

The Birds of Clay.

THERE is a legend, quaint and sweet and old,
How Jesus, when a little child at play,
Saw yet the sorrows of his life were told,
Made little birds of clay.

Then one who passed, with stern, unloving words
Reproved the children—so the legend runs—
Because they idly played with little birds;
And hurt "those little ones."

Then Jesus, with a great light on his face,
Touched once those images, poor earthly things,
And lo! they changed to living forms of grace,
And rose on strong, sure wings.

Up, up they flew, in glorious glad flight,
Up in the sunshine, to the heavens blue,
Up till a cloud had hidden them from sight,
All singing as they flew!

So like those children do we work and strive
To mold our lives, in fair, sweet shapes,
each day,
And yet we fail to make our deeds alive—
They are but birds of clay.

And then he touches them—our efforts small,
Our poor, weak aims, our hopes, our thoughts, our love;
They thrill, they leave the earth, and singing all,
They rise to God above!

—Bessie Chandler.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY.

B.C. 1042 1024] **LESSON IV.** [Oct. 27
SIN, FORGIVENESS, AND PEACE.

Psalm 32. 1 11. Memory verses, 1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5. 1.

OUTLINE.

1. The Confession of Sin, v. 1-5.
2. The Joy of Forgiveness, v. 6-11.

TIME.—Sometime during the years of David's prosperity, 1042-1024 B.C.

PLACE.—Doubtless Jerusalem.

RELATION TO THE HISTORY.—This psalm and Psalm 51 both relate to the crime in murdering Uriah and taking his wife, which formed the turning-point in David's career. It is here inserted instead of the eleventh chapter of 2 Samuel, and gives in the king's own words his experience under the sting of conscience and the displeasure of God.

EXPLANATIONS.—*In whose spirit*—That is, in whose heart there is no consciousness of sin. *Bones waxed old*—Men often speak of "bones aching" because of weariness from any exhaustion. *The drought of summer*—A poetic expression for the fever which his agony caused him.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *The Confession of Sin.*
What experience is suggested by these verses?
Does the second verse mean that there are men who do not sin?
What is David's own testimony on this point? Psa. 14. 2, 3
What, then, can the meaning be?
What misery follows upon sin unforgiven?
What is the power that produces such experience?
Wherein lies the worth of confession?
Why cannot God forgive without a man's confession? God is omniscient and omnipotent.
2. *The Joy of Forgiveness.*
What promise of God makes the assurance of ver. 6 doubly sure? Isa. 55. 6, 7.
From what source alone does David look for deliverance?
What authority is there for believing that this was David's own experience? Rom. 4. 6.

What blessings does David expect will come from forgiven sin? Psa. 51. 10 13.
In what attitude does God stand toward the willing soul that confesses its sin?
What are the joys that the soul feels when it knows itself forgiven?
What sort of character does God desire to form in men?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

The title of our lesson gives its teachings:
SIN.

Who has not sinned? How conscience scourged us! ver. 3. How we suffered tortures from which there was no escape! Falsehood, disobedience, parents dishonoured, promises broken, anger, treachery to our friends, etc. "The wages of sin is death."

FORGIVENESS.

Who has not been forgiven? Even unasked forgiveness has come from father, and mother, and friend. But has God forgiven? Why not? He is willing. "There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared." Hear Jesus pray: "Father, forgive them."

PEACE.

Have you peace? Said Jesus, "Peace I leave with you." You could have it, but not in sin. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Commit this psalm to memory.
2. Study its companion psalm, the 51st.
3. Read 2 Sam. 11 and 12, to ver. 23.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What blessing does the Thirty-second Psalm describe? "That of forgiven sin."
2. On what condition does the psalm teach that forgiveness depends? "On confession of sin to God."
3. What is the result that comes to the forgiven soul? "The peace of God."
4. When should the soul thus cast its sins on God? "When he may be found."
5. What is the condition imposed on the praying sinner? "Faith in Jesus Christ."
6. What is the result of faith? "Therefore being," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Peace in God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

48. When did God create man?
After the creation of the earth, God made man to be the chief of his creatures upon it.
Thus saith the Lord, . . . I have made the earth, and created man upon it.—Isaiah 45. 11, 12.
The Lord which stretched forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.—Zechariah 12. 1.

B.C. 1024] **LESSON V.** [Nov. 3

DAVID'S REBELLIOUS SON.

2 Sam. 15. 1 12. Memory verses, 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exod. 20. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. Policy, ver. 1-6.
2. Conspiracy, ver. 7-12.

PLACES.—Jerusalem. Hebron.

