THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 17.

THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILOR.

ACTS 16 · 25-40.

1. *The Prisoners' Joy.*—(Read ver. 25.) Our last lesson told us how these men got there. Their backs were sore with the many stripes, Their feet were fast in the stocks; there was none near to help them. In this sore trouble they would *pray.* But they also "sang praises unto God." They had the joy of knowing that they were doing what was pleasing in His sight—"the testimony of a good conscience," and so they passed a happier night in prison than the rulers did in the stately homes. Praying sang praises, or in their prayers were singing praises *(Alford)*: not two distinct acts, but the single act of praying by singing or chanting *(Alexander).* "The prisoners heard them." Never had stranger sounds than these awakened the sad inmates of a prison from their sleep. But God heard them too, and sent a wonderful answer to their prayer (ver. 26).

2. *God's answer to prayer.* One of the most remarkable earthquakes mentioned in Scripture occurred in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah king of Judah, Amos 1: 1; Zech. 14: 5. Korah and his companions were destroyed by the rending asunder of the ground, Num. 16: 32—that is by an earthquake. The earthquake was one of the fearful sights which attended the crucifixion of our Saviour, Matt. 27: 51-54. The earthquake in our text was not a natural occurrence, but probably in answer to the prayer and expectations of the sufferers that some divine interposition might take place. It awakened the keeper of the prison. He started up in fright, and saw that the prison doors were open. He feared his prisoners had escaped and he knew his life must answer for them, and in alarm and despair drew out his sword and would have killed himself." Paul saw it. How strange and startling to the jailer was all this! He had never had such prisoners as these. He thought of the meek and brave way in which they had borne their stripes, returning no fierce or angry word to those who injured them. It may be too, he had heard their preaching, or of what they said His *conscience was smitten.* In a way he never felt before he knew himself to be in a greater danger than that from the earthquake, or even from the loss of his life The Holy Spirit of God had shown him his *sin.* See what this caused him to do (verses 29-30). How quickly and gladly the answer came (verse 31) This question we need all to ask, with the same intense eagerness. The answer we must all heed, if we would have salvation for body and soul. Then Paul and Silas went on to speak "the word of the Lord" to him and all in his house.

3. *The Changed Jailer.* The jailer was now a *changed man.* A few hours before he had thrust these men into the inner prison, fastening their feet into the stocks, and leaving all untended their bleeding backs. Now see what he did (verses 33-34 So the grace of God changes men now. "That very hour." The narrative implies that the apostles were removed to another place, see ver. 25. *Washed their stripes,* "he washed their stripes; was washed from sin; he fed them and was fed" *(Chrysostom). Into his house,* "leading them up into his house," probably above the prison *(Alexander)*

4. *Instructed Magistrates.* Magistrates, Roman colonial officers who had jurisdiction in the trial of civil or criminal offences, *Serjeants,* Roman officers of inferior rank, appointed to carry the fasces, or bundle of rods, before the supreme magistrates, and to inflict the punishment of scourging and beheading upon criminals. The wonderful deliverance had alarmed the rulers. *Beaten us,* contrary to law. *Roman* citizens could not be thus *publicly* scourged, and then asked to depart *privately*; the honor of the Romans must be vindicated by public acquittal. *Fetch us,* we are not to be driven out, but brought out by the same officers who wrongfully arrested us. The rulers were now thoroughly alarmed; the case might be reported at Rome, and they fined and dismissed in disgrace. *Entered into;* they did not hurry away as if in danger of another arrest, but entered into the house of Lydia.

THE CHRYSANTHEMUM.

