



STREET IN PEKING.

STREET IN PEKING—KITE FLYING.

PEKING, in China, is one of the largest cities in the world, and no matter at what time you go there the streets are always crowded. The cut gives a view of one of the business streets, as shown by the curious signs hanging from the fronts of the shops. These are bright-coloured, mostly scarlet, and are inscribed with mysterious Chinese characters.

Kite-flying is a favourite pastime, and practised as a game by grown-up people. The man who can keep his kite up the longest of course has the game, and occasionally mean tricks are resorted to to bring down a rival's kite, such as sawing his string in two by drawing across it his own string, which has been prepared for the purpose by glueing all over it fragments of broken glass.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

B.C. 1015.] LESSON IX. [May 23.

THE EXCELLENT WOMAN.

Prov. 31. 10-31.] [Memory verses, 26-29.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Prov. 31. 30.

OUTLINE.

1. Her virtue, v. 10-12.
2. Her industry, v. 13-27.
3. Her piety, v. 28-31.

TIME OF WRITING.—Possibly about B. C. 1015.

CONNECTING LINKS.

This last chapter of Proverbs seems to have been originally a separate essay or poem, written by the mother of King Lemuel—though who he was is not known—and afterwards appended to the book of Solomon's proverbs.

EXPLANATIONS.

"Virtuous," in these verses, has its earlier sense of efficient, powerful. It means one who is competent for all a true woman's work. "Rubies," as we have already seen, were the highest valued of oriental precious stones. "Her candle"—Better "lamp." Perhaps referring to her watchful preparation in case of sudden alarm for marauders. "The spindle" was for twisting the thread in spinning. "The distaff" held the wool or flax to be spun. "Scarlet"—The word here should probably not be the name of any colour, but refer either to lined clothing, or else to some well-known article of dress, at once conspicuous for colour and warmth. "Tapestry" Carpeting and embroidery. "Silk"—Fine linen.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- What practical lessons are here taught—
1. For every sister, wife, or mother?
 2. For every brother, husband, or son?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Whose character is here described? "The virtuous, or excellent woman." 2. What sort of a woman is she? "Self-reliant, industrious, generous, gentle." 3. What is the foundation of her character? "She feareth the Lord." 4. What is the result of such a character? "Her own works praise her, and everyone loves her." 5. What does the Golden Text teach? "Favour is deceitful," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The foundation of character.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

What do the Scriptures teach you concerning God?

That God is an eternal Spirit, infinite and unchangeable in his nature and attributes, who alone exists of himself.

IMPERIAL TACT.

SOMEHOW great things are naturally expected from "high-born" people. Unfortunately the expectation is not often realized; but we are told that there is no lady in England who is superior to Queen Victoria in the gracious qualities which go to make the real gentlewoman. The following story, it is said, is strictly true:

Many of our readers have listened to the addresses of Lady Henry Somerset, who has endeared herself to hundreds of thousands of women in America by the charming personality which she has lent to the help of the temperance movement. When she was a child four or five years of age, she received with other little peersesses an invitation from the Queen.

Lady Isabel—she was then Lady Isabel Somers—came to the palace dressed in white, with a wreath of daisies on her head. Like most children she was full of fun and frolic, and while the other little ones were waiting primly for the Queen to appear, she ran and seated herself in the great chair of state reserved for Victoria.

Soon Her Majesty entered. She exhibited no annoyance at the baby's breach of etiquette, but came up and patted her on the cheek, and, smiling, said:

"Ah, my little Isabel!"

The child drew herself up. "Lady Isabel, if you please," said the tiny and audacious peeress.

Years passed away. At eighteen Lady Isabel was formally presented at court. The native simplicity and independence which to-day move her to dare unpopularity for the sake of an unpopular cause led her to appear in the gorgeous pageant that paid honour to the Queen in a simple gown of white.

Upon her head she wore a wreath of daisies, and daisies at her throat and waist. As she made her courtesy, the Queen touched her upon the cheek, and said:

"Ah, Lady Isabel! Daisies again!"

It was a simple, kindly act, courteously done, and showed the imperial tact of one who had carefully trained herself to remember other people's affairs.

