

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON,

JAN. 1.

Lesson I.—The Kingdom divided,
I. Kings 12. 1-24. Golden
Text, Prov. 13. 20.

Verse 1. Rehoboam—The only son of Solomon of whom we have any mention. His mother was Naamah, an Ammonite princess. Upon his succession he was forty-one years old, a man of weak character whom the luxuries of his youth had made insolent and unreliable.

Shechem—Situating west of the Jordan in the hill-country of Ephraim, just below Gerizim. Reputed to have been destroyed in the Jewish war and restored by Vespasian. It occupied an important position in the early history of Israel. The "oak" of Moreh connects Shechem with Abraham (Gen. 12. 6). "Jacob's well was there." There also Joseph was buried. Joshua made it a city of refuge, and near by the law was read by him (Josh. 8, 33-35). After Jeroboam was proclaimed king he built a palace in Shechem, but it was a poorly fortified place and did not remain the capital for long.

2. Jeroboam—He was son of Nebat and Zeruah, an Ephraimite of Zeredah. Having been proclaimed first king of Israel after the separation, he reigned twenty-two years. See next lesson. His abilities were early recognized by Solomon, who appointed him commissioner of the house of Joseph. In this important position he found opportunity to plot against the king, from whose avenging presence he fled into Egypt. Previous to this he was promised the leadership of the ten tribes by the prophecy of Ahijah (15).

Heard of it—Some prefer to make this refer to the death of Solomon, placing verse two where verse one now stands. At any rate, Jeroboam must have been in close touch with the situation at home, so that he could respond without delay when the time was ripe.

3. All the assembly of Israel came—The reasons why they hesitated to accept Rehoboam without condition lie upon the face of the story: 1. They wanted assurance that the new reign would be less despotic. 2. The old spirit of independence stirred them to suspect an hereditary monarchy. 3. The ascendancy of Judah and the centralization of power in Jerusalem were justified neither by geographical nor economic conditions. These facts naturally awakened jealousy in a people whose tribal instinct was still strong.

4. Thy father made our yoke grievous—In building the temple and maintaining the splendors of his court Solomon made large levies of men and imposed upon them heavy labors.

We will serve thee—They would not totally reject the hereditary principle, but the succession must be confirmed by the popular will.

5. Depart yet for three days—It is likely he was taken by surprise, and, being a weakling, he missed a golden opportunity of winning the immediate and decisive support of an important section of his people who were already seriously disaffected.

6. The old men—Their counsel was that of worldly wisdom. In effect it said, "Assure them with good words that you are their servant, and they will be your servants forever."

8. The young men that were grown up with him—They were the court favorites of a period of moral relaxation and effeminacy, and stood ready to give silly advice by which they might profit and the common herd be subjected to discomfort. "Be severe," they said.

"Tell them you will not surrender your prerogative of enforced service, but will even increase the burdens imposed by your father, and that, whereas he chastised with whips, you will chastise them with leaded thongs (scorpions, 11)." This mad counsel exactly suited the haughty spirit of the young monarch, already drunk with unaccustomed power.

15. A thing brought about of Jehovah—As a punishment for the sins of Solomon the Lord had decreed, through his prophet, that the kingdom should be rent asunder. Thus, the folly of Rehoboam, and the consequent material disaster to both kingdoms, were made the means by which Jehovah's higher purpose for the moral and spiritual good of humanity should be accomplished.

16. What portion have we in David?—Adopting the proverbial language used by Sheba in his rebellion against David (2 Sam. 20. 1).

See to thine own house.—An announcement of independence, and equivalent to "Hands off."

17. The children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah—The chief of these cities were Jerusalem, Mizpeh, Gibeon, and Hebron.

18. Adoram—This man, who was over the men subject to taskwork, was naturally the most hated person whom Rehoboam could have sent to patch up a poor piece of work. He represented just the arrogant, despotic spirit of their taskmaster which made him particularly offensive to the people. It is little wonder that, in their resentment, they stoned him to death. His fate awoke the king to the fact that it was perilous for him to expose himself to the wrath of such men, and he fled to Jerusalem.

20. There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah—Dean Farrar has pointed out the comparative strength and weakness of the two kingdoms. Israel, with such famous shrines as Bethel, Gilgal, Jericho, Shechem, Acho, and Joppa; and such national heroes as Joshua, Deborah, Barak, Jephthah, Gideon, Samuel and Saul; and her freedom "from the trammels of a bad commencement"; and her superiority in the matter of soil and climate; and her consequent larger freedom and more brilliant literature and higher development in prophecy; she seemed to possess overwhelming advantages, but she suffered two serious drawbacks—image-worship and the lack of one continuous dynasty. Judah, on the other hand, possessed the advantages of a magnificent capital, a loyal people, kings who more nearly approached the ideal, complete freedom from sins that curse a nation, and the wide expectation that out of Judah should come the Deliverer.

