

even to drop some seed that will be productive of useful thoughts in the minds of the hearers. I am sure that if each member were to assume his share of the responsibility, our meetings would not be the trials of patience that they often are, but gatherings from which none would go away unbenefitted.

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PONTIUS PILATE.

It is early in the morning of April 7, A. D., 30. Let us take our stand near the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest of the Jews. What sounds are those which come from the court of the palace? Let us step nearer; the servants of the haughty prelate are amusing themselves with a prisoner. Hear the screams of laughter as one bolder than the rest strikes the prisoner's face and even spits upon him. Suddenly the prisoner raises his face and the little crowd falls back a moment as if amazed. The expression of that face is not to be described, but once seen it can never be forgotten, there is no anger there, but unutterable pity and heavenly love beam from the strangely beautiful countenance as he turns his face to his cruel tormentors. One man cowers beneath the gaze bent upon him, and turning quickly to his comrades he says: "Let him alone! How know we what he is? I saw him in the garden when the soldiers arrested him; he made no resistance but when they went to take him they fell down as if struck by an unseen hand. Indeed! he had to speak encouragingly to them before they had power to arrest him, and lead him away. Only one of his followers attempted to defend him. Ah! but he was a brave fellow, he seized his sword and cut off the ear of Caleb, our fellow servant, who was too forward in attempting to seize him. But hark!" he continued in a lower tone, "Know you what this man done? he simply touched the wounded youth and lo! his ear was healed again."

Scoffs and jeers arose from some, others were silent, but one said in a whisper, "I overheard the master say last night that the arrest itself was unlawful according to our law, but the man is a Jew, and if he does such things as I have heard of him I should think our people would be proud of him." "Aye," said another, "and he does do them. I saw him myself when on the road to Nain, raise to life a corpse that was being carried to the burial, and I know that he cures every disease, even leprosy. I truly believe the words of our prophet Isaiah are fulfilled in him." The last man had spoken in a low, reverent voice, he seemed to command the respect of his fellows who were silent when he stopped speaking. But the silence is soon broken. The leaders of the Jews, after taking their prisoner first before Annas, then before Caiaphas and finally before the Sanhedrin, had pronounced him guilty of death, but they well know that no judgment pronounced before daybreak is legal, and at five o'clock the members of the Sanhedrin hastily gather to confirm the sentence already pronounced, and to devise means to persuade Pilate to order the death of the prisoner, for without the Governor's permission their sentence cannot be carried out. In half an hour Pilate is summoned to meet the Jews without the Hall of Judgment. The men who so loudly clamor for innocent blood must not enter the dwelling of a Gentile lest they be defiled. Reluctantly the proud Roman prepares for an audience with the people he both despises and fears. After listening to the various accusations Pilate says: "Take ye him and judge him according to your law." Quietly comes the answer: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Nothing but death will satisfy those haughty men whose jealousy has been inflamed by every act of mercy done by that loving one, and whose hatred has been aroused by every word of living truth which dropped from the pure lips. And they will never forget that while