

SATURDAY NIGHT TALKS

By REV. F. E. DAVISON
Rutland, Vt.

PAUL AT ROME.

International Bible Lesson for
Nov. 14, '09—(Acts 28: 11-31).



Paul at Rome is a theme that authorizes glowing description. Jerusalem and Rome were the pivotal centres from which went out the world's transforming forces—the one, the home of divine government; in the other, the god of this world was enthroned.

He was a lone man, a poor man, a man in chains, and yet he was the avant courier of a rising power that was to turn the tide of Roman history, and revolutionize the world. Had Nero on his throne been aware of the dynamic force embodied in that little travel-stained prisoner he would have been as profoundly moved and greatly troubled as if some foreign foe were thundering at his gates. But he knew it not, and he continued his drunken revels while the city slept, unconscious of the transformation scene which the entrance of that prisoner assured.

Getting a Hearing.

It is not hard to get a hearing for the gospel when the seeker, like Paul, has the "fire in his bones." He was a prisoner after a sort but was so well reported of that he was allowed to live "for two whole years in his own hired house."

But "the Word of God was not bound," and Paul felt that he could not rest without delivering his message. He might have spent his time amid the splendid architecture, world-famous sculpture and historical antiquities, but nothing of that sort could divert him from his work. And hence within three days after his arrival at Rome he calls around him the chief of the Jews, the rulers and leading men of the synagogues, that he might disarm their prejudices. Without a trace of bitterness he forgives and forgets the evils that had been inflicted upon him. One thing must be said to the credit of his persecutors, they had not sent on to Rome their evil reports and base slanders, and he is assured by his countrymen there that they had heard nothing against him.

Expository Preaching.

Paul was not like some modern preachers who take a text and preach—from it. He was a splendid type of that very uncommon class of divines who preach expository sermons—the meekest, judicious, most interesting of all the styles of preaching. He took his text from the Old Testament, the only Bible there was in those days, and appeared to have no difficulty in finding Christ in the Gospel according to Moses. So captivating, evangelical, Scriptural was he in his exposition, and so tremendously in earnest, that he preached all day but held his congregation to the end. That was the first Gospel sermon that his listeners had ever heard and they were so deeply stirred that they took no note of time.

A Crisis of Destiny.

It makes no difference who the preacher is, or what or how long is his sermon he cannot make his hearers believe. To present the message is the duty of the man of God, to accept or reject it is the hearer's prerogative. It is some comfort to hard-working modern clergymen that even Paul failed to convert the majority of those to whom he preached. Some churches seem to think that if they could only get Brother Silvertongue for their preacher their entire congregation would be swept into the kingdom. But whoever occupies the pulpit this will be the verdict of history "Some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." The same truth produces different effects even as the shining of the sun softens ice and hardens clay.

Promoted.

With this lesson the story of the life of Paul abruptly closes. Luke the amanuensis, very likely took the time to write it during the two years in which they dwelt at Rome. And Paul wrote many of the epistles, which are incorporated in the sacred canon during that time. Tradition says something about release, re-arrest and execution after five years more of toil. But the book of the Acts is the only certain historical guide in tracing his life. Nevertheless, all critics agree that the life of Paul did not extend over more than five years from this point.

One day a small procession wended its way through the gates, and "Paul the Aged," was again in the midst. The mightiest mind in the Christian church was on his way to promotion and coronation. He had just penned his last message and was, now "ready to be offered. He had fought the good fight. He had kept the faith. He had finished his course." Soon the soldiers halt, and the executioner steps forward. For the last time those tottering limbs bend in prayer. There is a flash in the sunlight as the headman's axe descends—and the worn and weary pilgrim is at rest.

HOME DRESSMAKING

By Charlotte Martin.

A YOKE SHIRTWAIST.



Pattern No. 439.—This is one of the most popular designs of the season. It is made up in white linen and finished with stitching and an embroidered collar is worn with it.

The pattern is cut in five sizes, 32 to 40 bust measure. Size 36 requires 3 1/2 yards of 27-inch material.

CHILD'S COAT DRESS.



Pattern No. 440.—This little dress is suitable for a boy or a girl, and suggests the Norfolk jacket in construction, there being two boxpleats in back and front. The closing is invisible under the boxpleat in front and extends all the way up and down so that the dress lays flat when laundering.

The material is blue and white checked gingham, and the collar, sleeves and belt fasten with pearl buttons and are trimmed with navy blue wash braid. The sleeves can be finished with tucks or a straight wrist band.

This pattern is cut in three sizes, 4, 6 and 8 years. Size 6 requires 3 1/2 yards of 27-inch material.

SIMPLE LITTLE DRESS.



Pattern No. 432.—The above design illustrates one of the simplest of dresses for the little girl. The sleeves of this little garment are straight on the edge and can be made especially pretty if trimmed with bias bands, as used in the picture. A band of the same edging extends across the front between the tucks. This garment is also pretty worn with a sash.

This pattern is cut in four sizes, 4, 6, 8 and 10 years. Size 6 requires 2 3/4 yards of 27-inch material.

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