

soever is set before you, eat ; that is, at feasts in heathen homes (" them that believe not "), to which Christians were sometimes invited. *Asking no question for conscience sake* ; the conscience of one's fellow guest. So long as he does not raise the question as to the food, the Christian need not do so, for, in such a case, he is not leading any one to disobey conscience.

V. 28. *But if any man say, etc.* If any fellow guest calls attention to the fact, which he knows from some mark on the meat, or otherwise, that the meat has been offered to idols, and expresses conscientious scruples about eating it, how is the Christian to act ? Should he go on eating the sacrificial meat, that would encourage his companion to disobey his conscience ; should he abstain, the other would be helped to act as his conscience directs. *Eat not for his sake.* This is Paul's counsel. One's own liberty should be set aside for the good of his neighbor.

Vs. 29, 30. V. 29 has been expanded as follows : " I don't say *your* conscience, but the other man's. For what right has he to judge you or to interfere with your Christian liberty ? No, he has nothing to do with *your* conscience, but you have a great deal to do with *his*. If you should inflict an injury on that, you would be greatly to blame." *By grace* ; by the grace of thanksgiving. It is the act of thanksgiving that sanctifies everything. In these verses Paul holds fast to the principle of Christian liberty to partake of the food in question, while he urges the giving up of that liberty for the sake of others.

### III. Our Lord's Glory, 31-33.

Vs. 31-33. *All to the glory of God.* Eating and drinking are not matters of religion, but they may involve moral questions. To-day, because of the admitted evil done by intoxicating liquor, it becomes the duty of Christians to regard the use of drink from the standpoint of those who may be injured by its use. *No occasion of stumbling* (Rev. Ver.).

Our example, say as to the use of drink, should be such as others may safely follow. *Jews* ; whose scruples might be wounded by the use of liberty. *Greeks* (Rev. Ver.) ; Gentiles, who might see in the eating of sacrificial meat a countenancing of idolatry. *Church of God* ; Christians, including those holding both views on the question at issue. *Profit of many* ; even at his own loss (see Rom. 9 : 3). *Saved.* This was the great matter. Paul would endure any self-denial to accomplish this end.

### Light from the East

SHAMBLES—Now means only a slaughter house, but once it meant a bench or stall on which goods, and especially meats, were exposed for sale, and hence it was rightly used to denote the provision market of Corinth, the open square frequented by cooks, fishermen, poulterers and butchers for the display and sale of their wares. Parts of the meat offered to idols were the perquisite of the attendant, and when he had more than he could use, some of it would go to the market. Occasionally all the meat in the market was consecrated in the morning by a libation to some god, so none could be procured that had not been offered, at least technically, to idols.

IDOLS—Were representations of imaginary beings, and yet the sacrifices to them were really made to evil spirits. According to the belief of their worshipers, these gods were subject to an iron fate, they were liable to delusion, and reproached one another with folly and crime. Jupiter was cheated by his wife, was kept in ignorance of the events before Troy. He threatens his fellow deities with blows, and makes Olympus tremble when he shakes his locks in anger. The whole of them were full of envy and wrath, hatred and lust, they prompted men to crime, and provoked one another to lying and cruelty, perjury and adultery.

### APPLICATION

*All things are not expedient*, v. 23. " I am out of patience with that boy ", wrote a father to the head master of the school to which he had sent his son, who still continued

to distress him with his dissipated habits. He was somewhat surprised by the questions the head master asked, in reply, and had to acknowledge that he himself was a moder-