Eph. iv. 24, “So we say of friends, ‘Such  
an one has put on such an one,’ when  
we mean to describe great love and unceasing   
intercourse.”

**CHAP. XIV. 1–XV. 13.**] ON THE CONDUCT TO BE PURSUED   
TOWARDS WEAK AND SCRUPULOUS  
BRETHREN.—There is some doubt who the  
**weak in faith** were, of whom the Apostle  
here treats; whether they were *ascetics,  
or Judaizers.* Some habits mentioned, as  
e.g. the abstinence from *all meats,* and  
from *wine,* seem to indicate the former:  
whereas the *observation of days,* and the  
use of such expressions as “*unclean,*” ver.  
14, and again the argument of ch. xv. 7–  
13, as plainly point to the latter. The  
difficulty may be solved by a proper combination   
of the two views. The over-scrupulous   
Jew *became an ascetic by compulsion*.   
He was afraid of pollution by  
eating meats sacrificed or wine poured to  
idols: or even by being brought into contact,   
in foreign countries, with casual and  
undiscoverable uncleanness, which in his.  
own land he knew the articles offered for  
food would be sure not to have incurred.  
He therefore abstained from *all prepared  
food*, and confined himself to that which  
he could trace from natural growth to his  
own use. We have examples of this in  
Daniel (Dan.i.), Tobit (Tob. i. 10, 11), and  
in some Jewish priests mentioned by Josephus,   
who having been sent prisoners to  
Rome, “did not forget their piety towards  
God, but lived on figs and walnuts.” And  
Tholuck refers to the Mishna as containing  
precepts to this effect. All difficulty then  
is removed, by supposing that of these over-scrupulous   
Jews some had become converts  
to the gospel, and with neither the obstinacy   
of legal Judaizers, nor the pride of  
ascetics (for these are not hinted at here),  
but in *weakness of faith*, and the scruples  
of an over-tender conscience, retained their  
habits of abstinence and observation of  
days. Ou this account the Apostle characterizes   
and treats them mildly: not with  
the severity which he employs towards the  
Colossian Judaizing ascetics, and those mentioned   
in 1 Tim. iv. 1 ff.—The question  
treated in 1 Cor. viii. was somewhat different:   
there it was, concerning meat  
*actually offered* to an idol. In 1 Cor. x.  
25–27, he touches the same question as  
here, and decides against the stricter view.

**1–12.**] EXHORTATION TO MUTUAL  
FORBEARANCES, ENFORCED BY THE AXIOM,  
THAT EVERY MAN MUST SERVE GoD  
ACCORDING TO HIS OWN SINCERE PERSUASION.

**1.**] *The general duty of a  
reconciling and uncontroversial spirit  
towards the weak in faith.*—In the original   
this verse is connected with the last  
by the particle “*but:*’ and it is thus  
bound on to the *general* exhortations to  
mutual charity in ch. xiii.: as if it had  
been said, ‘in the particular case of the  
weak in faith,’ &c.: but also implies a  
contrast, which seems to be, in allusion to  
the Christian perfection enjoined in the  
preceding verses,—‘but do not let your  
own realization of your state as children  
of light make you intolerant of shortcoming   
and infirmity in others.’ The  
particular weakness consisted in a want of  
broad and independent principle, and a  
consequent bondage to prejudices.

**faith** therefore is used in a general sense,  
to indicate the moral soundness conferred  
by faith,—the whole character of the  
Christian’s conscience and practice, resting  
on faith.

**weak in the faith** imports  
holding THE FAITH imperfectly, i.e. not  
being able to receive the faith in its  
strength, so as to be above such prejudices.

**receive ye**] ‘*give him your  
hand,*’ as the old Syriac Version renders  
it: ‘count him one of you:’ so far from  
rejecting or discouraging him.

[**yet**] **not for**] i.e. **but not with a view to:** ‘do  
not adopt him as a brother, in order then  
to begin’...

**deciding of doubts**]  
literally, **discernments of thoughts**, i.e. ‘*disputes   
in order to settle the points on which  
he has scruples.*’ Namely, *those scruples*  
in which his weakness consists,—and *those  
more enlightened views in you*, by which  
you would fain remove his scruples. Do  
not let your association of him among you  
be *with a view to settle these disputes.*

**2. eateth herbs**] See remarks  
introductory to this chapter.

**3.**]