

moderator. A call from the congregations of Parkhill and McGillivray in favour of John S. Lochhead, M.A., of Londesborough and Hullet, signed by 113 members and 115 adherents, and promising a stipend of \$1,000, no manse was sustained, and Rev. Mr. Cuthbertson was appointed to appear in the interests of the Presbytery before the Presbytery of Huron. The clerk read and laid on the table a call to the Rev. P. C. Goldie, Watford, from the first Presbyterian Church of Au Sable and Oscola, Michigan, at salary of \$1,200, in monthly payments. Messrs. Thom and William Smith appeared for the congregation of Watford, and Mr. Robert McLeay for the Main Road. Documents were laid on the table from the sessions and congregations of Watford and Main Road, stating that they had resolved to raise Mr. Goldie's salary to \$800. M. Goldie decided to accept the call and asked that his church be preached vacant on the first Sabbath of April. Mr. Cuthbertson was appointed to preach the church vacant on the first Sabbath in April, and Mr. Johnston, of Napier and Alvinston, to act as moderator. Mr. McLintock laid on the table a call from the congregation of Burns and Mooreline Church to Rev. J. Anderson at a salary of \$900 and manse, signed by 128 members and 143 adherents. It was moved by the Rev. J. Thompson and agreed that the call be received and that the clerk be instructed to urge upon Mr. Anderson the necessity of accepting the call. Prof. McLaren, D.D., was nominated as Moderator of the next General Assembly. Mr. Cuthbertson was appointed interim moderator of Second Church, Petrolia. Mr. Cuthbertson reported that Forest and McKay had agreed to separate according to the advice of the Presbytery, so that it is now possible for Camlachie and McKay to unite. A deputation appeared from Camlachie congregation stating that they were unanimous in agreeing to unite with the McKay congregation. It was resolved by the Presbytery that this union take place on the 1st of May. A deputation from Old Springs and Oil City stated that they had subscribed \$450 for the services of a minister during the year. The Presbytery resolved to apply for a student to preach for these stations during the summer and appointed a committee to visit them. Messrs. McKutcheon, Thompson and Cuthbertson, ministers; and T. Gordon, D. Gray, and Bryce, elders, were appointed commissioners to the General Assembly. A deputation consisting of Revs. G. Cuthbertson, J. Thompson and P. C. Goldie was appointed to visit Arkona in reference to the relation of that congregation to West Adelaide. At the evening sederunt the subject of temperance was taken up in connection with schedules sent to the different congregations by a committee of the General Assembly appointed to watch over this important matter. A very interesting and earnest discussion took place in connection with this subject. The speakers unanimously complained that the delay in sending the schedules by the convener of the Assembly's committee practically defeated the object, by not allowing sufficient time to answer the questions fully. The Presbytery directed the schedules to be filled up by sessions and forwarded to Mr. Goldie within one week. A list of congregations in the Presbytery requiring supplements in aid of their minister's salaries was made up, and the amounts necessary in each case agreed upon. Mr. Thomas Macadam proposed the adoption of an overture to the General Assembly, that a method for the proper reckoning of families in congregations might be adopted. The overture was adopted unanimously and Mr. Macadam appointed to support it before the superior courts. A conflict of jurisdiction between the Presbyteries of London and Sarnia arising out of the reception by the Presbytery of London into the Canada Presbyterian Church of the larger part of the congregation lately ministered to by the Rev. Mr. McPherson in East Williams, which had refused to join in the union of 1875, was next considered. Mr. Cuthbertson, reported that he had appeared at a meeting of the London Presbytery held on the 11th March, but had failed to reach any satisfactory adjustment. Rev. Thomas Macadam proposed a resolution stating that an encroachment on the rights of the Sarnia Presbytery had been made by that of London against which the former complains to the Synod of Hamilton and London. Messrs. John Thompson, Thomas Macadam and George Cuthbertson were appointed to appear for the Presbytery's interests before the Synod of Hamilton and London at its next meeting. The Presbytery then closed to meet at Sarnia on Tuesday, 24th June, at ten a.m.—GEO. CUTHBERTSON, Pres. Clerk.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

April 27, 1884. **ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.** (1 Cor. 8: 1-13.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."
TIME.—
PLACE.— See last lesson.

