THE CKIME OF SILENCE

"Thou Dumb and Deaf Spirit, I Charge Thee, Come Out."

SPEAK OUT ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Christians Should Not Ba Si'en: When Religi n is Made a Target for Raillery -They Should I oad Up With a Few found Those Who Attack Christianity.

Washington, Feb. 10 .- In this discourse Dr. Talmage calls for a more demonstrative religion and a hearty speaking out on the right side of everything; text, Mark ix, 25, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him.

Here was a case of great domestic anguish. The son of the household was possessed of an evil spirit, which, among other things, paralyzed his tongue and made him speechless. When the influence was on the patient, he could not say a wordarticulation was impossible. The spirit that captured this member of the household was a dumb spiritso called by Christ-a spirit abroad to-day and as lively and potent as in New Testament times. Yet in all the realms of sermonology I cannot find a discourse concerning this dumb devil which Christ charged upon in my text, saying, "Come out of

There has been much destructive superstition abroad in the world concerning possession by evil spirits. Under the form of belief in witch-craft this delusion swept the continents. Persons were supposed to be possessed with some evil spirit, which made them able to destroy others. In the sixteenth century in Geneva 1,500 persons were burned to death as witches. In one neighborhood of France 1,000 persons were burned. In two centuries 200,000 persons were slain as witches. So mighty was the delusion that it included among its victims some of the greatest intellects of all time, such as Chief Justice Matthew Hale and Sir Edward Coke, and such renowned ministers of religion as Cotton Mather, one of whose books, Benja-min Franklin said, shaped his life and Richard Baxter, and Archbishop Cranmer and Martin Luther; and among writers and philosophers, Lord Bacon. That belief, which has become the laughing stock of all sensible people, counted its disciples among the wisest and best people of Sweden, Germany, England, France, Spain and New England. But reject witchcraft, any man who believes the Bible must believe that there are diabolical agencies abroad in the world. While there are ministering spirits to bless there are infernal spirits to hinder, to poison and to destroy. Christ was speakspiritual existence when, standing before the afflicted one of the text, he said, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, come out of him."

Against this dumb devil of the text I put you on your guard. Do not think that this agent of evil has put his blight on those who, by ion of the vocal organs, have den gates of speech bolted and barred. Among those who have never spoken a word are the most gracious and lovely and talented souls that ever were incarnated. The chaplains of the asylums for the dumb can tell you enchanting stories of those who never called the name of father or mother or child, and many of the most devout and prayerful souls will never in this world speak the name of God or Christ.

Many a deaf mute have I seen with the angel of intelligence seated at the indow of the eye, who never came forth from the door of the mouth. What a miracle of loveliness and knowledge was Laura Bridgman of New Hampshire, not only without faculty of speech, but without hearing and without sight, all these faculties removed by sickness when two years of age, yet, becoming a won-der at needlework, at the piano, at the sewing machine and an intelligent student of the Scriptures and confounding philosophers, who came from all parts of the world to study the phenomenon. Thanks to Christianity for what it has done for the amelioration of the condition of the deaf and the dumb. Back in the ages they were put to death as having no right with such paucity of equip-ment to live, and for centuries they were classed among the idiotic and unsafe. But in the sixteenth century came Pedro Ponce, the Spanish monk, and in the seventeenth century came Juan Pablo Bonet, another Spanish with dactylology, or the finger al habet, and in our own century we have had John Braidwood and Drs. Mitchell and Ackerly and Peet and Gallaudet, who have given to uncounted thousands of those whose tongues were forever silent the power to spell out on the air by a manual alphabet their thoughts about this world and their hopes for the next. We rejoice in the brilliant inventions in behalf of those who were born dumb. But we are not this morning speaking of congenital mutes. We mean those who are born with all the faculties of vocalization and yet have been struck by the evil one mentioned in the text
—the dumb devil to whom Christ
called, when he said, "Thou dumb
and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come

