

**SATURDAY NIGHT TALKS**

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Rutland, Vt.

**OBSEQUIES POSTPONED**

International Bible Lesson for  
Oct. 10, '09. (Acts 22: 30-33: 35).



A band of ruffians gathered in a secluded place in Jerusalem. They talked over the events of the past few days. They felt that something ought to be done to Paul, the man whose goodness shamed them all, and they made an agreement among themselves to assassinate him. With Satanic malice they would kill the man whom they could not answer. The knife or the bullet has always been the rascal's argument, and proficiency in the use of deadly weapons secures the respect of the mob.

**The Conspiracy Formed.**

And see how determined they were. They pledged themselves not to eat nor drink until they had killed the apostle. The blood of that holy man would have been as nectar to them, and they confidently expected to have it in a few hours. But if not, they swore that they would not eat nor drink till the plot was accomplished.

And how cunningly they laid their plans. They knew that Paul was in the castle, and that the chief captain had tried several times to get at the real facts in the case, without avail. Paul was held by the officer, not so much a prisoner, for no charge had been sustained against him, as to preserve his life from the furious Jews. Now these conspirators visit the chief priests and elders and lay their plan before them.

They say: "Send word to the commander that you have called another meeting of the council, and that you would like to question Paul a little further. He is interested to get at the facts in this case, and he will send the prisoner at your request. Meanwhile we will be in wait for him, and when he gets to a certain place on the road we will rush out upon him, and kill him. You do not need to admit that you knew anything of the plot. We will take all the risk and all the responsibility."

What sort of an estimate could they have formed of those men to suppose that they would listen to them for a moment, much less become their accomplices in crime. And yet, the narrative bears unmistakable evidence that those ecclesiastics, those unscrupulous and hypocritical religionists, fell in readily with this most infamous plot. They professed themselves ready to do the lying, if the conspirators would do the killing. Thus the trap was set. The next day it was to be put into execution. And when night came forty scoundrels in Jerusalem went supperless to bed, wondering if they could stand the enforced abstinence until the deed was done.

**The Conspiracy Discovered.**

We know very little about Paul's family, but in this instance it is said that the apostle had a nephew in the city who somehow got wind of the plot to kill his uncle. Without a moment's hesitation he went to his kinsman in the barracks and related what he had heard. Paul knew that the promises of God are not given to encourage presumption, but that Providence helps those who help themselves. And though he had received the most positive assurance that he should be preserved in safety, he knew that that assurance instead of being a pillow for lazy inactivity, was rather a spur for prudent natural means. And hence, when he knew what was going on, he sent the young man to the chief captain with his story. The kind hearted commander took the lad aside, and the story of the nefarious plot came out.

**The Conspiracy Defeated.**

Man proposes, but God disposes. No sooner had the officer learned the particulars of the plot than he resolved to remove the apostle out of the way of danger. He, therefore, made preparation to send Paul to the Governor at Caesarea, 70 miles away. And at nine o'clock that night, after the city had become quiet, the narrow streets of Jerusalem echoed with the tramp of marching feet, and nearly 500 Roman soldiers passed through one of the Eastern gates, and took the road to Caesarea. In the midst of that formidable guard rode Paul, the apostle. And when the hungry conspirators went forth in the morning they were astonished to find that their victim had escaped.

We are not informed whether the men kept their vow, and starved to death, or not. But the probability is that they at once repaired to the nearest place where food could be obtained, and took a hearty breakfast. They had fasted twenty-four hours.

And thus the conspiracy was defeated, and Paul's funeral indefinitely postponed. I can imagine the great apostle, during that midnight ride over the hills of Judea, repeating softly this triumphant Psalm of David, so appropriate to himself:

"Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and we are escaped."

**WORTHY OF THEIR STEEL.**

**Militiaman Awaged His Throat and Then Told His Rank.**

During a strike in the coal mines of West Virginia some years ago, apprehension on the part of the State authorities led to the calling out of the Militia. There was really no trouble, but the situation was tense and bloodshed was looked for at any moment.

One day a soldier in uniform, off duty, was strolling through the main street of the town wherein the greatest violence was feared, when he was surrounded by a crowd of strikers.

"Honest, now, Bill," asked one of the men of the militiaman, "would you fire at your fellow men?"

"No, I wouldn't," promptly replied the man in uniform. "I never shot at any one in my life, an' I ain't goin' to do it now."

The crowd cheered, and some one invited the militiaman to have a drink, an invitation which he accepted with alacrity. When he had satisfied his thirst the question was put:

"If you are in sympathy with the strikers, why did you answer the call to come here?"

"I ain't said I was in sympathy with the strikers," was the unexpected rejoinder of the man in uniform.

"But you said you wouldn't shoot at a miner; that's the same thing," protested one of the men.

"Well, fellers," said the unformed one, after a moment's hesitation, "to tell you the truth, I never carried a gun in my life. The fact is I play the cornet in the band."

**His Tears Had Been Shed.**

President Hadley of Yale is apt in story telling, and all his tales have an application that those for whom they are intended cannot fail to perceive. At a reception given for him by an old friend some 500 miles from New Haven one individual with a better memory than tact asked him what he thought of the recent baseball game. As Yale had met with a disastrous defeat, the subject might be called unpleasant. Without hesitation President Hadley said: "There was a boy who lived in a village whose uncle died. The next day a man driving along the road was surprised to find the boy working in a field. Thinking this did not show proper respect for the dead uncle, he called the lad to him and said, Johnny, didn't you know your uncle was dead? Johnny slowly approached and drawled out: 'Yes, I know it—I have cried.'"

**His Deficiency.**

A certain Chicago merchant died, leaving to his only son the conduct of an extensive business, and great doubt was expressed in some quarters whether the young man possessed the ability to carry out the father's policies.

"Well," said one kindly disposed friend, "for my part, I think Henry is very bright and capable. I'm sure he will succeed."

"Perhaps you're right," said another friend. "Henry is undoubtedly a clever fellow; but take it from me, old man, he hasn't got the head to fill his father's shoes."

**Eggs Boiled to Music.**

A well-known evangelist tells a story of a visit to a small town in one of the Southern States, where he was awakened one morning by a soprano voice which came from the kitchen singing a famous hymn. As the bishop was dressing, he meditated on the pithy of the servant. Speaking to her after breakfast of the pleasure it had given him, he was met with an unexpected answer. "Oh, thank you, sir," she replied, "but that's the hymn I boil the eggs by—three verses for soft and five verses for hard."

**INSINUATING.**



Madge—I never eat such things because they spoil the complexion.  
Marjorie—But you used to eat them, didn't you?

**A Fair Offer.**

"No," snapped the sharp faced woman at the door, "I ain't got no food for you, an' I ain't got no old clothes. Now, git!"

"Lady," replied Harvard Hasben, "I could repay you well. Give me a square meal and I'll give you a few lessons in grammar."

**Not the Way.**

"Why have we stopped, captain?"  
"On account of the fog, madam."  
"Oh! but, my dear captain—surely not! Look! It's perfectly clear up above."

"Aye, ma'am—but we're not goin' that way, unless the boiler busts!"

**Unusual.**

"Yes; we were disappointed in the peasantry."  
"As to how?"  
"They always seemed to be working. We never found them dancing or singing in chorus."

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