Sunday School Lesson

June 9. Lesson X—The Story of the Rechabites—Jeremiah 35: 5-11. Golden Text—We will drink no wine.—Jeremiah 35: 6.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE TESTING OF THE RECHABITES,
II. THEIR EXAMPLE URGED AS A LESSON TO THE MEN OF JUDAH, vs. 15-19.

INTRODUCTION—It will be remembered that Jehoiakim was the second son of Josiah to come to the throne of Judah, succeeding his unfortunate brother, Jehoahaz (or Shal'um), who had been taken captive to Egypt, ch. 22: 10-12; 2 Kings 23: 31-34. Of Jehoiakim nothing good is recorded "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Jeremiah denounces his crimes in strong language in ch. 22: 13-19. He had paid a high price for his elevation to the throne by the Egyptian King Pharaoh-nechoh, which he exacted from the people by taxation, 2 Kings 23: 35; 2 Chron. 36: 3, 4. While very little is told us of his reign in the books of history we learn from frequent declarations of Jeremiah, whose prophetic ministry continued through its whole extent, that the old practices of idolatry which had been banished by Josiah were restored, with all their abominations, that Baal and Ashtoreth were worshipped even in the temple precincts, that infant sacrifices were offered to Moloch in the valley of Hinnom, and incense was burned on the house-tops to the star gods. The people, Jeremiah says, "are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers." So widespread is this evil in the days of Jehoiakim that he says again, "For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars . . . to burn incense to Baal," ch. 11: 10-13. There was need for plain words to be spoken against this monstrous evil, and here, in the Lesson of today, Jeremiah contrasts the fidelity of the Rechabites to their ancestral tradition with the apostasy of the men of Judah from the pure service of the God of their fathers.

I. THE TESTING OF THE RECHABITES,

The Rechabites were dwellers in tents like the wilderness Arabs. They seem to have been a branch of the Kenites (1 Chron. 2: 55) with whom Moses had lived centuries before in the land of Midian (see Judges 1:16), and who had come to live with the people of Judah, Num. 10: 29-32. They were worshippers of Jehovah, and were evidently warmly and loyally attached to the religion and to the customs of their fathers. Ordinarily they lived a nomad life, not cultivating the land, but pasturing their flocks and herds in open, unoccupied parts of the country. At this time, when a Chaldean army was invading the land, they had come into Jerusalem for safety, and had apparently been permitted to pitch their tents in some open space within the city walls, v. 11.

Jeremiah is commanded to give them wine to drink (v. 2). No doubt he is quite sure when he does this that the Rechabites will not break the law of their tribe. But he applies the test in order, by their example, to convince the men of Judah of their own infidelity. He brings them into the house of the Lord, "into one of the rooms erected round the temple courts," and sets before them bowls of wine. Their reply is what he had expected, "We will drink no wine," vs. 3-6.

Jonadab, the son of Rechab, is mentioned in 2 Kings 10: 15-28 as one of those who supported Jehu in his revolt against the kings of the house of Ahab, and who seems to have approved the bloody deeds with which Jehu sought, not only to destroy all the king's house, but also all the worshippers of Baal. He shared Jehu's "zeal for the Lord," which, according to the ideas and practices of that time, sought to overcome a false religion by deeds of bloody violence. See Hosea's condemnation of these deeds a hundred years later, Hosea 1: 4.

Jonadab's commands were no doubt in continuance of the ancient custom of his people. They required not only abstinence from wine, but also that the people should not build houses, nor cultivate the land. They regarded, perhaps, the confined life of the cities and towns and the hard labor of the fields as a departure from the simplicity, purity, and comparative health of the open air tent life of their ancestors. (See vs. 6-10.)

II. THEIR EXAMPLE URGED AS A LESSON TO THE MEN OF JUDAH, vs. 15-19.

The prophet compares this steadfast loyalty of the Rechabites with the indifference of the men of Jerusalem and Judah to the words of the Lord spoken to them by their prophets. The prophets of Israel and Judah had spoken both against the worships of false gods and against evildoing of every kind, vs. 14, 15. Compare Jeremiah's own denunciation of idolatry in chs. 2, 3 and 10, and of other forms of evildoing in chs. 7, 9, 22, etc.

