

Golden Text Sermonette.

BY THE REV. A. B. MACKAY, D.D., MONTREAL.

For the Review.

Luke xiv 17. Come, for all things are now ready.

Here is an invitation—"Come"—What to? The greatest and grandest feast that ever was or will be. Who sends out the invitation? God. To whom does He send it? To all, without a single exception, bad and good, near and far, old and young. Therefore it is an invitation to you and you can be more sure of this than if your name had been actually mentioned. Why does He send this invitation? Because all things are now ready. What does this mean? God has considered our wants and has provided everything needed to supply them. When anyone makes a feast they think a great deal about what they will provide for their guests. So has God in arranging this feast.

When you receive an invitation to go to a party, have you to take anything with you? No! All is provided for you down to the bread and salt and water. In God's feast all things are ready. You have not to bring anything. Je-us has come and lived and died and risen again. The Holy Spirit has descended. All is finished. We have only to come and enjoy the feast.

Indeed God's provision for His feast is far more perfect than that of any man in our days who gives a feast. When you go to a party your mother is very particular to see that you are properly dressed for it. It would never do for you to go to it in your oldest clothes, and as you had been running about playing. You must be neat and tidy and clothed in your best. Anything else would not be respectful to those who invited you, and you would feel yourself an oddity and would be most uncomfortable if you were not dressed like the others. Now the King who makes this feast not only provides all that is required for it, but, knowing the condition of his guests, provides the very clothes he wants them to wear, and therefore there is no excuse if the very poorest is not rightly clothed.

This is a very important matter. None of us are fit to sit down at the feast just as we are. We need to be clothed with the garment God has provided. Let us see that we have it. Many think that they are quite fit to be God's guests without having received any wedding garment from Him. I have met with such and tried to show them their error and, like Naaman, they have turned and gone away in a rage.

Why did that man get in to the wedding? Not only because he thought himself good enough as he was, but because others thought so to. It is plain that the King's servants thought he was all right for they did not turn him back at the door. The King's servants let him in, but the King himself turned him out. It will not do simply to pass the muster of the King's servants. Some of them are far too easily pleased and the most careful are sometimes woefully deceived.

There are many doors to this banqueting hall, and some of the servants at these doors are to-day saying openly to sinners "You have a good heart at bottom, you are a child of God. All you need is a little care, a little education, a little reformation. Do the best you can. Live as good a life as you can. Be kind and charitable and upright and generous and it will be all right. Brush up your old coat, black your boots, wash your face and comb your hair and you will do. The King is very kind and he won't be hard upon you." They do not say, "Remember you need a new heart and a right spirit. All your righteousnesses are filthy rags." Therefore, when many of the door keepers act in that way we need not wonder that this man came in without a wedding garment.

Nothing would give me greater joy than to welcome every one of you to that feast, to see you all sitting at the Lord's Table. But this I must say—See that you really trust in the Lord Jesus. See that you are really clothed in God's righteousness, and that you are not depending on your own righteousness. See that you are perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. Remember this man without the wedding garment is the representative not of one or two, but of a great company, and this company was never greater than

to-day, because the doorkeepers were never more willing to let every one that comes pass in. It is Jesus Himself who says, pointing to this man bound hand and foot and cast out, "Many are called but few chosen."

Therefore, Come. Come every one of you for all things are now ready. Why do you stay away? If you do not accept the King's invitation, do you not proclaim yourselves disaffected subjects? rebels fit to be punished, and he will punish you, there will be no escape. But if you do come, as I hope you will, see that you put on the wedding garment which the King has provided; for if you do not, while we may admit you, the King will cast you out; cast you out from all the light and joy and glory of the feast, to the blackness of eternal banishment and unmitigated misery.

Glimpses of Japan.

BY T. IVERTON.

III.

For the Review.

We leave Yokohama by rail purposing to spend some time in the interior of the country. Our route lies for the greater part through a fertile plain that inclines gently towards the South. We follow for miles the course of a lazy river and watch men and women among the paddy fields. The rice is flooded at this season of the year and the workers have to wade ankle-deep in water. It seems dirty enough work, but rice is precious, and it is true even in Japan that men earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. The women that we notice going about with baskets among green bushes are gathering the first crop of tea or stripping the mulberry trees of their leaves in order to feed the silk worms. Every town has a small silk factory. The great tea factories are at Yokohama and the large cities. Very pleasing is the rural appearance of the trim villages. Many of the houses are thatched, others are shingled, and some have tiles on. In China there is an appearance of dirt and decay everywhere. Here the reverse is the truth. On all hands we see evidences of order, decency, and progress. Many of these villages have large, modern-looking public schools, often presided over by foreign masters who teach in the English language. The train is crowded with passengers, for the subjects of the Mikado are fond of travelling, but there is no rude gazing at the foreigner, much less is he called by unspeakable names. I entered into conversation with an engineer, a graduate of the Imperial University, and found him very intelligent and obliging. It is refreshing to find that many of these are Christians. I preached at Tokyo to an audience of several hundred, largely composed of students from the University. There was no reason to complain of inattention, although the speaking was done through an interpreter. The young engineer was familiar with the truths of Christianity, but he may not have been a professed member of the Christian Church for all that. There is a great deal of scepticism gendored among the young men by the wholesale importation of scientific and philosophical writings with which the students are scarcely able to grapple. One finds the works of Hubert Spencer in nearly every book store at Tokyo, and works far more questionable are equally common. We were busily talking about the war between Japan and China when the train pulled up at a small station among the foothills. There was a little time for a stroll; and what a delightful spot it was! Behind us stretches out far and wide a rich and densely peopled plain with innumerable villages shining like gems in the universal verdure. The meandering river appears like a silvery ribbon twisting this way and that way until lost in the haze towards the sea. A glorious morning in the land of the rising sun! Nature, arrayed in the splendid opulence of June, goes forth to greet the orb of day. Birds flit from bough to bough and chirp and sing as if the live-long day were full of joy. Once more from the glades beyond we hear the welcome notes of the cuckoo. Some say that it is not the true cuckoo, but we persist that the notes are true at any rate and the same as of old. The balmy mountain air has lost some of its exhilarating power, and every breath fills