

**Saturday Night  
Talks** By F. E. DAVISON  
Rutland, Vt.

**OUR NATIONAL BONDAGE**

March 28, '09—(Prov. 23:29-35).

One of the most ludicrous incidents in the life of our Lord was the occasion when, addressing the people on the subject of liberty, they bristled up and said, "We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man." They willingly shut their eyes to the long centuries which Abraham's seed had passed in captivity, in Egypt, in Assyria, in Babylonia, and that even at that very moment they were a subject-nation living in the dying hours of national life.

**Nation in Chains.**

But such a condition of mind is not peculiar to the Jews of that day. It will be just as difficult to convince some modern optimists that the United States of America is a nation in chains. Such people scout the idea that intemperance like a slimy and deadly octopus has thrown his tentacles around the national, municipal, military, ecclesiastical, social, literary and individual life of this country like the devil-fish of Victor Hugo's story. These objectors are in the habit of calling people who direct attention to the bondage of the whiskey trust "cranks," "fanatics," "croakers," "impracticables," sometimes even "embryotic anarchists."

**Municipal Corruption.**

Meanwhile the cities are in the clutches of the rum power, the real ballot box the saloon keeper's vest pocket, and this hydra-headed monster rears its horrid crest in the halls of legislation, the editorial sanctum, the judicial court room, the scientist's laboratory, the university class room, the publisher's print shop, yea, even the pulpit recognizes its power.

It perverts the facts of history, it juggles figures so as to make them tell the most infamous lies, it bribes legislators, it perjured itself in the witness box, it causes justice to tear the bandage from her eyes and wink at bloated iniquity, it puts a gag in the mouth of the preacher, it stands at the elbow of the editor and paralyzes his fingers, it pulls the wool over the eyes of the heedless so that they see things through a distorted medium. It has bribes for one class, bludgeons for another class, bullets and bombs for another class, books for another class, beer for another class, and blindness black and baleful for all. And the whole nation in the blind staggers of intoxication, cries out, "We were never in bondage to any man!"

**Facing the Facts.**

What can we do about it? In the first place we can open our eyes to the facts in the case, and refuse to be hoodwinked by the saloon advocates, nor lulled to sleep by the cradle-rockers, slinging, "Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber." The liquor interest is a past master in the compounding of sedatives and soporifics. It knows how to drug mankind from the nursing bottle of the infant in the cradle, to the stimulating bottle of the statesman in his second childhood. It can put people to sleep on the brink of a volcano and the back of an earthquake. When awful disasters are coming on like a cyclone it can cause whole communities to say, "A little more folding of the arms to rest." It knows how to mix an anodyne so that men like silly sheep will go unhesitatingly to the slaughter, nay, even lick the hand that slays them. The first thing then to do, is to refuse to touch, taste, handle or smell the concoctions that are offered, that the brain may be clear, the judgment sound, the reason well-poised, the will unfettered to look the evil squarely in the face, to trace the hideous coils of the serpent, and to accurately judge his nation-wide control. We need to put the logic of the scholar, the scalpel of the scientist, the conclusions of the historian, the lens of the microscope, the object glass of the Word of God on this great subject.

**Agitation Necessary.**

And in the next place, being awake to the situation we can discuss the question till men are compelled to listen to this burning subject. Agitation is the first step towards reformation. We must keep at it, and not put the whole matter in the hands of a few, honest but erratic souls. It is not the men who see only one side of a subject that carry great reforms, but those who see all sides of it in the last analysis. The typical reformer pushes on one portion of the body politic until in sheer desperation the people awake, see the peril and put it away. He has his mission, let us not undervalue the man who acts as a fire alarm to arouse the sleeping.

The sailor might as reasonably criticize the fog horn on the jutting reef for disturbing his slumbers when his vessel is headed for the rocks as for society to denounce the reformer who lifts up a warning voice against the evils of intemperance. The fire bell arouses the sleepers, calls out the department and locates the blaze. That man is recreant to his trust who sees impending disaster yet refuses to call attention to it for fear of disturbing the peace.

Finally, those of us who happen to be adult males can walk up to the ballot box, and drop a righteous ballot on the monster's head—a ballot which is not a piece of paper but a chunk of Sinal, weighing a ton—and with it pound the life out of this curse of straws, the legalized saloon.

**RUNNING THE RHEA**

Relative of Ostrich Chased with Dog and Horse.

