OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

IN EASTERN LANDS, WHERE SPICES GROW.

BY MARY C. BILLINGS.

The following lines were written for a little girl to recite on a Presbyterian "Mission Sunday" in Hico, Texas.

In Eastern lands, where spices grow,
And softly sweeps the balmful air;
Where heathen children never know,
Or hear, the sound of praise or prayer;

Where heathen mothers, sometimes cast
Their infants 'neath the Ganges' wave;
Hoping such sacrifice, at last
From Demon's wrath, each child will save.

While we, our blessings multiplied,
With "Home," and "Church," with "school," and play;
Have all our needs and wants supplied
For every hour and every day:

With parents, brothers, sisters, friends,
And the pure Gospel of our Lord,
To teach us how his love extends
And make our lives with his accord.

Oh, let us pity those, who live
In Eastern lands, where spices grow,
And to these hapless children give
The sweetest Gospel that we know!

Tell them of CHRIST, our loving Friend;
Who, while on earth, the children blest!
His loving message, let us send
To those whose lives are so oppressed.

Tell them of all his kindly deeds,
His tender words of hope and cheer;
His pitying help for human needs,
His life of loving service here.

And thus to show each heathen child
That Christ loves them as well as we;
And in his spirit, pure and mild,
Would have them live from evil free;

And happy be in doing good;
In knowing how to live aright;
To learn his Gospel as they should:
Rejoicing in his blessed light!

So let us help our Master's cause—
By helping those who freely go
To teach God's love, and righteous laws
In Eastern lands where spices blow.

HICO, Tex.

KITE FLYING IN OTHER LANDS.

BY GEORGE E. WALSH.

THE recent appearance of the kite in this country as an article of practical value in obtaining weather records, makes its history in other lands of considerable interest. When the present generation of living men were boys the kite was looked upon merely as a curious toy, but one that could give an infinite amount of pleasure during the windy months of early spring. But today kites of all sizes and shapes are flying in the sky and, instead of boys, gray-headed men are holding the strings and watching their graceful evolutions in the upper atmosphere.

Long before American men of science took to kite flying, however, the men of China and Japan did not consider it beneath their dignity to construct kites and fly them during the season. In these two countries kite flying was carried into the realm of art. Before our own Franklin used the kite for bringing electricity down from the clouds a famous Chinese general had made practical use of the toy in measuring the distance of a citadel which he intended to undermine. The Chinese have indulged in kite flying from time immemorial, and their constructions are of special interest. They are made of the lightest bamboo splints and soft native paper. Their shapes are legion. Nearly all the gods, dragons, and historical characters of their mythology are imitated, as well as birds, beasts, and insects.

Any boy who realizes how nicely adjusted a kite must be to float easily into the air, can appreciate the amount of skill the Chinese kite makers must have employed to construct their oddly-shaped toys. But the Chinese always made their paper full, like a parachute, so that the wind would get under it and support it—the method now adopted by the manufacturers of the modern American tailess kites. Thus, a hummingbird made by a Chinese kite artist would have wings like half a balloon, and the air under these would almost support the structure when a dead calm prevailed.

The Chinese and the Japanese were the first to fly several kites attached to one string. During the past summer American kites of the Eddy type have been flown in flocks, half a dozen or more being attached to one string, and through their combined pulling power flags have been hoisted several hundred feet into the air. In China it is not uncommon to see a dozen kites attached to one string, representing a flock of birds, the stars in the heavens, or a group of their hideous idols. In the kite-flying season the air is literally swarming with bird and insect kites of all sizes and descriptions. It is a national pastime with the men as well as with the boys and girls.

In Japan kite flying has assumed very little less importance than in China, but the curious toys do not assume so many forms and representations as in the Celestial empire. The kites are usually nearly square, rectangular or fan-shaped, and on their faces pictures are painted in the most gaudy colors. The frames are made of light pieces of bamboo, and the paper is very thin and light, but tough and strong. At Tokyo the boys fly bird-shaped kites very similar to the Chinese kites. The fan-kite is a perfect imitation of a Japanese fan, with the paper pasted full over the face so that the wind can blow it out like a parachute.

