

not see those goodly piles of linen in the market place, the heaped up "girdles," too? Her asses brought them. But, better than silver and gold, spinning wheel and emerald vine, a girdle or a stack of linen, is some frequent scene of counsel and activity where woman's wisdom speaks and her love lavishes.

And now old age adds its beautiful picture: the white-haired wife and mother in the midst of a loving household. They do not wait until she is dead to bring forward their tributes, but children now rise up to call her blessed, and her husband praiseth her. When she is gone a slab of marble will not be the first herald to tell the world her great worth, but far back into life reach the memorials wrought by her goodness and her power, and in the gates will silently bear testimony.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The comparison of virtue with precious stones means much to all Orientals. Rubies were among the most costly of the ancient oriental gems. They were more than merely ornamental. In parts of the East the maxim obtains that a man should invest his property in three divisions—one part in merchandise, one part in real estate, and one part in jewels. The special object of the last is to have valuables which can be readily gathered up in the event of insurrection or riotous attack, which are very common, and in consequence of which the people often have to flee to remote sections of the country and remain in hiding for months, or even years. Besides this, however, these precious stones are of rare beauty and value. The writer of these lines has seen diamonds offered by the merchants worth twenty-five thousand dollars each, and a string of pearls, on one occasion, graded from the size of a pea to that of a very large hickory nut, for which the price was seven hundred and fifty dollars gold per bead. The great Taj Mahal in Agra has tons on tons of precious stones mosaiced in forms of vines and flowers. Every Eastern woman laid special emphasis on her jewels. It was the most fitting poetry possible, therefore, to say that a virtuous woman was like the most costly precious stones.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 11-27.* Ofttimes I have seen a tall ship glide by against the tide, as if drawn by some invisible towline with a hundred strong arms pulling it. Her sails were unfurled, her streamers were drooping, she had neither side-wheel nor stern-wheel; still she moved on stately in serene triumph. But I knew that on the other side of the ship, hidden beneath the great bulk that swam so majestically, there was a little, toilsome steam tug, with a heart of fire and arms of iron, that was tug-

ging it bravely on; and I knew if the little steam tug untwined her arm and left the ship it would roll and drift and go off with the tide, no man knows whither. And so I have known more than one man, genuine, high-decked, full-freighted, gay-pennoned, who but for the toiling arms and brave, warm-beating heart of the faithful wife that nestles close to him, would have gone down with the stream and been heard of no more.—O. W. Holmes.

When it was announced that Professor Palmer, of Harvard College, was about to marry President Alice Freeman, of Wellesley College, there were those who said: "Shall this rare woman, fitted by nature and culture to guide and uplift the many, step down to the seclusion and monopoly of a single fireside?" It was then that Thomas Wentworth Higginson arose for her defense, saying: "A woman can never be said to 'step down' when she passes to the head of a fireside."

Christian womanhood and philanthropy were forever joined in holy bonds in that Bethany home where Mary and Martha ministered to the Christ. Performing service for him, in the person of his little ones, his forsaken, suffering, dying ones, has been by far the larger part of woman's public work. The list of women prominent in this department is very long.

*Verses 50.* Catherine Booth, wife of General Booth, of the Salvation Army, comes strangely near to our ideal of the universal mother-heart that holds and heals the world. Fifteen degraded women gathered weeping around one of their number in a low lodging house to hear the account of her last hours. "Let others move on," said a tottering old woman, who had stood long looking into the face of dead Mrs. Booth, as they gently asked her to pass; "let others move on; I have a right to stop; she saved my boys." Beside her coffin knelt three rough drinking men, and gave their hearts to God. A poor tattered drunkard, for whom she had long labored, cried out through sobs, as he stood beside her coffin, "That woman lived for me."

### The Teachers' Meeting.

This lesson is regarded by one authority as a poem descriptive of the model wife: (1) She is a woman of strong character (verses 10-12); (2) Industrious (verses 13-19); (3) Generous (verse 20); (4) Prudent (verses 21-25); (5) Gentle (verse 26); (6) Beloved (verses 28, 29); (7) Godly (verse 30). . . . Another divides it thus: (1) The homemaker (verses 1-12); (2) Her daily duties and cares (verses 13-15, 19); (3) Her business qualities (verses 16-18); (4) Her benevolence (verse 20); (5) Her ministrations of comfort and beauty (verses 21-25); (6) Her teaching and training (verses 26, 27); (7) Her rewards (verses 28-31).