SUNDAY'S SERMON.

NO. 97 OF DR. T. DEWITT TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "Holy Compulsion."

TEXT: "And compel them to come in."—Luke xiv., 23.

The plainest people in our day have luxuries which the kings and queens of olden times never imagined. I walked up and down the stairs of Holyrood palace—a palace that was considered one of the wonders of the world—and I said: "Can it be possible that this is all there was of this reputed wonderful place?" And this is the case in many other instances. There are fruits in Westchester County and on Long Island farms far better than the pomegranates and apricots of Bible times. Through all the ages there have been scenes of festivities, and the wealthy man of my text plans a great entertainment and invites his friends. If one builds a beautiful home, he wants his acquaintances to come and enjoy it. If one buys an exquisite picture, he wants his friends to come and appreciate it, and it was a laudable thing when the wealthy man of my text, happy himself, wanted to make other people happy. And so the invitations went out, but something went very much wrong. You can imagine the embarrassment of anyone who has provided a grand feast when he finds out that the guests invited do not intend to come. There is nothing that so provokes the master of the feast as that.

Well, these people invited to this great banquet of the text made most frivolous excuses. The fact was, I suppose, that some of them were offended that this man had succeeded so much better in the world than they had. There are people in all occupations and professions who consider it a wrong to them that anybody else is advanced. I suppose these people invited to the feast said among themselves: "We are not going to administer to that man's vanity. He is proud enough now. We won't go. Besides that, we could all give parties if we made our money the way that man makes his."

So when the messengers went out with the invitations there was a unanimous refusal. One man said, "Oh, I have bought a farm, and I must go and look at it." He was a land speculator and had no business to buy land until he knew about it. A frivolous excuse. Another man said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen." The probability is that he was a speculator in live stock. He ought to have known about the oxen before he bought them. Besides that, if he had been very anxious to get to the feast, he could have hooked them up and driven them on the road there. Another frivolous excuse. Another man said, "Oh, I have married a wife, and I can't come," when if he had said to his wife, "I have an invitation to a splendid dinner. It is highly complimentary to me. I should very much like to go. Will you go along with me?" she would have said, "To be sure, I will go." Another frivolous excuse. The fact was that they did not want to go.

"Now," said the great man of the feast, "I will not be defeated in this matter. I have with an honest purpose provided a banquet, and there are scores of people who would like to come if they were only invited. Here, my man, here; you go out, and when you find a blind man give him your arm and fetch him in, and when you find a lame man give him a crutch and fetch him in, and when you find a poor man tell him that there is a plate for him in my mansion, and when you find some one who is so ragged and wretched that he has never been invited anywhere then by the kindest tenderness and the most loving invitation any one ever had compel him to come in."

Oh, my friends, it requires no acuteness on my part or on your part to see in all this affair that religion is a banquet. The table was set in Palestine a good many years ago, and the disciples gathered around it, and they thought they would have a good time all by themselves, but while they sat by this table the leaves began to grow and spread, and one leaf went to the east and another leaf went to the west until the whole earth was covered up with them, and the clusters from the heavenly vineyard were piled up on the board, and the trumpets and harps of eternity made up the orchestra, and as this wine of God is pressed to the lips of a sinning, bleeding, suffering, dying, groaning world a voice breaks from the heavens, saying: "Drink, O friends. Yea, drink, O beloved!" O blessed Lord Jesus, the best friend I ever had, the best friend any man ever had, was there ever such a table? Was there ever such a banquet?

> From the cross uplifted high,
> Where th' Saviour deigns to die,
> What melo'ious sounds I hear
> Bursting on th' ravished ear!
> Heaven's redeeming work is done,
> Come, and welcome, sinner, come.

