

**Eating Meal.**

Paul says in 1 Cor. viii. 13, that "if meat make my brothers to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."

This passage has become more prominent in the discourses of some of our preachers and writers of late than ever was, perhaps.

It is not our purpose here to find fault because of its frequent use, but to inquire into the correctness of the application that is made of it in using it, the principal which it is said to contain. The interpretation usually given to this passage is, as I understand it, about as follows. Paul could partake of the meat, or not do so, as he saw proper, but if a good brother was going to be offended at him if he did partake, then out of regard for that good brother's feelings, or for fear of giving him offense, he would not eat.

To present it in another way, Paul could eat or not eat, and have no conscientious scruples in the matter; but here is a brother who conscientiously believes that it is a sin for Paul to do so, therefore Paul resolves not to eat.

This I understand to be the interpretation usually given to the passage in question, and from this interpretation of it is laid down the following principal. That where a thing is acknowledged to be indifferent, and there are others who feel that it would be wrong to engage in that thing, that it is the duty of those who look at it as a matter of indifference, to refrain from the practice or use of that thing because of the consciences of those who oppose.

I believe that I have fairly stated the conclusion drawn by many from the passage under consideration.

I am free to state that I don't believe that the interpretation given above is the true one, nor do I believe that the principal drawn from it is a correct one. Paul says, "If meat makes my brother to offend (not offends my brother) I will eat no meat forever." Paul did not say that he wouldn't eat any more meat if his brother got mad at him, or thought he was doing wrong if he did so, but he did say that if meat caused his brother to offend, or in other words, to sin, he would not eat it. The offense of the brother was not against Paul nor his brethren, but against God and Christ. The sin of the weak brother was the eating of the meat with a conscientious regard for the idol to which it was offered, in other words, worshipping idols. The sin of those who could eat without regard to the idol consisted in the doing of that which the conscience of the erring brother approved, and not what it opposed, in helping him to build up a conscience where he had no right to have one. Paul says, "If any man see you who has knowledge sit at meat in an idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened (or built up) to eat those things which are offered to idols? Now, whatever we do to encourage a brother thus gone astray is wrong, and in doing it "we sin against him and against Christ." But we should never forget, so far as this case has any bearing on our conscientious convictions, the sin consists in approving by our own words or actions the false guidance of the conscience by a brother who is evidently in the wrong.

To illustrate the principal taught in the lesson of Paul, I will suppose that Bro. A. believed that it is a Christian duty to practice feet washing, and he is conscientious in his belief, but the church does not so regard it, but looks upon it as a matter of indifference. Now, according to the principal laid down by Paul, it would be wrong for the church to yield to his convictions for, in so doing, they would "embolden his conscience," strengthen his convictions in an error, and would then "sin against him and against Christ."

But I have already said more than

will be read, perhaps.

In my next I propose to test this soundness of that position which says that we must not engage in the practice of anything that will wound a weak brother, or that we must always respect the weak consciences of brethren by ceasing to practice that which they can not approve.

TIMOTHY.

**Select Reading.**

—Pretty things, the long handled little fans of the season, only they raise so little wind and look like ornamental griddle-cake turners.

—Kross yung ones should be treated with a slipper to day, and kandy in the distance.—*J. Billings.*

—When Webster said "there is always at the top" he was not referring to the advertising page of a newspaper.—*Bridgeton News.*

Savior, I weary of this ceaseless mind, That needs must spin and spin its tangle thought;

That needs must weave what Thou dost bring to naught.

Rest I would find!

Not thoughts of Thee, but Thine own self impart!

Ever I learn Thy precepts and Thy way, Yet know not how to follow and obey.

Teach Thou my heart!

—E. S. C., in *The Watchman.*

—When a girl is compelled to wed, first and fall in love afterward she usually does with some other man than her husband.

—What did puritans come to this country for? asked a Massachusetts teacher of his class. "To worship in their own way, and make other people do the same," was the reply.

—At a recent railroad festival, the following striking sentiment was given: "Our mothers—the only faithful tenders who never misplaced a switch."

**COMPENSATION.**

I thought she had all things to make her life

What life should be—gracious and glad and sweet;

All earthly good seemed prostrate at her feet.

And I my lot was one of daily strife

To meet my daily needs. To-day she'd call

To careless eyes, and at my feet would cast,

If only love could be so bought and sold.

All treasures of her present or her past.

