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PLOTTERS PERISH IN THEIR OWN PIT

The International Sunday-School Lesson For Sept. 23rd Is "Daniel in the Lion's Den."

By William T. Ellis.

This is one of the dear old stories, which children love, and cultivated men and women must know if they are to understand countless literary allusions. Now is a good time to get the event fixed in its setting; especially since its scene is now newly a centre of world interest. Great changes have taken place since the last lesson. The haughty Nebuchadnezzar, king of kings, who threw the three young Hebrews into the fiery furnace, has become insane, his successors have had their little day, and his throne itself has been overturned. The great Babylon has become a vassal kingdom. The first step of Daniels interpretation of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream has been fulfilled.

A new king rules, a new nation prevails. Cyrus, the Persian, has conquered Media, and, at the head of the Medo-Persian Empire, has overthrown Babylon. Cyrus himself reigns at Shushan, in Persia, and Darius is his viceroy in Babylon. With regal powers, Darius plans the government placing one hundred and twenty satraps (a familiar word to all who have studied Xenophon) over the territorial divisions, and three presidents over these. Daniel, the sage and stateman, was one of the presidents, though now an old man.

An Exile and Some Monarchs.

A bit of Latin was often in my mind as I roamed over the ruins of Assyria and Babylonia and succeeding empires: "Sic transit gloria mundi"—"So passes the glory of earth." For kings and even dynasties and empires were only as strata in the accumulated layers of dirt ruins. The kings of some of the stele that I saw amid the ruins along the Tigris could not be identified, though they were full of most boastful biographical statements. The average person does well who can keep in mind the names of the greater empires and their order, along with the names of the foremost rulers.

But there is no difficulty about remembering Daniel. And amid all the mutations and transformations of the centuries in this Tigris-Euphrates region the people of Daniel have stood fast worshipping the one true God. Myriads of them are still to be found in the territory which was once the Medo-Persian; and now they seem to be coming to their own again. For this way may be the final deliverer of the Jew. History is more wonderful than prophecy. The vindication of God's word and of God's people is written large in the records of time.

Plotters and their Plan.

Quite as the Hindus in a government office in India scheme against the Mohammedans, so the Chaldeans under Darius plotted against this Jew Daniel, who was set over them all. He excited their jealousy; and all men familiar with "office politics" know what this means; and also their year, for his principles stood as a barrier against grafting. One honest man in a corrupt organization can spoil the schemes of the most prominent and skillful predatory plotters, if he has the courage of a Daniel. This has frequently been illustrated in our own national life.

Orientals are adepts at subtelty and intrigue; and the plot of the satraps against Daniel was based on their knowledge of the vanity of the king. It was not a hard thing for Darius, any more than for the present emperor of Japan, to believe himself a god. He gulped down the alluring bait thrown to him by the courtiers, never suspecting the hook it held. If we did not understand something of human nature, and the grossness of the flattery which men will accept, this part of the story might seem incredible. Yet we have the example of the late Roman emperors; and, recently, of a European monarch who seems to look upon himself as the important member of a "Me und Gott" partnership. Darius readily, and thoughtlessly, assented to the proposition that no god but himself should be worshipped for the space of thirty days, under peril of the lions.

Trapped!

Never trap was sprung with greater certainty of catching its quarry. A fine compliment was paid to Daniel by his enemies, for they knew that he would never "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee" to any other god than Jehovah. They also knew that he was too much of a man to dodge saying his prayers as before. Being "without fear and without reproach," he could be counted on to be true to his highest allegiance; and this manoeuvre of his enemies made that higher fidelity seem like a breach of his worldly loyalty. Daniel's character, like his heart, was fixed; he was now an old man, and he could be counted upon not to play false to his God.

All honor to the stalwart men who do "as aforetime," in the face of Satan himself. Christian history has as its brightest pages the record of the Daniels who have stood fast; who have dared to defy councils, courts, kings and churches, in obedience to their convictions. These are the kingmen. They follow in the train of the great and steadfast Christ, who knew how to die, but did not know how to save His life at the expense of His honor. The "stonewall" sort of man, as faithful at praying as at fighting, is the sort upon whom man and God rely. Even the enemies of right know where to find him always.