It is because of this indifference and disobedience, the prophet declares, that God is about to bring upon Judah the great calamities which he has foretold, v. 17. And because of their obedience God will bestow such blessing upon the Rechabites that that tribe shall never want a man to stand before him. How this promise was fulfilled to them in their subsequent history we do not know. One hundred and fifty and more years later a member of this tribe, Malchiah, the son of Rechab, helped Nehemiah rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Neh. 3: 14. The first historian of the Christian church, Hegesippus (quoted by Eusebius), writing in the second century A.D., mentions "priests and sons of Rechab" as living in New Testament times.

The true sons of Rechab, or Rechabites, however, are those in every age who are willing for conscience sake to stand apart from customs of their time, and to abstain from indulgences of any kind which they believe to be harmful, who preserve with high resolve and pure motive, clean and healthy traditions of a past of which they are not ashamed.

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The Well-to-do Farmer

Quebec Soleil (Lib.). It is false to say that agriculture doesn't pay, when we compare it with other occupations and professions. We believe on the contrary that the cultivator has had a good year, when ,after having brought up and educated his children, he has something left at the end. Very few salaried people can say as much. We will not go so far as to say that farming really makes anybody rich, at least in the East of Canada; but we can state that, in normal times, it gives a man comfort and security. Thousands of our farmers who sometimes complain of their lot are much more comfortably situated, though they may not know it, than four-fifths of the rest of the world.

The Grain Surplus

Le Devoir (Ind.): During the War an abundance of wheat was blessed by everybody. In these days some people consider that it has its inconveniences, from the point of view of the price. Man is never content: either it rains too much or it doesn't rain enough; either the harvest is poor or it is too good, which does not prevent, in many countries,—as in Britain, in the mining districts,—thousands of peopde suffering from hunger, despite the huge crops of the last twelve months.

Farm Notes

Lily Pools

Lily pools range from a simple tub let into the ground, to cement and stone tanks. Small lakes and streams in and through the garden are usually outside the range of the amateur gardener. It is possible, however, in many gardens, to have a small pool, particularly where running water is obtainable.

Of course, if there is a particularly moist spot in the garden, the location of such a pool is not difficult to select. But failing this, an artificial pool can easily be made at comparatively small cost. If there is a clayey sub-soil, nothing further than the excavation of the pool and puddling the bottom and sides with clay need be done. If clay is not present, the bottom and sides must be cemented. In either case, it will be well to dig deeply enough to allow of 12 to 18 inches of good holding loam being distributed over its bed, and then leave room for a depth of 2½ feet of water in its centre, gradually decreasing its depth to 9 inches or less at the sides. A broad border should surround the pool for the culture of plants which love moisture but which are not truly aquatic. A few large, irregular stones partly embedded in this border will form an excellent rockery whereon moisture-loving Alpine plants may be grown if desired. Small tubs may be inserted in the pool containing lily roots, so that they may easily be removed for winter storage. A few goldfish in the pool will add charm and prevent the pool from becoming a breeding ground for the mosquito. Of course, some provision must be made for the supplying of fresh water to the pool and also overflow pipes to carry off the surplus water. Miniature pools may be formed by sinking halves of large barrels in the ground, and if a few nails are driven in near their tops and lumps of coke, stones or clinkers covered with cement are attached there, pretty little decorative pools may be formed. (Rev. G. W. Tebbs, before the Ontario Horticultural Association.)

The Illustration Stations

Answering a question about the operation of the illustration stations supervised by the Experimental Farms Branch, asked by a member of Parliament in the House of Commons, the Hon. Dr. Motherwell, Minister of Agriculture, explained that the Government does not operate the 186 illustration stations distributed over Canada, but the Department does give the operators some assistance. He said, "The illustration area of man's farm includes only that part of it fronting on a well-travelled road and varies in area from eight or ten to forty acres. For the privilege of saying what crops shall be grown, what rotation shall be followed and how and when cultural operations shall be performed, the Department pays the owner or operator a small amount ($5 per acre) each year. The purpose of these stations is to demonstrate the varieties of the different crops, the cultural methods and the rotations that have been found to give the best results on an experimental farm or station where conditions are judged to be similar to those which maintain on the illustration station under consideration.

"The crops harvested off these illustration stations are, of course, the property of the men operating them."