Religion is a joyous thing. I do not want to hear anybody talk about religion as though it were a funeral. I do not want anybody to whine in the prayer meeting about the kingdom of God. I do not want any man to roll up his eyes, giving in that way evidence of his sanctity. The men and women of God whom I happen to know for the most part find religion a great joy. It is exhilaration to the body. It is invigoration to the mind. It is rapture to the soul. It is balm for all wounds. It is light for all darkness. It is harbor from all storms, and though God knows that some of them have trouble enough now, they rejoice because they are on their way to the congratulations eternal.

Oh, the Lord God has many fair and beautiful daughters, but the fairest of them all is she whose ways are pleasantness and whose paths are peace. Now, my brothers and sisters—for I have a right to call you all so—I know some people look back on their ancestral line, and they see they are descended from the Puritans or Huguenots, and they rejoice in that, but I look back on my ancestral line, and I see therein such a mingling and mixture of the blood of all nationalities that I feel akin to all the world, and by the blood of the Son of God, who died for all people, I address you in the bonds of universal brotherhood.

I come out as only a servant bringing an invitation to a party, and I put it into your hand, saying, "Come, for all things are now ready," and I urge it upon you and continue to urge it, and before I get through I hope, by the blessing of God, to compel you to come in.

We must take care how we give the invitation. My Christian friends, I think sometimes we have just gone opposite to Christ's command, and we have compelled people to stay out. Sometimes our elaborated instructions have been the hindrance. We graduate from our theological seminaries on stilts, and it takes five or six years before we can come down and stand right beside the great masses of the people, learning their joys, sorrows, victories, defeats.

We get our heads so brimful of theological wisdom that we have to stand very straight lest they spill over. Now, what do the great masses of the people care about the technicalities of religion? What do they care about the hypostatic union or the difference between supralapsarian and supralapsarian? What do they care for your profound explanations? Clear as a London fog? When a man is drowning, he does not want you to stand by the dock and describe the nature of the water into which he has fallen and tell him there are two parts hydrogen gas and one of oxygen gas, with a common density of 39 F., turning to steam under a common atmospheric pressure of 212. He does not want a chemical lecture on water. He wants a rope.

Oh, my friend, the curse of God on the church, it seems to me, in this day, is metaphysics. We speak in an unknown tongue in our Sabbath-schools, and in our religious assemblages, and in our pulpits, and how can people be saved unless they can understand us? We put on our official gowns, and we think the two silk balloons flapping at the elbows of a preacher give him great sanctity. The river of God's truth flows down before us pure and clear as crystal, but we take our theological stick and stir it up and stir it up until you cannot see the bottom. Oh, for the simplicity of Christ in all our instructions—the simplicity He practiced when standing among the people He took a lily and said, "There is a lesson of the manner I will clothe you," and pointing to a raven, said: "There is a lesson of the way I will feed you. Consider the lilies—behold the fowls."

I think often in our religious instructions we compel the people to stay out by our church architecture. People come in, and they find things angular and cold and stiff, and they go away, never again to come, when the church ought to be a great home circle, everybody having a hymnbook, giving half of it to the one next him; every one who has a hand to shake hands shaking hands—the church architecture and the church surroundings saying to the people, "Come in and be at home." Instead of that, I think all these surroundings often compel the people to stay out. Now, let us all repent of our sins and begin on the other track and by our heartiness of affection and warmth of manner and imploration of the spirit of God compel the people to come in. How shall we lead sinners to accept the Lord's invitation? I think we must certainly begin by a holy life. We must be better men, better women, before we can compel the people to come into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. There are fine essays being written in this day about science and religion. I tell you the best argument in behalf of our holy Christianity. It is a good man, a good woman, a life all consecrated to Christ. No infidel can answer it. Oh, let us by a holy example compel the people to come in!

I read of a minister of the gospel who was very fond of climbing among the Swiss mountains. One day he was climbing among very dangerous places and thought himself all alone when he heard a voice beneath him say: "Father, look out for the safe path; I am following." And he looked back, and he saw that he was climbing not only for himself, but climbing for his boy. Oh, let us be sure and take the safe path! Our children are following; our parishioners in business are following; our neighbors are following; a great multitude stepping right on in our steps. Oh, be sure and take the right path! Exhibit a Christian example, and so by your godly walk compel the people to come in.

