

whose lips tremble the words :

"O Jesus, full of pardoning grace,
More full of grace than I of sin,
Yet once again I seek Thy face,
Open Thine arms and take me in,
And freely my backslidings heal,
And love the faithless sinner still."

Thou hast covered all their sin, v. 2; covered, as only a gracious God would or can cover. This is from a ripe experience. The psalmist sings with grateful wonder; for God does no more wonderful thing than to cover up the sin and *all* the sin of the penitent. "And especially," every saint of God will add, "my sin." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," the psalmist elsewhere exclaims (Ps. 103: 2); and which of those "benefits," think you, comes first and bulks most largely? Follow on; "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities." (v. 3.) As the Christian's experience ripens and he comes to see more deeply into the awful depths of the sin that is within him, the more of awe and wonder will go into his exclamation, "Thou hast covered all my sin."

Thou hast taken away all Thine wrath, v. 3.

"My God is reconciled:
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child,
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father, cry."

But let them not turn again to folly, v. 8. A much needed caution; for is there not a subtle temptation to rely upon the forgiving grace of God, when we want to sin? One stands on perilous ground who so reasons. God forgives. True! but to "bank" on that fact, and rush into known transgressions, adds the sin of horrible presumption to our other sins. It is what the apostle styles turning the grace of God into licence (Jude 4). The only rational ground of expecting further forgiveness is to set one's face like a flint to-

wards obedience. Right-doing can win no favor of its own merit; but wrong-doing deliberately entered upon because of our knowledge of God's readiness to forgive, is the sort of presumption that brings down quickly and sharply the just judgment of the Almighty.

Then said they among the heathen, Ps. 126: 6. It is a grand testimony when unbelievers are forced to say of Christians,—"*The Lord hath done great things for them.*" It is often this good estate of Christians that is the first thing to tell on the surrounding heathen in our mission fields. It has its effect, too, in our home land. "I don't know how it is," said an obdurate old unbeliever to the writer, "that Mr. — is always giving, giving, giving, and yet, although his family is larger than mine and his farm not so good, everything seems to prosper with him." He was edging pretty close to the kingdom of God, this unbelieving man, in so saying. If he had looked a little closer into the reason why, he might have sought to enter in.

They that sow in tears, v. 5. It was a task of reconstruction to which God's people had set themselves, to restore city and Temple to their former state and to build up a nation out of the scattered tribes again brought home. A heart-breaking enterprise, this of reconstruction, whether in the case of others or of ourselves. The powers of evil are so incredibly strong, the powers of recuperation so feeble and slow. *Shall reap in joy*. The gladness of the reaping atones for the sadness of the sowing. "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not," is God's own word (Gal. 6: 9). Even here, in this world, there is a certainty of a joyous reaping time to everyone who honestly and steadfastly turns from sin to God and holiness of life.

TEACHING HINTS

Possibly those who set the lessons had better have given one or other of these psalms, not both. To take the two is like overcrowding a bouquet of flowers. In any case there is such a wealth of beauty and of instruction that it will be impossible in the short teaching time to bring it all out. The

teacher will be wise not to attempt to do so, but to pick out a few of the flowers—he may take them almost at random, they are all so perfect—and hold them up to the admiration of the scholars. Let the lesson, therefore, be

A FEW FLOWERS FROM GOD'S GARDEN :