Introduction.—The controversy which called forth these remarks of the Apostle Paul is, so far as the church of to-day is concerned, a dead issue, but the spirit that pervades it and the root principles involved are as important as when Paul wrote the letter. The principle of self-denial for others may, does take a somewhat different form, yet it is a New Testament principle and needs enforcing now as much, if not more, than it ever did. On one feature of this controversy we may quote *Dean Alford's* words: "The eating of these portions of the idol-meats was forbidden by the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem. (Acts 15: 29; 21: 25.) That Paul in the whole of this passage makes no allusion to that decree, but deals with the question on its own merits." It shows how little such decisions were at that time regarded as lastingly binding upon the church; and how fully competent it was, even during the lifetime of the apostles, for Christians to open and question on its own merits a matter which they (the apostles) had for a special purpose once already decided."

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 1. "Things offered to idols:" when sacrifices were offered to idols, a part of the meat was burnt on the altar, a part was taken by the priests, and the remainder went to the worshipper, who could do as he pleased with it, and as a matter of fact did frequently send his portion to the markets to be sold, and thus partially indemnify himself for his outlay. The Christians could hardly help being partakers of these meats unless they kept away from all gatherings of their heathen neighbours and were very strict in their enquiries as to the meats sold in the markets. Was this, then, a matter of importance or of indifference? "Have knowledge:" know what is right; in ver. 7 it is said that this "is not in every man"; that is, that it is not actually and practically apprehended by each man. "Knowledge," "without charity—puffeth up:" leads to pride, self-sufficiency; "charity," or love, "edifieth," lit., buildeth up. Here is the contrast, mere religious knowledge may be destructive of Christian life, but love confirms and consolidates it.

Vers. 2, 3. "Any man think:" is self-conceited, proud, he "knows nothing;" there is no real knowledge without humility and love. "Any man love God—same known of him:" there is a little doubt as to the exact meaning here. We favour the thought that would understand "known" in the sense of approved.

Ver. 4. "An idol nothing:" a piece of wood or stone—nothing else. "None other God but one:" these were foundation truths which they all received.

Vers. 5, 6. Paul further says that while the heathen had many whom they called "gods in heaven," their heaven; "in earth:" gods of the mountains, plains, rivers, woods, seas, etc.; yet we, discarding all this, have "but one God," not many, "the Father"—either the Father of the Divine Son, or "Our Father," each equally true. "We in Him:" John 17: 21, the blessed union of the Christian to his Father in Heaven. "One Lord:" not many. "By whom:" John 1: 3, hence is His lordship proved; by Him are all things of God. "We by," Rev., "through Him:" and have the filial relation to God—have been brought into His family.

Ver. 7. "That knowledge:" of the vanity of idols. "With conscience of," Rev., "being used until now to the idol:" the same thought more clearly put. "Eat—and—conscience is defiled:" These were formerly heathen and could not rid themselves of the old idea of the idol sacrifice; to touch the meat was polluted, to others, the use to which it had been put made no difference; an idol was nothing; so this was common meat. "Conscience is defiled:" if a man does an innocent thing (eats meats offered to idols) thinking it to be sin, it is sin, and the conscience is defiled.

Ver. 8. "Meat commendeth us not:" that is, our character in the sight of God does not depend on what we eat or what we abstain from eating; these are externals—God looks at the heart. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink:" Rom. 14: 17, when Christ sets up His kingdom in the heart of a man it is not because of any external observances, but because the soul is willing and seeking for His presence.

Ver. 9. While this is gloriously true, don't let it be a "stumbling-block," an occasion of offence to others, in leading them to do as you do, thus violating conscience and committing sin. "Weak:" have not your knowledge as to the absolute nothingness of idols, and so do not feel towards these sacrifices as you can.

Ver. 10. An illustration of the argument of ver. 9: "see thee which hast knowledge," and whose example, therefore, would be more powerful. "Idol temple:" so that some of these strong-minded converts went so far even as to eat within the idol temples. "Emboldened—built up:" the same word as translated "edified" in ver. 1; thus the weak brother is built up, strengthened, but in a wrong way—in violation of conscience.

Ver. 11. And this may lead to worse and worse; emboldened in sin the weak brother may go on to apostasy, and "perish." One "for whom Christ died:" how affecting the thought that through the acts of one Christian, another may be sent on the downward road to death.

Ver. 12. He who does this will not, however, be held guiltless, for "when ye sin—so against the brethren, ye sin against Christ," who is one with the brethren (Matt. 25: 40); it is also an injury to the cause of Christ.

