

In the chapter before us we are cautioned against an abuse of our knowledge and liberty. "None of us liveth to himself." In all our life we should have careful regard for the ignorance or weak faith of others. We may think we know that certain practices are, for us, harmless. Such knowledge, if alone allowed to control our actions, will puff us up with a vain pride in our own strength, and make us selfishly indifferent to others. But if charity—love to others—govern us, we will avoid whatever is the least likely to offend weaker consciences. We are to spend our time, not in seeking for so-called "harmless" ways of indulgence, but in seeking for ways of doing good to our brethren. "edifying" them, building them up in Christian character.

The temperance lesson is plain. We should avoid the use of intoxicants for our own sake. But even if we foolishly imagine we can, safely to ourselves, indulge, we can never know what fearful harm we may do to others. For their sake we should entirely abstain.

1. Knowledge without love makes one uncharitable.
2. Those who are strong should have patience with the weak.
3. We should watch our acts, lest we do harm to others.
4. When we make another stumble we grieve Christ.
5. We should give up our pleasure for the sake of others.

THE EXCELLENCE OF CHRISTIAN LOVE.

22nd August.

Les. 1 Cor. 13: 1-13 Gol. Text. 1 Cor. 13: 13.
Mem. vs. 4-7. Catechism Q. 89.

Time—Early in A.D. 57.

Place—Written at Ephesus.

HOME READINGS.

M. 1 Cor. 12: 1-31 . . . "Covert the Best Gifts."
T. 1 Cor. 13: 1-13 . . . Excellence of Christian Love.
W. Lev. 19: 1-18 . . . "Love Neighbor as Thyself."
Th. Luke 10: 25-37 . . . Example of Neighborly Love.
F. Rom. 13: 1-14 . . . "Love the Fulfilling of the Law."
S. John 15: 1-17 . . . "Love as I have Loved You."
S. 1 John 2: 1-17 . . . "He that Loves Abides in Light."

1. The Necessity of Love. vs. 1-3.
2. The Works of Love. vs. 4-7.
3. The Eternity of Love. vs. 8-13.

The Greek word translated "charity," in our lesson passage, is more probably rendered "love," in the Revised Version. Charity, as now used, means tolerance or almsgiving. These, of course, are included in love, but they are only a small part of it. Our lesson speaks of all-comprehensive love—love to God and love to man. Without such love the best human attainments are valueless; with it even the weakest and least gifted souls become consecrated and mighty for God. Eloquence, even in religious discourse, without love in the heart, is mere empty noise. Surpassing wisdom, all-embracing

knowledge, the firmest faith, without love, are vanity. So-called charity, or even the sacrifice of life itself, prompted merely by a sense of duty, rather than by love, is unprofitable.

In verses 4-7 we have a plain and practical description of the nature and fruits of love. Verses 8-13 teach that though the best human gifts shall fail and decay, the virtues, faith, hope, and love, shall endure forever, and come to perfection in the next world. Of the three, love is chief, for without it faith and hope would perish.

1. Without love other gifts and deeds are of no value.
2. Love is patient, kind, generous, humble.
3. Love is modest, sweet-tempered, unselfish, long-suffering.
4. Love is immortal and shall live on forever.
5. We should learn love whatever else we may miss.

PAUL OPPOSED AT EPHESUS.

29th August.

Les. Acts 19: 21-34. Gol. Text. Luke 12: 15.
Mem. vs. 24-26. Catechism Q. 90.

Time—About A.D. 57.

Place—Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

1. Stir Among the Silversmiths. vs. 21-25.
2. Fear for Diana. vs. 26-29.
3. Paul rescued by his Friends. vs. 30-34.

HOME READINGS.

M. Acts 19: 1-20 . . . Paul Preaching at Ephesus.
T. Acts 19: 21-20: 3 . . . Paul Opposed at Ephesus.
W. 1 Cor. 16: 1-24 Paul's Many Adversaries at Ephesus.
Th. 2 Cor. 1: 1-24 . . . Trouble which came to us in Asia.
F. 1 Tim. 6: 1-21 . . . Love of Money the Root of all Evil.
S. Isa. 44: 9-20 . . . The Makers of Idols are Vanity.
S. Luk. 12: 13-36 . . . Take heed, and beware of Covetousness."

From Corinth (Lesson V) Paul went to Ephesus. He preached there to the Jews for a short time. He then sailed to Caesarea. After visiting Jerusalem he went to Antioch, in Syria. Thence he started upon his third missionary journey. Acts 18: 19-23. After he had left Ephesus occurred the visit of Apollos and his departure for Corinth. Acts 18: 24-28. After Paul had visited the churches in Galatia and Phrygia he returned to Ephesus. Here he labored with great success for about three years, establishing a Church, A.D. 54-57. Then occurred the opposition of the mob stirred up by Demetrius.

1. The Gospel stirs up opposition among Christ's enemies.
2. When religion affects men's business they oppose it.
3. The Gospel destroys idolatry wherever it goes.
4. Idolaters become furious when their idols are in danger.
5. The Gospel causes strife and bitterness among its enemies.