I think there is work also in the way of kindly admonition. I do not believe there is a person in this house who, if approached in a kindly and brotherly manner, would refuse to listen. If you are rebuffed, it is because you lack in tact and common sense. But, oh, how much effective work there is in the way of kindly admonition! There are thousands of men all around about you who have never had one personal invitation to the cross. Give that one invitation, and you would be surprised at the alacrity with which they would accept it.

I have a friend, a Christian physician, who one day became very anxious about the salvation of a brother physician, and so he left his office, went down to his man's office and said, "Is the doctor in?" "No," replied the young man waiting. "The doctor is not in." "Well," said this physician, "when he comes in, tell him I called and give him my Christian love." This worldly doctor came home after awhile, and the message was given to him, and he said within himself, "What does he mean by leaving his Christian love for me?" And he became very much awakened and stirred in spirit, and he said after awhile, "Why, that man must mean my soul," and he went into his back office, knelt down and began to pray. Then he took his hat and went out to the office of this Christian physician and said, "What can I do to be saved?" and the two doctors knelt in the office and commended their souls to God. All the means used in that case was only the voice of one good man, saying, "Give my Christian love to the doctor." The voice of kindly admonition. Have you uttered it to-day? Will you utter it to-morrow? Will you utter it now? Compel them to come in.

I think there is a great work also to be done in the way of prayer. If we had faith enough to-day, we could go before God and ask for the salvation of all the people in our churches, and they would all be saved there and then without a single exception. There might be professional men there, political men there, worldly men there, men who had not heard the gospel for twenty years, men who are prejudiced against the preachers, men who are prejudiced against the music, men who are prejudiced against the church, men who are prejudiced against God—I do not care—they might be brought in by fervent prayer—you would compel them to come in.

Oh, for such an earnest prayer! People of God, lay hold of the horns of the altar now and supplicate the salvation of all those who sit in the same pew with you—yea, the redemption of all who sit in your churches.

I tell you to-day, my friends of a great salvation. Do you understand what it is to have a Saviour? He took your place. He bore your sins. He wept your sorrows. He is here now to save your soul. A soldier, worn out in his country's service, took to the violin as a mode of earning his living. He was found in the street of Vienna playing his violin, but after awhile his hand became feeble and tremulous and he could no more make music. One day, while he sat there weeping, a man passed along and said: "My friend, you are too old and feeble. Give me your violin." And he took the man's violin and began to discourse most exquisite music and the people gathered around in larger and larger multitudes, and the aged man held his hat, and the coin poured in until the hat was full.

"Now," said the man who was playing the violin, "put that coin in your pockets." The coin was put in the old man's pockets. Then he held his hat again, and the violinist played more sweetly than ever and played until some of the people wept and some shouted. And again the hat was filled with coin. Then the violinist dropped the instrument and passed off, and the whisper went, "Who is it, who is it?" and some one just entering the crowd said: "Why, that is Bucher, the great violinist, known all through the realm. Yes, that is the great violinist." The fact was, he had just taken that man's place, and assumed his poverty, and borne his burden, and played his music, and earned his livelihood, and made sacrifice for the poor old man. So the Lord Jesus Christ comes down, and He finds us in our spiritual penury, and across the broken strings of His own broken heart He strikes a strain of infinite music which wins the attention of earth and heaven. He takes our poverty. He plays our music. He takes our sorrow. He dies our death. A sacrifice for you, a sacrifice for me.

Oh, will you accept this sacrifice now? I do not single out this and that man and this and that woman. But I say all may come. The sacrifice is so great all may be saved. Does it not seem to you as if heaven was very near? I can feel its breath on my cheek. God is near. Christ is near. The Holy Spirit is near. Ministering angels are near, your glorified kindred in heaven near, your Christian father near, your glorified mother near, your departed children near. Your redemption is near.

