

MISCELLANEOUS.

ST. PAUL AND THE THEATRE HAT.

Nations among which the Christian religion has been introduced so as to practically exclude all other forms of religion are called Christian nations. That does not imply that all members of such a nation profess faith in Jesus Christ. In our own country but a minority of the inhabitants belong to Christian churches. Still, Christianity is, so to speak, the only religion which exercises and has exercised for centuries a visible and tangible influence upon our people and their ancestors. Our manners and morals, public as well as private, have consequently become thoroughly imbued with Christianity. There may be some who are ignorant of this fact and inclined to deny it. It is, however, easily proved, especially as far as our manners and customs are concerned.

That our manners and customs are influenced by Christianity, even where it should least be expected, can be demonstrated with the greatest facility. The "theatre hat," for instance, which of late has been so often discussed and generally condemned, at least by the stronger sex, is an old Christian apostolic institution. That is the more surprising, since church and theatre are by numerous persons thought to be utterly opposed to each other. But, a closer examination of the first part of chapter xi. of the First Epistle to the Corinthians will make it perfectly clear that no less an authority than the Apostle Paul is responsible for the "theatre hat."

In that passage the Apostle commands the male members of the congregation at Corinth to be uncovered during divine services, while he urges the women to cover their heads. The Apostle does, indeed, not expressly use the term "divine services." He says that the men should be bare-headed when praying and prophesying, and that the women should wear their head-dress when doing the same. His words to that effect are found in verses 4 and 5: "Every man praying and prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth and prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head. For that is even all one as if she were shaven." Praying and prophesying formed, as is generally known, the two principal elements of the public, religious services of the Christians at the time of the Apostle Paul, just as they do at present. It is, therefore, not to be doubted that the Apostle's commandment refers to the head-dress of the Christians at Corinth when they were attending church.

The precept of the Apostle, as far as woman is concerned, centers in verse 10, which in our English translation reads: "The woman ought to have power on her head." This rendering is incorrect, inasmuch as it omits the indefinite article be-

fore the word power. It should be: "The woman ought to have a power on her head." The corresponding Greek word must mean something worn by women on their heads; and our English Bible has added on the margin the note: "That is a covering, in sign that she is under the power of her husband." Whether that be the real meaning of the strange Greek word, I am unable to state. The word signifies either in its abstract sense, power, or, in its concrete sense, officers that exercise power. Neither meaning suits our passage. If it could be shown that it also meant protection, and a thing that protects, it would be quite acceptable. It is, however, possible that the word found at present in our passage has been inserted by an old copier, instead of the original word meaning head-dress (for instance, *ἐπικρατίδας*), or that it was the popular name of a certain kind of head-gear worn by women at that time. One thing is absolutely sure, and is nowhere denied, it must be the name of something in the line of veils, hoods, or bonnets, used by women to cover their heads.

The Apostle enjoins his command concerning the head-dress of men and women among the early Christians at Corinth with so much force and earnestness that it is but natural to assume that they have obeyed him. Besides, as he did not preach another religion at Corinth than at other places, he must have given the same command wherever he succeeded in founding congregations. The Apostle Paul being the founder of the Christian Church among the Gentiles, among all nations not of Jewish descent, is also the father of our churches, because our ancestors were Gentiles, not Jews. For this reason it is to be taken for granted that the direct influence of the Apostle must appear in many things even among us; and it cannot be wondered at that such precepts of his as that of covered and uncovered heads, are still religiously observed in all Christian churches. Up to this present day men take off their hats as soon as they enter church, while women do not think of removing them. This latter custom, far from being the outgrowth of female vanity and the desire to publicly display their good or bad taste in selecting fashionable head-gear, has been introduced by the Apostle Paul, and proves how conservative the gentler sex is in matters of religion.