There has been apotheosization of silence. Some one has said silence is golden, and sometimes the greatest triumph is to keep your mouth shut. But sometimes silence is a crime and the direct result of the baleful influ-ence of the dumb devil of our text. There is hardly a man or woman who has not been present on some occasion when the Christian religbecame a target for raillery. Perhaps it was over in the store some day when there was not much going on and the clerks were in a group, or it was in the factory at the noon

der the trees while you were rest-ing, or it was in the clubroom, or it was in a social circle, or it was in the street on the way home from ss, or it was on some occasion which you remember without des-cribing it. Some one got the laugh on the Bible and caricatured the pro fession of religion as hypocrisy. made a pun out of something that Christ said. The laugh started, and you joined in, and not one word of protest did you user. What kept you silent? Modesty? No. Incapacity, to answer? No. Lack of opportunity? No. It was a blow on both your lips by the swing of the dumb devil. If some one should malign your father or mother or wife or husband or child, you would flush up quick and either with an indignant word or doubled up fist make response. And yet here is our Christian religion which has done so much for you and so much for the world that it will take all eternity to celebrate it, and when it was attacked you did not so much as say: "I differ. I object. I am sorry to hear you say that. There is another side to this." You Christian people ought in such times as these to go armed, not with earthly weapons, but with the sword of the spirit. You ought to have four or five questions with which you could confound any man who attacks Christianity. Oh, friends, better load up with a

few interrogation points! You can-not afford to be silent when God and the Bible and the things of eternity are assailed. Your silence gives consent to the bombardment of your Father's house. You allow a slur to be cast on your mother's dying pil-low. In behalf of the Christ, who for you went through the agonies of assassination on the rocky bluff back of Jerusalem, you dared not face a sickly joke. Better load up with a few questions, so that next time you will be ready. Say to the scoffer: "My dear sir, will you tell me what makes the difference be-China and the United States? What do you think of the sermon on the mount? How do you like the golden rule laid down in the Scriptures? Are you in favor of the Ten Commandments? In your large and extensive reading have you come across a lovelier character than Jesus Christ? Will you please to name the triumphant deathbeds of infidels and atheists? Among the innumerable colleges and universities of the earth will you name me three started by infidels and now supported by infi-dels? Down in your heart are you really happy in the position you oc-cupy antagonistic to the Christian religion? When do you have the most rapturous views of the next world? Go at him with a few such questions and he will get so red in the face as to suggest apoplexy, and he will look at his watch and say he has an engagement and must go. But then there are occasions when this particular spirit that Christ ex-

orcised when he said, "I charge thee to come out of him," takes people by the wholesale. In the most responsive religious audience have you noticed how many people never sing at all? They have a book, and they have a voice, and they know how to read. They know many the tunes, and yet are silent while the great raptures of music pass by. Among those who sing not one out of a hundred sings loud enough hear his own voice. They hum it. They make the lips go, but it is in-audible. With a voice strong enough to stop a street car one block away all they can afford in the praise of God is about half a whisper. enough sopranos, enough altos, enough bassos to make a small heaven between the four walls they let the opportunity go by unimproved. The volume of voice that from the largest audience that ever assembled ought to be multiplied two thousand fold. But the minister rises and gives out the hymn, the organ begins, the choir or precentor leads, the audience are standing so that the lungs may have full expansion, and a mighty harmony is about to ascend when the evil spirit spoken of in my text-the dumb devilspreads his two wings, one over the lips of one half the audience and the other wing over the lips of the other half of the audience, and the voices roll back into the throats from which they started, and only here and there anything is heard, nine-tenths of the holy power is destroyed, and the dumb devil, as he flies away, says, "I could not keep Isaac Watts from writing that hymn, and I could not keep Lowell Mason from composing the tune to which it is set, but I smote into silence or half silence the lips from which it would have spread abroad to bless neighborhoods and cities and then mount the wide open hea-vens." Give the long meter doxolog. the full support of Christendom, an those four lines would take the who

earth for God. During the cotton famine in L. cashire, England, when the sufferin was something terriflic, as the firs wagon load of cotton rolled in th wagon load of cotton rolled in the starving people unhooked the horses and drew the load themselves, sing-ing, until all Lancashire joined in with triumphant voices, their cheeks sopping with tears, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." When Commodore, Perry, with his warship, the Mississippi, lay off the coast of Japan, he bombarded the shores, with "Old Hundredth" played by the marine band. Glorious "Old Hundredth, composed by William Franc of Germany. In a war prison at 10 o'clock at night, the poor fellows far from home and wounded and sick and dving, one prisoner started the "Old Hundredth Doxology," and then a score of voices joined; then all the prisoners on all the floors took up the prisoners on all the floors took up the acclaim until the building from foundation to top stone, fairly quaked with the melodious ascription. A British man-of-war lying off a foreign coast heard a voice singing that doxology and immediately guessed, and guessed aright, that there was an Englishman in captivity to the Mohammedans, and in the small boats the sailors rowed to small boats the sailors rowed to shore and burst into a guardhouse

