

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

AUGUST 3.

DAVID'S REPENTANCE.

Ps. 51: 1-19.

In order to understand this psalm it is necessary to read it in connection with 2 Sam. 11, where is given the account of David's sin of which the psalm is his humble confession, and 2 Sam. 12: 1-14, which tells us of the occasion that led to his repentance. It was written probably about a year after the seizure of Rehobah, in the war with the Ammonites, 2 Sam. 11: 1.

NOTES.

Psalm-praise. In the Hebrew the Psalms are called Songs of Praise, or the Book of Praises. In the Hebrew Bible they are divided into five books: I. 1 to 42; II. 43 to 73; III. 74 to 100; IV. 101 to 150; and V. 151 to the end of 150. The psalm of our lesson is one of the seven "Penitent Psalms," so called because they express sorrow for sin. The other six are Ps. 6, 32, 38, 102, 130 and 143. This psalm is often and fitly called the "Sinner's Guide." No truer conceptions of religion than those embodied in this psalm can be found. Husop, just what this plant was is not certainly known, but probably a species of marjoram. It grew on or near the walls. 1 Kings 4: 33; was used by the Israelites in Egypt to sprinkle their door-posts with blood, Ex. 12: 22, and always in the purification of lepers, Lev. 14: 45. Zion II, as is possible, vs. 18 and 19 were added to the psalm after the Babylonian exile, then Zion here stands for the temple and its worship. Even David, however, might have prayed for a blessing on Zion, the stronghold of the city and seat of the ark which he had brought there. Jerusalem, the walls of the city may not yet have been built, see 1 Kings 3: 1. If verse 19 was added after the captivity, then the walls were in ruins. Zion and Jerusalem are often used symbolically of the Church of Christ.

EXPLANATIONS.

Have mercy, nothing but mercy, free, undeserved grace, will be claimed by a penitent. According, etc., not according to the sinner's merit, but God's infinite love. Blot out, erase, cancel, as from a written account, or "wipe away." 2 Kings 21: 13, utterly remove. Wash me, the sinner is unclean, needs to be cleansed. Thoroughly, again and again, till every trace of sin be removed. My sin, see 2 Sam. 11: 1, etc. Ever before me, haunts me; sorrow and remorse give him no rest. The only, David's sin was indeed against Bath-sheba and Uriah and against society, but primarily all sin is against God. According to Eastern ideas a king was responsible to no one but God. In the eyes of men it scarcely was an evil in those days. The fifth verse declares his whole nature to be radically sinful. Inward parts, the heart. Hidden part, thoughts and conscience and feeling. God will teach not only to act rightly, but also to think and feel rightly, wisely, purely. Purge me, thou wilt purge me, etc., cleanse and declare clean. Wash, wilt wash, as a ceremonially defiled person had to bathe himself and wash his clothes. Bones broken, figuratively expresses the utter crushing down of the whole being under the deepest sense of sin. Create, not only reform the old, but make new, pure heart. Cast me not away, do not banish. Thy presence refers to the worship and service in the tabernacle. Holy Spirit, for the first time mentioned in the Old Testament. Restore, he once had this joy, but by sin lost it. Thy free Spirit, "a willing spirit," noble, upright nature. Then, i. e., being thus renewed and filled with the Spirit. Teach, from his own experience. Blood guiltiness, David had in mind the murder of Uriah. Sing aloud, declare to all. Thy righteousness, that will in no wise clear the guilty. Ex. 34: 7, but "If we confess," etc., see 1 John 1: 9. My lips, which had been sealed by sin. Desirest not sacrifice, no legal sacrifice can atone for such sins as mine; see also Ps. 40: 6, etc. Burnt offerings, thank offerings from a guilty heart are not pleasing to God.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

- 1. Not on anything in us, but on God's grace do all our hopes depend.
2. We must be deeply conscious of our sinfulness before we can properly pray for pardon.
3. Confession of sin must be full and absolute.
4. Our feelings, desires, thoughts and entire nature need to be purified.
5. Only the blood of Christ can wash the soul clean.
6. Reform is not enough; "ye must be born again."
7. When you are converted bring others to God.—Consensed from Scholer's Hand book.

NATURE'S ANÆSTHETIC.