21-24—Through the man of God, Shemaiah (see 2 Chron. 12), it is made known unto Judah that Rehoboam's purpose to fight for the re-establishment of the kingdom is disapproved of. Once more Jehovah makes it plain that this thing is of me.

23. Judah and Benjamin—The latter was only partly within the bounds of Judah. Simeon, by its position, was practically absorbed by Judah, which accounts for their seeming to be eleven, instead of twelve tribes.

GASOLINE OUSTS RATS.

Rats appear to have a strong objection to gasoline. Not long ago a visitor exploring the London (England) sewers was told by his guide as they walked under Long Acre and Soho that the sewers in this neighborhood are almost entirely free from rats. This immunity has been noticed only since the development of the motor-car industry and the establishment of its headquarters in Shaftesbury avenue and Long Acre. A large quantity of gasoline thus finds its way down the drains, and this, in the opinion of the sewer men, effectually keeps the rats away.



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MADE IN CANADA

THE BLACK BOG.

A Corner of the County of Kildare
Dear to Those Who Know It.

The black bog of Kilbarron, in the County of Kildare, Ireland, lies five long miles from either railway or post office and is considered to be at the "back of beyond entirely."

There are three styles of dwellings in the black bog, says the Rosary Magazine, houses, cottages and cabins. The houses are quaint, rambling edifices, owned by the farmers, who still hold to olden styles and ancient ways unmindful of the great modern note which is sweeping through Ireland to-day.

The cottages belong to the Government and are rented to laborers at a very low rate; while the cabins are simply relics of the old regime, just clay huts roofed with straw. There are very few of the latter standing in Ireland now.

The black bog is a dangerous place for nightly rambles, as it abounds in deep holes full of inky water. But some warm summer evening after sunset, when the fogs are rising all around, go down there all you who are city tired, and find out how good that springy sod will feel to your cramped feet.

Try a short Marathon along those short pathways, you who are weary of life's treadmill, and see if you do not get to feeling like a young colt just let loose in a clover pasture. Or some misty day in October go down there among the brown heather and let the long, clean, wet winds blow the furrows from your forehead while the raindrops are pattering on the bracken like the wee feet of the fairies themselves.

Always enchanting, always beautiful, even if it is at "the back of beyond," the charm of this old bog will twine itself round your heart with a lure strong enough to draw you back to the wilds of Kilbarron for evermore.

THE BEST MEDICINE FOR LITTLE ONES

The best medicine in the world for little ones is the medicine that will promptly cure all their little ills and at the same time can be given the very youngest baby with absolute safety. Such a medicine is Baby's Own Tablets. They never fail to cure the ills of childhood and the mother has the guarantee of a government analyst that they do not contain one particle of injurious drug. Concerning them Mrs. John Robertson, Streetsville, Ont., writes: "I have used Baby's Own Tablets for constipation with the very best results. They are indeed a valuable medicine for little ones." The Tablets are sold by all medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

KING GEORGE'S CORONATION

Some of the Ancient Customs Which Survive to this Day.

The crowning of the King of England has usually been accompanied by what was regarded as the still more solemn rite of anointing with oil, which dates from the days of the ancient Hebrews. And in England, before the Norman conquest, the term used was "hallowing," or consecration, rather than that of coronation.

But from old records it seems that the ceremony as then performed at Winchester was in all essentials the same as that which now takes place in Westminster Abbey. Few people seem to be aware, says the Queen, that the coronation ceremony was the only religious rite of the Anglican Church which escaped the pruning policy of the Reformers. Hence its impressive ritual and gorgeous pageantries.

The last coronation at which every Old World ceremony was duly performed was that of King George IV. At his crowning a coronation banquet took place, there was a procession of peers, the herb strewer scattered flowers and the challenge of the champion of England was included in the ceremony. But at the coronation of William IV., Queen Victoria and King Edward these old customs were for various reasons omitted.

However, much remains that is of deep interest and stately splendor. The dean and chapter of Westminster claim the right to instruct the sovereign in the duties of this solemn service, and on coronation day the regalia are delivered into their custody.

According to old records £100 is paid for the anointing oil supplied by the royal apothecary. The coronation chairs are of interest. That of the King is the chair of Edward the Confessor, used by every British sovereign since the time of Edward II. It is of oak, and is recovered with fresh crimson velvet on each occasion. Beneath it is placed the stone of destiny, an ancient relic which came originally from Ireland.

NO DREAMS FOR MANDARIN.

Awakening of China Has Brought Great Changes.

