sacrament of the

Lord's Supper. It was instituted in connection with the Jewish Passover. In the Old Testament definite, accurate and particular directions are given for the celebration of that Passover Feast. If ever the rule that "what is not authorized is prohibited" would avail, it must avail here. But what of the wine? There is not one word in the Old Testament about the use of wine at the celebration of the Passover Supper. When wine began to be used, why it began to be used, and all about its earliest introduction, are matters of pure conjecture. Like the synagogue, and the baptism of proselytes, it was adopted by the people of God under their liberty concerning the means of grace. If the rule we are now considering is admitted, then it inevitably follows that up until that last Passover Supper the use of wine was utterly wrong and sinful. And yet this unauthorized cup was taken by the Savior on the night of his betrayal, and, without a word of disapproval of its previous unauthorized use, was adopted by him, and made immortal in the Church of God as the symbol of his blood shed for the remission of sins. It thus seems obvious that in Old Testament times and in New, by the practice of the Apostles and the example of the Lord, the people of God have liberty to adopt such measures as will promote the edification of Christian people and the spread of the Gospel.

Much ridicule is often turned upon the claim that the condition of the church, the variation in its work and the diversified opportunities offered to it in the world, should have real consideration in the methods of using the means of grace, or in the choice of persons to employ these means of grace. Everybody who makes any use of circumstances as an argument, urging one thing as proper in one place and circumstance, and improper in other places and other circumstances, is

charged with disregard of God's authority. So it is quoted, as if it was an axiomatic proverb, that "right and wrong do not change with circumstances." But here again we appeal to the Bible, and the behavior of the Apostles and the instruction of the Lord Jesus Christ. They certainly did approve of certain things under certain circumstances, and disapprove of those same things under certain other circumstances. Illustrations of this in incontestable cases are numerous, but many need not be cited. For brevity only three will be here adduced. On no question was the position of the Apostle Paul more distinct and definite than on the question of the continuance of circumcision in the New Testament Church. Over that question he had his controversy in the "Council at Jerusalem." Nevertheless, on that very question of circumcision his own practice depended upon circumstances. He did circumcise Timothy, Acts xvi: 3, and he did not and would not circumcise Titus, Gal. ii: 3-5. So in the twelfth chapter of Matthew we have our Savior's discussion of precisely this question, of the effect of circumstances. In Lev. xxiv: 9, the show bread is specifically named as to be eaten by Aaron and his sons; and the exclusiveness of that prohibition of that bread as food for any others is recognized by the Savior, in the last clause of Matt. xii: 4. The Savior's defense of the conduct of David, and those that were with him, in eating of that bread, as is recorded in I. Sam. xxi: 6, is based simply on the circumstances in which they were then placed. So our Lord's whole discussion, as found in Matt. xii: 1-9, is a defense of the conduct of his disciples, as they "when hungered began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat on the Sabbath day." No commandment can be more absolutely without exception in its literal and mechanical interpretation than is the Fourth Commandment. Following

the mechanical interpretation, undoubtedly the disciples were doing wrong in eating the wheat, as were also the priests, to whom our Savior refers in their labor in the temple on the Sabbath day. But here, as in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v and vi, the Savior insists on the vital method of interpreting commandments, and protests against the mechanical and formal. He approves of that which will make for righteousness, and protests against that which will make for crime. If his example and principles of interpreting are to be followed, then it makes all the difference between right and wrong what the circumstances and motives and effects shall be of any given course of conduct. If he was Lord, even of the Sabbath day, it will not be denied that as God of the Church he is Lord also of the forms of work for his people; and it is not inappropriate to quote his own words: "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." As in law, so here in his teaching the rule is applied: "The universal and effectual way of discovering the true meaning of a law is by considering the reason and spirit of it; when this reason ceases, the law itself ought likewise to cease with it."—Blackstone's Commentaries, p. (61.)

The rule of interpreting Scripture in the light of the circumstances in which its words were spoken, and with controlling respect to the spirit of their commands and prohibitions, is by no means confined to the question which we now have in hand. It underlies the entire subject of "Introduction" to the books of the Bible. If it is not important, then no importance attaches to the habits and customs and countries and the people, whether Jew or Gentiles, among whom Christ lived. All investigation as to the character, training, and mental habits and peculiar phraseology of Matthew as a publican writing for the Jews, John as a

philosopher writing very late in the apostolic age and in view of the heresies then extant, of Luke as a physician and in some sense an amanuensis of Paul, or of Paul himself as a scholarly lawyer; all these are entirely out of place. So, also, is every consideration derived from the difference between the churches of Corinth, and Ephesus, and Rome, and Galatia, as are also the differences between the Jews in exile to whom Ezekiel prophesied, and the Jews in triumph for whom David wrote his Psalms. Now, either these circumstances of the writer, and the recipients of an epistle, do throw light on the meaning of that epistle or they do not. If they do, then the character of the Corinthian and Ephesian churches becomes a matter of vast moment in this discussion.

If we are prepared to adopt this mechanical and formal method of interpreting Scripture, and comply with it literally, to the neglect of the essential and vital thing as to the spirit and heart and temper which are urged, and which underlie various duties and prohibitions, then assuredly some remarkable changes will occur in the conduct and practices of American Christians. This mechanical method of interpretation applied to Matt. x: 5-15, will require at once of Christ's ministers that they should no longer carry any money (gold or silver), no scrip (wallet or lunch), no two coats, and wear no shoes. Luke x: 4, will prohibit ministers from speaking to their people when they meet them; I. Cor. vii: 8, 9, 38, 40, will make marriage for either man or woman a confession of ungovernable passion; and II. Thess. iii: 10-12 will make it crime for any man to eat any food for which he did not himself labor. If these prohibitions are understood in their spirit as prohibiting egotism or over-anxiety about worldly provision, or endless delay by idle conversation, or discretion

in the matter of marriage, or requiring honest labor for an honest living, as has always been the interpretation of them, then all is plain. But why should these prohibitions, based upon the habits and circumstances and surroundings of those to whom they were addressed, be interpreted in their vital spirit, and no allowance be made for the seclusion of Greek women, and no account taken of the insinuation against their virtue involved in certain forms of dress when speaking, and no consideration given to their want of education as explaining their volubility in mixed assemblies?

Let us reverse the picture, and apply this mechanical method of interpretation to the affirmative commands of duty. This will require communism in property, Acts ii: 44, 45, and iv: 32. It will require ministers to drink a little wine, I. Tim. v: 23; it will compel young women to marry, I. Tim. v: 14; it will specifically require of Christians that they shall wash each other's feet, John xiii: 13, 14; and it will compel the adoption of kissing as the mode of Christian salutation, Romans xvi: 16; I. Cor. xvi: 20; II. Cor. xiii: 12, I. Thes. v: 26; I. Peter v: 14. If now these commandments are construed as requiring brotherly helpfulness in worldly affairs, the proper use of medicines for healing, diligence in domestic life on the part of women, humility and tenderness to each other among disciples, and affectionate salutation according to the manner of the country among fellow-members of a Christian church; then all is plain. It will be noticed that quotations are here made from both the epistles from which these directions concerning woman's speaking are taken, and outside circumstances should not be imported for the interpretation of the one, and be absolutely excluded in the interpretation of the other. If church authority is to be invoked for one part, then it may not be omitted in the

aid of another. If common sense, good taste, sound Christian judgment, and the light of God's providence and the general trend of Scripture show the undoubted scope of the analogy of faith to lead in a given direction, we may safely follow.

From this consideration of methods of interpretation let us return to the immediate discussion of the two passages which are supposed to prohibit women from speaking in mixed assemblies. They are, I. Cor. xiv: 34, 35, and I. Tim. ii: 11, 12. For these two passages there are in the main four interpretations. The first interpretation is, that they absolutely forbid, in all times and in all places, any woman to address or lead in prayer any mixed assembly. A second interpretation is, that these passages are either comparatively or absolutely uninspired. A third interpretation is, that these texts forbid women to speak officially as ordained to the full work of the ministry, or in presence of the church formally or officially gathered together, but do not apply to informal gatherings of Christian people, and informal addresses and prayers in voluntary meetings. A fourth interpretation is, that they forbid the disorderly or immodest speaking of women in circumstances where the general sense of propriety is offended, or in assemblies where such speaking is objected to by the people assembled together, and that the true intention of these passages is to require due respect to the Christian sentiment of the community, and to cultivate in those who do speak a delicate sense of modesty and decorum.

It is obvious from the whole drift of this paper that no sympathy is entertained with the second view named above, nor with any interpretation of these passages that denies to them equal authority with the other scriptures, or makes

their true meaning and spirit any less pertinent to modern times than to any other times under similar circumstances. What they meant to prohibit is prohibited. What they intended to allow is still allowed, precisely as is the case with reference to all other prohibitions and commendations.

With reference to the theory that they are intended to apply to the question of the ordination of women, or to the question of the official and formal gathering of the church as an organized body, every such suggestion is outside of the text. Not one word is said in the context of these passages or elsewhere about official or unofficial speaking. If the application of these passages is to all women equally, then no woman *may teach a Bible class, or, as a missionary, address an audience.* It is absolutely hopeless to interpret these passages except in view of local habits and justify the work of the women of to-day. Not one word is said to indicate that their application is limited to formal and organic assemblies of the church as a body. If it is allowed to supplement the statement of Scripture by such an important distinction, then surely some citation ought to be furnished showing that, in the cases where women were allowed to speak, importance was attached to the fact that they were unordained women, or that it was an unofficial assembly of the church. Men did not need ordination before they preached; why should women? After Paul had been preaching a long time, he was ordained, with Barnabas, as a Missionary; but it is absolutely gratuitous to assert that he was either licensed or ordained before he preached at Damascus and Jerusalem. When, where and by whom was Mark ordained, or Luke, or Apellos, or Titus, or Aquila, or Andronicus, or Apelles? If they were ordained, what evidence is there that Phœbe was not ordained in the same way, and

Mary, and Priscilla, and Tryphena, and Thyphosa, "who labored in the Lord"?