Seeing the one great joy my life doth hold,

The sweetness that all sweetness doth enroll,

She cries, "O niggard Fate, you've given me naught!"

And I, my heart with happiness o'erfraught,

Cry out, "O bounteous Fate, you've given me all."

—*Carlotta Perry.*

—Everybody reads postal cards. Many consider it a harmless amusement to peruse any card that comes through their hands, yet under certain circumstances, there is a penalty for reading another person's postals, and the penalty may amount to \$300 fine and imprisonment for one year at hard labor. Therefore turn the conversational gossiping side of a postal card from you.

—An Irishman was once taken to see the wonders of Niagara Falls. He did not seem to think it tremendous after all. His friend asked him "don't you think it is a wonderful thing?"

"Why is it a wonderful thing?" asked the Irishman. "Don't you see," said his friend, "that immense body of water rolling down this precipice?" Says he, "What's to hinder it?"

WHAT ONE BOY WENT TO SCHOOL FOR.—A little fellow of five, going along the street with a dinner pail, is stopped by a kind-hearted gentleman, says—"Where are you going, my little man?" "To school." "And what do you do at school? You learn to read?"

"No." "To write?" "No." "To count?" "No." "What do you do?" "I wait for school to let out."

—An old woman who had resided all her lifetime in a rural district in Aberdeenshire was lying on her deathbed, when as usual under the circumstances, the parish minister paid her a visit. After some preliminary

observations, he asked if there was anything that she wished her relatives to attend to after her death, and received the following reply: "Weel, sir, there's just ae thing; I would like tae be berrit i' the kirkyard o' L—, but I wudna like tae be pitten verra far doon amo' the yird." On being pressed to give a reason for this strange request, she answered: "Weel ye see, I'm grown very frail noo, an' at the last day I wud like to be up amo, the first o' them, an' be oot o' the thrang"—*Observer.*

**Poetry of Words!**

The language of Madagascar is fertile in poetical expressions. Many of its single words are freighted with poetry. One of the native names of the island is, "The land in the midst of the moving waters." The sun, which for one-half the year is a blaze of unclouded light is called the "eye of day." A river is a "mother of waters," and the capital the "mother of towns."

—Those who dwell on the wooded plains are "the people under the leaves." The word for glory and honor means "the flower of the grass." As the grasses are as beautiful as they are transitory, the word suggests both the beauty and brevity of that which depends upon the caprice of a despot.

The long-horned cattle are the largest and most formidable animals on the island, therefore the army is known as "the horns of the kingdom." The symbols is used as the Bible uses it to denote strength, power, confidence.

Our word *hypocrisy* means "under the mask," and refers to the mask and refers to the mask worn by an actor in the Grecian theatre. The Madagascar word for hypocrisy means "becoming good by spreading a mat."

The clay floor of the house is covered by a mat, which when dirty is not removed, but covered by a clean one. Often there is a layer of four or five rotten mats on the floor, each one dirtier than the one above it. When a stranger enters the house, a fresh mat is spread for him to sit down upon, and all looks nice and clean. But underneath is all sorts of filth. The house has become clean by "spreading a mat." The man who is all clean outside and all foul within, is a hypocrite who has become good by spreading a mat.

Christianity is known as "the praying," an expression which recalls the sign that Saul had become a Christian, "Behold, he prayeth!"—*Ex.*

—It is known that the Protestant church has made considerable real progress in Italy during the past score of years; but most readers will be surprised to learn that there is now hardly a town in Italy, even of secondary importance, which does not possess at least one Protestant Evangelical church, and it was only twenty years ago that the preaching of Protestants was admitted in that country. Of the churches, there are now two kinds. One class is composed of foreigners who were born Protestant and subsequently went into Italy to live, such as the English, Scotch and American churches, where the services are conducted in languages foreign to Italy; the other of Italians who are converts from Catholicism, and worship of course in their native tongue. There are fifty of the foreign churches, and 138 of the Italian. The Italian churches are divided among the sects as follows: Methodists, 44; Vaudois, 39; Free Church, 21; Baptist, 19; Plymouth Brethren, 15. The present missionary and pastoral force comprises about 100 duly recognized pastors and 50 evangelists being in great part converts from Catholicism.

—A humorist leaps gayly upon the step of an omnibus, and cries cheerfully to the conductor, "Is the ark full?" "No sir," replies the jovial conductor. "We have a seat for you. What ho! within there! Room for the monkey!"

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