Ver. 13. Here the apostle enunciates the grand principle of the lesson, that rather than do this sin he would "eat no flesh while the world standeth," and thus, by declaring his willingness to make any sacrifice for any length of time, lest a brother fall, he takes away the argument, used alas to-day, by some, that it is unfair to ask them to give up their Christian liberty because of the ignorance and prejudices of some brethren.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Prefatory.—This is an important practical lesson—one that needs enforcing to-day as strongly as ever it did. First of all, have you, teacher, heeded it yourself? There are practices lawful, it may be, to the strong, but thousands perish by them. Does your class know that you can, have, made sacrifices for others? Let no man with the fumes of liquor upon him; let no woman, whose devotion to dress is a temptation to the girls of her class, dare to teach this lesson, unless they can at once resolve that the words of the apostle shall be theirs, and that they will cast off every cause of offence for the sake of those "for whom Christ died."

Topical Analysis.—(1) Conscience without knowledge. (2) Knowledge without love. (3) Love's resolution.

On the first topic we may briefly note again the difficulty of these Corinthian brethren. They were converts from idolatry, they had so long been accustomed to regard their gods as a power that they were unable to resist the same feeling now, even with the light of the gospel shining upon them; thus it was the meats which had been offered to idols were to them invested with a special character, different to ordinary meats, and they felt that if they partook of them, either at festive gatherings or at their own houses, they in a measure came in contact with their old idolatrous customs, and from that they shrank with a natural dismay. But they did not stop there, they were hurt, wounded, that other Christians who had not passed through their experience did not feel like themselves. Hence, to these weak consciences offence came, and they would have the apostle see with them and denounce the use of idol meats for all Christians. The form of this trouble has passed away, but the spirit survives. Men who have been lifted by the gospel out of any special sin, are much more tender of any approach to it than those who have never known its power. That is natural and right, yet we must teach that the conscience of one can never be the rule of another; every one has to be fully satisfied in his own mind, and whether it be in eating or drinking, or amusements, or forms of worship, to his own Master he standeth or falleth. Happy would it be for our churches if all knew this, how much heated controversy and divisions would be avoided. Let us impress this on the young.

The second topic shows us the other phase of the error, "Knowledge" is right; we should strive to have all knowledge of our faith, especially of its duties and obligations but, knowledge alone "puffeth up," while love "builds up." These more enlightened Christians despised their weaker brethren for making such an ado about idol meats. An idol was nothing, of no account whatever; why then should the sacrificed meats be of any account? So, to-day we have those who contend for their "rights," for freedom of action, and often, it is to be feared, go further in that direction than their consciences approve, to support their contention; let us, as an antidote, point to

The third topic—love's resolution. "If meat make," etc.: let us look at the steps by which the apostle reached this resolution. "Love must guide us in the use of our knowledge." Knowledge without love is worthless, we may contend for our rights, about which we read little in the New Testament and yet neglect the duties it inculcates. Knowledge in the head, and love in the heart makes the perfect Christian. Love regards the weak. Christ did, He came from heaven to save the erring and the weak, and His apostle in like manner would sacrifice himself for them. Who are the weak? Those with tender, it may be unenlightened consciences who will suffer by our careless liberty. Love surrenders its rights—Christians have rights, liberties, freedom in the gospel, yet the true believer will always use these in the light of the ignorant conscience of a fellow-believer, and will abridge his liberty in things innocent for the sake of others. Love leads to a noble self-denial, and so reaches

Love's Resolution. "If meat," etc., and this will be the resolution of every man with the spirit of the apostle: Shall I take the pledge? Shall I go to the theatre? Shall I dance or play cards? Will my doing these hurt the conscience of my brother? If so, the resolve of the apostle shall be mine. This is the grand rule of Christian life. Press it upon your scholars.

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

Knowledge without love is ignorance. Let us not despise the weakest of God's people. Happy the man in whose heart love and knowledge is joined.

Love the measure of sacrifice. Personal rights should not be allowed to weigh against the welfare of others.

The body is of more consequence than a single member. The disciple should seek to follow the Master in the path of sacrifice for others.

Main Lesson—Self-denial the law of Christ's kingdom.—Luke 9: 23; 21: 4; Acts 20: 24; Rom. 9: 13; Chap. 14, throughout.

THE Church of England Mission Society has recently received the munificent sum of £72 192, 18s. 8d. from Mr. W. C. Jones, of Warrington. This princely gift makes a total of £150,000 contributed by this friend of missions within nine years. The money is to be wholly spent upon native agents, native churches, etc.

* From "Monday Club" Sermons.