To the first of these interpretations, that these passages are of universal application, and an absolute prohibition on all women and for all time, it will seem a sufficient reply that this convicts both the Old Testament and the New of sanctioning of sin in the cases of Miriam, Deborah and the others: Then, also, the prophecies of Joel and the Psalms, as well as the fulfillments thereof in the New Testament in the cases of the women on the day of Pentecost, and Philip's daughters, are all wrong. As, however, in most of these instances the women were specifically authorized so to speak by the people and instructed by God, it would seem impossible to convict them of wrong-doing in this speaking, and not condemn both the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles. If this interpretation is correct, then the language of the apostle in this same letter, I. Cor. xi: 4, 5, is without either sense or reason. In that passage he discusses the praying and prophesying of women before the assembly, and condemns one form of dress and behavior, and directs that, when they pray and prophesy, it shall be with another form of dress and behavior. It is not possible to put any interpretation of prohibition on that passage; but, upon the other hand, it distinctly contains an expectation that they shall thus pray and prophesy, and implies that there is no impropriety in their so doing, if only their demeanor is respectable and courteous.

The conclusion which will best harmonize these passages with the rest of the Bible is this: that the thing reprovèd in these passages is A DISORDERLY AND IMMODEST SPEAKING ON THE PART OF WOMEN IN THE MIDST OF COMMUNITIES WHERE SUCH SPEAKING WAS BY PUBLIC SENTIMENT LOOKED UPON AS

SAVORING OF IMPURITY. It is a perfectly fair question to be asked of those who believe women should be allowed to speak and pray at missionary meetings and at prayer meetings, "What is forbidden in these passages?" Certainly something is declared to be improper, and the pivot of this whole inquiry turns upon what that improper conduct is.

The answer to this question will not be difficult if we make ourselves familiar with the real character and condition of woman in Corinth, Ephesus and in the principal cities of the Greek civilization of that period. If betwixt Greek life and Hebrew life there was the sharpest possible contrast in the condition of woman, so that for Greek women to do what Hebrew women did, would be absolutely certain to bring upon them suspicions of lack of virtue; and if further there should be a sharp contrast between female society in Greece and Rome, in its measure similar to but not nearly so great as that between Greek and Hebrew women, then we shall have a complete explanation of the fact, that neither in the Old Testament, in the Gospels, in the Acts nor the Epistles to the Hebrews or the Romans, is there any such restriction as is here laid upon these Greek women. Even those who hold that woman ought to be prohibited from speaking in mixed assemblies, admit the force of this conclusion, if the facts are as is intimated above. They do not undertake to controvert the logic. They do, however, explicitly deny the facts. One writer says: "there is no kind of evidence that the women in the church at Corinth were either illiterate or immoral. The assumption that they were so is a gratuitous assumption to sustain a foregone conclusion." Another writer, in referring to the statement that the women of Corinth were illiterate and immoral, says: "there is not the slightest evidence that they were the former, and

it is certain that if they were the latter, they would never have been found in the churches." If the writers thus quoted are correct, then they have completely destroyed the classical reputation of a large number of eminent scholars whose writings have been heretofore quoted as of the very highest authority on Greek and Roman literature and civilization. The peculiar combination of those two adjectives "illiterate and immoral" in the above quoted sentences is a little rhetorical peculiarity, which shows that the authors are not acquainted with Greek life. If they had been, they would have known (what shall be hereafter abundantly shown), that virtuous Greek women were ignorant, and that only harlots had any chance for intellectual cultivation.

Lest any should suppose that in the following statement of the condition of women in Greece and Rome, the statements made are unauthorized, they shall be put in the words of the authorities themselves, whose right to be called authorities will not be challenged by any persons who are familiar with the subject.

Prof. James Donaldson, of St. Andrews University, Scotland, contributes to the *Contemporary Review* (volume 34, March, 1879, page 700) an article on "The Position and Influence of Women in Ancient Athens."

"In Athens we find two classes of women who were not slaves. There was one class who could scarcely move one step from their own rooms, and who were watched and restricted in every possible way. There was another class on whom no restrictions whatever were laid, who could move about and do whatever seemed good in their own eyes. The citizen women had special apartments assigned to them, generally in the upper story, that they might have to come down stairs and men might see them if they ventured out. They were

forbidden to be present at any banquet. The men preferred to dine with themselves rather than expose their wives to their neighbor's gaze. For the discharge of the duties which fell to an Athenian woman, no great intellectual power was needed, and seemingly the education of girls was confined to the merest elements. It is scarcely possible to conceive that such a marvelous crop of remarkable men renowned in literature and art could have arisen if all the Athenian mothers were ordinary housewives, but circumstances were exceedingly unfavorable to them, and tho' there never was in the history of the world such a numerous race of great thinkers, poets, sculptors, painters and architects in one city at one time, as in Athens, not one virtuous Athenian woman ever attained to the slightest distinction in any one department of literature, art or science.

"We pass from the citizen women of Athens to the other class of free women—the strangers or courtesans. These stranger women could not marry. They might do anything else they liked. They might form any other connection with men, temporary or permanent, except marriage. The citizen women were confined to their houses, and did not dine in company with the men; but the men refused to limit their associations with women to the house. Accordingly they selected these stranger women as their 'companions,' and 'Hetairai,' or companions, was the name by which the whole class was designated. The citizen women had to be mothers and wives—nothing more. The stranger women had to discharge the duties of companions, but to remain outside the pale of the privileged and marriageable class. *They were the only educated women in Athens.* Almost every one of the great men of Athens had such a 'companion,' and these women seem to have sympathized with them in their high imaginations and profound meditations.

ion,' and these women seem to have sympathized with them in their high imaginations and profound meditations.

"But the Athenian women, even the citizens, had no political standing. They were always minors. Aristotle always classes women and children together. Such, however, was the force of character of these Hetairai, or such their hold on powerful men, that not unfrequently their sons were recognized (by special decree) as citizens. But though these women may have gained recognition for their children, no interest was taken in their own case. The names of virtuous wives are not to be found in history; but the influence of the 'Hetairai' comes more and more into play. They cultivated all the graces of life; they dressed with exquisite taste; they were witty. But it must not be forgotten that hundreds and thousands of these unprotected women were employed as the tools of the basest passions, seeking only, under the form of affection, to ruin men, and send them in misery to an early grave."

No writer has investigated the domestic life of the Greeks and Romans with greater ability than Prof. W. A. Becker, of Germany. He has set forth Greek life in his story of "Charicles," and of Roman life in his story of "Gallus." He is quoted as unquestioned authority by all recent writers upon that subject. To both of these works he has added particular discussions on special matters. Every statement above quoted from Prof. Donaldson is completely supported by citations from Greek authors, in Prof. Becker's Excursus, No. 12, on "The Women," and No. 2, on "The Hetairai." From Becker's "Charicles" we also make here a few quotations:

Page 463: "At this time, and in the very focus of civilization, the women were regarded as a lower order of beings;

neglected by nature, in comparison with man, both in point of intellect and heart; incapable of taking part in public life; naturally prone to evil, and fitted only for propagating the species and gratifying the sensual appetites of man. Their education from early childhood corresponded to the rest of their treatment. There were no educational institutions for girls, nor any private teachers at home. They were almost entirely deprived of that most essential promoter of female culture, the society of the other sex. They were excluded from intercourse not only with strangers, but also with their nearest relations; and they saw but little even of their fathers and husbands, for the men lived more abroad than at home; and even when at home the sexes inhabited separate apartments. The maidens, especially, lived in the greatest seclusion until their marriage, and, so to speak, regularly under lock and key."

Page 287: "At Athens it was a thing unheard of for any free woman, except those of the lowest classes, to make purchases in the market."

Page 296: "It is certain that in nearly all of the Greek States neither matrons nor maidens were allowed to be spectators of the *Gymnasium Games*. An Attic virgin would never have dreamt of appearing in public or being present at the Games."

Sparta differed from the rest of the Greek States in this respect. But the appearance of Spartan women at their games was, if possible, worse in its nudity than the exclusion of the Northern Greek States.

The work of Guehl and Koner on the *Life of the Greeks* and Romans, Appleton 1876, page 185, says:

"The life of married women, maidens, children when in the care of women and of female slaves, was passed in the

Gynaikonitis, from which they issued only on rare occasions. The family life of the Greek women widely differed from our Christian idea. Intellectual intercourse with the other sex was wanting entirely. Even when maidens appeared in public at religious ceremonies, they acted separately from the youths. The wife did not share the intellectual life of her husband, one of the fundamental conditions of our family life. Her duties and achievements were hardly considered, in the eyes of her husband, in a much higher light than those of a domestic slave."

In his translation of Demosthenes' Oration, Volume IV, Bohn's Classical Library, Mr. Kennedy, in his appendix on "Husband and Wife," says:

"Athens, with all her literary taste, had no educational institutions for women; and not only that, but there were no private schools for them, nor any mental tuition for them at home. Marriages were formed chiefly for family and political considerations. An Athenian took a wife to prevent the extinction of his race. A maiden was seldom, if ever, consulted on the choice of her husband. The whole thing was managed by the relations."

Prof. J. P. Mahaffy, of Trinity College, Dublin, has written largely, and his works on "Social Life in Greece," and the "History of Greek Literature," are authorities. In his work on "Old Greek Education," page 11, he discusses the frequency with which children were "exposed," or left to die of starvation and neglect. "We can not really doubt that the exposing of new-born children was not only sanctioned by the public feeling, but actually practiced throughout Greece. Plato sanctioned infanticide, under certain circumstances, in his Ideal State. Nowhere does the agony of the mother's heart reach us through their literature, save

where Socrates compares the anger of his pupils when first confuted out of their opinions to the fury of a young mother deprived of her first infant. There is something horrible in the very allusion, as if in after life Attic mothers became hardened to this kind of treatment. The exposing of female infants was not uncommon."

