



CHINESE PUNISHMENTS.

ALMOST everything about China is interesting to us in this Western world, for it is quite another world from ours. The "Celestials," as they call themselves, are in most of their habits and customs directly the opposite of Europeans and Americans, and their doings and sayings seem to us very amusing.

Their modes of punishing culprits are peculiar. The *cangue*, or wooden frame, placed around the neck of a prisoner, is often put upon debtors who cannot pay what they owe. Public exposure in the *cangue* is considered rather a kind of censure or reprimand than a punishment, and carries no disgrace with it. The frame weighs between twenty and thirty pounds, and is so made as to rest upon the shoulders without chafing the neck, but so broad as to prevent the person feeding himself. The name, residence, and offence of the delinquent are written upon it for the information of every passer by, and a policeman is stationed over him to prevent escape. If one were compelled to sit in the streets of America in such a position, we are afraid the boys would laugh at him.

Another way of punishing is to whip a man through the streets as a public example to others, and is frequently practiced upon persons detected in robbery, assault, or some other minor offence. The man is manacled and one policeman goes before him carrying a tablet, on which is written his name, crime and punishment, accompanied by another holding a gong. In some cases little sticks bearing flags are thrust through his ears, and the executioner strikes the criminal with his whip or rattan as the rap on the gong denotes that the appointed number is not yet complete.

THE LUCKIEST FELLOW.

"FRED DIXON is the luckiest fellow in town; everything he wants he gets; everything he undertakes prospers. Did you hear he has the place at Kelly's, that so many have been trying to get?"

"You don't say so! Why, he is a very young man to fill so responsible a position."

"Yes," added the first speaker, "he always would stand on the top of the ladder in school. Though not the brightest scholar, he managed to carry off the honours upon quitting school, which he did at an earlier age than most of his classmates, because he had

to help support a widowed mother and younger brothers and sisters. He only had to ask for a situation, and to all other applicants were voted out, and Fred had the preference."

Boys, "Our Boys," do you know any Fred Dixons? If you do, don't think it is luck that helps him along, gives him the laurels at school, aids him to obtain first-class situations, puts him in places of trust and honour, where a good name or untarnished character is required. Look back in the pages of his life. See if he was not studious at school, fair and square in all his boyish games, gentlemanly and obliging, honest in all his dealings. Ask his friends if truthfulness, faithfulness to his duty, steadfastness of purpose, are not his characteristics. Find out whether he

has ever been known to frequent tipping shops, gambling dens and kindred places of vice; whether he spends his spare time in filling his mind with trashy literature, such as is thrown broadcast over our land, in the shape of dime novels. Depend upon it, boys, you will never be "the luckiest fellow in town," unless you earn it by honesty and integrity of character, and fidelity to all your undertakings.—*Christian at Work.*

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, AND EZEKIEL.

A. D. 550.] LESSON VI. [Feb. 7.

THE GRACIOUS CALL.

Isa. 55. 1-13. Memory verses, 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.—Isaiah 55. 6.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God invites all men to come to him and be saved.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

Ho—An exclamation for calling the attention. *Every one that thirsteth*—That has longings and desires unsatisfied, especially for forgiveness and goodness and God and heaven. *To the waters*—Which quench thirst. Jesus Christ satisfies all the desires and longings of the soul. *Buy*—Not "pay a price," but obtain. Use the necessary means. *Wine and milk*—The juice of the grape, and milk, were regarded as the best and most delicious of foods. Christ feeds the soul not only with that which is necessary to its life, but which is delightful. *Without money*—The poor here are on an equality with the rich. The best things of God cannot be bought with money—wisdom, love, knowledge, goodness, communion with God, salvation, heaven. *Let your soul delight itself in fatness*—The blessings which Christ gives are not merely good; they are full of the choicest delights of which human nature is capable. "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.) *Eternal covenant*—God's promise of salvation to the believing and obedient. It never ends: it never fails. *Sure mercies of David*—The promises made to David as king of the people and ancestor of the Messiah. (2 Sam. 7. 12-29; Luke 20. 41-44.) *I have given him*—The Messiah, included in the "sure mercies of David" just mentioned. *A witness*—To testify from God about eternal things. *Call a nation*—The Christian Church; a redeemed nation. *Thou knowest not*—Because not then in existence. *Nations*—Gentile nations, who would be converted. *Let the wicked forsake his way*—His evil course of life. *His thoughts*—His purposes, wrong objects of pursuit, his selfish and sinful aims and plans of life; the two phrases being designed to include all