The Storing of Eggs

This is the season of heavy egg production when stocks not required to meet the daily demands are going into cold storage to be brought out for use when production is low. The storing of eggs is greatly improved in recent years—so much so, indeed, that stored eggs are no longer looked upon with suspicion and doubt. Eggs that go into storage have to be submitted to the candling process which determines definitely their quality. Only those that are in prime condition are ever put away in storage quarters. The modern cold storage for eggs is a highly sanitary place not only in its ceanliness but also by reason of the manner in which it is maintained. The temperature is held at all times close to the frost line and of such consistency with respect to moisture as to reduce evaporation to the smallest degree. Not only are the eggs graded when put in, but the regulations governing eggs, covered by the Live Stock and Live Stock Products Act, administered by the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, require that they should again be graded when they are brought from the storage chamber to go into commerce.

The usual egg cold storage in Canada is what is known as dry cold storage into which eggs are placed in their natural state. In Western Canada many of the eggs are put through an additional process before being placed in the storage quarters. The fresh eggs are immersed for an instant in hot oil which not only sterilizes but seals up the shell, preventing evaporation from within and contamination from without. After treatment in this way the eggs are put through a sandblast machine, which removes the excess oil and restores the bloom of a fresh egg. They are then cold stored in the usual way. With the marketing of only graded eggs, whether fresh from the farms or out of storage, the losses from bad eggs has been almost eliminated in egg merchandising.

A Disease of the Hyacinth

The hyacinth bulb is subject to a disease that, when once admitted, does much damage to the plantation. It is especially important in commercial fields for its exceedingly destructive effect upon the plants. Under favourable conditions it spreads from bulb to bulb until the whole plantation is destroyed. The disease known as Yellow Disease is described in a new pamphlet numbered 104 of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, written by Mr. F. L. Drayton, plant pathologist, who made a study of this and other diseases of bulbs in Holland a year or so ago.

The disease appears first as a yellowing of the tips of the leaves which afterwards dry up. It spreads to the bulb, which soon begins to decay at the base, destroying its usefulness either for planting in the garden or forcing in the house. Certain varieties are less subject than others to attack. Among the most resistant are said to be Gertrude, Grand Maitre, King of the Blues, King of the Yellows and Yellowhammer. The disease is recognized as a serious one in Holland, where Mr. Drayton observed the means that are used to secure control. Specially-trained men are employed by the growers to inspect the fields during the growing season. Bulbs showing disease are each covered with a pot without a hole in the bottom and the plants near by are sprayed with a fungicidal solution such as a five per cent. strength of formaldehyde. The bulbs under the pots are allowed to remain until the crop is harvested when the diseased ones are destroyed by burning. Other practices for control are described in the pamphlet which shows by illustration the appearance of a diseased bulb cut crosswise and lengthwise. (Issued by the Director of Publicity, Dom. Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa, Ont.)

Canadian Air Mail Plane Establishes World's Record

Canada, in proportion to her size, is making greater practical use of aircraft than any other country and the "work" records of Canadian airplanes are regarded as even more important contributions to the advancement of aviation than the endurance and other stunt achievements of other countries.

Canada's latest and most impressive practical record in air is in speedy delivery of air mail and Capt. D. S. Bondurant, pilot for Canadian Airways, as a result of a record flight between Toronto and Montreal, now holds the world's air mail speed record.

Capt. Bondurant, flying a Fairchild "71", powered by a Pratt & Whitney Wasp engine, on March 21st, covered the 340 miles from Toronto to Montreal in just one hour and forty-four minutes, and this has now been established as the world's fastest air mail flight.

Remarkable as this time is, Capt. Bondurant would have bettered it, but for fog encountered a little over 100 miles from Montreal. Up to this point he had flown 215 miles in just 60 minutes, maintaining a speed of over 3½ miles a minute.

Throughout the record-breaking flight Capt. Bondurant reported perfect performance from his plane which was fueled with Imperial Aeroplane Spirits and lubricated with Marvelube Motor Oil.

Undesirable Immigrants

Winnipeg Liberte (Ind.): (Central European immigration in the West is creating an undesirable element in the urban centres.) We are faced with a definite task—to keep a watch on these dangerous groups and to transform them into desirable elements. Now that we have been subjected to this type of immigration, we must absorb it, and not let ourselves be absorbed by it; it is incumbent on us to communicate our sense of order to it, instead of allowing ourselves to be dragged along in their disorder; we must make them understand that when they changed their hemisphere they also changed their atmosphere. Too many colonists make the mistake, when they come to Canada, of trying to bring their countries with them, instead of accepting ours.