The chrysanthemum, now so popular, has an interesting history. In 1764 it was brought to Europe from China and planted in the botanic gardens at Chelsea in London, where, however, it attracted little notice and soon afterwards died out. In 1789, according to the *Gardener's Magazine,* a French merchant named Blanchard imported some plants from China to France, and the next year they found their way to England, where they were sold at a high price, and grown in a greenhouse In 1795 there was a chrysanthemum seen in blossom in Mr. Colville's nursery in the King's Road, Chelsea. The flowers were small and of a dark purple, only half double; the petals were ragged and uneven From 1798 to 1822 sixteen varieties were introduced from China After that we got on faster, and in one year alone (1824) twenty different sorts were imported. It was not, however, until 1830 that seed was first saved in the south of France; much finer blossoms were then produced. In a few years' time chrysanthemums became so numerous that the old nomenclature—white clustered, marigold flowered, quilled-yellow, tasselled pink, etc., had to be superseded as inadequate, and each was dignified with a distinct title.

HYDROPHOBIA.

The Brown "Animal Sanatory Institution" (under the government of the University of London) has issued a notice in which it is said that hydrophobia occurs in dogs of all ages, and may appear at any season of the year. It is recognized by a change in the demeanor of the dog, which becomes dejected, morose, inclined to roam, and anxious to hide itself. The animal gnaws at wool, stones, and at any refuse which it sees, snaps at imaginary objects, and becomes unusually excited by strange or sudden noises. It rubs its throat with its paws, as if striving to get rid of some object lodged there; at the same time there is a more or less abundant flow of saliva from the mouth. The dog will attack its master, or animals of any kind; but it is most easily aroused by the presence of other dogs. There is throughout the disease no dread of water. In one form of the disease called "dumb madness," there is paralysis of the jaw, and therefore inability to bite. If a dog has shown any of the symptoms of madness it should be at once loose-muzzled and securely chained up. Owners of dogs are warned of the danger they may incur by allowing their faces and hands (especially if scratched) to be licked by the animals, even if these show no sign of madness. All dog bites should be immediately cleansed by suction and washing, and the wounds should be cauterized as soon as possible.

OLEOMARGARINE.

There is much difficulty experienced by grocers in judging oleomargarine from butter. We here give two methods for so doing, and are sure they will be welcomed: Procure a vial of oil of vitriol (sulphuric acid), which will cost about five cents. Use a glass rod, and put one drop on the article to be tested. Pure, fresh, yellow butter will turn almost white, while tallow changes to a deep crimson red. Lard gives diversified colors, showing all colors of the rainbow. Here is another and a very simple test: Melt a very small quantity in a shallow dish, which should only be large enough to hold the quantity, and put a piece of wick in the fluid Now light the protruding end of the wick above the surface of the liquid, and after it burns a few minutes, extinguish the flame. By inhaling the ascending smoke from the wick, the odor of fried butter will designate pure butter, but if the odor is similar to that of smoking candlestick, you may rest assured it is oleomargarine.

USEFUL HINTS.

A well-beaten egg is a great addition to a dried apple pie, giving lightness, and a good favor also.

If the stair-rails are dingy, their appearance may be improved by washing them with a little sweet milk; polish with a flannel cloth.

Hang up everything you can find about the kitchen. It saves trouble when sweeping, and is so convenient to know just where to find things when wanted in a hurry.

It is the sudden changes that have a bad effect upon roots in cellars. Ventilation should, of course be had all the time. On very cold nights the ventilation can be decreased; but cold is better than heat.

To clean lamp chimneys, hold them over the nose of a tea kettle when it is boiling furiously. One or two repetitions of this process will make it beautifully clear. Of course they must be wiped with a clean cloth.

A carelessly kept coffee-pot will impart a rank flavor to the strongest infusion of the best Java. Wash the coffee-pot thoroughly every-day, and twice a week boil borax and water in it for fifteen minutes.

Overhaul and repair the tools and implements, and have duplicates of parts liable to wear out or break, such as plow points, cultivator teeth, etc. It more sashes are needed for hot-beds, purchase them in ample time.

In winter collect all the old limbs, stumps, fence posts and rails, and pieces of boards that are scattered over your farm, and, unless you have been as unusually tidy farmer, you will have firewood enough to last a month. The boys might take a horse and waggon, and do this some Saturday.