"Women in all Ages and Nations," by Thos. L. Nichols, page 44, says of Greek civilization: "Women appear to have been ever educated and treated as if their only duties were to attend to their husband's affairs. The polite accomplishments were taught to very few, and the only women in Greece who were highly educated in poetry and philosophy, as well as in the graceful accomplishments so suitable to females, were the Hetairai." Page 112: "The treatment of women among the Greeks does not accord with what we should expect from a brave and polished people. Custom introduced, and the law established the mode of living which confined women to their own apartments, in the rear or upper portions of the houses. They associated but little with the men in public or private. Their minds were uncultivated and their amiable qualities were buried in obscurity." In allusion to the custom of "exposing children," he cites a Greek poet, who says:

"Aman though poor will scarce expose his son,
But if he's rich will scarce preserve his daughter."

The importance of this general statement of the condition of women in Greek civilization, in its bearing upon this subject, is greatly increased when we find that the worst city in all Greece was this same city of Corinth.

In his "Excursus," scene 2, Professor Becker, in speaking of the Hetairai, Charicles page 245, says:

"Corinth seems to have surpassed all other cities in the number of its Hetairai; to whom the wealth and splendor of the place, as well as the crowd of wealthy merchants, held out the prospects of a rich harvest. In the Temple of Aphrodite there were numbered above one thousand of these Hetairai as Hieroduli, who are described as the ruin of foreigners."

This he follows with numerous citations and confirmations of his presentations of their character; and says "that the phrase, 'Corinthia korē,' became an adage expressive of the acme of voluptuousness."

In Smith's "Classical Antiquities," in the article on the Hetairai, he says:

"The town most notorious in Greece for the number of its Hetairai was Corinth. One temple of Aphrodite in this town possessed more than 1,000 Hetairai, who were the ruin of many a stranger."

In his Classical Geography the same author, in speaking of Corinth, says:

"It was the most licentious city in all Greece. In no other city do we find the institution of the Hieroduli (courtesans), as a regular part of the worship of Aphrodite." So utterly bad was the character of Corinth, that it goes into Greek literature as a proverb. The Greek verb Korinthi-adzomai was derived from the name of that city, and meant to become a harlot or courtesan. See Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon. So the term 'Korinthia Korē' was used in the other cities of Greece as a name for a woman of ill character.

Horace, in his Epistles, Book 1, Epistle 17, line 36, says: "It is not for every man to go to Corinth."

In the Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius, Book 1, Chapter 8, it

is stated that this proverb alluded to by Horace, which was also a Greek proverb, arose from a visit of Demosthenes to the Corinthian courtesan, Lais. The Greek proverb is found in Strab. 8, page 378. In Smith's Classical Biography another Greek proverb is given in the form of "there is no Corinth without a Lais." The phrase, Korinthia pais, is used with the same licentious allusion.

Athanasius, in his account of the conversation of the Deipnosophists, says that Stronicus, in his denunciation of the town of Heraclea, applied to it the adjective, androcorinthos (a man Corinth), and says that when he passed out of the gate he looked cautiously around, because he was ashamed, as if he was leaving the house of a courtesan.

The best insight into the character of the Greek Hetairai and of the position of Greek women, is found in the speech of Apollodorus (said to have been written by Demosthenes) against Neaera. It is found in Demosthenes' Orations, and English readers will find it in the 5th volume of Demosthenes in Bohn's Classical Library. This insight is all the more reliable because it is in a measure an indirect view derived from a judicial trial where Roman common law, and statute law and public opinion are all set forth. Whoever will read that oration will never again need to be told that Greek women, when once converted, would need to be extremely over-cautious in their public behavior to avoid bringing reproach on the Christian name. They will never again need to be told that what was entirely proper for Hebrew women was not proper in Grecian States, where womanhood was divided between slaves, the secluded and ignorant citizen women and the intelligent but corrupt Hetairai.

If from this view of womanhood in Greece we turn to Rome, we shall have a complete explanation of the absence

noticeable in Paul's Epistle to the Romans of any restrictions laid on female conduct, such as he required in Greek cities. Almost any standard author, in touching upon the subject of Roman women, calls attention to the contrast between them and their sisters in Greek countries. Dr. Smith, in his Greek and Roman Antiquities, speaks thus, closing his account of Roman marriage:

"The position of a Roman woman after marriage was very different from that of a Greek woman. The Roman presided over the whole household, and as the materfamilias she shared the honor and respect shown to her husband. Far from being confined, like the Greek woman, to separate apartments, the Roman woman occupies the most important part of the house."

Prof. W. A. Becker, in his presentation of Roman life, speaks to the same effect. (Gallus, Excursus I, The Roman Women, page 153.)

"Whilst we see that in most of the Greek States, and especially at Athens, the whole female sex were little esteemed, treated as children all their lives, confined to separate apartments, shut out from society life and all intercourse with men and their amusements, we find that in Rome exactly the reverse is the case. The Roman housewife always appears as the mistress of the whole household economy; instructor of the children; guardian of the honor of the house, and equally esteemed with the paterfamilias both in and out of the house. Walking abroad was only limited by scruple and custom, and not by the law or the jealous will of the husband. The women frequented public theaters as well as the men, and took their places with them at public banquets. In her own house the woman was not confined to particular, separate apartments, but in ancient times her own place

of abode was in the most important part of the house, the Atrium."

In Excursus 2, on Education, Gallus, page 182, Prof. Becker says: "It must not be forgotten that in the house far more of real family life occurred, and a more strong and sacred band bound together the different members of the house amongst the Romans than amongst the Greeks. The chief cause of this was the real dignity of the housewife, whose influence asserted itself happily in the education of the children; not only as a mother during their earliest years, but also in superintending them during their riper years."

E. F. Bojesen, in his work on Greek and Roman Antiquities, says that "Roman women frequently visited places of public amusement, and were altogether strangers to the retirement which distinguished the ladies of Greece."

The introduction of Greek licentiousness into Rome came to be so serious, that the attention of the Senate was called thereto. Nowhere in Greece were the Bacchanalian mysteries celebrated and practiced with such abandonment and freedom as at Corinth. The discovery that these Bacchanalian mysteries were practiced in Rome came as a shock to public sentiment, and as a matter of general scandal. Rigid legislation was adopted for their suppression. See Livy, Book 39, chapters 8-18.

It is thus obvious that when Christianity entered Rome, it found the relation of the sexes not so free as among the Hebrews and among Christians, but such as to need no peculiar regulations other than those suggested by courtesy and propriety.

Women could go to the assemblies to hear the Gospel preached, and would be left to their own sense of propriety in the steps to be taken in assisting in the dissemination of

the knowledge of Christ. A proper knowledge, therefore, of the condition of female society in Rome, and in Corinth and Ephesus, makes the difference between Paul's encouragements to activity with the former, completely consistent with his earnest demand for extreme caution in Greek society, until Christianity had reconstructed it.

On the other hand, it is absolutely certain that on the first introduction of Christianity into Greek cities, such as Athens, Corinth and Ephesus, if any women heard the Gospel preached, they were not of the virtuous members of the families, but were of the Hetairai. These women were allowed to attend the conversation of the philosophers, and make themselves familiar with the affairs of state, as a method of increasing their own popularity, and of so developing their intellectual faculties as to be fit conversationalists for Greek philosophers, statesmen and poets. For Aspasia Pericles traded off his own wife to another. This trading of wives was not at all an unknown practice among the most reputable of Greek men, as reputation went in those days. The first part of the eleventh chapter of I. Corinthians can not be properly understood without some fair notions of the habits and dress and manners of those Greek courtesans.

If now we remember that the task set before Christians, and especially given to Paul and Timothy as leaders of the mission enterprise in Athens, Corinth and Ephesus, was to transform the position of womanhood in those cities from its obscurity or impudence and immodesty into the piety and purity and freedom of the Hebrew womanhood, we shall be at no loss to understand the energy with which modesty and propriety in speech and behavior are enforced in the epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to Timothy sent to him while he was presbyter or bishop of Ephesus.

Corinth became what it was by the force of its history, and its geographical and commercial position. Located on an isthmus between two great commercial seas, with the port of Cenchræa on the one side and Lechæum on the other, it was destroyed by Mummius, and after lying utterly desolate for a hundred years, it was rebuilt by Julius Caesar. In view of its importance as a military and mercantile position, he sent there a colony of Italians who were chiefly freedmen. Its commercial advantages quickly attracted adventurers from every direction, and the tide to this new city was like the tide that set toward California in the gold excitement. Every form of business prospered, every form of amusement flourished, every form of vice ran riot. No wonder that it took a vision of the Lord (Acts xviii: 9, 10,) to stay up the hands even of the Apostle Paul, in the heroic struggle needed to establish Christian religion and morals in that city of iniquity! If any fact of the history of the civilization of any city is capable of a demonstration, it is beyond doubt that the Greek women of the chief cities were illiterate and secluded if virtuous, and immoral if educated.

As to the argument that if they had been immoral they would not have been members of the church, it is sufficient in reply to say that immoral men were members of the church at Corinth. To reprove them for their immoralities was one of the chief reasons for the writing of the first epistle, and some of them were guilty of almost nameless vices (I. Cor. v: 1). In this very same epistle it is stated that some of them were drunken and some gluttonous even at the Lord's communion table. It is utterly unfair to measure the character of new converts coming out of a corrupt civilization by the high standard of morality which is common amongst

American Christians after many centuries of civilized habits. These early heathen converts are to be judged with the charity with which we would judge Christians in our foreign mission churches, with their heathen instincts not yet destroyed, and their religious habits of thought extremely undeveloped. Conversation in public worship is not unknown even amongst us, and oftentimes on the part of very reputable people, and not altogether unknown when two or three ministers are found in the pulpit and have something to say during the progress of worship. But remembering now how little the Corinthian women could know of the meaning of a Christian service where men and women were gathered together for the worship of God, we can fully understand why in the midst of the service they should ask their husbands of its meaning. That was the privilege of the Hetairai in the midst of the instruction of the philosophers to their disciples. In Ex. xii: 26, we have a scriptural illustration of precisely what is meant by it. Men could know what worship meant in Greece in the Christian sense, and women could not. The proprieties of the occasion demanded that this instruction (needless in a Christian country, indispensable there) should be sought by the women at home, and furnished by their husbands in the quiet of a home life.

