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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON,
JULY 2.

Lesson I.—Isaiah's Prophecy Concerning Sennacherib, Isa. 37.
14-38. Golden Text, Psa. 46. 1.

Verses 14-20—The prayer of Hezekiah in the temple.

14. Spread it before Jehovah—The act was symbolical, intending to bring to Jehovah's attention the haughtiness of the Assyrians. The letter contained the threat of Sennacherib, to the effect that no nation had yet resisted him successfully. This warning was reinforced by the events which had brought the Assyrian forces through a series of conquests to Jerusalem. It was a time of severe testing. But the King of Judah was no doubt fortified by the assurances of Isaiah.

15, 16. Hezekiah prayed—His invocation of Jehovah consists, first, of an address to him as the God of Israel, the reference to the cherubim signifying no doubt the two figures which were over the ark in the Jewish temple. But Jehovah is also the God of all the kingdoms of the earth, a doctrine of the solitary divinity of Jehovah derived from the fact that he alone has created heaven and earth.

17. Sennacherib, who hath sent to defy the living God—See Isaiah 36. 18-20.

19, 20. The work of men's hands . . . Thou art Jehovah, even thou only—The two ideas stand in contrast. The worthlessness and nothingness of idolatry are often pointed out by such contemptuous references to wood and stone (see Deut. 4. 28; 28. 36; 29. 17; Isa. 2. 20; 17. 8; 31. 7). In this extremity of the nation Jehovah is to show that in him alone abides the true power of actual Godhead.

21-35—The prayer answered in the form of a message from the great prophet. This word of the Lord has two distinct sections: (1) verses 22-29, which is essentially a poem taunting Sennacherib because of his pride and declaring his doom. Verses 30-32 are a sort of postscript, addressed to Hezekiah. (2) The rest of the message foretells the certain deliverance of Jerusalem.

22. The virgin . . . hath laughed thee to scorn—Isaiah anticipates the retreat of the Assyrian king, and thinks of Jerusalem as intact. In the Old Testament, shaking the head means to act derisively.

23. Whom hast thou defied?—Sennacherib is blind to the sort of being he has been trifling with, none other than the Holy One. He has exalted his voice in arrogance, and lifted his eyes in pride, not against Israel, but against the living God.

24-25—Through his messengers the Assyrian has made vain boasts, and these are the blasphemy against Jehovah. With swelling pride and extravagant hyperbole he brags of his triumphs over all barriers. As a matter of fact no Assyrian army had set foot in Egypt, and Sennacherib was not to see his dream realized.

26. I have done it—Unconsciously the aggressive Assyrians had been only the instruments in the hand of Jehovah. It was he who, through them, had been subjecting the fortified cities and their inhabitants to such humiliations as those indicated in the blasting of the unripened grain (27).

28. I know . . . thy going out—Compare Psa. 139. 2. All the activities of the Assyrians are under the closest scrutiny of Jehovah. Their raging and arrogance (29) are not to go by unnoticed. With hook and bridle Jehovah is to drag them back like wild beasts.

30-32. The sign—By a series of natural occurrences, Judah is to be made certain of her deliverance from her trials, according to the prophecy of Isaiah and the eternal purpose of Jehovah. This year (701) the people must eat what

growth of itself, the scanty crop which springs up from the shaken grain of the previous harvest. Then, with the devastation and waste of war on all sides, they must still another year suffer lack, subsiding upon the bare products which spring from the roots of the corn. But after these two years of suspended operations in the fields they will be able to plant and reap freely, for their enemies will be gone.

33. Therefore—Some think that this word definitely unites this section with the "whereas" in verse 21. At any rate, verses 33-35 contain in emphatic form the substance of the promise of deliverance from the threatened invasion.

35. For mine own sake—This is one reason for preserving Jerusalem, that Jehovah may justify his way with Israel his people, and so preserve his own glory before the nations. In addition, he is willing to do it in order to preserve the glory of the throne of David, his servant.

36. The angel of Jehovah went forth—Sennacherib, while besieging Libnah, one of the unlocated, defended cities of Judah, got news of the advance of the forces of Tirhakah, the Egyptian, whom he set out immediately to confront. His precipitous retreat is now a part of history. The Assyrian army reached the outskirts of Egypt, at a place called Pelusium. There the awful calamity befell him as here described, 185,000 soldiers meeting their fate. The instrument of this disaster was undoubtedly a pestilence, inasmuch as the neighborhood of Pelusium was noted in antiquity for its power of plague. From Egyptian sources, through Herodotus, we find that by night a multitude of field mice ate up the quivers, bowstrings and shield-straps of the Assyrians. This is probably a picturesque way of describing the pestilence, the mouse being a symbol of sudden destruction.

