

church. The Commissioners were unable to be present owing to the ice blockade at Sarnia, but he was able to speak confidently regarding the feelings of the congregation. On the motion of Rev. Dr. Proudfoot, seconded by Rev. Mr. Camelon, the call was sustained, and Rev. Mr. Thompson was appointed to prosecute the call before the Stratford Presbytery. Rev. Mr. Thompson gave notice that he would moderate in the call for the congregations of Bear Creek and Brigden. Rev. J. A. Murray asked the permission of the Presbytery to resign his position on the Committee appointed to make arrangements for a Sabbath School Convention. He was persuaded, however, to continue his connection with the Committee. Rev. Mr. Goodwillie gave notice that at the next meeting he would move that the Presbytery hold six regular sessions during the year. Rev. Mr. Henderson gave notice that at the next meeting he would move that the various ministers canvass families contributing to the ordinance fund, with a view of diminishing the demands upon the central fund. The case of a student at Wardsville, who was receiving a stipend below that authorized by the Presbytery, was brought to the notice of the Presbytery. A committee consisting of Rev. Messrs. Miloy, Henderson and McEachern, were appointed to wait upon the Wardsville congregation, and endeavour to induce them to raise the amount to the required standard. The final trial discourse of Mr. Galloway, of Lucan, was heard and sustained. On motion it was resolved to hold the ordination and induction on the 19th inst., Rev. Mr. Ballantyne to preach, Rev. H. Currie to address the people, and Rev. Mr. Rennie to address the minister. The ordination and induction of Mr. Kippen at Dorchester was appointed to take place on the 25th inst., Rev. G. Cuthbertson to preach, Rev. J. A. Murray to address the minister, and Rev. Mr. Camelon the people.—The Presbytery then adjourned.—G. CUTHBERTSON, *Pres. Clerk*.

PRESBYTERY OF OTTAWA.—This Presbytery held its last regular meeting in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on Tuesday, Feb. 4th, when the following business was transacted: The Rev. F. W. Farries was elected Moderator for the ensuing six months. Power to moderate in a call was granted to the congregation of Manotick and Gloucester. A standing order of business for each quarterly meeting of Presbytery was adopted. Mr. McDiarmid tendered his resignation of the pastoral charge of Russell and Gloucester, in order that the Presbytery may re-arrange that field. The resignation was laid upon the table, and a Presbyterial visitation appointed to be held at Russell, on Monday, March 3rd, at 2.30 p.m., and at Gloucester the day following at one o'clock p.m. The mission station of Huntley and Kinburn was raised to the status of a vacant congregation. The congregation of New Edinburgh were allowed to secure their own supply for the remainder of the quarter. It was agreed to send the Rev. D. McNaughton on trial as ordained missionary to Aylwin and the Desert. The Rev. J. White read an interesting report on Statistics. The following Commissioners were appointed to the General Assembly: Ministers by rotation—Messrs. Carswell and Farries; by ballot—Messrs. Fairlie, Whillans and Armstrong. Elders—Messrs. Daniel Cameron, Hugh Allen, John Thorburn, George Hay, and John Durie. Messrs. Gordon and Armstrong brought before the attention of the Presbytery the necessity of increased contributions towards the colleges, and missionary deputations who have not yet held meetings in their district were instructed to give this matter special prominence at these meetings. The following minute in reference to the resignation of the Rev. C. I. Cameron, of New Edinburgh, was adopted: "The Presbytery deeply regret that owing to severe and protracted illness the Rev. Chas. Innes Cameron has been unable to continue the active duties of the ministry, and has therefore been constrained to resign the pastoral charge of New Edinburgh; and it is with sincere sorrow that they have felt compelled to accept his resignation. The Presbytery desire to record their esteem and affection for Mr. Cameron, their appreciation of his earnest and unselfish labours, and their cordial sympathy with him and his family in their present affliction. They fervently pray that God may strengthen him in body and in spirit, and that the presence and consolation of the Comforter may be very richly enjoyed by him. The Presbytery commend the congregation of New Edinburgh to the guidance of the Great Head of the Church, in the hope that they may be led to adopt such measures as shall most fully advance the interests of the Church."—J. CARSWELL, *Pres. Clerk*.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON IX.

March 2, 1879. } THE PRAYER OF THE PENITENT. { Psalms, li. 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."—Psalm li. 2.

HOME STUDIES.

- M. Psalm vi. 1-10. Mercy sought.
T. Psalm xxxviii. 1-22. Supplication in distress.
W. Psalm li. 1-13. The prayer of the penitent.
Th. Psalm cxxx. 1-8. "Out of the depths."
F. Luke xv. 11-24. The return of the penitent.
S. Luke xviii. 10-14. The pardon of the penitent.
S. Psalm cxvi. 1-19. The gratitude of the penitent.

