

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

NOVEMBER 30.

THE VOICE OF WISDOM.

PROVERBS 8: 1-17.

Wisdom is here personified, as in Proverbs 1: 20. Of course, in the mind of the writer, this is a mere personification. Under Divine inspiration, however, it forms part of the gradual revelation of God, the Trinity, and especially a foreshadowing of the truth concerning the Son of God. Compare St. John's terms and teaching in the prologue of his gospel with verses 22-30 of this chapter. The "wisdom" of the lesson is in the "words" of St. John. The description which wisdom gives of herself is completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Thus does the book of Proverbs, which at first sight seems to relate to the conduct of life only, "testify of Christ." (John 5: 39.)

Ver. 2.—She. The representation of wisdom as a female is an evidence of the high place occupied by a pure and true womanhood in the thought of a Jew. The top of high places, etc. The high places are supposed to be the heights about the Temple, from which the crowds of worshippers passing could be addressed. The places of the path would be favorable for attracting passers by. The gates, etc., were also places where an audience would easily be collected. People met or business and to converse, and hear and tell the news at the gates of the city. Here also public deliberations were held, and justice was administered. The origin of the name Gate, applied to the Turkish custom of making the gates of cities and palaces places of assembly for the conduct of the affairs of government and justice. Wisdom does not teach in a quiet and retired place, imparting her instruction to a favored few. She in this respect is a type of Christ and of His gospel. He and His apostles proclaimed the truth to all who would hear. "I speak openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whether the Jews always resort; and in secret have taught nothing." (John 18: 20.) "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22: 17.)

1.—Men; sons of men. There is a distinction between the two. "Men" are the high-born, those of rank and distinction, those who stand prominently forward out of the multitude. "Sons of men" are those who have nothing in the way of rank or genius or work to distinguish them from others. The word translated here "men" and "sons of men" are translated "high" and "low" in Psalm 49: 2. Human nature, wherever found, in palaces and in hovels, gifted with genius or foolish and ignorant, needs Divine wisdom. How strong a testimony is this to the essential equality of men. In the light of this invitation to the "sons of men," and of the possibilities involved in the call, let us "honor all men."

2.—Simple, inexperienced, open to temptation. Fools; foolish ones, silly. The word before us must be distinguished from the godless scouter of Psalm 14: 1, and also from the expression of hate condemned by our Lord in Matt. 5: 22.

3.—To the simple and to fools wisdom appears foolish, and her address and entreaties provoke the cry, "What would this babbling say?" When there is some degree of understanding and knowledge, then her ways appear more plain and right; and with the growth of knowledge and experience is increase of appreciation of the truths of wisdom. "Wisdom is justified of her children," said our Lord (Matt. 11: 19.)

10.—Yet how many there are who regard wealth and not wisdom, as "the principal thing." Wealth, however, is not represented in the Proverbs as being evil in itself, but as not worthy of mention in comparison with wisdom. Wealth must be used but not abused. There had been no time in which such powerful temptation had been placed before Israel with regard to the pursuit of wealth as in the reign of Solomon. In that time of outward enrichment and splendor, the words of the lesson would have special force as in these days.

12.—Prudence; subtlety in the margin. A power of penetration and insight, helpful in the ordinary business of life. This "prudence" is one of the many forms in which wisdom manifests itself. Witty inventions, or counsels. These spring from Divine wisdom in the heart. Life in its details is thus in the Proverbs represented, not as the result of a painful and mechanical attention to an outward system of rules and regulations, but as the product of an inner enlightenment and force.

and the wise man is always strong. Strength completes the representation of wisdom. The sublime figure combines in herself the moral strength of manhood with the grace and tenderness of womanhood.

15, 16.—All strong and lasting and good government must have its roots deep down in Divine wisdom. No matter how splendid may be the pomp of royalty, kingship is a mere name, if wisdom is not the foundation of the throne. The attempt to govern will result in anarchy or slavery, but not in justice or peace.

17.—I love them etc. Another form of statement of the truth of verse 9. The word "early" does not occur in the original. It seems to have been inserted under the influence of the fact that the verb comes from the same root as that of "dawn" or "morning." The gracious encouragement to the young afforded by the words need not, however, be lost, as the whole of the teaching of the chapters is addressed especially to the young.—Abridged from W. M. S. S. Mag.