To us much that is said seems impossible because of our long habit of decent and respectable behavior in public worship. But in that very fourteenth chapter of I. Corinthians we are informed that there were men who spake in an unknown tongue simply to exhibit their gifts, and oftentimes two and three spake together, so that much of the chapter is taken up by the apostle to show that prophesying, or exhortation, or exposition, in the common language of the congregation, one at a time, was absolutely essential, and was every way

best for the promotion of Christian life and godliness. If, therefore, there ever was a case in which an epistle should be interpreted in the light of its surroundings, this is such an epistle; and these regulations and counsels of the apostle concerning womanly behavior are precisely such matters as require that we should transport ourselves into the surroundings to get at the vital spirit and true meaning of the apostle's directions.

The effort to show that the word "*laleo*," translated in I. Cor. xiv: 34, "to speak," means "to babble," does not seem to be a success. The suggestion grows out of overlooking the distinction between New Testament Greek and classical Greek. That there is such a substantial distinction is assuredly evident. The apostles and the evangelists of the New Testament times found themselves compelled either to make new words or to adapt old words with new meanings for the introduction of such ideas as were peculiar to the Christian religion. The notions of the Trinity, of regeneration, of justification, of a new heart and of a new life growing out of a new birth in Christ, were absolutely unknown in the Christian sense to the Greek nations of that day. In preaching these doctrines, therefore, the apostles did precisely what our missionaries in China and India now do. They take the best native words they can find and use them in a Christian sense. The use of this verb "*laleo*" shows the same treatment. In classical Greek it undoubtedly does have the unfavorable associations which belong to its origin and general use. Originally it meant to babble or prattle, or, as we would say, "to talk baby talk." In its more general use it commonly applies to the vocal use of words without any special attention to the meaning, and therefore does carry with it a measurably disreputable association. When, however, its

use in the New Testament is considered, it can not possibly be limited with uniformity to any such meaning. It is used in the most reputable connections, and that through all the variations of the use of human language. The most that can be said is that its use gives no indication whatever of the character of that which is spoken.

The Greek of the other passage, I. Tim. ii: 8-15, relied upon by the antagonists of women speaking, is certainly much more evidently bad in its associations and meanings. Whether that epistle to Timothy was written by the apostle to Timothy when Timothy was in charge of the church at Ephesus (as almost all scholars agree) or not; it is certain that it was written to him while he was laboring among the Greek churches. The character of the Greek women in all the leading cities as divided between the virtuous and the Hetairai or courtesans, has already been discussed. It is certain that in no Greek city of importance would any woman, not belonging to the Hetairai, ever venture to teach, in the sense of the Greek word used in that twelfth verse; and for her to attempt to do so would be to bring instant suspicion upon her moral character. If, as the authorities on New Testament introduction and commentators agree, at this time Timothy was in Ephesus, he was surrounded by the influence of the worship of "Diana of the Ephesians" in that city. That worship was utterly demoralizing to female character, and utterly destructive of any public influence for reputable women. The Greek word upon which most stress is laid in the argument is the verb "*authenteo*," translated, to "usurp authority over." It is extremely difficult to base any conclusive argument in any direction upon the use of that word. In two respects its use is extremely peculiar. In the first place it is nowhere else used in the New Testament. In

the second place it is nowhere used in classical Greek. Two or three centuries later it began to appear in ecclesiastical Greek. Its nearest cognate word is the noun "*authēntēs*," which means a "suicide." A somewhat similar word is used in the Apochrypha, in Wisdom xii: 6. In that passage the author is speaking of the destruction of the Canaanites, priests and people, in order that the land might be occupied by the Hebrews under Joshua. And so the passage runs, speaking of the destruction of the people "with their priests out of the midst of their idolatrous crew, and the parents that *killed with their own hands* souls destitute of help, that the land which thou esteemest above all other might receive a worthy colony of God's children." The words in italics are those used in translating this Greek word. Numerous Greek-Latin dictionaries give the verb *usurpare* as the translation of this Greek verb, and this is followed by our English translation in the expression, "usurp authority over."

Many commentators and several dictionaries cite this passage in Timothy as applicable only to the relation of husband and wife. Thus Scapulæ gives this Latin translation, "*uxor vetatur auctoritatem sibi in virum usurpare*," that is, "he forbids a wife to usurp authority to herself upon her husband." So also Schlevsner, "*feminam imperium sibi in maritos arrogare*," that is, he forbids women to assume authority or dominion to themselves over their husbands. Parkhurst translates the word by "domineer." The context here in Timothy would seem to favor strongly the limitation of the passage to the relation of husband and wife. The noun "*gunē*" in Greek means either woman or wife, according as the connection requires. So also the word "*anēr*" means either man or husband, according to the connection. Like the English, the Latin distin-

guished the two by having two words, the word *uxor* for wife and *femina* for woman. Now in verses eight to ten in this second chapter of Timothy, the generic *plural* of both words is used as if referring to the sex *as a sex*. "I will, therefore, that *men* pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting." In like manner also "that *women* adorn themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." In verse eleven, however, that generic plural is displaced by the specific *singular*, and without the article. If he now was going on to speak of women as a class and sex, why should he change from the plural to the singular? It is all plain enough, if he was changing to the relation of husband and wife where there could be but one woman and one man. But no other reason can be offered fairly for this use of the singular from that eleventh verse to the close of the chapter. Still further, the illustration of Adam and Eve is the illustration of a husband and wife, and is again based upon the marriage relation. Though it is not absolutely impossible that it should apply to the authority which an unmarried man might assume in preventing an unmarried woman from speaking in a mixed assembly; it is much more directly and fittingly applicable to the question of the relation of husband and wife. That relation of husband and wife has always required that the common law of God and man should determine which of them, in case of difference of opinion, should have the right to decide for the family. Precisely in the line of that unity and relative subordination pointed out in connection with the creation of woman, and the establishing of the family in the marriage relationship, runs the passage under consider-

ation. When we come, however, to the last verse, there can be no possible question but that it refers to the marriage relationship. To refer it to any other relationship would be either to commend licentiousness or to condition woman's salvation upon her marriage. If the whole passage, therefore, from the eleventh verse to the close, refers to married women with living husbands in the presence of Greek civilization, all is completely plain, and completely harmonizes with the relation of official subordination of wife to husband set forth in the Old and New Testaments.

But it is said that whatever may be true of the Epistle to the Corinthians, as addressed to a particular church, this Epistle to Timothy is a general epistle sent by Paul to a young minister, and can not thus be limited to a particular church. It must be remembered, however, that it is no more a general epistle to a young minister than the Epistle to Titus is a general epistle written to young ministers. And will it be said that Titus i: 12 is applicable to the whole church, and that all churches are like the Cretans, "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies?" I. Timothy is no more a general epistle than is II. Timothy, and will it be said that the personal salutations of the fourth chapter are applicable to all churches? In I. Tim. i: 3, the Apostle states that he had left Timothy at Ephesus that he might rectify certain evil habits. Is it universal, and without exception, that no widow under sixty is to be supported, or at least no woman is to be received into the assembly if she hath not washed the Saint's feet (I. Tim. v: 10); that every minister must use a little wine (chap. v: 23); or, that chap. vi: 1, 2, requires the maintenance in the church of the relation of master and servant? If we are to interpret that epistle as we interpret all others, as teaching the spirit of the Gospel

under the relations in which Timothy was then laboring in the midst of Greek civilization, all is plain. But if we are to follow the mechanical mode of interpretation, and make that compulsory in every place, which was prudent there, we shall find ourselves landed in inextricable confusion. Against such a method of interpretation we have the strongest possible protest from the Scriptures in general, and from the Savior himself.

Take these two passages, I. Cor. xiv: 34, 35, and I. Tim. ii: 11, 12, and interpret them in the mechanical method which they use, who insist that they are of universal application, both as to place and time, and even then they can not be more universal and explicit than is the language of the Fourth Commandment with reference to labor on the Sabbath, or the language of Lev. 24: 5-9, in limiting to Aaron's family the right to eat of the show bread. So the antagonists of capital punishment quote the Sixth Commandment, and interpret it with mechanical literalness, notwithstanding the death penalty was frequently directed to be inflicted.

We are constantly told that permitting women to speak in mixed assemblies will be utterly demoralizing to them, and that it is utterly subversive of the marriage relation, and of the sentence inflicted on woman at the fall. The "argument from consequences" is not generally viewed in Scripture with any special favor. It was the argument on which the Judaizing teachers of Galatia and Palestine relied to enforce the continued observance of many of the Mosaic ceremonies. Its most conspicuous use was by Memucan, the last of the wise men of Ahasuerus' court. When they were summoned to ask what should be done to Vashti, for her refusal to come before the drunken king to gratify his pride and the vicious

tastes of his princes, he said (see Esth. i: 16): "The queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes when it shall be reported." After giving his advice that Vashti be dethroned, and her royal estate given to another that is better than she, he gives this promise of the consequences, "that when the king's decree, which he shall make, shall be published throughout all the empire, all the wives shall give to their husbands honor, both to great and small." Especially was he concerned about the latter.

So it is often said, that for women thus to speak would be to destroy their modesty and ladylike character and behavior. That some women (like some men) should grow egotistic and self-sufficient when given this opportunity for ventilating their opinions in public, is not strange. They are but human, and in the Bible with the rest of the race, their vices and their virtues are equally recounted. But modern women, like Scriptural women, will be found by the grace of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit, amply able to discern the opportunity when it is wise and womanly for them to speak, and when they forget these requirements they will improve under the chastening rod, precisely as their sisters did of old. If in the Scripture record the Spirit has seen fit to make very large mention of women, and of the use the God of the church has made of them for the world's salvation, some confidence may in modern times be indulged, that under the Divine direction, they will fairly keep their place, and do whatever work he may put upon them.

