

11-12. Upon the first of these passages it is sufficient to point out that Paul is not discussing the propriety, or impropriety, of women teaching or preaching in church assemblies; but that the subject of his contention is, the irregular mode of conducting public worship in the Corinthian Church. It is worthy of note, however, that verse 5 assumes the fact of women *prophesying* in public; and that the Apostle does not utter a word of censure against the custom. He simply pronounces against her doing so "with her head unveiled;" "Every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoreth her head." The other two passages are the only ones of any weight, and read as follows: "Let the women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness" (R. V.). He would be a rash man who said that these words give no "uncertain sound." At the same time some who are favorable to the rightfulness and propriety of women preaching have submitted the former text to a curious mode of interpretation. *Lalein*, we are told, does not mean so much to *speak*, as to *prattle*, *chatter*, *babble*, or to talk unmeaningly, and that it was against this babbling, etc., that the Apostle lifted up his voice. Even the Lexicons of Robinson, and Liddell and Scott, give this as the meaning of the word. But what a shock it would be to our sense of propriety, to use *babbleth* instead of *speakeeth*, in verses 2, 3: To read, "babbleth unto God," and "babbleth unto men to edification," is worse than "jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire." Besides, throughout this chapter, *lalein* applies to *men* as well as to women; but, are we to infer that men are so stocked with wise-headedness that they are, occasionally, permitted to *babble* nonsense in the church?—that women are so destitute of

"That fell our ca'd common sense,"

as not to be trusted to speak at all? A less objectionable method would be to bring some exegetical skill to bear upon the word *gune*. Does it mean, in these passages, *wife* or *woman*? Lachmann renders it *wife*, in the passage from Corinthians,—“As in all the churches let the wives of the saints keep silence in your assemblies.”