TO KILL THE TASTE FOR ALCOHOL. There are many drinkers who can break up the habit for a time, and would gladly refrain from ever touching it again, but an uncontrollable thirst for the beverage attacks them and never lets up until they give way. A prominent gentleman in Richmond, Va., tells how he broke this up. "I was one of those unfortunate given to strong drink. When I felt I felt a horrid want of something I must have or go distracted. I could neither eat, work nor sleep. Explaining my affliction to a man of much experience, he advised me to take a decoction of ground quassia, a half ounce steeped in a pint of vinegar, and to put about a small teaspoonful of it in a little water, and to drink down every time the liquid thirst came on the violently. I found it satisfied my cravings, and gave me a feeling of stimulus and strength. I continued this cure and persevered until the thirst was conquered. For two years I have not tasted liquor, and I have no desire for it. Lately to try my strength, I have handled and smelt whiskey, but I have no temptation to take it. I give this for the consideration of the unfortunate, several of whom I know have recovered by means which I no longer require."

USEFUL HINTS.

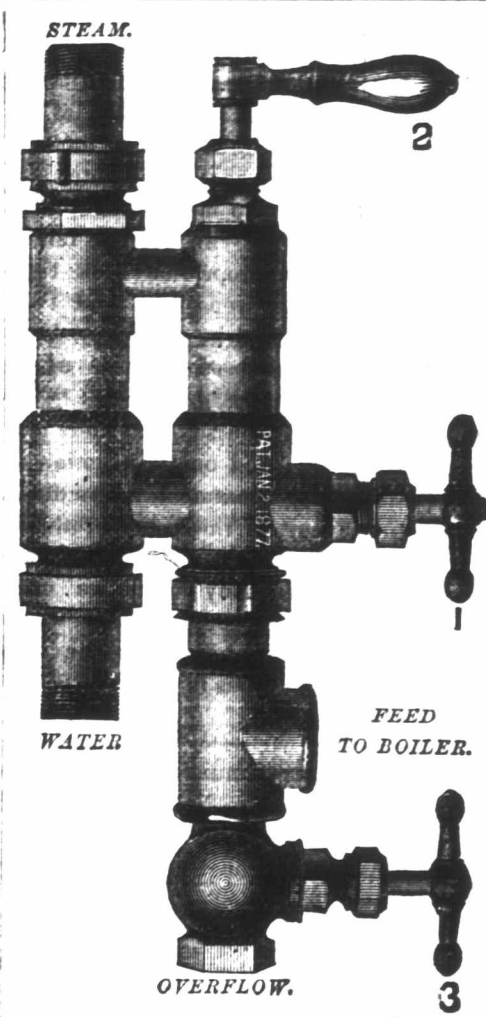
Soap will last longer if kept in a dry place. This small economy will amount to something in a large family in the course of a year. The best way to strengthen and promote the growth of the hair is to wash it every morning in cold water. Treat an unloaded gun with the same care that you would use in handling a loaded one. "I did not know it was loaded" has caused many terrible accidents.

For a sauce for puddings take one tablespoonful of butter, one cup of sugar, one half cup of milk. Rub the butter and sugar to a cream, add the milk by degrees. Grate over nutmeg. To make Graham gems, use one egg, one good handful of sugar, a pinch of salt, one half cup of melted butter, one pint of buttermilk, and one teaspoonful of soda. Put in butter when hot mixed up; when nearly mixed add soda, and mix rather stiff. Have gem irons hot and a good oven.

A cement which resists damp and firmly attaches labels to iron and tin work, consists of a paste of rye meal and a little solution of glue and water, to which as much venetian turpentine is added as may be required. Ordinary flour paste, when well made, does very well for fixing printed labels on tinned sheet iron boxes.

When a horse has a good appetite and eats well, it is a good indication of health and capacity to undergo hard labor. For such horses nothing can be gained by attempting to improve them with condition powders or stimulants. A good feeder can, in nearly all cases, be relied upon. Edward Clark, the architect of the Capitol at Washington, in his annual report notes the success of his attempt to transplant over one hundred trees averaging a foot in diameter. To adapt them to removal their roots were cut off at a distance of three and a half feet from the trunk. The operation was regarded as hazardous, and was characterized as an injudicious and disastrous one. All the trees with two exceptions have flourished, and are growing more rapidly than others in the same park.

A brown wood stain for the imitation of oak, walnut and cherry-tree wood is obtained by thinning ordinary tincture of iodine with alcohol, more or less being added of the latter, according as a lighter or darker shade of brown is desired. The stain should be applied with a broad brush or a rag. After it has dried the work should be polished. It is, however, possible to dispense with ordinary French polish by adding to the stain white shellac. One or other of these processes of polishing is indispensable to give permanency to the stain.



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