The Roman gladiators shouted and laughed aloud while their wounds were being dressed. A scalded child sob and gasps for a therapeutical purpose: instinct teaches it the readiest way to numb the feelings of pain. The physiological rationale of all this is that rapid breathing is an anæsthetic. In a paper read before the Philadelphia Medical Society, Dr. W. A. Bonwill ascribes that effect to the influence of the surplus of oxygen which is thus forced upon the lungs, just as by the inhalation of nitrous oxide gas (which is composed of the same elements as common

air, but with a large proportion of oxygen), and mentions a large variety of cases in his own practice where rapid breathing produced all the essential effects of a chemical pain-oblunder, with appreciably diminishing the consciousness of the patient. Persons who object to the use of chloroform (perhaps from an instinctive dread that in their case the ether-slugger might prove a sleep that knows no waking), can numb their nerves during the progress of a surgical operation by gasping as deeply and as rapidly as possible. "One of the most marked proofs of its efficacy," says Dr. Bonwill, "was the case of a boy of eleven years of age for whom I had to extract the upper and lower first permanent molars on both sides. He breathed rapidly for nearly a minute, when I removed in twenty seconds all four of the teeth. He declared there was no pain, and we needed no such assertion, for there was not the slightest indication that he was undergoing a severe operation."—Remedies of Nature, in Popular Science Monthly.

KEEP UP YOUR TREES.

A tree, undoubtedly, is one of the most beautiful objects in nature: airy and delicate in its youth, luxuriant and majestic in its prime, venerable and picturesque in its old age, it constitutes in its various form, sizes and developments the greatest charm and beauty of the earth in all countries. The most varied outline of surface, the finest combination of picturesque materials, the stateliest country house would be comparatively tame and spiritless without the inimitable accompaniment of foliage. Let those who have passed their lives in a richly wooded country, with daily visions and deep leafy glens, forest clad hills and plains luxuriantly shaded, transport themselves for a moment to the desert, where but a few stunted bushes raise their heads above the earth, or those wild steppes, where the eye wanders in vain for some "leafy garbure," where the sun strikes down with parching heat or the wind sweeps over with unbroken fury, and they may perhaps estimate by contrast their beauty and value.

USEFUL HINTS.

- Newly ground flour, which has never been packed, is very superior to barrel flour.
Every closet and room in the house should be thoroughly inspected once a week.
Those crops of grain and grass that are driven to market on foot generally bring the best prices.
An orange eaten every morning before breakfast is said to be a specific for the craving for alcoholic liquors.
Give the fowls soft feed in the morning; it satisfies their immediate wants after their night's fast quicker than whole grain.
The old fashion of serving lunch or supper without a cloth has been revived, and is particularly effective. The prettiest mats to use for these occasions are made of scarlet yarn.
Field beans should never be cultivated when the leaves are wet, as then the dirt falling on the leaves causes them to rust and thus injures the crop. Nor should they be cultivated at all after blossoming.
A good and quick way to test jelly, to see if it is done, is to drop a little in a glass of cold water—ice-water, if possible; if it falls to the bottom immediately, the jelly is done.
Thistles and weeds among grain not only decrease the yield, but also make its curing much more difficult. Much of the loss from heating of grain would be avoided by keeping out the weeds.
Too much rain! Yes, that may be; at least you and I might think so. But God knows best, and we had better leave the weather entirely to him, and go on our way cheerfully. We have been often mistaken in the past, and perhaps are wrong this time.—Western Advertiser.

Buttermilk is considered one of the best summer drinks. Those who have a craving for something sour in warm weather will find the lactic acid which buttermilk contains, very grateful to the stomach, and the staving properties of the drink will enable a person to undergo more fatigue than anything else that may be drunk.—Philadelphia Record.

Under the head of greens are comprised spinach, beet-tops, cabbage-sprouts, turnip-leaves, mustard-leaves, all of which are excellent, and milk-wood leaves, cowslips and dandelion leaves, which, though a trifle bitter, are not unwholesome. All require to be carefully washed and cleaned, and boiled until very tender; then drained in a colander and sent to the table.

We have often seen an infant which has been dosed ad nauseam for gastro-intestinal irritability assume almost at once a more cheerful appearance, and rapidly grow better when treated to the much-needed draught of water. If any prescription is valuable enough to be used as routine practice, it is, "Give the babies water."—New York Medical Record.

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