Kite flying begins in our country about the first of March, but in Japan the season opens the first of the month, at New Year, and from that time till summer the air is pretty full of the toys. The boys of Tokyo have invented a musical instrument made of light bamboo and strings which they attach to the head of their kites, and when the wind is blowing a stiff breeze a musical, humming sound is made.

This humming has a peculiar, far-away sound that a stranger would be unable to locate. When a dozen kites are flying in the air from one spot, the noise can be heard some distance away. Naturally the Japanese boys are fond of making all the noise with their kites they can.

In the Malay Peninsula kite flying is also a popular sport among the natives. At the World's Fair in Chicago a collection of Malay kites was exhibited. These were so beautifully modeled and scientifically constructed that American kite flyers made a special study of them. They represented many birds and beasts and objects of nature.

The Koreans are expert kite flyers, and even the King takes a hand at the sport occasionally. They are made in the rectangular form, with pieces of colored paper pasted all over them to give a brilliant effect when floating in the air. They have no tails, and in this respect they approach the nearest to the scientific kites now employed in this country for meteorological experiments. A peculiar custom among the Korean kite flyers is to dip their silken strings in fish glue, and then draw them through powdered glass. The string makes a good knife or saw, and when it comes in contact with the string of another kite, one or the other is apt to be cut in two. The boys seem to enjoy this sort of sport and each one prides himself upon the number of kite strings he severs in the course of the day.

After the middle of the first month of the year kite flying in Korea practically ceases, and it is then just as much out of fashion to be seen with one as it is to wear straw hats in the middle of winter in the United States. As a final closing act of the kite season little slips of paper with Korean characters on them are pasted over the face of the kite, and sometimes they are written on the bamboo frame. These characters simply express the wish that coming misfortunes will be carried away with the kite. A piece of twisted sulphur paper is attached to the string near the kite, and lighted before it is put up into the air. When the kite is a hundred feet high the paper burns out, the string is parted by the flames, and the kite goes sailing away to some unknown part of the country, presumably carrying with it all the impending misfortunes of the little owner.

In New Zealand kite flying has been a popular sport for centuries, and among the natives of the South Sea Islands the kite is looked upon with superstitious reverence. Some of the natives have a practical turn of mind, and they employ the kite for fishing purposes.

In Europe the kite is more modern than in any of the countries above, but mention of them here dates back to 1690. In Asia, however, the kite is such an ancient institution that it is difficult to fix its birth in China, Korea, Japan, India, Siam, Burmah, or the Malay Islands. The origin must have resulted from a desire to imitate the flight of the birds in the air. The natives consequently patterned nearly all of their early kites after the birds, and subsequently incorporated the deities and animal world in their system of flying objects.—*The Advance.*

MOTHERS' DOLLS.

BY KATHERINE BEEBE.

EVERY thoughtful observer of children must have been at some time greatly impressed by the resemblance existing between grown-up girls and little girls, grown-up boys and little boys. They must also observed that many of these big girls—mothers—play with their children very much as little girls play with their dolls.

The greatest pleasure and widest use which a small maiden of the present day gets from and makes of her doll is in dressing and undressing it, in making pretty clothes for it, and in carrying it about where other mothers of dolls may envy and admire.

Any day and every day one may see any number of these overdressed little girl-dolls in public places. They are in the theaters, on the streets, in the stores, and in the public conveyances, dressed in voluminous cloaks of silk, velvet, or wool, with sleeves so large that any real use of the arms is precluded, wearing enormous and unwieldy hats, which are tied under the chin with great bows of ribbon, and further bedecked in dainty furs, kid gloves, and bits of jewelry. The little human doll is dressed and taken abroad that strangers may nudge each other and say or look, "See that pretty little girl! Isn't she cute!" that acquaintances may exclaim, "What a dear little girl you have! where did you get that lovely coat?" that friends may say, "My dear, how exquisitely you do dress Gladys!" And so poor Gladys, not for her own interest, pleasure, or well-being, but to gratify her mother's pride, and sometimes vanity, spends hours, which should be given to wholesome, happy, childlike play in a child's world, as a beautifully dressed doll in a far from judicious grown-up world of hurry, noise, excitement and flattery. She does not rebel at this, poor little Gladys! She seldom even protests, for she early learns to love the excitement of the city, with its bewilderingly delightful panorama of theaters, shops, toy departments, soda-fountains and candy-stores. She likes to hear her mother's friends say how sweet and pretty she is, and how beautifully her hair curls. The discomfort of the yards of dry goods, of the huge sleeves and top-heavy hat, is lost sight of in the thought that she looks "too dear for anything," and that her coat is "so stylish!"