TRUMPET CALLS.

Ram's Horn Sounds a Warning Note to the Unredeemed.

WHEN the church is idle the devil can sleep.

EXAMPLE is more contagious than the smallpox.

TRUTH loves to be looked in the face.

MEDITATION is the mother of spiritual life.

EVERY sin becomes a tiger on our track.

THE devil never has to go far to find a loafer.

WORRY and the grave digger are good friends.

PURITY can be happier in prison than sin can in a palace.

A HYPOCRITE fools some, but none so badly as he does himself.

SAYING "not to-night," has made many a man lose his soul.

A FACT is something that will keep going straight on forever.

WHEN we know God well his word is all we want for anything.

THE man who goes out to meet trouble will have a short walk.

NONE but the good can love the truth that looks them in the face.

EVERY grateful heart is full of music that angels would like to sing.

A CIVIL tongue is a better protection for the head than a steel helmet.

GOD will not let go of your hand because the world throws mud at you.

THE devil can cause us trouble, but he can't keep us from taking it to God.

LOVE to God is sure to express itself in ways that men can understand.

TO WILLINGLY go in bad company means that the devil has gained a recruit.

THERE is great power for good in a smile, when God puts it on the face.

THE cross is never found to be heavy when we take it to please Christ.

A SINNER in the church weighs more for the devil than a dozen outside of it.

THE man who has an appetite for glory will never get enough of it to make him fat.

WHER the devil tells you that it will be safe to take a certain road, go the other way.

DON'T make the mistake of thinking you can become rich by never giving away anything.

A HYPOCRITE feels better satisfied with himself every time he sees a good man backslide.

MANY are more concerned about what they will have for dinner than where they will spend eternity.

THERE is no place this side of Heaven where it will be safe for the Christian not to watch and pray.

THE man who teaches a child to swear, is one to whom the devil probably feels like taking off his hat.

GOING into politics has been the Jericho road on which many a man was robbed of the raiment of self-respect.

SINNERS will never be in a hurry about repenting, as long as the preacher's manner makes them think they have twenty years in which to do it.

HAD the Lord quartered Elijah with the richest man in Zion, instead of feeding him on the widow's crumbs, his great camp meeting on Mt. Carmel might never have been heard of.

English Currant Cake.

One pint dark Porto Rico molasses, one pint New Orleans molasses, or one quart of one of the two, one and one-half pints of water, three-fourths pound of lard, two handfuls of brown sugar, one and one-half ounces saleratus, two tablespoonfuls vinegar, two spoonfuls of ginger, one spoonful of cinnamon and one and one-half pounds currants, all mixed. Add sufficient very soft, cheap pastry flour to make soft dough. Fill in paper-lined, greased winecake tins. Bake medium warm, and when done frost with chocolate. Chocolate is a very fine combination flavor with almost all cinnamon or ginger flavored bakestuffs. —Baker's Helper.

The Pottery Tree of Para.

One of the curiosities of Brazil is a tree who e wood and bark conta n so much silica that they are u ed by potters. Both wood and bark are burned and the ashes are pulverized and mixed in equal proportions with clay, producing a very superior ware. The tree grows to a height of 100 feet, but d es not exceed a foot in diameter. The fresh bark cuts like sandstone and when dried is brittle and hard.—Domorest Magazine.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE driest place in the world is said to be that part of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile. Rain has never been known to fall there, and the natives do not believe travelers when told that water falls from the sky.

TALL iron towers are no longer considered worth erecting. The preparations for the grand exposition of 1900 at Paris include the removal of the Eiffel Tower, if designers prefer its removal, and the still higher iron tower for Wembley Park, London, has been stopped for want of funds. Work ceased before its four great legs had been united at the first platform.

