

Firm as Adamant.
 It was before the fall.
 "Adam," said our first mother, in a serious tone, "we certainly are living beyond our means."
 "That's exactly my own opinion, little woman," said the father of his kind. "And what do you propose to do about it?"
 "We must economize," said the universal mother.
 "Yes," said Adam, "we must, and I am ready to second anything you suggest. But, wait. There is one item of expenditure that positively must be excepted from the pruning shears."
 "I will not," said Adam, with a strong emphasis, "I will not have our laundry bills cut down!"
Had One Advantage.
 De Wolf Hopper was once a witness in a suit for slander, and the opposing counsel in the courtroom said:
 "You are an actor, I believe?"
 "Yes," replied Hopper.
 "Is not that a low calling?"
 "I don't know, but it's so much better than my father's that I am rather proud of it."
 "What was your father's calling, may I ask?"
 "He was a lawyer," said Hopper.
All Names Alike to Him.
 "What is the name, may I ask," said the reporter, "of the man who has purchased a controlling interest in your line of road?"
 "His name, sir," frigidly answered the officer of the railway company, "is withheld."
 "That's a new one," rejoined the imperturbable reporter, whipping out his notebook. "How do you spell it?"
 During the year 1900 there were built in the United States and officially numbered by the Bureau of Navigation 1,102 merchant vessels.

SPEAK FOR THE RIGHT.

Dr. Talmage Says Silence Is Not Golden While There Are Evils.
In Your Large and Extensive Readings Have You Come Across a Lovelier Character Than Jesus Christ?

(Copyright 1901.)
 WASHINGTON, D. C.—In this discourse Dr. Talmage calls for a more demonstrative religion and a hearty speaking out on the right side of everything; text, Mark 12: 29: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, I charge thee, come out of him."
 Here was a case of great domestic antagonism. 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 word—articulate was impossible. The spirit that captured this member of the household was a dumb spirit—so 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 devil which Christ charged upon in my text, saying, "Come out of him."
 There has been much destructive superstition abroad in the world concerning possession of evil spirits. Under the form of belief in witchcraft 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 1500 persons were burned to death as witches. Under one judge, in Lorraine, 900 persons were burned to death as witches. In one neighborhood of France 1000 persons were burned. In two centuries 200,000 persons were slain as witches. So mighty was this 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, who wrote "Wonders of the Invisible World," and John Wesley, who said that the devil 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 an amiable people counted its disciples among the wisest and best people of Sweden, Germany, England, France, Spain and New England. But while we reject witchcraft, many men who believe the Bible nevertheless have been misled by diabolical agencies abroad in the world. While there are ministering spirits to bless there are indelible spirits to hinder, to poison and to destroy. Christ was speaking to a spiritual 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 omission of the vocal organs have had the golden gates of speech bolted and barred. Among those who have never spoken a word are the most gracious and lovely and talented souls that were ever incarnated. The chaldeans in Babylon for the dumb can tell you of 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.

said my friend, "we have in this world only half of everything, and do you not think that when we hear the last half things may be consistent and that then we may find that God was right?"
 Oh, friends, better load up with a few interrogation points. You cannot 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 pillow. In behalf of the Christ, who for you went through the agonies of assassination on the rocky bluff of Jerusalem, you dare not face a sickly joke. Better load up with a few questions, so that next time you may find that God was right.
 "My dear sir, will you tell me what makes the difference between the conditions of woman in 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?"

"How do you account for the fact that among the out-and-out believers in Christianity were such persons as Benjamin Franklin, John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle, Babington Macaulay, William Penn, Walter Scott, Charles Kingsley, Horace Bushnell, James A. Garfield, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Admiral Foote, Admiral Farragut, Ulysses S. Grant, John Milton, William Shakespeare, Chief Justice Marshall, John Adams, Daniel Webster, George Washington? How do you account for their fondness for the Christian religion?"
 "Among the innumerable colleges and universities of the earth will you name me three started by infidels and now supported by infidels? Down in your heart are you really happy in the position you occupy antagonistic to the Christian religion?"
 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, "I have a book to read," and then he will give up. You will put him in a sweat that will beat a Turkish bath. You will put him on a rout compared with which our troops at Bull Run made no time at all.