I do not think I am overdrawing the picture. It is a familiar one in all large cities, whose streets are also full of cheap imitations of the same sort of finery on the children of poor and hard-working people. It always seems to me, however, as if a sort of mother-love lay behind the adornment of the little Gustavas, Norahs, and Gretchens, with their clumsy plush bonnets and cheap lace collars—a mother-love, which, imitating that which it sees in the higher walks of life, feels that it is doing its best for the children, that best often necessarily meaning self-sacrifice.

The stiff-legged little boy-doll, in his many-buttoned leather leggings, huge collar, and yards of necktie, is is not seen on the streets so commonly as the girl-doll, probably because he, with his sturdier and growing man-nature, rebels more vigorously against being dressed up, and because he will not be compensated even by a box of Heyler's best for long hours spent on the street cars and before counters.

When these same children are a few years older, when they are no longer "cute" and "perfectly dear," when the boy is too large for leggings, and the girl's front teeth are missing, they will not be seen "down-town" so often. The city's museums, art galleries, panoramas, and flower shows will call for them in vain, as will Stoddard's lectures, Thomas's concerts, and the many special exhibits which could teach them so much under a sympathetic leadership.

Then there are the poor baby-dolls, so beautifully dressed in snowy white, that under no condition must they be allowed to get out of their carriages. An afternoon out-of-doors means for them a stately progress up and down, either sitting or asleep, from the very weariness of inaction. All who pass may see, any fine afternoon, these dear little baby-dolls in spotless order, under dainty lace parasols, in "the handsomest baby-carriage his grandfather could get in New York," beneath beautifully embroidered afghans. The sufferings of these little ones, with their heaven-sent longing for almost constant activity, from their hours of forced inactivity, from the discomfort of tight little bonnets tied on with such stiff, scratchy bows as you and I would not tolerate, from huge sleeves and enormous collars, will never, perhaps, be known, as the babies cannot tell of them, except by exhibitions of temper, nervousness, and fretfulness.

Again, excitement is offered in place of the simpler and more natural child life which is the baby's right. As he is wheeled up and down busy streets, gay avenues, or among crowds of children and baby-carriages in the parks, the dazzling panorama of city life keeps him quiet, and his clothes clean. What it is doing to the tender little soul and unfolding mind develops later as an effect which is traced to any cause but the fact that he was played with as a doll instead of being treated as a live baby.

This same baby-doll, while he is learning to walk, must wear picturesquely long white dresses, because, forsooth, "they are so cunning, and all babies wear them." As if it were not enough to learn to conquer the laws of balance and equilibrium with a limited experience of but one year of life, without having to trip over a long skirt time and again! In a short dress a baby learning to walk will get falls in plenty, and the long dress multiplies them by at least ten. The big girl who dresses her baby-doll this way ought to be condemned to learn to ride her bicycle in an equestrian skirt.—*Outlook.*

How to Keep Your Room.

A look into the chamber of a boy or girl will give one an idea of what kind of a man or woman he or she will probably become. A boy who keeps his clothing hung up neatly, or a girl whose room is always neat, will be apt to make a successful man or woman. Order and neatness are essential to our comfort as well as that of others about us. A boy who throws down his cap or book anywhere will never keep his accounts in shape, will do things in a slovenly, careless way, and not be long wanted in any position. A girl who does not make her bed until after dinner—and she should always do it herself rather than have a servant do it—and throws her dress or her bonnet down on a chair, will make a poor wife in nine cases out of ten. If the world could see how a girl keeps her dressing room, many unhappy marriages would be saved.

—Captain John Haynes, an inmate of the St. Louis Memorial Home, who celebrated his 109th birthday last Christmas, is said to be the oldest member of the G. A. R. He was born in Tennessee on December 25, 1787. He fought under General Jackson at the battle of New Orleans, and displayed such courage that he was the recipient of a high personal compliment from the General.