In this discussion no attention has been paid to the arguments urged on the one side, that women have special fitness

for proclaiming the Gospel; and, on the other side, that they have special incapacities for the same. Universal generalizations from a collection of facts where the exceptions are nearly as numerous as the illustrations of the rules, are never conclusive. Many women have special and personal unfitness for preaching the Gospel precisely as many men have; undoubtedly some have special fitness at least for certain forms of evangelistic work precisely as men have; undoubtedly many women have insufficient voice for preaching to any considerable number of people, as is also true of many men; and just as undoubtedly many women have voice and endurance enabling them to speak to perhaps as large audiences as most men can make hear. It will probably be safe to allow *the audiences* to decide in the case of each individual man or woman whether they have fitness or unfitness, and whether they can be heard or not. No audience ought to be compelled to hear a man whom they do not want to hear, nor be prohibited from hearing a woman if they wish to hear her, and she is willing to speak.* The human race is composed of bodies which are essentially animal, plus in each case a rational soul. Among the animals, male and female from infancy onward eat the same food and take substantially the same exercise, and there is no manifest distinction in the strength, and especially the endurance, of male and female animals. So among human races where girls

* A large part of the prejudice against women speaking has been aroused by the unreasonably persistent demands of foolish representatives of the W. C. T. U. and other societies of women to have a hearing where they are not wanted. A pastor or board of church officials with any marrow in their backbone will firmly refuse to allow any man the use of their audience if they do not think it wise to hear him. Why should not women accept the same treatment? Persons (men or women) who ask a hearing, usually do it to get an audience which they could not get on their own account. A pastor who can not hold his audience, loses his church. Women ought to get their own audiences as men get theirs.

and boys are subjected to substantially the same physical fatigue, women are able to endure as much as the men. No argument drawn from the physical weakness of our American women, who are allowed comparatively little exercise when they are children, and still less when they are grown, is a sufficient basis for reliable conclusions. And yet even these delicate American women, when it comes to the endurance of pain in undergoing surgical operations, or in confronting the alarm which accompanies such plagues as yellow fever, cholera and the like, have shown themselves more than a match for men in the same communities. All this is saying nothing about the laboring women, who work at the wash-tub or with the needle the same ten hours with their husbands, and then add on hours in the morning and hours in the evening, before and after their husband's day's work; and many and many a night are up a great deal of the time, caring for sick and crying children, while their husbands are asleep.

A very common resort in objecting to women speaking is to laud to the skies the field of female influence as "the queen of home," "the motherly trainer of men," "the gentle monitor of the household," and "capable of exerting an irresistible influence on the destinies of mankind." To all of which it may be most truly said, "There is not a doubt about it." But if God and his people see fit to take advantage of these gifts and enlarge their scope, as was done in Scripture days, what harm will be done? All these fine phrases were used in resisting the struggle of indigent and starving women as they worked their way, aided by their friends, out of the less than one hundred vocations open to them fifty years ago, into the more than fifteen hundred vocations in which they are now actually earning an honest

living. While at work on this study the author received through the mail the following eloquent extract: "One of the most efficient of mission workers is a woman in the mission of Burmah. She never preaches, nor ever appears even on a public platform. She is content to see her teachings reproduced in the native helpers she has taught. She is a real overseer of the church, and guide and director of the pastor, as well as a teacher in theology and trainer in homiletics." This started questions. This woman, like Priscilla, seems to be a teacher of theology with a class of one man. Might she take two in her class, or three or four, or fourteen or forty? Just how many men may a woman righteously address, and which additional man will convert the whole thing into sin? Where is the line? A woman may teach the Bible to a class of boys with a girl or two among them. At what age of the boys does all this become a sacrilegious subversion of Scripture, and fatal to the doctrine of the fall of Adam and the good order of society? Two Presbyterian churches have become so impoverished that they have long been unable to support a pastor. In that long time of neglecting the means of grace, every male member of these churches has died or removed. Recently the spirits of certain devout women have moved them to come together to sing and read the Bible, *and pray and speak to each other*. Unconverted men want to come in; must they be kept out because "woman's sphere is to be the queen of the home"? Holding to that, and letting the means of grace cease, their sons and neighbors have been going to ruin. Suppose, now, some prodigal son of one of these praying mothers should ask leave to come to her prayer meeting, and while she was speaking he should be convicted and converted: must that prayer meeting stop? The curse

has been on their households while these women kept silence, and the blessing has been on them as God hearkened and heard them speaking often to one another and their families; has God, then, been guilty of a mistake? Let us have definiteness, so that we may have chapter and verse of Scripture fixing just how many men are too many for propriety, and what proportions of men and women make a sinful mixed audience. The women will then know just how many to turn out to make it all right.

She was an excellent woman, a good talker, full of missionary zeal, and president of the Presbyterial Society. She had decided she never would speak when men were present. A weak country church asked her to come and help them organize a woman's missionary society for Home and Foreign Missions. She was glad to go. The congregation was scattered and the roads bad, so the men brought their wives and daughters in wagons and carriages to the meeting. The church had no basement or lecture-room, nothing but an audience room, and the day was very cold. The men stood it for a time, and then sent in a petition to be allowed to come in and sit by the stove. All the previous resolutions and reasonings of that pious woman went to ruin in the presence of God's providence, and the men decided that if they could avoid it, there never should be a woman's missionary meeting in that church, *except in bad weather*.

Generally, the argument against any woman speaking in mixed assemblies, at any time and in any place, is made as if it was always done in defence of the right of a husband to have some proper authority over his wife; and to preserve for the man some form of freedom of speech which the women were seeking to steal away. With this implication, therefore, the following passages are continually cited:

I. Cor. vii: 3-4; Ephesians v: 22-33; Colossians iii: 18-19. All of which are similar, and may be represented by I. Peter iii: 1-7, which says: "Likewise ye women be in subjection to your own husbands," etc. But there is a phase of this question which needs honest, fair consideration. How can a wife be in any true sense a helpmeet for her husband, if she can not at any time, or in any place, either act as his substitute or representative, or under his direction do part of the work that he would desire to do, but is not able. She was gifted at creation with the same power of speech with which he was endowed; with intellectual faculties equal to his own; and has certainly proved herself competent, under her husband's direction and counsel, to be a most efficient substitute for him in very many phases of a pastor's work.

Grant, for the sake of argument, then, that a man's wife and daughters are bound to be subject to him, and that against his wishes they ought not to undertake to address miscellaneous assemblies. Probably there would not be much controversy over the question. There are not many wives that against the protest of their husbands, would be disposed to insist on public speaking. And there are certainly not many who would be disposed to insist on making public addresses to audiences that did not want to hear them. As a fact, however, there are a very large number of husbands who are glad to have their wives and daughters promote the kingdom of Christ, and who, finding that God has given them the natural talent, and the acquired facility for useful public speech, earnestly desire that they should glorify God in the foreign field or in the home field by using their gifts for his glory. The question now arises, does the Scripture so *put husbands* under bondage that they shall not be allowed to permit the women of their families, with their approval and under their

persuasion, to undertake such duties. Undoubtedly Brown may prohibit his *own wife*, and the women of his own family, from entering upon such a service, and no human being would undertake to compel either him or them to go to an assembly where a woman was to speak. But has this same Brown a right to stalk abroad outside of his own church and of his own home, and say to his neighbor Smith that he (Brown) will not allow *Mrs. Smith*, and the women of that family, to participate in such a gathering, or to attend such a meeting at Mr. SMITH'S request. Is this bondage such, that it includes both men and women, and enters into the household relation of husband and wife, and, contrary to the wish of both, gives an unmarried man authority to interfere with a married man's family and their personal wishes, and say to this married man and his family, "No matter how much of a unit you are in your wish to attend such assemblies, and to have your women participate in them, this yoke of bondage from which the Jews were free in Old Testament times, and Jewish converts free in New Testament times, shall now hold you down to silence! During the transition from woman's degradation in Greek civilization to the Christian liberty of the New Testament civilization, this yoke was laid upon the household; and with it I am determined still to harness you both, and it shall be put as a padlock on the lips of every woman, however she and her husband may desire her to speak; and as a cork in the ears of every audience, however earnestly they may desire to hear." Surely the time has come, when those of us who are husbands and fathers, and believe that the Scriptures authorize women, in a courteous and respectful manner to present their hopes and fears to their fellow Christians, should insist on our right to be set free from subjection to others who may differently interpret

the Scripture. It is a question of the rights and freedom of husbands as much as of women.*

This has been a Bible study. No special attention has therefore been given to the controversies of the obscurer ages of church history on this question. From that source the existence of a class of "deaconesses," either as a separate and distinct class or as female members of the New Testament office of deacons, is beyond controversy. So it is well known that the Montanists, of whom Tertullian is one of the most famous, believed in the right of women to preach, and had some of them introduced into the office of bishop. That there were persons called "presbyteresses," any one may see who will refer to Lange's Commentaries on I. Tim. v: 9. Whoever will read up on the office of deaconess, and on the position of the "wives of deacons" and "widows," as mentioned in this epistle to Timothy, will find conclusive evidence that women played an important part in New Testament times, and also that it is not possible now from church history definitely to learn what that particular part and work was.† As the dark ages came on bishops and cardinals in-

* Herein is the sharp distinction between this question and the woman suffrage question. If one audience desires a woman to speak, and she is willing to do so, that lays no duty on other audiences or other women. The advocates of female suffrage have suggested no method by which they can be allowed to vote, and yet leave those who object to voting under no obligation to vote. Multitudes of women object to having the responsibility of suffrage forced on them. The man who can vote and does not vote, votes wrong always. It is altogether different in the matter of speaking. Until some method is devised by which women who believe female suffrage is wrong and evil, can be protected from the burden of the responsibility, while others who want to vote do so, it is probably sure that miscellaneous female suffrage will not be adopted. Suffrage is too universal and miscellaneous now.