THE performances of the Austrian Archduke Eugene at Domstadtl have inspired a great deal of hero worship there. While visiting the little town he observed with interest the threshing of corn on a farm, and asking for a flail he joined in the work with the men and women, while half the village ran to see the unwonted spectacle. As the Archduke is a strikingly handsome man of unusual height and noble bearing the spectacle was one to be remembered.

ACCORDING to recent statistics, there are about 2,000 women practising medicine on the continent of North America, of whom 130 are homoeopathists. The majority are ordinary practitioners, but among the remainder are 70 hospital physicians or surgeons, 95 professors in the schools, 610 specialists for the diseases of women, 79 alienists, 65 orthopedists, 40 oculists and aurists, and finally 30 electro-therapeutics. In Canada there is but one medical school devoted exclusively to the training of medical ladies, but in the United States in 1893 there were ten, one of them being a homoeopathic establishment.

ASIATICS are learning, for the first time in a generation, something about the strength of the United States navy. Since the civil war the Asiatic station has seldom had a considerable ship in its squadron. The Baltimore is the only considerable modern ship that this Government has sent to the station, and even now half of the ships of the squadron are small and old-fashioned. It used to be said in the navy that certain ships were kept on the Asiatic station not only because they were of sufficiently light draught to ascend Chinese rivers but as well also because they were totally unfit to come home across the Pacific.

IN a recent sermon the Rev. C. F. Aked, of Liverpool, England, declared that slavery still exists in England. "Think of St. Helen's in Lancashire," he said, "and the condition of the chemical laborers there. There, engaged in the very foulest work, men labor one hundred and twelve hours one week and fifty-six hours the next, or one hundred and sixty-eight hours in the fortnight, or an average of twelve hours a day all the year round, scared and burnt by the flying particles of caustic; their teeth destroyed by acids and their internal organs, as revealed by post-mortem examination, blackened by the vapors. These men drink, and so would you drink, madly, till death released you from your sufferings."

SENSIBLE readers will, in the opinion of the New York Times, take their war news, whether it appears to come from Chinese or Japanese sources, with a liberal dilution of doubt. But one thing is abundantly clear from the tenor of all the dispatches, and that is that the Japanese have far more enterprise, dash, and initiative than the Chinese, and these qualities go a long way in war. It is not denied, either, that the Japanese are entirely united and very much in earnest, while there is great doubt whether the mass of Chinamen care anything about the matter. In fact, the Chinamen are so numerous and so stay-at-home that to them, except upon the coast and the frontiers, a foreigner is not a conceivable creature. Their whole world is China. No doubt, if the torpid empire could really be got into motion it would crush the Japanese by mere force of numbers, but as things are, the moral qualities of the Japanese will go a long way to counterbalance their inferiority in numbers and resources.

ON the steppe near Borki, that point on the railway where an accident happened on 1888 to the train carrying the Russian Imperial family, rises a church built in the Muscovite style of the seventeenth century. It was erected, adorned, and filled with paintings by the subscriptions of the faithful in all parts of the empire, and cost about $125,000. A high cupola is surrounded by six conical towers. The fronts are in yellow brick, elaborately ornamented with designs in which the double-headed eagle is conspicuous. A chapel has been built into the embankment near the rails where the Emperor's coach was pitched off the track. The mural and other paintings in church and chapel are by Prof. Maskoffsky, whose paintings are well known in New York. A park has been planted about the church. In the chapel is a record of the [illegible] of twenty-three persons killed, thirty-six injured in the disaster. Work has been going on for three years or more; the inauguration took place last June.