Victoria is said to be the busiest woman in the world. It was, therefore, all the more noteworthy that she should remember whether little Isabel wore daisies or roses, or in fact that she should remember anything at all about her. That one gentle expression of tactful remembrance made Lady Isabel the Queen's friend forever.

What is tact but skill in discerning what will be agreeable and helpful to somebody else: It includes kindness, and then it is one of the elements of the highest breeding, and an ornament to any character.

Christianity includes many pagan virtues, but tact is the flower of them all. A good deed done without a proper method may do great harm. Great causes suffer more from tactless enthusiasts than from virulent enemies.

The pretty story of the little peeress and the great Queen has value for those of us who are trying to develop ourselves according to the Christian ideal.

Sincerity is the soul of spiritual tact. This, with kindness, will enable a person to move the little world around him to beautiful and gracious ends. Consider what other people care for. Study their histories. Remember their little things. Daisies are the commonest flower of the field. They were not beneath the notice of a observant queen. Don't forget the daisies.

To a Little Maid.

How should little maidens grow,
When they're ten or over?
In the sunshine and the air,
Wholesome, simple, fresh and fair,
As the bonnie daisies blow,
And the happy clover.

How should little lassies speak,
When they're ten or over?
As the birds do, and the bees,
Singing through the flowers and trees,
Till each mortal fain would seek
The merry-hearted rover.

How about her eyes and ears,
At this stage of growing?
Like the clear, unclouded skies,
Not too eager nor too wise,
So that all she sees and hears
May be worth the knowing.

And the little maiden's heart?
Ah! for that we're praying,
That it strong and pure may grow;
God, who loveth children so,
Keep her from all guile apart,
Through life's mazes straying.
—Journal of Education.

HOW DO YOU USE YOUR TIME?

It is safe to take it for granted that many of our young folks have most of their day-time mapped out for them by older and wiser heads than their own. But to every one of you comes the time, somewhere in the twenty-four hours, when you draw a long breath and say, "Now, my time is my own, I can do as I please." And what do you please to do? One who is deeply interested in young people, in addressing an audience of young men in London, spoke these earnest words about the use of those precious "spare moments."

"I wish you would let me say a plain word to some of you about the use of your leisure hours, for many is the young man who, to do him justice, is thoroughly assiduous in his office or place of business, but as soon as he shuts his books, locks his desk, puts on his hat and turns his steps towards his home or his lodgings, he abandons himself to idleness; and then comes the devil's chance. Almost all the moral havoc that is wrought amongst young men is effected after the office-door is closed. Few men go wrong when they are busy at work. The worst thing you can do of an

evening is to do nothing. You may almost predict what a man's future will be if you know how he spends his hours of leisure. All honour to those who take up some course of reading, some branch of literature, the study of French or German, or some practical form of philanthropy; but there are numbers who never dream of such a thing, and who, when a few years have gone, will wake up to find out how stupid they have been, and to exclaim, 'Behold, I have played the fool!'"

Girls, dear girls, who long to be pretty and winning and attractive, who love to know that you have given pleasure, I have a word for you. Have you looked deeply enough into your own hearts to see how easily the honest, wholesome desire to give pleasure can give place to that unwholesome desire to be praised, which you dislike so much that you are hardly willing to admit, even to yourself, that it has any place in your heart. It is perplexing to know just where the one ends and the other begins. No wonder that your pretty brows are knotted as you try to decide how much pleasure you may rightly take in giving pleasure. Somewhere, I know not where, I have found and saved for you a little bit of wisdom which seems to me to have the true ring:

"Let God set his light upon your brow, if he will, that all who may come into the house 'may see the light,' but do not look into the mirror of human praise to inquire what you appear to be. For every word to which you listen, of human praise, you will feel the thrill of the divine life lessening. Keep to work steadily and trustingly, and lay it daily at the feet of your Lord for his acceptance and blessing. Very little can another know of your sense of responsibility or of your fidelity, but kneeling at the Master's feet you shall say it over and over again: 'He knows! He knows the darkness I went into, and the feebleness of my arm to hold a light.'"



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