CONNECTING LINKS.—Eighteen years have passed. They were very eventful years. Great conquests and great glory marked Israel's national life. The court had become luxurious, sin that was revolting had here and there manifested itself. David's sin had brought forth legitimate fruit in his own family, and sorrow was closing in upon him to cloud his last years. Absalom's crime compelled his flight, and complete estrangement from his father, and though Joab had brought about reconciliation, yet there was unrest in the hearts of each, which brought forth fruit in disaffection among the people, and final open rebellion.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Prepared him chariots and horses*—Probably those that David had captured in war, and of which Absalom could take possession without attracting great notice. *Fifty men to run before him*—As heir-apparent to the throne he began to assume these ostentations of royalty. *The way of the gate*—The way leading to the gate where judgment would be declared in cases at issue. *Stole the hearts*—Gained their affections by the insinuations against his father mentioned in vers. 3-5. *After forty years*—This is plainly an error in

early transcribing. Josephus says after four years from the time of his restoration to royal favour. *Absalom sent spies*—Or, better, messengers to sound the people, and prepare them for his intended revolt. *Went in their simplicity*—That is, not knowing anything at all of the purpose which Absalom cherished. *While he offered sacrifices*—While Absalom offered the sacrifices in connection with the festival which he was celebrating at Hebron.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *Policy.*
Who was Absalom?
What trouble had he previously given to his father?
Who had brought about reconciliation?
For what did Absalom intend to use his restoration to the king's favour?
What was the meaning of his acts told in vers. 1-3.
What personal element in him aided in his purpose? Chap. 14. 25.
What was the wrong in his course?
How widely did he thus extend his influence?
In what particulars did he exhibit policy?
Can you account for the seeming ignorance of Joab and of the king?
2. *Conspiracy.*
Why did Absalom need the king's permission to go to Hebron?
Can you explain the difficulty connected with the time mentioned in ver. 7?
How long had Absalom been in Jerusalem after his banishment? Chap. 14. 28.
How long, then, must his conspiracy have been growing?
What spirit among the people can be traced by the ease with which Absalom accomplished his purpose?
Who was Ahithophel?
What is meant by hearing the sound of the trumpet?
How successful was the conspiracy?
What is shown by it concerning the character of the people?
What is shown by it concerning the character of David?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

See how sin over-reaches itself. Absalom was heir to the throne. All he needed was to wait. He hastened and lost all.
See how hateful ambition is when sinful. It made Absalom a hypocrite, a liar, a murderer, an adulterer; and at last slew him.
Treachery is always despicable; but the treachery of a son to a father is hell born.
Sin may run prosperously for awhile, but God holds its tether; and when he will it thrusts a dart through Absalom's heart, and hangs Ahithophel.

Learn { To be true to father, friend, neighbour.
To be loyal to self, to country, to God.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Find out Absalom's position among the king's sons, and how near the throne he stood. 2 Sam. 3. 2, 3.
2. Study about his life, his relations to his father, his crime, his beauty, etc. 2 Sam. 13. 23-29, 34, 39, etc.
3. Learn about the customs of dispensing justice in Oriental cities. Enumerate the steps in Absalom's conspiracy.
4. Write the evidence that you can find of dissatisfaction with the administration of David.
5. Study the questions on the lesson, and find proofs for the statements made in the practical teachings.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who was Absalom? "David's eldest living son."
2. What purpose had he formed concerning his father? "To dethrone him and become king."
3. What course did he pursue with the people? "He turned them against the king."
4. What step did he take to complete his purpose? "He began civil war."
5. Into what sins did his course lead him? "Hypocrisy, lying, adultery, and murder."
6. What one of God's commands did he notoriously break? "Honour thy father," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Ingratitude to God!

CATECHISM QUESTION.

49. How was man the chief creature on earth?
Because the Creator made him in his own image.
So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.—Genesis 1. 27.

Cheap Pansy Books.

PAPER COVERS. ILLUSTRATED.

- Three People.
- The King's Daughters.
- An Endless Chain.
- Wise and Otherwise.
- Four Girls at Chautauqua.
- Chautauqua Girls at Home.

Price 15 cents each.

Mailed post free on receipt of price.

NOTE.—We can supply the Pansy Books in better bindings, but offer the above as specially cheap summer reading.

A NEW PANSY BOOK

A SEVENFOLD TROUBLE.

By PANSY and her friends.

12mo, cloth, 431 pages. . . . 50 cents

COPIOUSLY ILLUSTRATED.

Printed from original plates—unabridged.

But for the confession in the preface it would never occur to any one that this smoothly written story was the joint production of seven different authors, so strong is the sympathy between them. It is a true story, of a home where confusion and ill-feeling reign; where the stepmother is unappreciated, the children misunderstood, the father worried, and everything tending to misery. But, little by little, new influences come in, and in the course of time a complete change is worked, simply because the different members of the household grow to understand and respect each other. The character drawing is remarkably well done, and the story is full of interest in its gradual development.—*Golden Rule.*

This is a unique book—a continuous story, not a series of sketches, told by seven different authors, each contributing the same number of chapters, and all together working out the plan of the original projector, who was Pansy herself. Mrs. Alden's books always have a definite moral purpose, and this new volume is no exception. The story is very interesting, and full of strong and helpful thoughts. It will take a prominent place among the other "Pansy" books on the home and Sunday-school library shelves.—*N.Y. Advocate.*

SEND US 12 CENTS

(In stamps.)

And we will send you, Post Paid, a copy of

Prof. Excell's great song,

"You Better Quit Your Meanness."

(Full sheet-music size.)

One of the trite sayings of
Rev. S. P. Jones.

SEND 25 CENTS

And we will send, Post Paid, a copy of

The NEW SONG,

"CALL YE FOR MEN."

WORDS BY MUSIC BY

L. A. Morrison: Clarence Lucas.

Finely tinted lithograph cover.

WILLIAM BRIGGS

29 to 33 RICHMOND ST. WEST

AND

30 to 36 TEMPERANCE ST., TORONTO.

C. W. COATES, MONTREAL, QUE.

S. F. HUESTIS, HALIFAX, N.S.