Arm yourself, not with arguments, but interrogation points, and I promise you victory. Shall such a man as you, shall such a woman as you, surrender to the meanness of a spirit that ever smoked up from the pit—the dumb devil spoken of in the text?
 But then there are occasions when this particular evil character exercises 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, they have a voice, and they know how to read. They know many of the tunes and yet are silent while the great raptures of music pass by. They know how to sing, but one out of a hundred sings loud enough to bear his own voice. They hum it. They give a sort of religious grunt. They make the lips go, but it is inaudible. With a voice that could sing, they sing no more than one book away, all they can afford in the praise of God is about half a whisper. With enough sopranos, enough altos, enough basses to make a small heaven between the four walls, they sing the opportunity go unimproved. The volume of voice that ascends from the largest audience that ever assembled ought to be multiplied by ten. They have the opportunity but they do not use it. The evil spirit spoken of in my text—the dumb devil—spreads his two wings over the lips of one-half the audience, and 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, and nine-tenths of the holy power is destroyed and the dumb devil is at his fling 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 heavens." Give the long meter doxology the full support of Christendom and those four lines would take the whole earth for God.

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. Religion kept on ice. How many of us have lost occasions of usefulness?
 In a sculptor's studio stood a figure of 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 sculptor answered, "The face of the statue is thus covered up because we do not recognize Opportunity when it comes, and the wings of the feet show that Opportunity is swiftly gone."
 But do not let the world deride the church because of all this, for the dumb devil is just as conspicuous in the world. The great political parties assemble the proper time to build platforms for the candidates to stand on. A committee of each party is appointed to make the platform, and in proper deliberation the committees come in with a ringing report, "whereas" and "whereas" and "whereas." Pronouncements all shaped with the one idea of getting the most votes. All expression in regard to the great evils of the country ignored. No expression in behalf of temperate living, for that would lose the vote of the liquor traffic. No expression in regard to the universal attempt at the demolition of the Lord's day. No recognition of God in the history of nations, for that would lose the vote of the atheists. But "whereas" and "whereas" and "whereas." Nine cheers will be given for the platform. The dumb devil of the text puts one wing over the one platform and the other wing over the other platform. These great conventions are opened with prayer by their chaplains. If they avoided platitudes and told the honest truth in their prayers they would say: "O Lord, we want to be postmasters and consuls and foreign ministers and United States district attorneys. For that we are here and for that we will strive till the election next November. Give us office or we die. Forever and ever, Amen."
 The world, to say the least, is no better than the church on this subject of silence at the wrong time. In other words, is it a time for Christianity to become pronounced and aggressive and more before? Take sides for God and sobriety and righteousness.
 "If the Lord be God, follow Him; if Baal, then follow him." Have you opportunity of rebuking a sin? Rebuke it. Have you a chance to cheer a disheartened soul? Cheer it. Have you a useful word to speak? Speak it.
 Be out and out, up and down for 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 "sulky" with room only for you and that yourself, but get the biggest gospel wagon you can find and pile full of friends and neighbors, and about till they hear you all up and down the hill, for the Lord hath promised good concerning Israel.

Finance.
 "Gimme a 10-cent seegar," said the tough young man to the tobacconist.
 "Aw, take it back," he continued, after carefully inspecting the weed.
 "Gimme a couple boxes o' sweetcaps."
 "Hold on, you haven't paid for them," yelled the cigar man, as the customer moved toward the door.
 "Haven't paid for 'em? Why, I give you the seegar for the cigarettes."
 "Well, but you didn't pay for the cigar."
 "Well," demanded the tough young man with great disdain, "I didn't take it, did I?"

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