Untroubled By Trouble.

Everybody must meet trouble some day. He is a foolish sailor who builds his boat only for fair weather. Now trouble should be prepared for, but not worried about. Daniel was not upset by this plot of his enemies. He went about his work as usual, and prayed with his windows open toward Jerusalem, even as he did every day. He was not vauntingly ostentatious in the defiance of the king's edict; nor was he cravenly cautious. He simply did as usual. Blessed be noble routine.

The king, who was as weak as most vain men, was troubled by the plot against Daniel when he perceived it. How he must have cursed his own silly pride and gullibility. He spoke openly to the plotters; but when they rather menacingly intimated that not even the king was above the law, he quailed, and with the wailings of a weakling surrendered his friend and counsellor, whom he knew to be a true man, standing "foursquare to every wind that blows."

Sleepless and worried, the king tossed on his royal couch that night. Vain were the allurements of food and music. He had a coward's conscience. As for Daniel—well, Mr. Moody, with his homely eloquence, used to picture him as drawing to himself the biggest of lions for a pillow, and settling down for the untroubled sleep of a little child. It is not the lions about one that matter, but the wild animals within one's own breast. Don't pity Daniel; pity Darius.

The Tables Turned.

Lions have mostly disappeared from Asia, although one was seen near Jericho only a few years ago; and Shamu told me that he, and a boatload of passengers, had once seen a magnificent male lion standing boldly on the bank of the Tigris, a short distance below Ctesiphon. As with the Indian princes to-day, a den of lions was an adjunct to the king's court. Into one of these Daniel was thrown, and the door sealed with just such cylindrical seal as one may pick up thereabouts to-day. The result should have been swift and horrible death.

There are many angels ready to do the bidding of Jehovah, and one was sent to shut the mouths of the lions. This scene, Daniel in the lions' den, is a favorite one with the painters; but most of them err in painting the beasts with open mouths. They were shut, for God's honor was concerned in the salvation of his friend. Daniel's great allegiance deserved great support at the divine hands. "They who trust him wholly find him wholly true." Satan and his legions have never yet been able to circumvent Jehovah.

Early in the morning came hastening the king, in strained, worried tones inquiring if Daniel's God was able to deliver him. Little did Darius, any more than the world to-day, know how able is God. But Daniel of old, and all the Daniels since, realized the might of the Master he served; so, in cheerful tones that contrasted with those of the king, he answered with the conventional salutation. "So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he trusted in his God."

As for his plotting foes, they fell into the pit they had digged, as has been the fashion since the beginning of time. They and theirs came to a swift and dreadful end at the open jaws of the lions which had been closed against Daniel. It never pays to fight against God or God's people; it always pays to be loyal.

DARES DEATH TO WRITE EPITAPH

In the din of battle and with bullets and shells bursting all about him, this intrepid soldier takes the time to inscribe a brief eulogy of a slain comrade over whose grave a simple cross has been erected. The picture shows the man at his work, apparently unapprehensive of the danger to himself.

DR. MORIARTY'S DISCOVERY.

Former Baseball Player Devises a New Local Anasthetic.

Dr. E. H. Moriarty, of the Mount Clemens Private Hospital, formerly a well-known baseball pitcher in the International League, is in Toronto on a visit and extended his congratulations to President McCaffery and Manager Lajoie on the pennant victory of the Leafs. Dr. Moriarty pitched for Newark for six years and was sold to Detroit, but quit the game to follow the profession of surgery at which he has been eminently successful.

Dr. Moriarty worked in the London hospitals for three months as a volunteer Red Cross surgeon during the early part of the war when skilled professional men were in greatest demand, and has since then assisted in Canadian soldier hospitals.

Dr. Moriarty has devised a new local anesthetic which is being extensively used and is said to absolutely eliminate pain in most serious operations. He has offered it to the United States and Canadian Governments for army use and demonstrations are to be given at the local hospitals. In none of the operations in which it has been used did it leave the patient suffering from any of the nauseating effects often so pronounced after general anesthetics have been resorted to.

