

Conversion of the Gaoler.

(Acts 16. 20-31.)

BY JOHN NEWTON.

A believer free from care,
May in chains or dungeon sing,
If the Lord be with him there,
And be happier than a king;
Paul and Silas thus confined,
Though their backs were torn by whips,
Yet, possessing peace of mind,
Sang his praises with joyful lips.

Suddenly the prison shook,
Open flew the iron doors;
And the gaoler, terror-struck,
Now his captives' help implores.
Trembling at their feet he fell.
"Tell me, sirs, what must I do,
To be saved from guilt and hell?
None can toll me this but you."

"Look to Jesus," they replied;
"If on him thou canst believe,
By the death which he hath died,
Thou salvation shalt receive."
While the living word he heard,
Faith sprang up within his heart,
And, released from all he feared,
In their joy his soul had part.

Sinners, Christ is still the same;
Oh, that you could likewise fear!
Then the mention of his name
Would be music to your ear
Jesus rescues Satan's slaves;
His dear wounds still plead, "Forgive!"
Jesus to the utmost saves;
Sinners, look to him and live.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON II—JULY 11.

PAUL AND THE PHILIPPIAN GAOLER

Acts 16. 22-34. Memory verses, 28-31.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.—Acts 16. 31.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Prisoners, v. 22-25.
- 2. The Deliverance, v. 26-34.

Time.—A.D. 52. Shortly after the events of the last lesson.

Place.—The court of justice and prison in Philippi.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Paul and the Philippiian gaoler.—Acts 16. 16-24.
- Tu. Paul and the Philippiian gaoler.—Acts 16. 25-34.
- W. Brought out.—Acts 16. 35-40.
- Th. Shamefully entreated.—1 Thess. 2. 1-9.
- F. A mighty Deliverer.—Dan. 3. 21-30.
- S. Faith and life.—John 3. 14-21.
- Su. Faith and salvation.—1 Peter 1. 1-9.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- The Prisoners, v. 22-25.
Who arrested Paul and Silas? Verse 19.
Why were they arrested? See verses 16-18.
Before whom were they taken?
What charge was made against them?
Who joined in the clamour against them?
What did the magistrates do and say?
What is said of the hearing?
How many times was Paul thus beaten?
- Cor. 11. 25.
What command was given the gaoler?
How did he secure the prisoners?
How did all this affect Paul and Silas?
What does Paul say of his treatment at Philippi? 1 Thess. 2. 2.
- The Deliverance, v. 26-34.
What disturbance suddenly occurred?
What happened to the prison and the prisoners?
What was the gaoler about to do, and why?
Who hindered him, and how?
What did the gaoler then do?
What earnest question did he ask?
What was the reply? Golden Text.
What more did Paul and Silas do?
What did the gaoler at once do for them?
What did they do for him and his household?
What further did the gaoler do?
What was the cause of his joy? Rom. 5. 1.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we shown—

 - The need of salvation?
 - The blessedness of salvation?
 - The way to be saved?

STORY OF THE QUEEN'S LIFE.

V.

THE QUEEN'S HIGHLAND HOME.

Victoria and Prince Albert visited Scotland in 1847. This was their third visit. They set sail in the yacht Victoria and Albert from Osborne and sailed round Land's End, through the Irish Sea to the river Clyde, and up the Clyde to Dumbarton Castle. Ever since then this passage to the Western Highlands of Scotland has been called "The Royal Route."

There were contrary winds and the Victoria and Albert did not arrive promptly. The Scotch turned out in vast numbers to welcome their Queen. There were hundreds of thousands of them. But no Queen came. A large part of them stayed over till the next day. They were very hungry, and they spread over the country round about, and ate everything they could find.

The next day the Victoria and Albert arrived. Forty steamers, gay with outting, and crowded with people, went to meet them. As they all came sailing together up the Clyde, they were a beautiful sight.

It was at this time that the Queen and the Prince decided to have a home in the Scottish Highlands, and they bought Balmoral. Balmoral is on the river Dee, in Aberdeenshire. It lies among the hills where there are mountain streams and pine woods, and deer, and above all, the lovely heather. The pink fragrant blossoms of the heather are beloved by the bees, and from them they make their very sweetest honey.

"It was so calm and so solitary," writes the Queen, "and the pure mountain air was most refreshing."

Queen Victoria loves this mountain home best of all her homes. She used to like to put on her waterproof and go out in the rain and wind and snow. She liked to climb the mountains, to picnic on the hills.

She likes, too, to visit her Highland peasants in their cottages. To carry comfortable gifts of warm stockings and flannels to the old women, and toys to the children.

"I'll bring you a pretty toy when we come back next year," she said one day to little Highland Jenny. And she did. She bought the pretty toy in Paris, too!