THE striking fact is stated by Professor Powell that in the western half of the United States, there is an area of some 760,000,000 acres where the mean annual rainfall does not exceed twenty inches. The water to be used in irrigation in all this vast region is, with slight exceptions, the natural run-off from the same area; to this being also added the amount of water caught in the mountain regions where the rainfall is more than twenty inches, but which runs down where it can be taken upon the lands having twenty inches of rainfall or less. Professor Powell remarks that, if computing the absolute run-off of all this region, it appears that it is could be all caught and distributed upon irrigable lands at the rate of twenty-four acre-inches to every acre of crop, the amount which could then be irrigated would be about one-tenth of the whole, or 75,000,000 acres; such an absolute catch is, however, impossible. Reduced to the possible catch, the amount may be stated at a little over 52,000,000 acres; this reduced again to the really practical catch, gives a little over 36,500,000 acres. The last, therefore, is the extent of land in the arid country having twenty inches or less of rainfall which can, under practical conditions, be redeemed for agriculture by irrigation through the use of the natural run-off; but to redeem it all the practical catch from the arid region and from the mountains which deliver their water into the arid region must be utilized.

A MUSICAL MOUNTAIN.

Sweet Sounds Like the Tinkling of Bells Made by Shifting Sands.

In the old Truckee mining district, down the Truckee river, near Pyramid Lake, is situated Nevada's musical mountain. This mountain was first discovered by the white settlers in 1863, at which time there was some excitement in regard to the mines found in the neighborhood. The discoverers were a party of prospectors from the Comstock.

They had pitched their tent at the foot of the mountain, and for a few evenings thought themselves bewitched, says the Virginia City Enterprise. Each evening, a little after dark, when the air was calm and all was quiet, a mysterious concert began. Out from the face of the big mountain were wafted soft strains that seemed to cause the whole atmosphere to quiver as they floated over the camp. The music then appeared to pass over it until it was far, far away, and almost lost in the distance, when, beginning with a tinkling, as of many little silver bells, there would be a fresh gust of sweet notes from the mountain.

During the daylight hours little of the mysterious music was heard, and it was settled that it was not caused by the wind. As spring near which the explorers had pitched their tents afforded the only good camping grounds in the neighborhood, and as each new party of prospectors arrived at the spot the wonder grew.

Some Piute Indians who came along and camped at the spring were found to be acquainted with the peculiar musical character of the mountain. They called it the "singing mountain."

Some of the men collected in the camp became more interested in the mountain than in prospecting, and gave most of their time to an investigation of the mystery of the musical sounds heard to proceed from it. They found that the whole face of the mountain was covered with thin flakes of a hard crystalline rock. There were great beds of these flakes. The investigators concluded that the musical sounds heard proceeded from the loose material, huge drifts of which seemed to be gradually working their way down the steep face of the mountain.

At all events the strains heard at the foot of the mountain in the evening's stillness seemed to be produced by the uniting and blending of the myriads of bell-like tinklings proceeding from the immense beds of slaty debris creeping glacier-like down the slope.

The solution of the mystery of the musical mountain is the only one worthy of notice. As no mines of value were found the district was soon deserted, and has since seldom been visited. Therefore, few expect the old-time prospectors know much about the "singing mountain."

ONE of the curiosities of railroad building is the construction of a road running from Ismid, a harbor about sixty miles from Constantinople, to Angora, about 300 miles. The bridges, sleepers, stringpieces and telegraph poles, as well as the rails, are of iron, nine-tenths of which is of German manufacture. The bridges average about four to the mile, there being 1,200 of them, the longest having a stretch of 590 feet. In addition to these there are sixteen tunnels, the longest measuring 1,480 feet. This is the only railroad which penetrates the interior of Asiatic Turkey, the Smyrna lines being near the coast.

The "Court Hand."

All legal treatises and documents during the twelfth and two following centuries were written in a stiff, affected and undecipherable hand, called "court hand." It was intentionally illegible, that the knowledge of the law might be effectually kept from the common people. The manuscripts of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries seem to be all written by the same hand. This was due to the influence of Charlemagne, who selected a peculiar style of handwriting, adopted it, and ordered every scribe to write after that as a copy.—[New York Dispatch. U38

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