that pertains to the outer and inner life of man. He must make his heart right, and his outer life also; not his heart only, but his life; not his life only, but his heart no less. *And the snow from heaven*—Not only rain, but snow also, is of great importance to the fruitfulness of the earth. It treasures up the waters of winter, and it slowly melts, and brings the moisture gradually to the fields of spring. The snow also protects vegetation from the too severe cold of winter. *So shall my word be*—(1) It will be fruitful in holiness; (2) It will not fail of its purpose. God's word is his truth, his promises, his commands, his gospel. *For ye shall go out*—Of exile; out also of the exile of sin. *Thorn . . . brier*—Marks of the uncultivated wilderness. *Fir . . . myrtle*—Trees of the garden and cultivated landscape. *For a name . . . a sign*—To manifest the nature and character of God, and show it to all who see these things.

Find in this lesson—

1. An invitation to all.
2. To what they are invited.
3. What we should do with the invitation.
4. What we should forsake.
5. Five gracious promises.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

8. What commission did Christ give to his apostles before his ascension into heaven? He said unto them: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

A Little Man.

I know a little hero whose face is brown with tan, But through it shines the spirit that makes the boy a man; A spirit strong and sturdy, a will to win its way— It does me good to look at him and watch him day by day.

He tells me that his mother is poor, and sews for bread. "She's such a dear, good mother!" the little fellow said; And then his eyes shone brighter—God bless the little man!— And he added: "'Cause I love her, I help her all I can."

Ah! that's the thing to do, boys, to prove the love you bear To the mother who has kept you, in long and loving care. Make all her burdens lighter; help every way you can, To pay the debt you owe her, as does this little man.

A WARNING TO THE YOUNG.

It is often worse to read bad books than it is to keep company with bad boys. Actions grow off our thoughts, and a bad book can in a few minutes damage us forever.

One of England's greatest and best men says that when a boy another boy loaned him a bad book for just fifteen minutes. It sent a deadly dart to his soul. He never could get away from the vile impression made upon his mind by that book in so short a time. He shed many bitter tears over it, and tried to forget it; but the shadow lingered. God forgave him, but he could not tear from his soul the memory of that evil book.

My young friends, if you will hear the voice of age and wisdom, do not read bad, trashy books and papers. They feed unholy, lustful thoughts and lure to dark deeds. They poison the mind and corrupt the morals. They are worse on the soul than liquor is on the brain. If you fill your mind with the rubbish of nonsense and the filth of vile thinking, there will be neither room nor relish for the choice gold of truth and the diamond-dust of pure thought. In the Bible you will find

the loftiest sentiments expressed in clear and captivating style. It is fountain of pure thought and clear English. Read it much, love it more, and live out its blessed teachings forever.—*Pacific Methodist.*

A QUICK TEMPER.

WHAT did I hear you say, Theodore? That you had a quick temper, but were soon over it; and that it was only a word and a blow with you sometime, but you were always sorry as soon as was over?

Ah, my boy, I'm afraid that was the way with Cain. People almost seem to pride themselves on having quick tempers, as though they were no things to be ashamed of, and fought against, and prayed over with tears. God's word does not take your view of it, for it says expressly that "he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;" that "better is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city;" and "anger resteth in the bosom of fools."

A man who carries a quick temper about with him is much like a man who rides a horse which has the trick of running away. You would not care to own a runaway horse, would you?

When you feel the fierce spirit rising do not speak until you can speak calmly, whatever may be the provocation. Words do lots of mischief. Resolve, as God helps you, that you will imitate our Saviour, who was always gentle, and when he was reviled reviled not again.—*Child's World.*

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