HELPS TO STUDY.

This Psalm, written by David, after he had fallen into terrible sin, when the faithful words of the prophet Nathan had aroused his conscience (1 Sam. xi. xii.), is the expression of a deep and unfeigned repentance. The home thrust "Thou art the man," pierced him to his heart; and the psalm is but the fuller record of the confession, "I have sinned." "So profound a conviction of sin, so deep and unfeigned a penitence; so true a confession, a heart so tender, so contrite, a desire so fervent for renewal, a trust so humble, so filial, in the forgiving love of God, are what we find nowhere else in the Old Testament, but what we might merely expect from the man after God's own heart."

Observe I. THE PLEA—vers. 1, 2. This underlies the whole outpouring of the penitent heart. There is *hope*. Without it there can be no godly sorrow, only remorse or despair. This hope has its *ground* and source not in self, in self-confidence, or self-excusing, but in the Divine *Mercy*. Ps. xlv. 6, 7, which the psalmist exhausts words to describe. It is not only kindness, but loving-kindness, and tender mercies, not one, but many, a multitude. So full, so rich, so free, so manifold is that on which alone rests the sinner's hope. It is God's glory. Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19; His delight, Micah vii. 18. In this plea there is briefly set forth what is afterwards exemplified, confession and power; and as the same words recur, it will be best to consider them as they are expanded.

II. CONFESSION—vers. 3-6. It is from the very heart. I know, not merely "acknowledge." He refers to that which is before confession and which leads to it. He has discerned the true nature of sin and of his own exceeding sinfulness. He describes it by three words. *Transgression* sets forth the evil as a departure from God, defection from His will, renunciation of His allegiance, distrust of His love.

Sin describes the evil as "a coming short of the mark," of the ideal of manhood. Sin is unnatural, contrary to our nature. The sinless Jesus is the perfect man. Iniquity sets forth the guilt we have incurred, the punishment we deserve, the condemnation under which we lie. Such is the dreadful nature of the spectre which haunts the sinner. It is, he says, ever before me; he feels not merely the terror of God's wrath, but the sorrow of having done despite to God's love and goodness. For he adds, "against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." This thought swallows up everything else, even the wrong done to his neighbour. And even the latter is in reality against God, in whose image he was made, and in whose life he lives. "When ye sin against the brethren, ye sin against Christ." 1 Cor. viii. 12; Matt. xxv. 40-44.

That thou mightest be justified, does not mean that the sin was done in order to set forth God's righteousness; but that the confession was made so that God might be proved right and true in what He had said concerning the guilt of the sinner; and is clearly indicated when He entered into judgment with and punished the transgressor. In Hosea viii. 4, we find "that" used in a similar sense.

Sin in man is not a series of isolated acts. It consists in a corrupt and sinful nature, of which the transgressions are the outgoings. David acknowledges this sinfulness of his whole being from its very beginning, not in extenuation but in aggravation of his offences. It is sin in its *root*, the in-born sinfulness which corrupt children inherit from corrupt parents—John iii. 6; Eph. ii. 3; Job. xiv. 4. Hence the change which the sinner needs and which God requires is a most thorough and radical one; not merely reformation, but regeneration. Thou desirest truth, reality, heart-fidelity, in the inward parts; and in the hidden part, the inmost recesses of the conscience and understanding. Thou wilt make me know wisdom, will give enlightenment. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and Christ Himself is wisdom.

David shows that he has been made wise unto salvation. He knows himself, his sin and need. He knows God, His truth which judges the sin, His mercy which brings salvation. Have we attained to this knowledge and has it led us to confess our sins and cast ourselves upon the Divine mercy?

III. THE PRAYER—vers. 7-13.

It consists of two parts:—

1. *Prayer for forgiveness*—vers. 7-9. Notice first the terms in which he describes the forgiveness he seeks. *Blot out* (vers. 1, 9), which means to unmake that which is done, as if it had not been done; to erase as from a book (Ex. xxxii. 32; Num. v. 23; Ps. lxxix. 28), sin being regarded as a debt; to wipe away and so entirely and completely remove, as a man *wipeth* a dish (2 K. xxi. 13) as a cloud is *blotted out*, swept away by the wind—Isai. xlv. 22. The same word is used in both places.

Wash me (Vers. 2, 7). Sin resembles filth, and so the remission of it is compared to washing—Isai. i. 16; Jer. ii. 22; iv. 14; Mat. iii. 2, 3.

Cleanse (ver. 2). is a word used by the priest who "pronounces clean" the leper who has been purified. So our

High Priest declares to the penitent, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"—Matt. ix. 2; Luke vii. 48.

