

VI. GODLINESS.

Fear the Lord. v. 30.

"Keep his commandments." Eccles. 12. 13.

"Fear the Lord thy God." Deut. 10. 12, 13.

Thoughts for Young People. About Womanhood and Other Topics.

1. *Woman's true sphere.* It would be more sensible to talk about woman's true orbit than woman's true sphere. She is herself the sphere, and the orbits of women vary as widely as do the orbits of heavenly bodies. It is worse than nonsense to say that "woman's true sphere and mission are in the home" and stop there, without recognizing that the forces of modern society have, without any option of theirs, set thousands of the worthiest women apart from the special privileges and duties of home. A woman's duty, like the duty of a man, is to do whatever she has the capacity, training, and ability to do. Men might as well make a law that no canary shall ever trill a certain note, as to make a law forbidding any human being to do any worthy deed for which he has the ability, and God's providence opens the way.

2. *The loneliness of the excellent woman.* This title is written without sarcasm or humor. What sort of a mate can be found for the character portrayed in our lesson? It is our custom, when we read exhortations to young men from the wisest of earth, to turn to our young women and say, "These truths apply to you as well." Let us take a similar course to-day. The noble characteristics here described we should all seek to realize in our daily lives.

3. *The secret of success is intelligent energy.* This excellent woman works on the same general principles by means of which Joshua conquered Palestine, and David secured his throne, and Paul converted the world to Christianity. Lofly purpose, decision of character, faith in God, and tireless endeavor will achieve the noblest results.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Her life is a gallery hung all over with beautiful pictures. How much her husband thinks of her! He comes with a wrinkled brow from the market place, where his business ventures have been unsuccessful, or from the fields he brings a sigh and a doleful story about withering crops, or from the temple courts, where he has heard of backsliding Israelites, he takes home a heavy heart.

He tells all to his large-minded, wise-hearted, trusty wife, his confidante, his counselor, his comforter. What a change she works in his face and his feelings. She smoothes away those wrinkles. A sigh over what he has lost she turns into a psalm over what has been saved. That depressed heart she lifts up with faith's assurance that the sheep astray

will come back to their own pastures. If he will but go and look them up, she will help.

He turns away, only to pause a moment and look back upon a scene of domestic activity. He smiles as he sees his wife bending over her spinning task, hears the cheery whirr of the wheel, and notices how the yarn steadily lengthens. He walks away, only to pause again, but now at a window from which he looks upon the blue sea rippling in the freshening breeze. There are the ships with wings shining white against the azure around them. How they fly toward the land! Under that spreading, swelling canvas what cargoes from lands afar, pulpy fruit, rich spices, costly silks, gold from Ophir, grain from the Nile valley, cedar from Lebanon! His wife is like those ships, bringing from afar treasured resources.

It is now early in the day. The morning star is milk-white above the eastern hills, and day is not far away. Soon there are banners of flame set up in the east. Out in the yard you hear the shrill cry of the cock proclaiming that the sun will soon be here. You hear another sound, a footstep, quick, alert. It is the housewife stirring. And soon you hear her clear, pleasant voice echoing amid her housemaids as she leads them to their tasks. When the sun is fairly up, and the birds are breaking their throats in their ecstacy at seeing its honest face, she steps out into the fields with her husband. The dew beads the grass with jewels. The wind shakes out of the "censers of the flowers" fragrance that is waited heavenward. You can see the two, husband and wife, going down some rose-lined walk, and her voice is heard counseling her husband to buy the thrifty field at the right, and at the left some southern slope, so choice a place for purpling vines. In later days the husband smiles to think the field is his, while on the southern slope his wife's tender plants are bursting into leaf.

But who are these straggling to her doors? Do they wear finespun clothes? Do they own fields of grain and rows of vines? O, the rags and hunger and weariness that piteously beg at her doors! And how her kindly gifts come down in shower-like abundance upon these children of want, her brothers and sisters! What a picture, those outstretched hands, and that noble almoner before them!

Kindly without, she is faithful within. Does the chilling north wind bring a cloud of white snowflakes? Look at the warm, scarlet robes of her household.

But where will you find her husband, a man associated with such a helpmeet? Come to the gates of the city where sit the honored of the land, and is not he among them? She helps her husband sit there. Hark! Whose name is sounded in praise there at the oft-envious gates? Is it not the husband of this woman? But look again! Do you