

way. *Receiveth*; welcomes or entertains. *Eateth with them*; which the Pharisees would not do because about the person or garments of these outcasts there might be some ceremonial uncleanness. (See Matt. 9:9-13.) *This parable*. The two parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin are regarded as one.

V. 4. *What man of you*. Jesus would show that He is acting just as all reasonable men act in their own business. *An hundred sheep*. Palestine is still noted for the countless flocks of broad-tailed sheep which find pasture on its hills. Sometimes the tail of one such sheep will yield as much as 10 pounds of pure fat, which is highly prized. *One*; a single sheep out of so large a flock. *Ninety and nine in the wilderness*; not a desert place, but the usual summer pasture. The sheep would be left under the care of minor shepherds. *Lost*; missing when the shepherd at night rounds up the flock in some cave or rough stone enclosure, and therefore exposed to cold and rain, to wild beasts and robbers,—a peril to the shepherd also.

V. 5. *Hath found it*; and "until He find it," no toils or dangers can turn the shepherd back. How determined God is to save the lost! *Layeth it on his shoulders*; as great Jan Ridd, in the story of Lorna Doone, rescued his sheep from the deep snowdrift and carried them home two at a time. *Rejoicing*; as the Pharisees should have rejoiced when they saw the publicans and sinners coming to Jesus.

Vs. 6, 7. *Cometh home*; to the village in which he lived. *Calleth together*; to a feast in his house. *Rejoice with me*. His joy is so great that it seeks sympathy. *Found . . . sheep . . . lost*. The lost sheep pictures sinners who go astray through their own ignorance and folly. *Likewise joy . . . in heaven*. The shepherd's gladness is a picture of God's joy when one lost soul is saved. *One sinner that repenteth*; changes his mind and forsakes his evil ways, like the outcasts who were coming to Jesus. *Need no repentance*; or think they need none, like the Pharisees. These *needed* repentance, but did not *want* it.

## II. The Lost Coin, 8-10.

V. 8. *What woman*; not "of you" (see v. 4), perhaps because no women were present;

but Jesus would teach that all classes, men and women, should be interested in the salvation of sinners. *Ten pieces of silver*; coins (Greek drachmæ, each worth about sixteen cents), perhaps forming a string worn as an ornament about the head. *Lose one*; not worth much, but the tenth of what she had. *Light a lamp* (Rev. Ver.); because the house is dark; the houses of the poor in Palestine have no windows. *Sweep*. The floor might be of earth, covered with reeds or brushwood under which the coin would easily be hidden. *Until she find it* (Rev. Ver.); keeping up the search until it is successful.

Vs. 9, 10. *Friends and . . . neighbours*; women naturally in this case. There is little privacy in an Eastern village, and all would know of the loss and be ready to *rejoice* in the finding. *Likewise*, etc. The angels see God's overflowing joy and share in it. *One . . . that repenteth*; so great is the value of each soul in God's sight.

## Light from the East

PIECES OF SILVER—This coin was the size of a ten cent piece, but was half as thick again, and was worth between fifteen and twenty cents. Its purchasing power among the necessaries of life was as great as that of our dollar is now, and it was relatively more valuable because of the abject poverty of the people. This woman prized it more because it was likely part of the necklace of coins that she wore. The wife carried then as now all her personal property in the form of gold or silver coins on her head or round her neck. If she was divorced, she could carry away all that she had upon her, nothing more. It would not be an easy matter to find the coin. In a windowless hovel without any floor but the earth, with fowls and even cattle in the same apartment, what clouds of dust she would raise and with what restless anxiety she would turn out the whole contents of the house. And it is in accordance with the strongly social and impulsive emotions of Eastern women to rush to a neighbor's house to tell the news, too good to keep a moment, that the coin had been found, and with congratulations and glad cries they would dance joyously round her.