The Return of the Exiles

Le Monde Ouvrier (Ind.): Why all the weeping and wailing over the lot of our brothers who live under the sunshine of the Stars and Stripes, and who live better than any of us here do, in the land of our ancestors? . . . If we sometimes hear of the unfortunate conditions in which they live—and in some places they certainly know how to exploit them systematically—that is no reason why we should cry out on the housetops that our people find life untenable with our neighbors, that they live in misery and would be happy and content to find themselves once again on their own land in the village where they were born. We admit that sometimes some of them do not succeed as they should, and that homesickness—which is their greatest foe—becomes a powerful factor in their desire to return home, but to conclude from this that Canadians would do much better to return home in a body, is far from the fact, especially when we compare the conditions which have prevailed for some years in this "prosperous" Canada of ours.

"Pa, what is a rare volume?" asked Clarence.

"It's a book that comes back after you have loaned it," replied Pa.

An insane person is just like a sane one—only more so.—Dr. Edna Heibreder.

BOOK NEWS
by Arthur Kent

"White Narcissus," by Raymond Knister. (MacMillan's, Toronto. $2)

This is one of the most significant Canadian novels yet written. It contains many of the elements of greatness; in places it rises to poetic heights. But it is an unsatisfactory book.

In "White Narcissus" Knister found a vehicle that might at once have placed him in the ranks of the world's important writers and secured him recognitio nas such. Unfortunately, he will probably have to wait for this distinction.

The book is essentially tragic. Its figures are sombre and heavily drawn. The circumstances with which it deals are inevitably calamatous. Chapter by chapter the story goes forward towards but one logical conclusion. Knister pointed this out in every sentence he penned. Swiftly, as the story unfolds, the dramatic interest grows to the point of tensity. The last chapter is a complete let-down of everything that precedes.

It is a hard thing to understand why Knister tacked onto his story a happy, conventional, mechanical conclusion. It is nearly inconceivable that the man who wrote as he writes and conceived the background and characters of "White Narcissus" could make such a mistake.

The book proves, however, that Knister is a writer of unusual calibre. It promises that he will write books that will live longer than their author. Anyone interested in the progress of Canadian letters, such as they are, should read "White Narcissus."

"Hieronymus Fracastorius and His Poetical and Prose Works on Syphilis," by the Honourable William Renwick Riddell, LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.H.S., etc., President Canadian Social Hygiene Council. Published by the MacMillan's in Canada. Price, $3.00.)

This, the most recent literary work of the distinguished and versatile Mr. Justice Riddell is appropriately dedicated to "Dr. Gordon Bates and the Staff of the Canadian Social Hygient Council."

"I, as a somewhat diligent student of mediaeval Philosophy, had read the poems of Fracastorius," the author stated in his preface, "and had admired his mastery of Latin and his skill in moulding the uncouth terminology of early medicine and philosophy into smoothly-flowing hexameters; but I had not seen any advantage in paying attention to the content rather than the form. Reading his poetry, I thought it well to read his prose as well, and, rather to my astonishment, I found a mine of entertainment in his prose works also. The shrewd guesses and practicality of Fracastorius must strike every reader; while no student of the history of medicine can afford to leave him unread."

"If You Know What I Mean," by Joseph Easton MacDougall. (MacMillan's, Toronto. $2.00.)

MacDougall, as the editor of "Goblin," is no stranger to the Canadian public but the MacDougall who presents the verses in this volume is far more refreshing than we believed any Canadian writter to be. Books of verse, it is understand, are not usually profitable commercially, but this one deserves, and will probably have, a wide sale.

There is no pretense about either the book or writer. The work is described on the cover as "nonsense verse." It is that, of course, but more. Some of the rhymes are decidedly clever. All but one or two are witty and mirth-provoking. A number are exceptionally penetrating and contain comments of a pungent flavor on the lighter side of human endeavor.

Smiles

Will you smile and make others happy, or be crabbed and make everybody miserable? You can live among flowers and singing birds if you will. The amount of happiness which you can produce is incalculable, if you will only show a siling face, and speak pleasant words.

Activity may lead to evil, but inactivity cannot be led to good.

MUTT AND JEFF— —By Bud Fisher. A One Way Brain On a One Way Street.