The Queen and the Prince went to Paris to visit the Emperor and Empress of France. "Vicky" and "Bertie" went with them. It was a busy and gay visit. But amid all the pleasant bustle, Queen Victoria did not forget her promise to little Highland Jenny. She bought the toy, as I said, and the next autumn gave it to little Jenny, saying, "Now I haven't forgotten you." It is said that Queen Victoria never breaks a promise.

The Queen has another title besides that of Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. She is Empress of India. Though England is so small an island, it has possessions in every part of the world.

"The sun never sets upon Victoria's dominions."

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING.

BY T. DWIGHT HUNT, JR.

"Ted! I say, Ted, where are you going?"

Johnny Wakeman, quite out of breath, came puffing up to the bridge where Teddy had stopped, his face all beaming with excitement.

"Me? I'm going down-town for some lemon extract. Hurry up!"

"Whoopee! You're just in luck! How much are you going to get?"

"Thirty cents' worth. Why?"

"Why, haven't you heard about it? Blackman's goin' to give 'way a bicycle free on the Fourth of July, and—"

"Give 'way a bicycle?"

"Yep, give 'way a brand-new one to the fellow who holds the lucky number, and everybody who buys a soda, or a quarter's worth o' stuff, gets a chance on it; so you see you're in luck."

This astonishing news almost stupefied Teddy, but he managed to gasp out:

"What? Everybody who holds the lucky number gets a bike? Great Caesar, if I could only get one! What trips we'd take this summer! And I could get my papers all peddled in no time, an' 'twould be nothing but fun!"

Ted's brown face shone, as visions of a bicycle, his very own, ran before his eyes.

"Nope, I didn't say everybody'd get one," resumed Johnny; "only just one—the lucky one, you know. But you've got as good a chance as anybody, and somebody's sure to get it, for it's there in the window now; you can see it from here."

In front of the store were a lot of other boys, all greatly interested over "A bicycle to be given away!" Joe Hicks and two or three others had already

and were proudly exhibiting tickets having printed numbers on them, to the envy of those who had none.

"I'm goin' to spend every cent I get this spring on sodas, you'd better believe that!" Joe said, emphatically; and nearly every one voiced the same sentiment.

"There's only one thing against it that I can see," said Teddy, thoughtfully, while he and Johnny stood before the window. "A fellow who can't buy a any sodas don't see d much of a show."

"Yes," interposed Johnny; "but the fellow who just buys enough for one ticket may get it. At any rate, it's worth a try, as long as it doesn't cost anything. And just think Ted, 'sposin' you won it, you'd have a better wheel than I, for mine's a last year's one, and not so good as this, either."

But what was troubling Ted most for the moment was his knowledge that his aunt disliked trading at Blackman's. However, as Johnny kept up his flow of persuasive arguments, and as a bicycle was his heart's desire, the question quickly settled itself. Lemon extract was lemon extract, no matter where he got it.

When Blackman's clerk handed him his change, he also gave him a scrap of blue cardboard, on which the following was printed:

"Good for One Chance on Bismarck Bicycle. Ladies' or Gentleman's. To be awarded Fourth of July. A ticket with every glass of soda water, or 25c. cash purchase of other goods.

"George Blackman."

On the back, stamped in red ink was the number, 2,081.

Teddy took the ticket home to his room, and put it away in his mother's old writing-case, where he kept the few little knick-knacks and treasures dear to him.

During the next few weeks Blackman's soda fountain did a flourishing business. Indeed, Blackman himself was heard to say that he had never before enjoyed such a run on "soft drinks."

Ted spent no money on soda water, for his nickels had to go toward his clothes and school books. His aunt had little to live on, and he knew that since she had taken him in she had felt obliged to tighten her purse-strings considerably. The little his papers brought helped her to get along. Consequently, as there had been no occasion for other purposes, the middle of June found him still possessed of but one "chance" on the wheel.

But Johnny had promised to give him his three tickets. So great were their hopes that even on these paltry chances they had built many wonderful air-castles and laid many brilliant plans for the long summer days, when "If I get it, we'll both have bikes," as Ted often repeated.

In all this time Teddy had not once mentioned the scheme to his aunt; indeed, he had not been much given to confiding his boyish secrets and longings since coming to live with her after his mother died. Not that he did not love her,—his heart ached to love some one,—nor that she was unkind to him; but an inexplicable something always seemed to hold him back. Perhaps it was a feeling that she did not like boys, or distrusted them. Ted was always at a loss to know just what it was.

He could not help comparing, almost unconsciously, Aunt Jane's peculiarities and oftentimes rather narrow views with the indulgent, affectionate ways of his mother. He had never known his mother to express fear lest he get into mischief, or, to use Aunt Jane's common phrase, "disgrace the family name."

