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Soederblom and Harnack in a Swedish Estimate.

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During March Prof. Adolph von Harnack, of Berlin, visited the principal ecclesiastical and academic centers of Sweden. His visit attracted a great deal of attention. A conservative paper like *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* celebrated the coming of the distinguished guest with fulsome praise.

The Twelfth General Convention of the Swedish Lutheran State Church had just closed its session when the renowned German Gnostic arrived. There is no apparent connection between the convention and Dr. Harnack's visit, except that both events aroused a great deal of public interest, and both afford glimpses of Swedish church-life under state control.

The convention was attended, not only by representatives from every part of Sweden, but also by invited guests from the adjacent countries to the East, the former provinces of Russia bordering on the Baltic, which had sent their bishops to the convention. *Nya Vaektlaren*, for April, calls them the Swedish Archbishop Soederblom's "suffragan bishops." The preparations for the convention had been on a scale to excite great expectations. From a meeting of the leading men of the Swedish state church the public had a right to expect important deliberations bearing on Swedish church-life. In this the confessional Lutherans of Sweden were disappointed. Editor Svensson has called the great doings "a delusion," because "the convention, in fact, was not permitted to take the initiative in any matter or to issue any important declaration on the burning questions of the day." The archbishop, as usual, was charming and impressed the convention with his skill as chairman and general manager. He delivered a remarkably informing address on the state of affairs throughout the world and present-day politics, in which "he sided with both the French and the Germans, the Socialists and the Conservatives." He told

Are 1 Cor. 11, 3—16 and 1 Cor. 14, 33—40 Parallel Ordinances?

An inquiry into Paul's injunctions, 1 Cor. 11, 3—16, 1 Cor. 14, 33—40, and 1 Tim. 2, 11—15.

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The question of woman suffrage in the sphere of politics has given rise to new problems in the Church. Suggested by the privileges enjoyed by woman in temporal affairs, the question has been asked: Should like privileges be accorded to woman in the spiritual sphere of the Church? or, Should woman enjoy equally with man the right of public preaching and deliberation in the churches of Christ? Most churches have answered this question in the affirmative. Such churches as have denied woman these rights are comparatively few. Even the Lutheran churches have not followed a uniform practise in this matter, although conservative Lutheranism, on the basis of Paul's injunctions in 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2, has stoutly denied to woman in the Church equal rights with man. It has maintained that the injunctions of Paul in these passages are final, pertaining to all Christian churches for all time. Woman is neither to teach nor to usurp authority over man.

This position of conservative Lutheranism has been stated so often and well that it is not necessary to state it anew. Hence the question for discussion now is not that of woman's rights in the Church in general. That question, according to the writer's view, has been definitely settled. The subject of discussion is rather an incidental question, namely: Are 1 Cor. 11, 3—16 and 1 Cor. 14, 33—40, as well as 1 Tim. 2, 11—15, parallel injunctions; in other words: If the Church disregards the command of Paul in 1 Cor. 11, is it not consistent also to disregard the injunctions of Paul in 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2? In 1 Cor. 11 the apostle insists that women must be veiled in the Christian assemblies. In 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2 he enjoins that women should be silent in the congregation. Now, conservative Lutheranism has not insisted upon carrying out the first injunction. It has not regarded it as essential that at the present time women should be veiled in the Christian churches. In many congregations women even approach the Lord's Table with their heads uncovered. Now, if this is permitted, must not the Church also permit women to take part in the public deliberations and the general functions of the Church,

especially in public preaching and teaching? Those who draw this inference rest their argument upon the fact that Paul in all these passages uses precisely the same basis of argument: A woman should be veiled in Christian assemblies because she is the glory of man and was created for man, 1 Cor. 11, 7. 8. A woman should be silent in the Church because she is to be under obedience, 1 Cor. 14, 34; 1 Tim. 2, 11.

In order to ascertain whether the injunctions in 1 Cor. 11 and 1 Cor. 14 are parallel, it may be well to delineate the line of argument which the apostle follows in each of these chapters. Let us first examine the argumentation in 1 Cor. 11, 3—16. The general subject is clear and may be stated as follows: Women must be veiled in the Christian assemblies. For this the apostle assigns the following reasons:—

1. The removal of the veil clearly militates against the ordinance of God, who has made man the head of the woman. 1 Cor. 11, 3. 8. 9.

2. The unveiled woman dishonors her head, since by this act she puts herself on an equal level with "women of easy virtue," who revolt against woman's subordinate position, vv. 4—6.

3. The removal of the veil from woman offends the angels, who are present in the Christian assemblies, veiling themselves in the presence of God. As the angels veil themselves before God, so woman should veil herself before man, since she is the glory of man, vv. 7—10.

4. It is an impropriety, an offense against natural modesty, for woman not to be veiled, vv. 13—15.

5. It is a custom or agreement among the *churches* that woman should be veiled, v. 16.

In considering these points, it is obvious that the apostle bases his arguments on woman's subordinate position as determined by the Creator. God, so Paul teaches, has made the two sexes different and has placed them in different stations. A proper regard to Him and to each other requires that this difference be seen in their apparel and deportment. In studying the arguments of the apostle, the reader notes at once that Paul adduces no direct command of God which makes it imperative for woman to be veiled in the assemblies. The whole matter is a question of propriety, of observing a custom indicative of woman's subordinate position. From this custom the women at Corinth were not to depart; for by this they would reject

the authority of man, adopt the customs of women of doubtful virtue, offend the angels, who witness the propriety or impropriety of the conduct of the Christians, and set aside the propriety suggested by nature as well as the agreement of the churches. In the whole argument the apostle presupposes a definite custom prevailing at his time. That custom the apostle approved of, since it was in accord with the rule made by God that woman should be subject to man, with the propriety suggested by nature, with the dignity of the angels, and the general understanding prevailing among the Christian churches. The apostle urges the custom very strongly. Nevertheless, he weighs his arguments very carefully, and by no word does he indicate that the custom of veiling should be observed by all Christians for all time. Not so much the custom as rather what the custom indicates, namely, the subordination of woman, is the point which he wishes to stress.