For the person who desires a unique form of sport "running the rhea" in Southern Patagonia is recommended. The rhea is a member of the ostrich family, but somewhat smaller. It runs with the swiftness of the greyhound or a fast horse, and has a knack of doubling on its track, which often serves it in eluding its pursuers. The natives in hunting it use horses, dogs and the bola. The dogs course after the fleeing bird in full cry, while the hunters follow after at top speed, prepared to throw the bola if opportunity offers.

The bola, consisting of two or three heavy balls of lead or stone attached to a thong six or eight feet long, serves to hamper the movements of the bird, for the balls twine about the part which the bola strikes, regardless of whether it be the legs, neck or wings. This permits the dogs and hunters to overhaul and dispatch the bird.

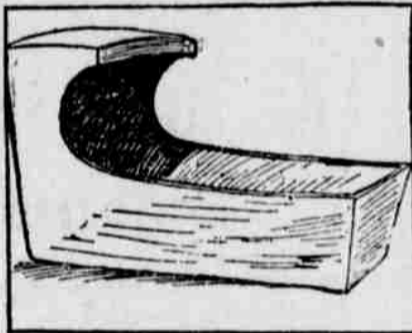
At the approach of danger the rhea will often crouch flat upon the ground with neck outstretched under the grass, remaining motionless until the dogs have passed. This stratagem is often successful when the wind is blowing against the scent, but when the contrary is the case the dogs soon discover the hiding bird. In this case, doubtless bewildered by the sudden failure of its artless ruse, it makes no attempt at escape.

The chase of the rhea, which sometimes extends over a distance of five or six miles, is a thrilling one. It has, for the rider, all the excitement of a horse race, with the added satisfaction of knowing that the winning of the race will result in a welcome addition to the larder. The wings of the rhea have a flavor not unlike that of turkey, and if one is not averse to the taste of horse flesh the meat of the thigh is very satisfactory. The rhea is one of the main food supplies of a Patagonian hunting trip.

**CRADLE GOLD CANNOT BUY.**

Maine Woman Possesses One Sir William Phips was Rocked In.

Boston.—Mrs. S. S. E. Hawthorne of Woolwich, Me., has in her possession a relic which gold cannot buy, and which is considered one of the most valuable of the many pieces of



**CRADLE OVER 200 YEARS OLD.**

antique furniture to be found in the old town. It is a homely, little, old-fashioned cradle, made of pine boards.

This cradle has been in the family for over 200 years, and according to the tradition which has been handed down from generation to generation it is the one in which William Phips, later Sir William Phips, was rocked when an infant.

Mrs. Hawthorne's ancestors were among the first settlers in Woolwich, and lived in the same locality where Phips was born. They went there from York in a schooner which they had built themselves, and brought up large families of children.

**Siberian Bread that Makes You Drunk**

Since you don't live in Siberia you need not be afraid, says M. Narrion, a Russian, to get drunk through eating ordinary bread. A hardened hobo would, on the other hand, think that Providence had played him a nasty trick in not allowing him first to see the light of day in Siberia.

In Far Eastern Russia, in that region which lies between the sea and the river called Assuri, the humidity of the climate, as well as of the soil, is remarkable. Vegetation is here distinguished for its wondrous exuberance, to such an extent that the soil never dries up. The result is that the inhabitants, in order to prevent putrefaction of the roots, sow their corn upon a series of layers of the soil. Nevertheless, in certain districts, the humidity is so intense that there grows upon the ears of corn a kind of fungus-matter made up of microfungi.

As a result of this sporadic excretion, the bread made from the corn in question gives all the results of an overdose of alcohol. In very humid climates the phenomenon is likewise known, though to nothing like the extent of Eastern Siberia, where whole districts are affected by this strange kind of "alcoholized bread."

**Did not Know Husband's Name.**

In declaring that she never knew her husband's first name Mrs. Esther Nieman of Monroe street, Philadelphia, created laughter at the central police court.

"I have always called him 'Pop' from the first day I married him, and as he did not object I never worried myself about his first name," said Mrs. Nieman, who had her husband arrested on the charge of failing to support her.

The accused husband by direction of the magistrate was induced to tell his wife his full name.

"Certainly I'm glad to do it," remarked the deendant, "but I think my wife has known right along that I am Jacob Nieman."

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