W.C.T.U. District Convention Ends.

Brockville, Sept. 20.—The thirteenth annual convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union has been brought to a close at Gananoque, with the choice of officers as follows: President, Mrs. I. N. Beckstedt, Lansdowne; vice-president, Mrs. B. O. Britton, Gananoque; recording secretary, Miss Bowen, Brockville; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Donovan, Lansdowne; treasurer, Mrs. Connolly, Brockville; delegates to provincial convention at Cornwall, Mrs. Beckstedt; alternate, Mrs. M. A. Johnston, Athens. The next year convention centre will be Athens.

Capt. Gilbert Edwards Killed.

Port Hope, Sept. 19.—Capt. Gilbert Edwards, a former deputy reeve of Hope Township, has given his life on the battlefield. His aged mother received the message that he was killed on Sept. 14th. He was one of the best known and most highly esteemed young men of Durham County. He was a member of the municipal council for several years, and also served on the Counties Council of Durham and Northumberland.

Some men attempt to do a main tent stunt on a sideshow ability.

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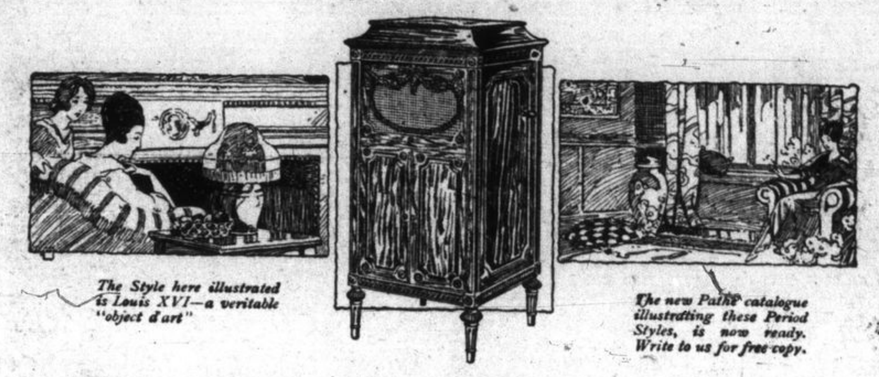

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THE BOSS OF THEM ALL.

By H. L. Stuart, 21st Batt., C.E.F., in Canadian Hospital News.

Who is the man with a manner so grand,
The Colonel.
Who is it forgets the word of command,
The Colonel.
Who is it that leads the regiment in
To a feed, or to battle, or even to sin,
And who gets the credit, if we should win?
The Colonel.

Who is the fellow who gives you a pill,
The Doctor;
Slips you a drink (I don't think) when you're ill,
The Doctor.
The man whom often you see up the line,
Whether it's muddy or whether it's fine,
For gout or rheumatics prescribes No. 9?
The Doctor.

Who is the man who's got plenty of dough,
The Paymaster,
To whom all the soldiers so cheerfully go,
The Paymaster.
Who has to hear hard luck stories all day,
Makes the poor, downhearted Tommies so gay,
Gives 'em ten dollars and drives 'em away?
The Paymaster.

Who is the lady with blue eyes or brown,
The Sister,
Who charms with a smile, or quells with a frown,
The Sister.
Who nurses poor Tommy after the fight,
Who hangs o'er his bed like an angel of light,
Then marries her patient as soon as he's right?
Oh! Sister.

Who is it that thinks he's the boss of them all,
The Private.
Who eagerly watches the Paymaster's call,
The Private.
Who is it that goes in the thick of the fight,
In the light of the day, or the dark of the night,
And leaves our friend Fritz in a H——l of a plight?
The Private.

Complete denial is given by Manager E. C. Fox of the William Davies Co., that his firm wrote off into cost large amounts totalling about $680,000 because of the War Profits Tax in 1917.

All the big milling companies have agreed on a price for flour and also on certain changes in the matter of delivery.

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