know what tune the trumpets of re-surrection shall play, but it may be the doxology which is now sounding across Christensom. How much cross Christengom, hearty we would be in our songs an how easily we would drive back the dumb devil from a'l our worshiping dumb devil from a'l our worshiping assemblages if we could realize that nearly all our hymns have a stirring history. That glorious hymn, "Stand Up For Jesus," was suggested by the last words of Dudley Tyng, who was dying from having his right arm torn off by a thrashing machine. That hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," heard through a telephone, converted an through a telephone, obdurate soul. "Shall We Gather at the River?" was a hymn first sung in Brooklyn Prospect Park at the children's May anniversary and then started to encircle the world. "Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" is a song that has saved hundreds of dissipated young men.

Tom. the drummer boy in the army was found crying, and an officer asked him what was the matter. "Oh,"
he said, "I had a dream last night,
My sister died ten years ago, and my
mother never was herself again, and she died soon after. Last night I dreamed I was killed in battle and that mother and sister came down to meet me." After the next battle was over some one crossing the field heard a voice that he recognized as the voice of Tom, the drummer boy, singing, "Jesus, lover of my soul." But at the end of the first verse the voice became very feble, and at the end of the second verse it stopped, and they went ve and found Tom. the drummer boy, leaning against a stump and dead.

Do not, however, let us lose ourselves in generalities. Not one of us but has had our lives sometimes touched by the evil spirit of the text-this awful dumb devil. We had just one opportunity of saying a Christian word that might have led a man or woman into a Christian life. The opportunity was fairly put before us. The word of invitation or consolation or warning came to the inside gate of the mouth, there it halted. Some hindering power locked the jaws together so that they did not open. The tongue lay flat and still in the bottom of the mouth as though struck with paralysis. We were mute. Though God has given us the physiological apparatus for speech and our lungs were filled with air which by the command of our will could have made the laryngeal muscles move and the vocal organs vibrate, we were wickedly and fatally silent. For all time and eternity we missed our chance, or it was a prayer meeting, and the service was thrown open for prayer and remarks, and there was a dead halt—everything silent as a graveyard at midnight. Indeed, it was a graveyard and midnight. An embarrassing pause took place that put a wet blanket on all the meeting. Men, bold enough on business exchange or in worldly circles, shut their eyes as though they were praying in silence, but they were not praying at all. They were busy hoping somebody else would do his duty. The women flushed under the awful pause and made their fans more rapidly flutter. Some brother, with no cold, coughed, by that sound trying to fill up the time, and the meeting was slain. But what killed it? The dumb devil. This is the way I account for the fact that the stupidest places on earth are some prayer meetings. I do not see how a man keeps any grace if he regularly attends them. They are spiritual refrigerators. kept on ice. How many of us have lost occasions of usefulness? In a sculptor's studio stood a figure the god Opportunity. The sculptor had made the hair fall down over the face of the statue so as to completely cover it, and there were wings to the feet. When asked why he so represented Opportunity, the sculp-tor answered, "The face of the statue is thus covered up because we do not recognize Opportunity when

righteousness. If your ship is afloat on the Pacific ocean of God's mercy. hang out your colors from the masthead. Show your passport if you have one. Do not smuggle your soul into the harbor of heaven. Speak out for God! Close up the chapter of lost opportunities and open a new chapter. Before you get to the door on your way out shake hands with some one and ask him to join you on the road to heaven. Do not drive up to heaven in a two wheeled f'sulky" with room only for one, and that yourself, but get the biggest gospel wagon you can find and pile it full of friends and neighbors and shout till they hear you all up and down the skies, "Come with us, and we will do you good, for the Lord hath promised good concerning Israel." The opportunity for good which you may consider insignificant may be tremendous for results, when on the sea Captain Haldane swore at the ship's crew with an oath that wished them all in perdition, and a Scotch sailor touched his cap and said, "Captain, God hears prayer, and we would be badly off if your wish were answered." Captain Haldane was convicted by the sailor's remark and converted, and became the means of the salvation of his brother Robert, who had been an infidel, and then Robert became a minister of the gospel, and under his ministry the godless Felix Neff became the world renowned missionary of the cross, and the worldly Merle d'Aubigne became the au-thor of "The History of the Reformand will be the glory of the h for all ages. Perhaps you do as much as the Scotch sailor ust tipped his cap and used one n sentence by which the earth he heavens are still resounding otent influences. Do something d, and do it right away or

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