But the Apostle's influence in this respect is by no means confined to the churches; it rules supreme even at such places of worldly pleasure as the theatre and the concert-hall. Every one knows that the theatre of the ancient Greeks was a religious institution; theatrical performances with them were religious services of the highest importance. A similar connexion exists between the Christian Church and the modern theatre. The migration of the Teutonic tribes swept away Greek and Roman culture from the confines of Western Europe. The Church alone preserved the germs of that old and venerable civilisation, and cultivated as well as imparted them to the people which acknowledged its spiritual rule. Thus it happened that during the Middle Ages the Christian Church became the mother of all modern arts and sciences. Modern music, poetry, sculpture, painting, architecture, etc., served their apprenticeship as handmaids of religion. Christmas plays were the beginnings of modern drama and opera. Those plays were given at the usual places of public worship and were regarded as public religious services of even a higher order than the ordinary services. The necessary consequence was that men removed their hats and women did not on such occasions, just as at the regular services.

When, by and by, the theatre became emancipated from the control of the Church, that custom had become so firmly established that it was a matter of course for women not to be seen in public places unless with covered heads. The origin

of that custom had long been forgotten ; nobody cared to learn its real meaning ; everybody was convinced that it was the only proper thing for decent women to do ; and women themselves would have been ready to fight for what they believed to be their privilege. And this position our women can hardly be said to have abandoned. That is, in short, the historical evolution of the "theatre hat"; and I hope to have been successful in proving that the Apostle Paul is its father, in so far at least as he induced all Gentile Christians to conform with an old, religious observance of the Greeks and Romans.

Among the Jews, both sexes, men as well as women, had to cover their heads while praying, a custom still observed in all orthodox synagogues. Among the Greeks and Romans, however, men prayed with bare heads, but women had to be veiled. Juvenal, for instance, tells us, Sat. VI., 390-392, of a certain Roman lady (*quaedam de numero Lamiarum ac nominis Aeli*):

Stetit ante aram, nec turpe putavit,
Pro cithara velare caput, dictataque verba
Pertulit, ut mos est, et aperta palluit agna.

(She stood before the altar, nor did think it disgraceful to veil her head in favor of a cithara, and completed the prescribed words religiously, and watched closely, as the lamb was opened.) Paul, who was very careful not to introduce Judaism among his Gentile disciples, accepted and sanctioned, also in this respect, the old established heathen custom.

Many people will, as I believe, find it somewhat queer that the Apostle should have occupied himself seriously with such a question, and especially that he should have made so great a distinction between man and woman. The more carefully will we have to consider his reasons. These, as furnished by himself, are three in number. The Apostle, in the first place, states that it is not "comely that a woman should pray unto God uncovered." According to him, such a woman should also be "shorn or shaven." The long hair given her indicates that she must cover her head while attending church. The second reason consists in woman's natural inferiority. The Apostle says: "The man is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." Such inferiority demands an outward token, and, in order to furnish that, the Apostle decreed that women should keep their heads covered at church. The third reason is found in verse 10: "The woman ought to have a power on her head because of the angels." The expression "because of the angels" has to be explained more fully.

It refers to an old Jewish myth or superstition which, as is shown by our present passage, was shared by the Apostle Paul. In the first verses of Genesis vi. the following remarks occur: "It came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." "There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old men of renown." "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." We further are informed that this experience induced God to destroy the inhabitants of the earth by the great flood. On these short and unconnected remarks, in later times, the story of the fallen angels was built up. Angels became enamored of mortal women, begot

the giants, and introduced all kinds of wickedness and evil among the dwellers of the earth. God was finally compelled to punish those angels by imprisoning them in a deep, dark hole in the desert of Dudael, and the mortal sinners by drowning them in the deluge. This story is handed down to us in the first part of the Book of Enoch, an apocryphal writing which originated in Palestine about one hundred and twenty-five years before the Christian era, and which was very popular both among the Jews as also afterwards among the early Christians. It is impossible to cite the whole story of the fallen angels. A few sentences, however, will enable us to form a sufficiently clear idea of its character.

In chapter vi. we read: "It happened, after the children of men had multiplied in those days, that fair and beautiful daughters were born to them. And the angels, the sons of the heavens, saw them and lusted after them, and said unto each other, 'Come, let us choose wives among the children of men and beget children.' And Semjaza, the first of them, said unto them, 'I fear lest ye may not want to accomplish that deed, and then I alone shall have to suffer punishment for that great sin.'" The next chapter continues: "And they took them wives, and each selected one for himself, and they began to go in unto them, and mixed with them, and taught them witchcraft and incantations, and informed them how to cut roots and different kinds of wood. But they became pregnant and brought forth mighty giants whose length was three thousand cubits."

