

he had grievously sinned, bitterly repented, and been graciously forgiven. It is the song of a forgiven sinner,—such a song as the Prodigal in the parable might have sung, Luke 15 : 24.

Three words for wrong-doing, vs. 1, 2. Explain these,—“transgression”, breaking over a boundary ; “sin”, missing the mark ; “iniquity”, twisted, distorted. All ugly words, to describe a dreadful thing. For what God thinks of sin, see Jer. 44 : 4.

Three words for the pardon of sin, vs. 1, 2,—“forgiven”, the burden taken away ; “covered”, so as to be hidden out of sight : “imputeth not”, does not reckon against one. God hates sin, but loves to pardon it fully and freely. Have the class turn to Ex. 34 : 6 ; Isa. 50 : 18 ; 55 : 6, 7 ; Luke 6 : 36.

Verses 3, 4, are a theme for the study of how conscience works. The scholars will tell of how Nero and Caligula were tortured by the recollection of their foul murders. Shakes-

peare's, Macbeth and Browning's, Pippa Passes afford illustrations. Better still, the scholars will recollect, although they may not speak about it, how sin has wrought wretchedness in their own hearts.

Verse 5 tells how quickly and certainly forgiveness follows sincere penitence and confession, and what joy it brings. Ask for the scripture passages.

In v. 7 there is an enticing theme, God as a Hiding Place. Ps. 18 : 1 ; Isa. 4 : 6 ; Jer. 16 : 19 ; and such hymns as, *Rock of Ages*, are in place. The scholars will suggest other references.

Verse 9 will be sure to arrest attention. Keep the Rev. Ver. in mind—“Else they will not come near unto thee”, will not be controlled. God's way of breaking in the obstinate and unruly is seen in v. 10 ; and His great goodness to those who trust Him and seek to walk in His ways.

It is only these who can say, or sing, v. 11.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON II.]

Says Dr. George Adam Smith, in his new book on Jerusalem :

“The bare catalogue of disasters which have overtaken Jerusalem is enough to paralyze her topographer. Besides the earthquakes which have periodically rocked her foundations, the city has endured nearly twenty sieges and assaults of the utmost severity, some involving a considerable, others a total, destruction of her walls and buildings ; almost twenty more blockades or military occupations, with the wreck or dilapidation of prominent edifices ; the frequent alteration of levels by the razing of rocky knolls and the filling of valleys ; about eighteen reconstructions, embellishments, and

large extensions, including the imposition of novel systems of architecture, streets, drains and aqueducts, athwart the lines of the old ; the addition of suburbs and the abandonment of parts of the inhabited area ; while over all these gathered the dust and the waste of ordinary manufacture and commerce. Even such changes might not have been fatal to the restoration of the ancient topography, had the traditions which they interrupted been immediately resumed. But there also have happened two intervals of silence, after Nebuchadnezzar and after Hadrian, during which the city lay almost if not altogether desolate, and her natives were banished from her.” (See also *QUARTERLIES* and *LEAFLETS*.)

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Some Test Questions

1. Which are the “Penitential Psalms” ?
2. By whom and when is Psalm 32 believed to have been composed ?
3. How many words are here used for sin and forgiveness respectively ? What does

each one of these words signify ?

4. How had God dealt with the psalmist while he refused to confess his sin ?

5. What three words are used for the confession of sin ? What was the immediate result of confession ?

6. To what does the psalmist's experience encourage others ? Who are the “godly” ones ?