Aunt Jane was no casualist. She had no patience with people who did not see that it was "as great a sin to steal a pin as to steal a greater thing." An act was, in her view, right or wrong, black or white; she scorned the shades of blackness or whiteness—there was no moral neutral tint, or drab, or plebeian in her category. She would freely express herself when the occasion offered. Hence, she could not always remain silent concerning Blackman's somewhat-talked-of bicycle scheme.

One afternoon, while Ted was filling the wood-box and Aunt Jane was sitting in her accustomed place by the kitchen window, reading the village paper, she suddenly spoke her mind in the case:

"I declare, if it isn't dreadful the way folks are gambling now—simply dreadful!" She paused, gave Teddy a searching glance, and resumed: "All it isn't those alone who don't profess anything, either, but church people, Teddy Watson, who should be shocked at the very mention of it. And the worst is, they're not only gambling, but getting so they actually keep gambling-places themselves!"

Again there was a pause. Teddy remained standing at the door, silently

wondering what Aunt Jane was aiming at, and why she kept looking so meaningfully at him. But he had not long to wait.

"There's that Jim Ross, for instance," she continued, "has got a thing mean drop quarters late, and gamble for cigars. But of course he's not a professor; but George Blackman is, and a leacon in the church, and is openly running a bicycle lottery! It's perfectly scandalous!"

At these last words Ted started visibly, and on looking up met his aunt's scrutinizing gaze.

"Why," he gasped, "that's been going on all the spring! Everybody's trying for it! And you don't mean, Aunt Jane, that it's gambling?"

"Gambling? gambling?" repeated Aunt Jane, excitedly. "Of course it's gambling!"

"But no one risks anything; they get what they pay for at the regular prices, and the tickets are given to them. It's all free—"

"Sh-h-h, Teddy Watson! Do I hear you actually upholding that worst of all baits of the devil—gambling? You! Have you forgotten so quick what ruined your father and broke your poor mother's heart? Where's your promise to her? Teddy, you shock me! You—"

"Aunt Jane! I—"

"Teddy Watson, there's no use in excusing evil! Gambling is gambling, no matter what cloak it's hid by."

"But, Aunt Jane, where's the harm in this?"

"Harm? harm? No harm, when all the silly boys and girls of Petersburg are going crazy over it, and spending every cent they can lay their hands on, buying chances? Who knows but what many of them are tempted to steal, and more of 'em to ruin their digestion with soda water? Teddy Watson, to get something for nothing ain't right, and only the guilty uphold it. If you're—"

But she stopped short. Ted was gone.

"I declare, if he isn't most trying!" she exclaimed aloud to herself. "There's no use in doing anything for such a boy. Here I am, pinching and scraping, and doing all I know to take his mother's place, and then when I commence saying a word, he just clears out. But I suppose he's not much worse than all boys,—all of his sex, I might say,—I presume there are some exceptions. Anyway, one can't trust them a minute but they're into mischief, and Ted's no exception. Couldn't be, considering who his father was, for if ever there was a deceiving man! It's the Watson in the boy; that's where he gets it. If he only showed a little more of his mother's blood, I believe I could love him as my own. But he has the same hair, the same eyes—everything just like his father, and it's beginning to come out in his character."

In the meantime Teddy was lying on his back out among the grape-vines.

"Just as if I'd ever break that promise!" he thought, choking back his tears. "She would never say that if she liked me, or be always thinking I was into mischief. I'm not to blame 'cause of father, and—I can't stand it much longer. I'll—"

But at that point the supper-bell rang, and in spite of his grievance it was a welcome sound. He could feel sure that Aunt Jane would not allude to the subject of difference again. When she had had her say on a matter, she usually dropped it. So when Teddy appeared, red-eyed and silent, vary little was said by either.

In truth, Miss Jane felt a bit ashamed of her lack of self-control. Besides, blunt and outspoken as she was, she had a warm heart, and when Teddy came to say good-night, she even smiled by way of making up. This had more effect on the boy than her previous manner of moral indignation.

As the days glided by those words of hers, "Gambling is gambling, no matter what cloak it's hid by," kept echoing in Ted's memory notwithstanding every argument that they were unreasonably applied to Blackman's scheme. And the promise she had alluded to—the one he had solemnly made to his mother a few days before she died, that he would never gamble in any way—continually rang in his ears, until he began asking himself if, after all, Aunt Jane wasn't right about it. Certainly there was a "chance" element to the scheme, and he knew a good many boys and girls who were spending all their spare change on sodas, with no other object than to get chances on the wheel. That truly had a smack of evil to it.

All this troubled Ted, and on two or three occasions he even went to his room quite resolved on tearing up the ticket, and thus ending the whole matter; but each time, when he came to get