38. Smote him with the sword—See above. This was twenty years after his leaving Palestine. In that time he conducted several successful campaigns, but never again attempted to invade Palestine. He had learned his lesson, that the Lord is God alone.

PAUPERS AT AUCTION.

The "culture of the Finlanders is not incompatible, it would seem, with an institution that savors strongly of the old slave markets of ancient Rome and the Orient of more recent days, comments the London Standard. The Finnish poor law system puts up able-bodied paupers at auction, displaying them in the market-place, where they are examined by employers of labor desirous of finding cheap workmen. The bidding works downward, the authorities handing over to the lowest bidder the chosen pauper, for the person acquiring the right to his labor receives an allowance from the authorities for his upkeep, the amount being that of the "lowest tender."

BABY'S LIFE THREATENED BY SUMMER COMPLAINT

The life of every baby is threatened during the hot summer months by that dreaded trouble—summer complaint. Thousands of children die every summer from this trouble—thousands of happy homes are made dark and sorrowful because a precious little life has been snuffed out. But mothers, though you fear this trouble, you can yet fight it—yes, fight it and defeat it with Baby's Own Tablets. Concerning them Mrs. Jos. Steffs, Coultts, Alta., says: "During the hot summer days my little boy took ill with summer complaint. He was seized with vomiting and nothing helped him till I got Baby's Own Tablets. They relieved him and made him a strong healthy child." The Tablets are for sale by medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

BIRDS, BEWARE!

There is a very remarkable plant which grows in the colony of Natal. Its popular name is the corpse plant. It grows to a very considerable size, and its principal feature is a bell-shaped throat, something like the flower of an arum lily, but much larger and deeper, and opening into a hollow stem. It is almost black in color, and covered with a thick, glutinous secretion. Its principal characteristic is its loathsome odor, strongly resembling that of decaying carrion. By means of this it attracts carrion-feeding birds to it. Once they alight on it, they are lost. Their claws become entangled in the secretion, the bell-shaped mouth folds up, and they are literally swallowed feathers and all, and digested by juices secreted in the throat of the plant.

NEW HEALTH AND NEW STRENGTH FOR SUFFERING WOMEN

Aching Backs, Tired Limbs and Splitting Headaches Need Not be Endured

In silent patience nearly every woman endures suffering that casts a shadow over half her existence. An aching back, tired limbs, attacks of faintness, and headaches and backaches, need not be part of a woman's life. Such trials indicate plainly that the system requires the new blood that is supplied through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. These Pills are valued by suffering women who have used them above all other medicines, because they give the rich, red blood that makes women well, bright and at their best. Mrs. Fred Collard, Peplar Point, Man., says: "I can give you but a very small estimate of the suffering I endured before I began using Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. After the birth of my first child I suffered intensely from ailments that too often afflict my sex. This was complicated by an attack of bleeding piles, and the agony of the days and nights I endured is almost past comprehension. I tried many remedies, but they did not help me in my trouble, and from a healthy young woman weighing 140 pounds I fell away in weight to 95 pounds. I grew so weak I could hardly walk across the floor, and there were times I hardly knew what I was doing, so great was my agony. I went to Brandon and consulted a doctor who said that nothing would help me but an operation for both my troubles, and that I would have to remain in the hospital for at least eight weeks. Being a farmer's wife I felt that this was impossible, and while in Brandon I met a friend who strongly urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, telling me that they had cured her trouble similar to mine, after an operation had proved of no benefit. She had such strong faith in them that she gave me the first box, and I began using them. It was not long before I found much relief. I continued to use the Pills all the rest of that summer, and the result was they restored me to perfect health. I told the doctor what Dr. Williams' Pink Pills had done for me, and his reply was that he considered what they had done for me little less than a miracle. I have since recommended the Pills to many others who have suffered from woman's troubles, and they always produced beneficial results. I hope that this statement will be of benefit to some other suffering person."

These Pills are sold by all medicine dealers or may be had by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

'HA, HA!' HERBS.

There is a curious plant that grows in Arabia, and is known by the name of "laughing plant." This name comes from the fact that anyone who eats its seeds cannot control his laughter. The natives of the district where this plant grows dry the seeds, and reduce them to powder. A small dose of this powder makes those who eat it act very much like foolish people! The soberest person will dance, shout, and laugh like a madman, and rush about, cutting the most ridiculous capers for an hour. At the end of this time the reaction comes. The dancer is exhausted, and a deep sleep comes upon him. After a nap of several hours, he awakens with no recollection of the antics he has performed.