Thou shalt—here is his strong confidence which makes his petition a declaration—*purge me with hyssop* (Note 1) Luther translates, "Unsin me with hyssop," set me free from its guilt. The hyssop was in constant use in sprinkling the sacrificial blood—Ex. xii. 22. It was used in the cleansing of a leper, and of one defiled by contact with the dead—Lev. xiv. 4, 6, 49; Num. xix. 6, 18; 1 Kings iv. 33. David prays for that cleansing of which the sprinkling with hyssop was but an emblem and symbol—Heb. ix. 19.

Hide Thy face from my sins. God can only look upon sin in wrath and with displeasure. But God can and does look upon the sinners with love and in compassion.

Notice, secondly, the *results* of the forgiveness. Perfect cleansing—I shall be whiter than snow—Isai. i. 18. God's forgiveness is full and complete. The blood of Christ cleanseth from *all* sin—1 John i. 7. Joy and gladness will spring up in his heart when God makes him hear the message of His mercy, the assurance of forgiveness. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, a never-failing grace—Eph. ii. 10; Gal. vi. 15.

2. *Prayer for renewal*—vers. 10-12. He desires not only pardon, but entire renewal of heart, sanctification, to be made holy.

Create, the Christian is a new creature in Christ Jesus—Eph. ii. 10; iv. 24; Jer. xxiv. 7; Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26. This new nature is described as a *clean heart*; if you would have the streams of life pure, make the heart pure whence they flow—Prov. iv. 23. From an evil heart evil deeds will proceed—Mk. vii. 21. A *steadfast spirit*, one that is firm, not easily swayed through its own weakness or through blasts of temptation.

Cast me not away. His longing and desire are for God. He dreads separation from Him. *Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me*. He shudders lest he should be left to himself. He feels, as never before, his own weakness and his need for Divine help. He cries out, therefore, for the continual succour of that Divine Spirit, who is the only source of every good thought, of every earnest desire, of every steadfast resolve.

Restore to me the joy. The gladness of forgiveness (ver. 8) will be followed by the joy of victory over sin, of progress in the truth. The believer will go on from joy to joy until he enters at last into the fulness of the joy of salvation. *Uphold me*, sustain, support me with a *free spirit*, a willing, prompt, ready, ardent spirit. Some refer it to God, and render "a freely-bestowed spirit."

This beautiful prayer passes into—

3. *A Resolution* (ver. 13), which sets forth the greatness of his newly found joy. *Then will I teach transgressors*. The blessings he has found are so great, he must tell others of them. The love which has entered his heart goes out in loving desire for the good of others. Besides, as he knows how much harm his sin has done to others, and how terrible a stumbling block it has been, he is anxious, as far as possible, to undo the evil. Such a man, too, a sinner saved, is best qualified to tell the glad tidings to others. St. Paul, when he preached, "Christ Jesus came to save sinners," could add most feelingly, "of whom I am chief." After Jesus had asked Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" he added "Feed My sheep." Love for Christ is the best qualification for one who would help or teach others; so also helping others is the best proof that we love Christ.

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MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

GUELPH.—In Knox church, Guelph, on the third Tuesday of March at 10 o'clock a. m.

PETERBOROUGH.—At Port Hope, on the last Tuesday in March.

LONDON.—In First Presbyterian Church, London, on the third Monday in March, at 2 p. m.

KINGSTON.—In Chalmers' Church, Kingston, on Tuesday, March 18th, 1879, at three p. m.

CHATHAM.—In St. Andrew's Church, Chatham, on Tuesday the 18th March, at 11 a. m.

BROCKVILLE.—At Edwardsburg, on Tuesday the 18th March, at 7 o'clock p. m.

OWEN SOUND.—In Division street Church, Owen Sound, on March 18th, at 10 a. m.

LINDSAY.—At Woodville, on Tuesday, 25th February, at 11:30 a. m.

OTTAWA.—In Knox Church, Ottawa, May 6th, at 3 p. m.

BARRIE.—At Barrie, on Tuesday, 25th March, at 11 o'clock a. m.

MONTREAL.—In St. Paul's Church, Montreal, on Tuesday, 1st April, at 11 a. m. A Sabbath School Conference will be held in the evening, to which all the teachers in the Presbytery are invited.

HAMILTON.—The next stated meeting will be held in Central Church, Hamilton, on the third Tuesday of March, (the 18th), at ten o'clock, a. m.

LANARK AND RENFREW.—The next meeting will be held in Zion Church, Carleton Place, on Tuesday, 18th March, at 1 p. m.

SAUGEEN.—In St. Andrew's Church, Mount Forest, on Tuesday the 11th day of March, at 2 o'clock, p. m.

TORONTO.—On the first Tuesday of March, at 11 a. m. Commissioners to General Assembly to be appointed at 3 p. m.

Births, Marriages and Deaths.

NOT EXCEEDING FOUR LINES 25 CENTS.

DIED.

At Sonya, on the 30th ult., Jane, beloved wife of the Rev. A. Currie, M. A., much lamented.