Water is not necessarily pure because it is cold. Give animals good water, and do not compel them to obtain it from shallow places where they take in great quantities of unhealthy stuff Some people think that anything is good enough for a hog. "Anything" sometimes produces disease.

Unless you have hired help whom you can trust implicitly, it is a good idea to use earthen dishes for milk in place of tin; they are kept clean with much less trouble. The scientists of the present day claim that the germs of disease hide in the crevices of a milk-pan, and that nothing but conscientious application of absolutely boiling water will remove the danger.

France gives her Ambassadors thrice as much as she gives her Cabinet Ministers, and Germany does likewise. England also pays her Ambassadors considerably more than any member of the Cabinet.

From the Rev. Mr. Dixon, Rector of St. Jude's, Episcopal Church, Montreal, P. Q. August 15th, 1883.

Messrs. T. Graham & Son,

Dear Sirs, This is to certify that Graham's Pain Eradicator has been used in my family for years, and we find it *better than represented.*

I remain, yours truly,
Rev. J. H Dixon.
132 Fulford St., Montreal.

There is said to be a full million dollars of unclaimed deposits in the savings banks of Massachusetts. There is no State law requiring the publication of such deposits, but these amounts can never become the legal property of the bank however long they may remain unclaimed.

No other medicine is so reliable as Ayer's Cherry Pectoral for colds, coughs, and all derangements of the respiratory organs tending toward consumption. In all ordinary cases it is a certain cure, and it affords sure relief for the asthmatic and consumptive, even in advanced stages of disease.

An Austrian master mason died recently and left all his property to the city of Vienna. It seems that he came as an apprentice to that city, fell from a scaffolding, and was taken care of by the city authorities, to whom he now shows his gratitude by this act.

If a well be poisoned, woe to those who drink thereat. It is worse to poison the fountain of life for others self, and for posterity. Often by carelessness, or misfortune, or inheritance, this has been done. Ayer's Sarsaparilla frees the blood, the vital stream, and restores appetite, strength, and health.

Last year not a single passenger riding on a passenger train on the Massachusetts rail-roads was killed, except from his own fault, and there were over 61,000,000 passengers carried on an average distance of fifteen miles each.

It is claimed that *Johnson's Anodyne Liniment* is almost infallible in the cure of diphtheria, pneumonia, influenza, bronchitis, congestion of the lungs, and hard dry coughs. This may all be true. We know it will prevent diphtheria and that it will cure the croup instantly.

There are 1,971,365 bee hives in France, from which were taken last autumn 19,897,284 pounds of honey, and 6,691,598 pounds of wax, the total value of the product amounting to about $4,600,000.

GOT HIM OUT OF BED.—I was confined to my bed with Rheumatism, could not move hand or foot. A clergyman called to see me and advised me to use Minard's Liniment. I did so, and in 3 days was out of bed and resumed my work as well as ever.

JAMES LANGILLE
Springfield, Annapl's Co., '82. m2 1y

Last year the Florida orange crop, in the estimation of some of the best judges, amounted to about 55,000,000 oranges, or 333,000 boxes of 150 each, and that of the present year will amount to 102,000,000 oranges, or 600,000 boxes, the oranges averaging less in size than last year.

HOW TO TREAT WEAK LUNGS.—Always breathe through the nose, keeping the mouth closed as much as possible. Walk and sit erect, exercise in the open air, keep the skin scrupulously clean, and take Hagyard's Pectoral Balsam for coughs, colds, and bronchial troubles.

M. Giard has bequeathed to the French Association for the Advancement of Science a capital sum of $20,000, the interest of which is to be devoted every five years to the encouragement of researches into the antiquity of man and his relation to geological ages.

We will wager a year's subscription that a 25-cent package of *Sheridan's Condition Powders* contains more pure ingredients and cost more money than a bushel of any kind put up in *large* packs. Sheridan's powders are absolutely pure.

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