

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

Talk about the great temperance teachers of the Bible,—Solomon and Isaiah of the Old Testament, and Paul of the New Testament. The problem is the same in the Old Testament as in the New, and the same way of solving it is suggested,—total abstinence. The Old Testament appeal is on the ground of personal safety, Prov. 23 : 29-32. It is safe for the individual to have nothing to do with strong drink. Paul stands upon higher ground in making his appeal. He teaches that, even if we feel that it is safe for us individually to drink, it is a good thing, a beautiful thing, a Christlike thing, to abstain for the sake of others who might be influenced, to their undoing, by our example.

Deal briefly with the Corinthian meat question of the Lesson Passage (see Exposition). Find out what the trouble was at Corinth, the two parties, the strong and the weak,—the strong, who had no patience with the silly notions of the weak, and the weak, who were suspicious of the strong.

When they appeal to Paul, how does he deal with the question? Note that he addresses himself to the strong. He might have addressed himself to the weak and told them what silly nonsense it was for them to make a conscience of such matters, but he does not do this. He tells the strong that he thinks just as they do about this matter (vs. 25-27), but he tells them that he would not act as they were acting, vs. 23, 24, 28-30. Out of love for others he would deny himself.

Bring out clearly, that this Corinthian meat question is in itself a poor little local controversy, in which we would take no interest, if Paul had not dealt with it as he did. He has lifted the question up into the light of a great principle which should govern all the world during all the ages, vs. 24, 31.

Note that Paul is not dealing directly with temperance in this passage, but that the glorious principle of love which he enunciates, is capable of helping us to solve many of the perplexing problems of the world.

In the temperance controversies of to-day, is there any party corresponding to the strong of the Lesson,—are there any who can drink without doing themselves harm? Refer to ex-President Eliot of Harvard who thought at one time that he could do so, but has changed his mind. His is one of the most valuable testimonies of modern times. Even if we think that we can drink without doing ourselves any harm, is it not a beautiful thing to take Paul's stand and give up this habit for the good of others? No one but an utterly selfish soul can fail to see the beauty of Paul's position.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

In this Lesson, the teacher of boys and girls has a double problem to solve—how to make a much worn passage fresh, and how to make a passage without incident interesting. There is this further difficulty also, that the subject recurs each Quarter. Teachers find themselves puzzled to get new material.

The following is suggested :

1. *Take up some words.* "SHAMBLES"; which, as explained in *Light from the East*, now means a slaughter house, but once meant a bench or stall on which meats, etc., were exposed for sale—a provision market. A picture of a modern Eastern street, with shops, will add interest. "FEAST"; a dinner or supper. The parable of the wedding feast (Matt. 22 : 1-14), and the story of the supper at Bethany (John 12 : 1, 2), will be recalled. "IDOLS"; an actual idol from a heathen country, or a picture of one, will start conversation. *Light from the East* adds some interesting facts. Before the Babylonian captivity, the Jews were very prone to fall into idolatry—witness King Solomon; after the captivity, during which, for seventy years, they had been in bondage to an idol worshiping nation, they hated idols and idolatry with a deadly hatred. "SACRIFICE"; the slaying of an animal as worship. The sacrifice might be to the true God, or to an idol. In heathen Corinth, the animals slaughtered for sale, might first have been consecrated to an idol; or on the occasion of a birthday, marriage, or other festivity, part of the animal would be burned