† See especially Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Vol. 1, Book II, Chapter xxii. Dr. Howson's work on "Deaconesses," and Ludlow's "Women's Work in the Church." The Presbyterian General Assembly (Minutes, 1884, page 114), asserts that "the deaconesses in the apostolic church were neither ordained nor installed." Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book II, Chapter xxii, Section 6, shows,

creased the restraint put upon Christian women until finally the office of deaconess died out in any New Testament sense, and nuns and sisters of charity took their place. With the coming in of the Reformation frequent attempts were made to reëstablish the New Testament office. With the revival of the missionary spirit of the church in the present century, such as pervaded the whole church in apostolic times, this work of women has reappeared in New Testament variety, earnestness and energy. If in these latter days the church has liberty to originate Sabbath-schools, young men's Christian associations, theological seminaries, ceremonies of licensure and installation in order to promote Christian intelligence and culture, and dissipate ignorance and indifference, so, clearly, the church of God has a right to utilize women's ability and efficiency according as the call of God and the common consent of the church shall indicate.

But a scriptural *mode of argument* would seem to be as scriptural as a Scripture argument, if in repeated ways and on repeated occasions that mode of reasoning is set down in the Bible as approved. That mode of argument is to be followed by us as certainly as any other feature of scriptural example. Now no method of Scripture argument has more positive endorsement from the Bible, than that which affirms that the general, continued and widespread blessing of God is not given to that of which he disapproves. Temporary success is not proof necessarily of truth or of the Divine favor. The blessing and presence of the Holy Spirit, however, upon the means of grace has been accepted by the church as Divine approval, at least in the case of Sabbath-schools,

however, that deaconesses in the early church were ordained, and that, too, specifically, with laying on of hands. The Greek words used in describing it in the authority which Bingham cites were *cheirotomia* and *cheirothesia*, and the Latin words cited are *manu superosita consecravil diaconam*.

publication societies, medical missions and the like. With manifest approval Scripture reports the statement of this argument from the lips of Gamaliel, Acts v: 34-42. The same argument is the basis of the vision granted to Peter, recounted in Acts x: 9-16. It was conclusive to Peter, as is shown in Acts x: 44-48. It is given by the same apostle at the Council in Jerusalem, as is set forth in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, and it is there specifically stated as the basis of the conclusion reached by the apostles. Now it is positively certain that the prejudice of Peter and the rest were more energetic and decided against the right of the Gentiles without circumcision to admission to the church, than is modern hostility to the admission of women to the right of public address. If the blessing of the Spirit of God is visible upon any work in the modern church, it is manifest upon the work of woman in these latter days. A volume would be necessary to recount the same. It will be sufficient here to mention only a few things. Women to-day are the most numerous teachers of common schools in all Christian countries. Women are to-day the main teachers of Sabbath-schools of all evangelical churches. No movement for moral reform, either national or international, is more skillfully organized, or more energetically worked, or more economically managed, or more influential in results than is the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The women of the Northern Presbyterian Church during the years 1887-1888, for home and foreign missions raised more than half a million of dollars, and sent it in the shape of buildings, furniture, teachers and female missionaries, medical and literary, almost all over the earth—at home and abroad. This is only one denomination's work. The total gifts of the women of various evangelical denominations through women's societies from

1870 to 1886 is reported by Dr. Dorchester, "Christianity in the United States," page 702, as \$8,270,780. When now it is remembered that to a very large extent this work is done in the face of a prejudice, that either affirmatively or silently confronts them everywhere, and a timidity and embarrassment that belongs to womanhood everywhere, who will say that the time has not come for some one to collect and marshal the scriptural examples and statements and arguments, which to the consciences at least of some who sympathize with these women in their movements, completely justify them in believing that they are doing the will of the Savior that delivered them from a woman's bondage and ignorance in barbarism, and brought them into a woman's life and holy hope in the presence of her Christ.

But it is said that in Timothy the reason assigned is the fact that woman was first in the transgression, and that this reason is not a local or temporary reason peculiar to the Greek civilization and the cities of Ephesus and Corinth, but is one belonging to the history of the race, and just as true everywhere and always as in any time and place. On that subject three things ought to be noticed. In the first place, the facts of the fall were just as true during the Old Testament times and among the Jews as they are now. Those facts can not therefore be inconsistent with Miriam's work, or Deborah's ruling, or Huldah's prophesying, or Joel's predictions, or the words of Mary, Elizabeth, Anna and others; or the blessings of Pentecost, or Priscilla's teaching of Apollos, or the labors of Philip's daughters as Prophetesses. Whatever force attaches to Eve's first sinning always belonged to it. It has not been diminished, and it is not increased. As it did not prohibit God from calling and using women as he was wont to call and use them then up

to and for a quarter of a century after Christ's ascension, surely it does not prohibit God from calling and using them now. In the second place, it is demonstrated by the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians that the apostle does not make the history of woman's creation and fall a sufficient reason for prohibiting her from praying or prophesying. In that chapter he does make woman's creation a reason why, when she prays or prophesies, she should do so with modest dress and courteous behavior. Godet, in an exhaustive effort to show that woman should not generally be commissioned to preach, admits, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, vol. 11, p. 117, that Paul meant to leave women a certain degree of liberty. His suggestion that the apostle was thinking of married women, and then of exceptional cases, is wholly without any authority in the text. But every one must judge for himself whether the apostle can be supposed to give such specific directions as to the method of praying and prophesying, if he intended in that self-same epistle a little later to absolutely prohibit them from ever doing either in public. Surely the eleventh chapter does not refer to private devotions. Its discussion of the dress and behavior of men as well as women is conclusive that it refers to their dress and behavior in the presence of each other. In the third place, if the argument stated in Timothy is an argument dealing with the relation of husband and wife, and not with the relation of the sexes, then the force of the reason is exhausted in that universal and official subordination which belongs to the wife in connection with the federal headship of the husband over the family. As we have seen, only thus can be explained the change from the generic plural of verses eight, nine and ten, for the specific singular of the succeeding



verses. Only thus can be explained the force of the statement of verse fifteen.

It is not expected that this discussion of the passages in First Corinthians and First Timothy will satisfy every one that reads it that these passages are applicable only to women in the midst of such communities as the Greek civilization developed. Nor is it indeed expected that the whole argument will satisfy everybody, that in Christian countries where men and women meet in public worship and unite in devotional meetings as they do in the United States, it is within the bounds of Christian liberty for women to take part in speaking and praying. It is the undoubted right of those who believe that women are not allowed so to do, to refuse to do so themselves if they are women, or to enter their protest against their families so doing if they are men. On the other hand, however, it is also certain that just as good men and women as themselves are satisfied as to the propriety of women thus participating from the arguments here submitted, or from others equally conclusive. In the presence of this difference of opinion, is it right that those who object should lord it over the consciences of those who disagree with them? Having stated their objections, have they not exhausted their responsibility and satisfied the requirements of duty under the circumstances? Many churches in the Presbyterian body believe the office of deaconess scripturally useful and wise. Is it the duty of the pastors and elders in other churches to invoke authority to prohibit such churches from using women in that office for the promotion of church work? Is it not reasonable that every one should be fully persuaded in his own mind, and is it not unreasonable that any should undertake to dictate and dogmatize over others? Church officers are not wise who in this matter

introduce any practice which is certain to produce violent schism and controversy in their own congregations; but if pastor and session in various congregations desire women to address their churches upon religious subjects, by what scriptural right have pastors and officers of other congregations a right to step in and forbid their so doing? Beyond all controversy the Scripture puts "prophets and prophesying" next to the apostles as a New Testament position, and above "evangelists, pastors and teachers" wherever it speaks of them; and equally beyond controversy women did thus "prophesy" in New Testament times. By what scriptural authority, then, shall those who desire women to speak "by prophesying unto edification and exhortation and comfort" be prohibited from so doing at the dictate of those who differ from them? On the other hand, why should those who believe women ought not so to speak, be compelled to allow them to speak by other churches who differ from them? If a congregation wants a young people's association, what right has any church to forbid it to have such an association? If another church does not want to have one, who shall compel it to organize such an association?

When we consider the question of the apostolic office, the fact confronts us that all the apostles were men. It is asserted that this fact is conclusive to show that no woman should speak in a mixed assembly, and is specifically conclusive against the propriety of any woman being authorized *officially* to preach the Gospel. To such denominations as hold that the apostolic office was a permanent office of the church, great weight may be attached to this fact, when it comes to the question of admitting women to that form of church authority which is held to be *the perpetuation of the apostolic office*. If, however, the apostolic office was a temporary one, and

terminated with the lives of those who had been granted personal interviews with the Savior, it would hardly seem that woman's exclusion from a temporary office was proof of her exclusion from all other and subordinate offices. Are we prepared to say that because women are not admitted to some offices, therefore they must not be admitted to any office? All the apostles were Jews, and surely we are not prepared to say that this proves that none but Jews may proclaim the Gospel. All of the seven mentioned in the sixth chapter of Acts were men, was it then a heresy for the church at Cenchreæ to make Phœbe a deacon, and Paul to endorse their act by commending her, in her office, to the church at Rome?