Let us now inquire into 1 Cor. 14, 33—40 and 1 Tim. 2, 11—15. The reader will at once notice great similarity between these two passages and the one just discussed. In 1 Cor. 14, 33b, which properly belongs to the following rather than to the foregoing verses, Paul refers to what is customary in the Christian churches. He says: "As in all churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the churches," vv. 33b. 34. However, what the apostle wishes to impress now is of far greater importance than what he has stressed in 1 Cor. 11. The very manner in which he speaks of this new injunction shows that he regards this new injunction as of far weightier significance than that of the veiling of women. The fact that he does not treat the silence of the women in the churches in connection with the veiling of women shows that the two are not parallel indeed! The fact, too, that he repeats the injunction of 1 Cor. 14 in his epistle to Timothy proves that he ascribes to it much greater significance than to the veiling of women.

However, the difference between this injunction and the foregoing one is clear mainly from the manner in which the apostle treats this issue. In forbidding woman to speak in the churches, he adduces far stronger arguments, to wit:—

1. "It is *not permitted* unto them to speak." 1 Cor. 14, 34.
2. "They are *commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the Law." V. 34b.
3. "If they will learn anything, let them *ask their husbands at home.*" V. 35a.

4. "It is a *shame* for women to speak in the church." V. 35b.
5. "The things that I write unto you are the *commandments of the Lord.*" V. 37b.
6. A man who disregards the apostle's injunctions is *ignorant.* V. 38.
7. "Let all things be done *decently* and, in *order.*" V. 40.
8. "Let the woman *learn in silence* with all *subjection.*" 1 Tim. 2, 11.
9. "But I *suffer not* a woman to teach nor to *usurp authority.*" V. 12.
10. Woman was formed *after man.* V. 13.
11. Man was *not deceived*, while woman, *being deceived*, was *in the transgression.* V. 14.

1. Immediately the reader notes the difference between this basis of argument and the preceding one. The custom of veiling was not *commanded*, but woman's silence in the churches is a *commandment* and a *law of God.* 1 Cor. 14, 34.

2. The unveiled woman was *not to be cast out of the church*; but the woman speaking in the churches should *not be "suffered."* She should ask her husband at home. 1 Cor. 14, 35.

3. The woman unveiled offended against the propriety suggested by *nature*, while, if a woman speaks in the church, this is a *moral fault*, a *shame.* V. 35b.

4. For the preservation of the custom of veiling the apostle adduces no direct command of the Lord; with regard to the latter injunction, however, he desires that his commandment be *acknowledged as the commandment of the Lord.* 1 Cor. 14, 37.

5. A man arguing for the unveiling of woman Paul declares to be *contentious*; to the man permitting women to speak in the churches he ascribes *wilful and persistent ignorance.* V. 38.

6. Disregarding the custom of veiling constitutes an impropriety; woman's speaking in the church militates against *decency and order.* V. 40.

7. A woman who refuses to wear a veil in a Christian assembly and a woman who insists upon speaking in the churches both, according to Paul's argument, revolt against the decree of God which subordinates woman; for, says he, God first created Adam and then Eve. 1 Tim. 2, 13. However, there is this difference: the unveiling of woman offends against a custom and sets aside

propriety, whereas the speaking of woman in Christian assemblies is conducive to the *propagation of errors and false doctrine*. V. 14.

From this it is clear that the apostle, when forbidding the speaking of women in the churches, has in mind far greater perils for the Church than in the other case. If a woman removes her veil, she revolts against the rightful authority of man. But this need not of necessity result in direct peril to the Church. It would not render the Church unchristian. Again, the harm done by unveiling is done only where the veiling of women is a symbol of her subordinate position, as it was in the Christian congregation in the time of St. Paul. In our time, especially in the Western world, this custom no longer prevails. In our time, women veil their heads simply for the sake of propriety or because wearing a veil is in vogue. Viewing the passage in this light, we might interpret Paul's thoughts as follows: Since woman should be subject to man, and since the custom of veiling was indicative of the subordinate position of woman; since, furthermore, the unveiling of woman might give offense and lead strangers to classify Christian women with the *hetairae* of that time, the Christian women of Corinth were to follow the custom prevalent in, and agreed upon by, other churches, and appear in the assemblies veiled. More than this the text does not suggest. Paul does not insist that what was the custom at that time should remain a custom for all time. On the other hand, however, woman, when speaking in the congregation, not only revolts against the clear command of God, but also usurps authority over man, subverts the divine rule of order, and entails upon the Church the perils of false doctrine and general disorder and confusion, through her amenability to fraud and deception. It is for these reasons that Paul forbids women to speak in the churches — an injunction to remain in force at all times.

It may be added that there are situations in which a woman may both teach and voice her opinion in the Church. In no case has conservative Lutheranism permitted her to teach and speak in the assembly when this would militate against the rightful authority which man holds over woman. She may teach those who are not men. She may instruct women and children. However, she is not to be a public preacher of the Word. She may also deliberate and take part in the discussion of practical matters in the church; however, only in such a way that the injunction of Paul be not violated: "I suffer not a woman to *teach* nor

to *usurp authority over the man.*” So much must be clear to every one who approaches the subject without bias. What Paul is intent on maintaining in the churches is the authority of man established by God, and the preservation of God’s pure Word, which He has entrusted to him who was not deceived. For these reasons women are commanded to be silent in the churches.