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AN ISLAND OF MURDEAERS

20,000 CUTHROATS IN THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

Great Island Prison is the Largest and in Many Respects the Best in the World.

The largest of English prisons seldom, if ever, contain more than 1,200 inmates, but the convict population of the Andaman Islands considerably exceeds 20,000, and yet is to all intents and purposes one enormous gaol, guarded on every side by leagues of shark-infested waters, says Pearson's Weekly. The Andaman Islands lie in the Gulf of Bengal about 800 miles from Calcutta and 400 from Rangoon. They were originally inhabited by a tribe of small black people, savage and treacherous to a degree, and giving to murdering and eating the crew of any unlucky ship that happened to be cast away upon the thickly wooded shores. This was one of the reasons why the islands were picked out so long ago as 1789 for a penal settlement. But after a few years the unhealthy climate and constant trouble with the natives caused the settlement to be abandoned.

CINGALESE AND DACOITS.

In 1857 the Government of India, having subdued the great mutiny, found that it had on its hands thousands of dangerous characters for whom there was not even room in local prisons. It was determined to ship them to the Andamans, and in the following year the Port Blair penal settlement was once more established.

To-day the Andaman Islands, which have an area about equal to that of Devonshire, are almost entirely settled by convicts who are brought together from every part of our Indian Empire. You find there Cingalese murderers, Burmese Dacoits, Bengalee sedition-mongers, and fierce hillmen from the wilds of the mighty Himalayas.

The great island prison is not only the largest in the world, but in many respects the best. The object in view is to reform the criminal and turn him into a skilled laborer or artisan. For the first six months of his sentence a prisoner does "separates," just as he does in England. He works alone in his cell, under a rigid regime.

Then, if he has behaved himself, he is sent to a station, where he works with a gang under the direction of expert officials, and for a year and a half does hard and unpaid labor, but is well fed, housed, and cared for.

If his conduct is satisfactory he now enters on rather lighter labor, for which he receives a small amount of pay. He can use this to buy luxuries, or to put in the savings bank.

At last, after serving ten years, comes a big change in his condition. He gets a ticket-of-leave. If he has a wife he can now send for her, if he is a bachelor he can get permission to marry.

KEEP COWS AND POULTRY.

The women convicts are kept on another island. The would-be Benedict, having made his proper application to the authorities, is ferried over there on a Saturday afternoon, and finds the ladies who desire to procure husbands drawn up in a long line. He walks past, and seeing one who takes his fancy points her out and says: "I like her looks. I'll have her please, sahib."

Ten to one she jumps at the chance. But if she objects and says: "No, he's an ugly fellow, and I don't like the looks of him," the ticket-of-leave man has to try again and make a second choice.

The courting is rather a public proceeding, and only takes an hour or so. Next week they are married and settle down on a piece of land given by the authorities. They keep cows and poultry, and grow crops of millet or rice, and often do very well. Their children are educated by the State, taught two languages and a trade, and eventually sent back to the mainland, useful members of society.

The bad characters among the men convicts, about 6,000 in all, are kept on a separate island, and the authorities have a short way with those who refuse to reform. If one of these bad characters attacks a warder, it is no question of punishment cells and maudlin sentiment. He is hanged out of hand.

MURDER OF LORD MAYO.

It was in the Andamans that one of the most shocking crimes in Indian history occurred—the murder of Lord Mayo, Viceroy of India. This was in 1872. Lord Mayo was on a visit of inspection to the settlement, and after a long round visited Hope Town, which is chiefly inhabited by ticket-of-leave men.

He reached the pier about half-past seven.

It was pitch dark, but torch-bearers preceded the party, which was guarded by eight police. Suddenly a convict, Sher Ali by name, sprang out of the darkness and stabbed the Viceroy twice in the back with a long knife. Lord Mayo died almost at once from the effects of his wounds, and the murderer was hanged at Port Blair.

Poet's Wife—"My husband read this poem at a public celebration before thousands of people. Alas, it was the very last poem he ever wrote!" The Publisher—"Oh, I see. Did they lynch him or shoot him?"

Mrs. Starvem—"I'm surprised to hear you say you're having trouble to get your money out of Mr. Starboard. He always boasted that he paid as he went." Mrs. Bardem—"Maybe he does; but I can't get him to go."

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