Closely allied to the apostolic office, and next to it in New Testament dignity, is the office of prophet. In both the places where the New Testament offices are mentioned, the apostles are put first and prophets named second. See I. Cor. xii: 28; Eph. iv: 11; also Eph. ii: 20; Rev. xviii: 20. Whether this work of prophesying was like the apostles' office limited to New Testament times, or a permanent work of the church, is a matter of dispute. Many limit it to the age of the apostles, and confine it to the work of those who were supernaturally inspired with a direct revelation from God at the time. Others hold, what seems to be the better opinion, that the work of the prophets in Old Testament church and in New, was the work of a teacher, and was mainly a work of instructing God's people in the will of God. Ordinarily this duty consisted in explaining revelations already made, interpreting the judgments of God, and pointing out the duties of his people. In addition to this ordinary duty of the prophet, however, God in his sovereign pleasure through some of them gave specially inspired utterances, and these were oftentimes in the form of predictions of the

future, but also included divine interpretations of his judgments, and the utterance of inspired praise. If we undertake to limit the work of the prophet to this work of predicting the future, or even speaking by inspiration, then what conception can we have of the Old Testament *schools of the prophets*? Could persons be educated to speak by inspiration? If it was the business of the prophets to study the law, and exhort the people, a school of the prophets is an intelligible thing. If it was inspired prediction, then there is no comprehensible idea of it possible. The assertion that prophesying was limited to those who were inspired, because they wrought miracles in attestation of their divine commission, is certainly unfounded. No record is given of any miracle wrought by Miriam, Deborah, Elizabeth, Anna, or Philip's daughters, nor by David or Jeremiah, or Luke or Timothy. The use of the word in the New Testament will scarcely allow of its being limited to this work of prediction. The very chapter of I. Corinthians under discussion, gives a definition of what prophesying was, and is found in verse three. It is there defined to be "speaking unto men to edification, exhortation and comfort." That kind of speaking is important for the church in every age of the world. In that view, the Apostle's laudation of the work of prophesying, as more important and useful and desirable than the work of speaking with tongues, becomes entirely clear.

But the question whether the office of a prophet and the work of prophesying was temporary or permanent is not material to the present argument. We are absolutely certain of two things concerning it: It was an office next in importance to that of the apostolate, and superior to that of pastor or teacher. We are absolutely certain, secondly, that into that office women were admitted in the New Testament

church as they had been in the Old Testament. The case of Philip's daughters and Paul's reproof of women praying and prophesying in an improper dress proves their participation in this office. If now the apostles had the authority of every office inferior to their own, and the office of ordained minister includes all those inferior to it, what escape is there from the argument, that as women were admitted to the office of prophet, they have thereby so far forth a right of admission to every other office of the New Testament church except the apostolic office. This phase of the argument in no way whatever hinges upon the question, whether the prophetic work was temporary or permanent. In either case it was the business of speaking in behalf of God in explaining his revealed will unto mankind. If the modern church will allow women this privilege of "prophesying," and the authority coupled with it in the New Testament, under such circumstances as give reason to believe that they are called to the work by such proofs of a call as would be considered sufficient in the case of men, then no one need be concerned about securing for them any further liberty.

But it is said we do not know but that the reason for appointing only men to the apostolic office, was to exclude women from the work of preaching, and that we do not know whether Miriam, or Deborah, or Hannah, or Huldah, or the daughters of Philip, or those spoken of in the eleventh of Corinthians as prophesying, spoke in the presence of mixed audiences or not. This "argument from ignorance" is not a specially reputable one among logicians, and it is conspicuously weak in such a connection as this. The whole burden of proof is on the other side. Whoever denies that they were allowed to speak to men, must affirmatively show that their authority and exercise of it was limited to women.

Their words are recorded in Scripture precisely as the words of men are recorded. No hint is given that Moses' song was given to any audience other than Miriam's inspired chorus, or that Deborah's utterance was not made in the presence of Barak and his warriors whose praises she sounded, or that Huldah had any embarrassment in making her response to the men that came to her with their questions about the law, or that Anna waited until Joseph and Simeon had gone out of her presence before she "gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him (Mary's babe) to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." If the effort to prohibit women from speaking has so completely failed, that its only resort is to say, that "we do not know who were present on the various occasions mentioned in Scripture in which women took part," then surely they may be now allowed to participate in the devotional exercises of the church of God *until we do know that the men had gone out*. Every indication looks to the fact, that on the day of the resurrection and on the evening following it, the women which belonged to the company of the disciples before the crucifixion and after the resurrection, participated with freedom in that Sabbath evening interview between the risen Lord and his followers. In after time, beginning with the day of Pentecost, throughout all the New Testament history of the propagation of the Gospel, they participated as providential opportunities opened, and the proprieties of the social customs and habits of the countries to which they traveled, or to which persecutions drove them, may have allowed. They worked then as our missionaries are working now, and until some conclusive proof is given to the contrary, the missionary workers at home and abroad may well go on with their loving labors, assured that they are



following the example of their sisters in New Testament times.

But it is said that in the temple service in Old Testament times no woman took part in the priestly offices. It must be remembered, however, that the question now under consideration is the question concerning one person's addressing an audience for their instruction or edification or comfort. The temple was not constructed with any view of any such service. There was no audience room in the building. There was no furniture for any such use. The Holy Place and the Most Holy Place were both but very small rooms, and in the innermost the only furniture was the ark, and in the outer one the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread and the golden candlestick. The prophets of the Old Testament, male and female, did not utter their words to the people in the temple. Furthermore, the priestly office was distinct from the prophetic, and terminated with the resurrection of Christ. The priests were themselves but types of him in his priestly office. The words of the priests in the temple had no more relation, therefore, either in Old Testament or New Testament times, to the question of the duty of prophesying and instruction, than the temple itself is a final type of construction for any Old Testament synagogue, or New Testament church. And lastly, it is absolutely certain that somewhere about the temple women did speak to the people. Luke ii: 36-38, specifically states that Anna, the Prophetess, departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayer night and day, and coming in (to the temple) that instant (that Simeon was blessing Mary as she presented her son) gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

In Gal. iii: 28, we have before us what seems to be a final summing up of that condition of mankind into which the Gospel tends to bring the race. The preceding part of the chapter is a discussion of the race in its process of education, and its release from the curse of the law through the redemption of Christ. Verse twenty-six is the ideal future to which all the history of the church was tending, namely, that all should be the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; so that ultimately there is to be "neither Jew nor Greek, there is to be neither bond nor free, there is to be neither male nor female, for all are to be one in Christ Jesus." Even in that time, yet peradventure long in the future, there will be proprieties and courtesies; for the perfect Christian is always gentle, courteous, discreet. But when that time comes the children of God will be ready to hear God's word from the lips of any of his redeemed people to whom his spirit and his providence have given a word to speak for edification and comfort. In the meantime prudence will be required, and the proprieties of life should not be violated; nor on the other hand should the activities of man and woman be needlessly and ruthlessly checked.

Of course every one has been asking themselves whether all this will not go to favor ordaining women to the full work of the ministry? That question was not intended to be discussed in this study with any special prominence. To properly discuss it would require the thorough discussion of a very difficult question, namely, the whole subject of the New Testament doctrine of "ordination." Some hold that ordination was connected solely with the matter of government. Others hold that the New Testament limits the right of official preaching to those especially ordained for that pur-

pose. Others hold that licensure and ordination are services within the right of the organized church in maintaining order, propriety and efficiency in the prosecution of church work. It is thus obvious that the whole subject is a wide one. It is impossible to show, that all those who are mentioned as preaching the Gospel in the Acts of the Apostles were specifically ordained. A few examples will be sufficient to set thoughtful people to a careful study of their Bible on this question. Take for instance the statement in Acts viii: 3, 4. In the third verse it is stated definitely that Saul imprisoned both men and women as the enemies of the Gospel. This is immediately followed with the statement that those who were scattered abroad went everywhere "preaching the word." Were all these ordained? Is it reasonable to suppose that they were all men? Is there any evidence that the men named in the last chapter of Romans were ordained any more than the women who are miscellaneously named as workers with them? After Apollos had finished his education under Priscilla and Aquilla, did one or other or both of them ordain him? And who ordained them? Is it not rather certain that in the evangelization of the nations by the church of that day, Christian men and women went abroad talking by the way, visiting from house to house, gathering companies in private houses, in synagogues, in chapels, and speaking to them of the kingdom of heaven and of the Redeemer of men, precisely as Christian missionaries, ministers, licentiates, catechists, native preachers, teachers, Bible women, medical missionaries, female missionaries in foreign lands are doing to-day. Zenana work in India is impossible for men. Work among the women of the Mohammedan harems is equally impossible. There are numerous other circumstances in which men can

no more reach the women of to-day, than they could the women of Greek speaking nations of old. Suppose now these women, inaccessible to men, are converted, and desire the means of grace God has appointed for the sanctification of his people, and especially desire the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, what shall be done? The Presbyterian Church refuses to authorize any woman, under any circumstances, to minister these means of grace unto those whom the Spirit has converted through the instrumentality of the labors of women.

Undoubtedly it is true, as is said in reply to this, that the means of grace are not essential to salvation, but it is respectfully submitted, is there scriptural authority to justify us in saying, that man's limitation to men of the administration of these sacraments is more essential than God's sacraments are to the salvation of his people. Nowhere that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is mentioned in the Bible is there any direction given as to the person by whom it is to be administered. The fitness of things evidently would require, that it should be administered by the officers of the church, but even that can not be supported by *Scripture statement, and chapter and verse cited*. If ordination means anything, it admits the subject to duties, privileges, and official positions which were prohibited before. The question of the admission to ordination and official preaching is entirely distinct from the question of admission to all such work (suitable to women) as may be done by unordained men. THE ARGUMENT OF THIS PAPER IS SPECIFICALLY FOR THAT PRIVILEGE FOR WOMEN AS THEIR SCRIPTURAL PRIVILEGE AND DUTY. If it is said that admission to this carries with it the right of admission to the other, it must be evident that it no more involves it than does the present work of female missionaries in foreign and home



fields, and their sisters in boards and bands in raising their support. The Presbyterian Church is shut up to one of these three things: either, firstly, to practically adopt the doctrine of this paper; or, secondly, to suppress its woman's boards and societies and recall its female missionaries; or, thirdly, confessedly go on doing what it thinks is unscriptural.

