

made us at peace with him. *Edify*; build up in Christian character. *Destroy not*; referring to "edify" in the preceding verse. Do not break down what you should help to build up. *All things . . . are pure*; all things are allowed as food; but even though allowed, *it is evil* to eat, if this is done *with offence*, that is, if the strong one leads his weak brother to follow his example, and so to offend, doing what his conscience forbids. *It is good*, etc. Self-sacrifice is the highest privilege of the Christian. The application to the use of strong drink is very clear.

Vs. 22, 23. *Hast thou faith?* Which enables you to see that there is nothing unclean. *To thyself*. Nothing is gained by flaunting our liberty in doing what pleases us, with no thought of others. *Before God*; to whom all are responsible. *Happy is he*, etc. It is a good thing to have a conscience not troubled by scruples. *Doubteth*; is not sure that he is doing right in partaking, for example, of certain food. *Is condemned* (Rev. Ver.); because he has not the full approval of his conscience. *Not of faith*; not in agreement with a truly Christian life.

III. Our Example, ch. 15: 1-3.

Ch. 15: 1-3. *We . . . strong*; who are not troubled with needless scruples. *Ought*; because we are brothers to those about us. *To bear*, etc.; to be patient towards our weaker neighbors. *Not to please ourselves*; which would be selfish. *Please his neighbor*; be willing to do anything for his neighbour. *To edification*; to build him up in Christian character. *Christ pleased not himself*; and he

is our example. *It is written*, etc. See Ps. 69: 9, words fulfilled in the experiences of Christ.

Light from the East

UNCLEAN MEATS—Primitive man draws a line between "holy" men and "holy" things on the one hand, and men and things that are not "holy" on the other. The old Hebrews used the words "clean" and "unclean" in about the same sense. A man, an animal, a thing, might be "clean" as belonging to God or near to him, or it might be unclean. When these words are applied to foods, they are obviously used in a very broad sense. "Clean" food is not only food already offered, or to be offered, to God, not only food that the (holy) priests may eat, but also simply food that any member of God's (holy) people may use. Many animals (but no plants) the Jew was forbidden to use. To eat the flesh of a prohibited animal defiled a man; the unclean meat made him unclean; it infected him with qualities that were alien to God; it cut him off from God and God's people. In the exact sense of the word, he was by his own action excommunicated, that is, cut off from the fellowship of God and God's people, till by a ritual exercise he was cleansed and restored.

The distinction between "clean" and "unclean" foods was much insisted on in the three centuries before Christ. It was the test of the religion of Daniel and his companions, Dan., ch. 1. And very much was made of it by the Pharisees. It was one of the most obstinate prejudices that Christianity had to break down, Acts, ch. 10.

THE LESSON APPLIED

It is good not to drink intoxicating liquor nor to do anything whereby a young man may cause himself to stumble. There is no doubt in the minds of any that intoxicating drink taken in large quantities is a poison to the system. Professor Irving Fisher, who fills the chair of Political Economy in Yale University, says, "that the only question which remains in debate is, whether in minute quantities it may not be harmless."

"The results of the medico-actuarial investigation based on statistical data from forty-three American life insurance companies, covering an experience of twenty-five

years, show that individuals who took two glasses of beer or one glass of whiskey or an equivalent amount of alcohol in any form, each day, showed a mortality of eighteen per cent. higher than the average of the group." If this is the result for the very moderate drinker, where shall the man appear who drinks freely and immoderately.

The late Sir Victor Horsley, of Great Britain, says: "We are repelling the murder and robbery instigated by the kaiser. We want to do it as quickly as possible. In order to attain this end, I ask you to get the government to help the army and not to hinder it.