



RIDING ON A WHEEL-BARROW.

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BY REV. J. A. DAVIS.

MANY of our readers have heard of the man who brought home his wife on a wheel-barrow. This, probably, is not a picture of that man, unless he brought his wife's sister too, yet it is a picture of real wheel-barrow-riding. The picture tells the story so well that words cannot add much to it. If anyone asks if they really ride in that way in China, let it be said that in northern China it is a very common mode of travelling across the country - for short, if not for long, journeys. In the south people are carried in sedan chairs, borne by long poles on the shoulders of men.

These wheel-barrows are somewhat like those we have in our country, but have a larger wheel. It is set farther back, has a frame on either side, and passengers, as well as loads, are carried at the sides instead of behind the wheel. There are handles by which it is pushed and partly carried; but the man who works it saves his hands and arms the heavy work of carrying, by having a rope fastened to each handle and passed over his shoulders; so he really holds the wheel-barrow up by his shoulders rather than by his hands.

There is a disadvantage or two connected with this method of travel; a person cannot well go alone. That is no disadvantage to Chinese women, for they like company; but, as a man and his wife there seldom go out together, when he wishes to travel by wheel-barrow and doesn't care to have his wife on the other side, he may be obliged to take a less agreeable companion. One man in the picture has a pig to balance him. Another disadvantage lies in the fact that these, like all wheel-barrows, are liable to upset and drop the load without any ceremony. The men running them are, however, careful, and, though it might be fun for them to see passengers tip over, they rarely allow that fun, if able to prevent it. The Chinese are careful of the welfare of those under their charge.

Strange as it may seem, this is about as good a way as the Chinese have of travelling on land. Though they have carts, those are really little if any better for riding than wheel-barrows; and the sedan chairs are, to some, not even as pleasant. No stage coaches and not a railroad in

another railroad now, which, it is hoped, will succeed. Ignorance, superstition, and idolatry are the three tyrants who fearfully oppress the people of China.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

A. D. 28.] LESSON X. [Dec. 9.

CHRIST TEACHING BY PARABLES.

Luke 8. 4-15. Memory verses, 11-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The seed is the Word of God.—Luke 8. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. Four Kinds of S, il, v. 4-8.
2. Four Kinds of Heart, v. 9-15.

TIME.—A. D. 28.

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

EXPLANATIONS.

4. "Much people"—There is a wide difference between the conditions of life in Palestine in A. D. 28 and the conditions of life in Christian countries in 184. We can form little idea of the immense throngs that followed Jesus from town to town, leaving their work and pleasure, and willing to sleep without roof or tent for covering, if necessary, readily lured from their homes and responsibilities by this latest of sensations, the wandering Messiah. In the East, even to-day, such crowds would follow any wonder-worker very much as groups of children are sometimes attracted from block to block, far from home, by a wandering brass band.

5. "Sower"—It was springtime, and very probably Jesus and his hearers saw such a sower go forth. Every incident in this parable was thoroughly familiar to the people. "Wayside"—A path trodden across the field. The only sort of road in Palestine. "Fowls of the air"—Little birds.

6. "Upon a rock"—Stony ground.

8. "A hundredfold"—This would be an enormous harvest. But so large a crop has been known in the East. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"—It would sound oddly to-day for a public speaker to say at the close of his address, "Listen with your ears;"



THE SOWER.

and doubtless it sounded as oddly to the crowd that clustered about Jesus' boat. But it is an exhortation that we must pay attention to. Few people than half use their ears.

9. "Parable"—Any wise saying that contains a truth wrapped in it, as a kernel is in a nut or a treasure in a box. It may be a story, or it may be a mere sentence, the true meaning of which does not lie on the surface, but can be reached by research and study.

10. "Mysteries"—Hidden things. "That seeing they might not see"—Jesus means simply that he has wrapped this truth up in a story so that those who really desired the truth could get it, and those who wanted merely a story might have that. The majority of his hearers had sight, but not insight.

11. "Word of God"—Divine truth, written or spoken.

13. "Had no root"—This is the matter with most of the boys and girls and men and women who are making failures in life.

15. "Patience"—The greatest of virtues. He who has it will never make a complete failure.

HOME READINGS.

M. Christ teaching by parables.—Luke 8. 4-15.

Th. Occasion for parables.—Matt. 13. 10-17.

W. The seed.—Psalm 19. 7-14.

Th. Wayside hearers.—Acts 14. 8. 20.

F. On rocky ground.—John 9. 59-66.

S. Among thorns.—Mark 10. 17-27.

Sp. Good ground.—Acts 8. 26-39.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That we should study God's word?
2. That we should obey God's word?
3. That obedience means fruitfulness?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. To whom did Jesus tell the story of the sower? "To a great multitude." 2. Who asked Jesus to explain the meaning of the parable? "The twelve disciples." 3. What did Jesus say this parable would teach? "The mysteries of the kingdom of God." 4. Who are the sowers of good seed? "Teachers and preachers of truth." 5. What is the seed they sow? Golden Text: "The seed is," etc. 6. What did Jesus cry aloud when he had finished his story? "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Natural law in the spiritual world.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

What, then, do you learn by all these commandments?

Two things: My duty towards God and my duty towards my neighbour.

—A Lowell teacher received in one pupil's grammar papers this illustration of the degrees of comparison: "Positive, first; comparative, next; superlative last."

—Rescuer—"Hurry! quick! Throw her a life-preserver." Drowning Girl—"Haven't-you-a-white-one? That-dirty drab-doesn't-match-my-blue-suit."

A Winter Song.

There's a song upon the air,
Heard above the trumpet blare
Of the storm, 'mid bleak and bare
Woodland mazes.
Ah! the icy winds may blow,
And hurl the heaping snow;
But in the earth below
Sleep the daisies.

There's a song within the heart,
Though its sunshine may depart,
Learn it whosoe'er thou art,
Till life closes.

Ah! the snows of grief may fall,
And the shadows may appal;
But beneath them, after all,
Sleep the roses.

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