Miss S. M. Kaufman and Miss Mary L. Cort were left at Pet-chaburi, Siam, for many months alone as missionaries at that station, when ill-health had compelled every ordained minister to leave the field. There was no ordained minister of any denomination within one hundred and sixty miles. Here were two women, which the Presbyterian Church had counted good enough to send there to teach the natives the Gospel, called upon to minister to the dying and counsel and guide the living. A scourge of cholera passed over that city while those two missionaries were there alone. There, as among us, sickness and death prevailing everywhere, made serious and thoughtful the minds of the living, and the behavior of the Christians in the midst of the plague deeply impressed the heathen. But *because these two were women* the sacraments of God's house were prohibited to the native Christians as well as to the missionaries themselves. Out of the overwhelming anxiety, and nervous strain of that perplexing experience, Miss Kaufman came, with nerves shattered and her naturally robust health broken, and so returned home. That overtaxed body is sleeping quietly now, and that brave and faithful soul is with her Master. But if the responsibility was laid upon the author of this paper, as he sees God's truth and understands God's providence, and appreciates the blessings of God's spirit upon woman's work, no Presbyterian woman should ever again be put into the mission field with liability to be thus

situated without the right to minister to the children of God every means of grace which God has appointed in his Word for the edification of his people, and their comfort in trial.

It may be said that these are exceptional cases, and the fact is that the Bible provides for exceptional cases, but the Presbyterian Standards do not. The Presbyterian Church authorizes presbyteries to make exceptions of uneducated men, and if they are specially useful and blessed of God, they may be licensed and ordained, no matter how they may murder grammar, dictionary, rhetoric, and good sense. In the presence of the conspicuous blessing of God on their labors, who dares to object to their ordination? Many a scholarly minister would gladly exchange his learning for the usefulness of some of his less learned brethren. But there must be no exception ever made for a woman, no matter how educated, eloquent, or blessed of God. The only inflexible, infallible test is sex. God's blessing and success can make up for every other defect; but if a person's gender is wrong, no endorsement of the Holy Ghost, and no favor of Christian people can atone for that in the eyes of the Presbyterian Church; nor indeed in any other evangelical church except the Quakers.

If God has so cleansed women from sin and its curse, as to create them anew in Christ Jesus, to endow them originally with the natural gifts, to providentially furnish them with the ample acquirements, and to give them the ears and hearts of the people, so that they are glad to hear them speak the words of truth, and then the Holy Ghost shall come upon the speaker and the hearer, in converting and sanctifying power, may not the command of God to Peter, as he sent him to preach to the Gentiles, be repeated in behalf of such divinely called female messengers, and such

waiting audiences, "What God has cleansed, that call not thou common or unclean"?

A most important phase of religious thought is now making itself manifest in various directions, and among quite a number of different denominations. This is what is called "the revival of the scriptural office of the deaconess." Deaconesses have been extant in Europe in various denominations. The most notable of these is the House at Kaiserwerth. The Pan Presbyterian Council of 1888, at London, approved of a report of a committee appointed in 1884, and commended the subject of Deaconesses to the favorable consideration of the various bodies represented in that Council. The Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland had already taken steps toward the more formal inauguration of this work. On this side of the water, the movement is also quite significant. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in New York in 1888, commended the organization of the work of Deaconesses to the earnest consideration of the conferences and churches of that denomination; and since then steps have been taken for the establishment of this order, both in New York and in Cincinnati. The Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanter), at the meeting of its General Synod, in 1888, adopted a resolution declaring the office of Deaconess a New Testament office; and since then two women have been ordained to the office in that denomination. Various individual congregations in the Presbyterian Church have appointed Deaconesses. These last, however, are much more like the office of deacon among the men in the Presbyterian Church, than like members of the organization of deaconesses in the German or Methodist sense of that term. What is commonly known as the order of deaconesses, in the sense in which

the word is used in the Methodist organizations, and probably in the Scotch churches, and certainly in the German churches, where they were first established in recent times, is a class of women, who, without formal vows of any kind, devote themselves to charitable, philanthropic, and especially evangelical work. The German deaconesses generally give much time to nursing the sick as trained nurses. The two great forms of work are, the relief of suffering and the ministration of religion by such methods of access as seem not yet to have been effectually tried. Whereunto all this will grow it is not yet possible to tell. It is most hopeful that it is taken up in a spirit of sincere consecration to the Master, and earnest desire to do whatsoever the providence of God may indicate as possible to be done by the labor of consecrated women. The outlook for the work is most hopeful and promising, and well deserves the sympathy, study and co-operation of every follower of Christ and friend of the race.

The phrase, "the revival of the scriptural office of deaconess," is very excellent. It greatly tends to avoid prejudice, and to secure a favorable consideration of the subject, but it ought to be frankly confessed on all hands, that the attempt will be futile to show *in detail* what the duties of New Testament deaconesses were and cite chapter and verse therefor from Scripture. Who doubts that the deaconesses' work then was adapted to the work to be done in the conditions of society wherein men and women then were found? Who doubts that now it would be destructive of every useful result to set forth in the English and American communities a body of women adapted to work in the condition of Greek and Roman communities. Very wisely the modern church has organized its church work for the modern world in which

it finds itself, and the peculiarities of which world that church has largely moulded. So the church may wisely establish the deaconess as an official position, and so organize the office that it shall be fitted in the best manner possible to occupy the field within its reach. In European and American society there are no conditions of womanhood to exclude the labors of men, so completely as the Zenana of India or harem of Mohammedan countries. On the other hand, however, there are very many conditions of life in which the work and services of men are a nuisance both to the laborer and to the persons among whom he labors. In these very same circumstances the ministrations of women would be most acceptable and extremely profitable. If now the denominations can through deaconesses enter all these fields into which women can go most easily, and these women shall gather women, children and feeble old men and tell them of Christ, who will say that such preaching of the Gospel is contrary to Scripture? And if in the obscurer parts of the great cities, where the maintenance of churches is attended with many perplexities, these deaconesses shall organize their cottage prayer meetings, until that cottage prayer meeting shall become established in the house of some modern Priscilla and Aquilla, and converts shall be brought to the knowledge of eternal life, by what chapter and verse of Scripture are these deaconesses prohibited from distributing the memorials of the Savior's death? Presbyterians have long held that deacons are competent to distribute the elements in the administration of the Lord's Supper. If that be so, why may not a deaconess. Their ordination as deaconess would thus make female missionaries scripturally competent to administer the sacraments.

Whatever may be the conclusions to which any may come,

the question of the right of Christian women to address public assemblies is one of the burning questions of present religious life. The attitude of many denominations is completely self-contradictory. With gratitude they accept the munificent contributions the women's societies gather. With laudatory resolutions they express their thanks, applaud and commend the work, and year after year strenuously urge these same women to more activity, more liberality, more zeal and more enthusiasm. And yet across the paths of these same women thus urged forward, these same ecclesiastical bodies throw the dark frown of their decided disapprobation on what the women have found necessary to do in carrying out past exhortations. Their course seems to be like that of the highway robber, that in the same sentence bids his victim throw up his hands, and hand the robber his money. A writer in the Southern Presbyterian Review, in arguing against ordaining women, suggests as too horrible to be contemplated, that if a woman was ordained, it might become her duty in administering discipline to suspend her husband from the church. Of course such a writer could suspend his wife without emotion.

Of course this question will not disturb those denominations where ecclesiastical judicatories of men definitely forbid their women to speak and remand them to silence and inactivity; and where the women are content to do nothing and be nothing, while their sisters in other denominations are humbly and effectively at work under the Master's blessing, and their sisters in heathen and home lands are perishing without that Gospel. But herein is a marvelous thing; those very denominations, in common with all Presbyterians, affirm and defend *woman's suffrage as scriptural*. *There is not a pastor nor elder among them that was not elected BY THE VOTES OF*

WOMEN. To say that a woman may speak in the organic congregation of believers sitting officially to call a pastor by that most influential voice—her vote—and yet may not explain her vote, by urging others to vote for one man's orthodoxy in preference to another man's laxity, may seem to some consistent, but to others it looks like flat self-contradiction. In Presbyterian bodies Corresponding Members may speak but may not vote, but in the whole circle of deliberative assemblies it is reserved for women under such rulings to have the right to vote but not to speak. One prominent writer says he does not deny woman's right to speak in unofficial assemblies, but that she is bound to silence when "the church is gathered together as a church;" but if the church is not gathered together as a church when electing officers, then it never is. There is ten times as much scriptural authority for women speaking in mixed assemblies as there is for their voting, and some curiosity may be innocently indulged in watching the rise, progress and failure of a movement to take the church ballot away from women. He must have marvelous gifts in limber-jointed logic, and great skill as an intellectual acrobat, who can demonstrate that a woman may vote in a church meeting, and yet may not tell her fellow-members why she favors this motion and opposes that. *If she can vote on a motion, can she make one? Must she make it in SILENCE, AND VOTE ONLY WHEN THEY VOTE BY BALLOT?* Making silent motions in a meeting sounds like a peal of silent thunder. The church is gathered in its most definitely organic form when electing officers, and if women vote they may speak. This is short logic and from it there is no escape.

No assumption can be much more unscriptural and sophistical than that which asserts that, so long as there is any doubt

about woman's right to speak, she is bound to be silent. Over and over again this assumption is repeated, as if it was a self-evident truth, that "it is safe to be silent but perilous to speak." When Moses was ordered to go and speak to Pharaoh, it was not safe for him to be silent, however he may have doubted his fitness. Jonah tried the plan of refusing to speak, and was sharply reprov'd. In the description of the judgment-day, quite as much is said of the sin of not doing duty, as of doing what was forbidden. Let no woman lay the comforting unction to her soul, that in the presence of the call of God to this work, she may sin by speaking but can not sin by keeping silence; nor let the church believe that there is no risk of sin in silencing the speech of those whose speech and work God has blessed in every land.

Surely the day has come when the missionary spirit brought into the Church of God in the present century may have liberty to mould and use men (and women as well as men) in every form of work which shall tend to proclaim the Gospel—shall be found to be acceptable among those to whom the Gospel is sent, and shall receive the approving blessing of the Holy Ghost in the conversion and salvation of souls. To the hastening of that day of skillful Christian enterprise—of wide-awake religious tact and self-forgetful consecration to God and to sinners, this "Bible Study" is offered as a passing contribution.



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