The reforming of the political aspect of China has brought with it some changes in social conditions and it seems as though many more were to follow. Among those who have felt these changed conditions are the mandarins, whose altered official routine is described by the North China Daily News. The old dreamy days when a mandarin spent hours in dolce far niente, "a demigod amid subservient crowds, delighting himself with the philosophy and poetry of his land," are all gone since the introduction of telegraph, telephone and railways.

The national awakening, bringing with it the reorganization of the army, the introduction of occidental sanitary systems, of modern prisons, and other reforms, has made mandarin life not what it once was. Now that official has to raise regiments of modern drilled soldiers and find the money to equip and maintain them; has to build expensive barracks and hospitals, erect model prisons, and must refrain from old time punishments and find the money for all these bothersome novelties. He is bombarded with telegrams from Peking and has to withstand attacks by the reform party and the free press.

Poppy growing is forbidden, but he must compel the reluctant agriculturist to raise cotton and other products. Licenses and gambling has been suppressed, but he must raise the revenue thus lost by increasing the tax on salt and other necessities. This causes riots, and he must put these down. The enraged and harried taxpayers no longer are in fear of the once revered mandarin, and they do not hesitate to attack his person when he appears on the streets. It requires the wisdom of a Confucius for a mandarin to maintain his dignity under the new order of things.

FISH THAT SHOOT FLIES.

Found in the Northern Rivers of Queensland.

In Queensland some of the most interesting forms of animal life are to be found. The duck biped platypus (with the web feet of a duck, which lays eggs and suckles young), the lung fish, the walking perch and many other queer creatures might be mentioned in confirmation of this, says the London Globe.

A remarkable little fish is the rifle fish, which lives in the far northern rivers of Queensland. A full grown specimen, writes a correspondent, measures about ten inches

in length and averages one and a half pounds in weight. The rifle fish derives its name from the fact that it shoots its food. It swims leisurely about the stream a few inches below the surface and is always on the look out for flies and other insects that settle on the floating leaves and twigs or on the surface of water plants. On getting close enough to its victim it discharges a tiny jet or ball of water, which if shot straight knocks the fly into the stream, where it is instantly gathered in by the shooter.

THE UNION BANK OF CANADA

The 46th Annual Statement the Best in Its History.

The 46th statement of the Union Bank of Canada, submitted at the annual general meeting of the shareholders, held on Saturday, December 17th, was a most satisfactory one. It shows a very liberal margin of profit over the amount required for dividends. In fact, the bank earned at the rate of 14 per cent. on the average paid-up capital, and as a result of the satisfactory earnings increased their dividend from 7 to 8 per cent. The net profits for the year, after deducting expenses of management, interest due depositors, etc., etc., amounted to \$451,620. During the year \$500,000 of new stock was issued at a premium of 25 per cent., amounting to \$259,810. Those two sums, together with the balance at the credit of account on November 30, 1909, amounting to \$23,000, made a total of \$840,107 available for distribution. This was apportioned as follows:

Three quarterly dividends at the rate of 1 1/4 per cent. and one at the rate of 2 per cent., a total of \$500,000 transferred to the rest account, this sum being made up of premiums on new stock and \$140,000 from the ordinary earnings; the sum of \$10,000, transferred to officers' pension fund, leaving a balance of \$80,000 to be carried forward. The paid-up capital now amounts to \$4,000,000, being increased by \$800,000 during the year and the rest account now stands at \$2,400,000, being also largely increased during the same period.

An examination of the statement shows that the deposits not bearing interest amount to almost \$15,000,000, having increased by over \$3,000,000 during the year. This increase in the deposits not bearing interest indicates an increased capacity for profit earning on the part of the bank. The statement shows the bank to be particularly strong in cash reserves in gold and Dominion notes, which amount to nearly 13 per cent. of the total liabilities, and also that the assets immediately available, including stocks, debentures and call loans, are very nearly \$15,000,000, or over 37 per cent. of the total liabilities.

The net profits for the year show a gain of \$44,000 over the figures of the previous year and the total assets of the bank an increase of \$5,000,000 during the same period. The total assets now amount to the large sum of \$47,455,000, indicating that the Union Bank has become one of the larger of our financial institutions. That it is serving the needs of the business community is shown by the fact that it has loans to business houses of over \$30,000,000. Another indication of its growing importance in the country is the fact that during the year 37 branches or agencies of the bank have been opened. Altogether, the showing made by the bank is the best in its history and reflects the highest credit upon the president, board of directors and general manager.

The proof of the auto is the bill for repairs.

**"Ring out the old,
Ring in the new,
Ring out the false,
Ring in the true."
And the Best of
1911
To You.**

Thomas Hipton