The Apostle evidently believed that women, by covering their heads when appearing before God, would avoid the danger of tempting the angels, some two hundred of whom had fallen easy victims to womanly loveliness and beauty in olden times, and had thereby brought fearful ruin and destruction upon themselves and upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He was afraid such an awful thing might occur a second time, and, therefore, thought it but prudent to warn all Christian women not to show their bare heads when in presence of God and His angels.

The first of the apostle's reasons is a mere question of taste in regard to which there has taken place a very decided change. We are not at all shocked when we behold a woman with bare head; nor do we consider it as unbecoming when a woman, be it from choice or necessity, wears her hair short, or is, as the Apostle would express it, shorn. Neither does the second reason impress us as strong and convincing. The Apostle rests his decision upon the report of the creation of man in Genesis ii., where we are told that the first woman was formed out of a rib of the man, and was created for the purpose of finding a help meet for him. But there are at present not very many people who implicitly believe in that tradition. Modern science has formulated other theories concerning the origin of man, and modern public opinion does certainly not countenance the idea that man is a superior being as compared with woman. Man and woman are certainly different from each other in more than one respect; but, for all that, they are without doubt of exactly the same rank and dignity, and nobody is more strongly convinced of this truth than woman herself. If they were asked in earnest whether they considered themselves as beings occupying a lower position than man, and whether they felt themselves in duty bound to publicly confess their inferiority by wearing such a badge as the Apostle has prescribed for them, they would rise of one accord to indignantly protest against such an outrageous insult.

The third reason is even weaker than the first two. Many Christian poets and thinkers, for instance Milton, have become interested in the old myth of the fallen angels, but they invented their own explanation, and would never have believed in

the report of the Book of Enoch, notwithstanding the fact that its truth has never been doubted among the early Christians, and that it was even accepted by Paul and other Apostles. We are absolutely unable to imagine that angels could be tempted by womanly grace and beauty; and we can cite in confirmation of such a doubt the following words of Jesus Christ himself: "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

We have, therefore, to admit that the Apostle Paul absolutely fails to support his commandment with convincing reasons. It is, according to our way of feeling and thinking, as little uncomely for women to remove their hats at church or at other public places, as it is for men. We cannot believe that the virtue of angels may in any way be affected and tempted by women. And, least of all, may women be ordered to wear a badge of inferiority, because they are not inferior to men.

The apostle very likely had, although he entirely fails to mention it, still another reason which would have to be accepted as valid, as far, at least, as his own contemporaries were concerned. His precept was undoubtedly called forth by an attempt of Christian women at Corinth to demonstrate that they were man's equals by discarding their customary head-dress at the meetings of the congregation. That would have been, if successful, not only an injudicious but also a very dangerous move. Those rumors, circulating among pagans that the Christians were practicing all kinds of animal sin at their meetings, would thereby have been confirmed. For prostitutes alone appeared in public, clothed in a toga and bareheaded, while decent matrons always wore the stola which included a covering for the head.

The result of this investigation is that we to-day disagree from the Apostle Paul on a question considered by himself as important enough, but which is and remains after all not a question of faith and ethics, but simply of temporary expediency and fashion, which, as such, does not stand in any connexion with religion. We might draw the conclusion that modern women ought to abolish the old custom introduced by the Apostle, and thereby demonstrate that they have the same rights as are enjoyed by men. Such a course would at once become necessary when it ever should be claimed that women must not uncover their heads because they are not man's equals. But, since only few know anything about the origin and the real meaning of the custom, we may even imagine that women wear their head-dress at public places where men have to uncover because chivalrous men have granted them such a privilege. Nevertheless, considerations of Christian charity should induce Christian women to willingly renounce such a privilege wherever other people suffer from it. True womanhood as well as true manhood does not consist in covered or uncovered heads, but in perfect charity, the laws of which are exactly the same for both sexes. In Christ there is neither man nor woman.

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COUNT TERACHIMA ON THE RELATIONS OF JAPAN TO THE UNITED STATES.

[The following remarks were made by Count Terachima, of Japan, a graduate of Pennsylvania University, who is now taking postgraduate studies in law at the University of Paris. Count Terachima replied to the sentiment, "The Foreign Students of the American Universities," at the Washington's Birthday banquet in