

ground—Ethiopian treasurer, Saul of Tarsus, Lydia. . . . How to hear the Gospel as taught in this lesson: 1.) Willingly. 2.) Attentively. 3.) Thoughtfully. 4.) Steadfastly. 5.) Singleheartedly. 6.) Practically. . . . Warnings of the parable: 1.) Hearing, merely, is not enough to save us. 2.) Careless hearing does no good; how many heard this parable unbenedicted! 3.) Forgetful hearing gives opportunity to the devil. 4.) Instability of character is a sin which most easily besets youth. It may be conquered in the same way as any other sin. 5.) Love and fear of the world are alike prejudicial to the development of a good Christian character.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 5: Going forth to sow, 663; the way-side, 664. . . . FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Ver. 4: Prose, 10863, 10870, 10871. Ver. 5: Prose, 5241, 5242, 11808, 11809, 5468-5471; Poetical, 4010. Ver. 7: Prose, 1774, 11900, 11901. Ver. 8: Prose, 11133, 11133. Ver. 10: Prose, 4008, 9747, 10672-10675, 9900. Ver. 12: Prose, 11124, 11123, 11132. Ver. 18: Prose, 9360-9373, 2803-2820, 6634.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Elements of the Parable.

I. THE SOWER.

A sower went out to sow, v. 5.

"He that soweth . . . son of man," Matt. 13. 36.

"God gave the increase," 1 Cor. 3. 6.

II. THE SEED.

The seed is the word of God, v. 11.

"The word . . . bringeth forth fruit," Col. 1. 5, 6.

"Not of corruptible seed," 1 Pet. 1. 23.

III. THE WAY-SIDE.

Some fell by the way-side, v. 5.

By the way-side . . . they that hear, v. 12.

"Hear . . . understandeth it not," Matt. 13. 18.

"Give the more earnest heed," Heb. 2. 1.

IV. THE ROCK.

Some fell upon a rock, v. 6.

They on the rock, v. 13.

"Hear . . . but do them not," Ezek. 33. 32.

"Goodness as the morning cloud," Hos. 6. 4.

"Ye did run well," Gal. 5. 7.

V. THE THORNS.

Some fell among thorns, v. 7.

That which fell among thorns, v. 14.

"They that will be rich," 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.

"Take heed to yourselves," Luke 21. 34.

VI. THE GOOD GROUND.

Other fell on good ground, v. 8.

That on the good ground, v. 15.

"Like a tree planted by the rivers," Psa. 1. 2, 3.

"Bringeth forth much fruit," John 15. 5.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Incidental Teachings.

1. Jesus would have us draw from the most familiar events lessons of spiritual truth. Bread, water, lamps, fish, sparrows, pennies, eggs—he has used these and many other commonplaces of our lower life to convey to us lessons of the higher life. All about us is "parabolic."

2. The Church is divided into Christians of sight and Christians of insight; those who are eager for the story, and those who search for the deeper lessons. As we study all written wisdom, and observe God's daily providences, let us reverently ask in relation to each, "What might this parable be?"

3. Ears were given us to hear with. And there is no

listening worthy of mention that is not heedful. Let us "take heed how we hear."

4. The divine Sower inevitably does his part. There is great comfort in this thought. The Church may fail; we ourselves may at times prove failures; but the Holy Spirit never tires. With or without human assistance the Sower goes forth to sow.

5. There was no fault in the Sower; there was no fault in the seed; it was the defects of the soil that prevented the rich harvest. And the soil represents the human heart. Our hearts are responsible for the spirit in which they receive the word taught.

6. The physical soil cannot help itself; the pressure of feet, the prevalence of stones, the growth of thorns, are all beyond its control; but each heart largely decides for itself whether it shall be shallow and stony, choked with cares, beset by the devil, or, like the good ground, "bearing" the word, "keeping" it, and "bringing forth fruit with patience."

HOME READINGS.

M. The parable of the sower. Luke 8. 4-15.

Th. Way-side hearers. Acts 24. 22-27.

W. Stony places. John 6. 59-66.

Th. Among thorns. Mark 10. 17-22.

F. Good ground. Acts 2. 37-47.

S. Bearing fruit. John 15. 1-8.

8. Abundant fruit. John 4. 31-42.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 75, New Canadian Hymnal.

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast.

No. 76, New Canadian Hymnal.

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling.

No. 73, New Canadian Hymnal.

God calling yet! shall I not hear?

DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns Nos. 69, 77, 73.

TIME.—A. D. 28.

PLACE.—In a boat, close beside the Lake of Genesareth.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Natural law in the spiritual world.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

226. O scatter seeds.

228. Work, for the night.

230. Give me some work.

242. The Lord into his garden.

254. To the work.

255. Far and near.

288. Growing up for Jesus.

291. Beautiful, the little hands

293. Come, with rejoicing.

296. We plow the fields.

297. Summer sunshine.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Sower, v. 4, 5, 9, 10.

What crisis in Jesus's life was now approaching?

Why was it necessary for Jesus now to sift his followers,

and keep the more earnest at a distance?

Was this the first of Jesus's parables? vers. 10-11.

Matt. 13. 10.

What rural episode was probably going on before the eyes of Christ's hearers at this moment?

Where did Jesus make his pulpit?

Where did his hearers stand?

Who is meant by the sower?

What was Jesus's purpose in thus veiling his truth by parables? ver. 10.