

SIN AND ITS BAITS.

Dr. Hills of Chicago on Temptation and Its Danger and Discipline.

Ways of Escape Provided—Weapon of Defense Given by God to Keep the Soul Immune and Clear From Taint.

Rev. Newell Dwight Hills preached recently to the congregation of Central church, Chicago, on "Temptation; its Danger and Discipline and the Soul's Immunity Therefrom." His text was:

God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able to bear; but will with the temptation make a way of escape.—1 Cor. x, 13.

If the dangers that threaten the life of animals and men are numerous and powerful, the weapons for warding off attack are even more wonderful. That which Christ saith unto man, nature saith unto living things: "What I say unto you I say unto all. Watch! For every danger there is a way of escape."

But if man is the lord of creation, and if all the dangers and enemies of life that are distributed through the rest of the animal world are gathered up and concentrated upon his single body, it is also true that all the implements of offense and defense are united in man. Man's body is a museum into which are collected all the instincts, all the nerves, all the muscles that are distributed among the rest of the animal creation.

Grateful for these instruments of defense and protection, we are also grateful for the fact of temptation itself. Strength is through struggle. Growth comes by wrestling. Manhood is a trophy after a long, fierce fight with passion and sin. "Easter's holiest spirits are not those who have lived sheltered lives, easy and languorous. All the heroes have been tested by responsibility, tried by adversity, and refined by failure. God makes man great by feeding his will with difficulties. The memory of temptations that have been conquered, and sins that have been forgiven, and the Christian heart that grows in glory that shall never fade from the walls of memory.

INSTINCT OF EVIL AS A WAY OF ESCAPE.

God, who remembers the animals in their time of danger, hath not forgotten His children. When evil approaches a secret instinct whispers a warning. Explain the fact as we may, every sweet girl instantly recognizes a bad man, and her finer instincts never slumber, never fail her, never deceive her. Those who are deceived refuse to listen to this "inner" warning, must the while they are in the presence of their compass and went on the rocks and the needle that it might point the way he wished. Poison plants exhale a noisome atmosphere, and so does a bad man. A block of ice leads a chill to the air, and so does a hard, cold, selfish heart. Some secret instinct made young Oliver Twist shiver when he met Fagin, bear-eyed, demoniac, with his two little eyes burning like two furnaces of fire beneath the overhanging cliffs. Gluttony, uncleanness, viciousness, falsehood, idleness and theft that characterize tramps—all these are instantly recognized by a secret instinct of the child that makes him revolt from these forms of evil. And this instinct that forewarns the soul forearms it. Happy the youth who maintains the delicacy of this fine moral sense! What the bloom is to a peach, what the dewy freshness is to a rose, that secret instinct is to the heart of the man. "Filled with the hills of the valley is half so fragrant as a human heart that has learned the art of plain living and high thinking, the art of faith and trust and prayerful aspiration. Happy the child who keeps the bloom of delicacy upon mind and heart! Happy the girl who shivers at the mere sight of a doubtful picture or a questionable novel. Often some so-called "society woman" and so-called "widely-travelled man" mock at what is termed the prudishness of those who try to keep sensitive and delicate the fine bloom that lies upon a sweet imagination and untroubled heart. But this is for some time with dead boughs, and bare branches, and rotting trunk, to mock at the apple tree covered with pink-frosted snow, saying: "I have gotten beyond all those things named buds and blossoms and fruit! Alas, for the tree, blasted and blackened, that smears at the very feet of the child who blooms. Alas, too, for that man who is a dead and decaying tree instead of the tree putting on verdure, bloom and fruit.

EXPERIENCE AND PROTECTION.

Experience opens a way of escape from temptation. Milton makes Satan approach Eve in the form of a tempter, but for the most part Satan is transformed into an angel of light. Evil disdains rags. Sin puts on the bright plumage of a bird of sweet song. In the legend when the Greek boy was sent with important dispatches from one town to another the general warned him not to allow himself to be attracted from the path. But while the boy was hesitating over the hills and stopping now and then to pick a flower or a beautiful girl met him in the way. She blew him a kiss from the tips of her dainty fingers. She beckoned him to follow her far from the homeward path. As he followed her, the angelic form seemed to leave a rosy flush in the air, and the soft, insinuating perfume from her garments intoxicated his senses. But the more he pursued the more she fled. In the wild chase she plucked into the thorns that tore the boy's flesh. She led him into a stony path, where the sharp rocks cut his feet. Not until night fell and he was lost in the forest was he able to seize her garments. Then, lo! her disguise fell off, and instead of a beautiful girl there was disclosed a hag. And if sin begins as an angel of light, it ends as a demon of darkness. God does not permit the illusion to continue. He sends experience on to discern this pretender and expose its falsity and ugliness. Just as a pure

SUNDAY SCHOOL. THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

LESSON IX.—February 26. GOLDEN EVENT.

If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.—John 7: 37.

THE SELECTION. Includes the whole chapter.

PLACE IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST. Third year, latter half. Near the close of His great Galilean ministry. Opposition increasing. Six months before the crucifixion.

HISTORICAL SETTING. Time—October 17, A. D. 29. About six months after the last lesson. The Feast of Tabernacles this year began on October 11 (Lewin) and this was the seventh day of the feast.

Place.—Jerusalem, in the court of the temple. Jesus, nearly 33 years old.

CHRIST AT THE FEAST.—John 7: 14, 23-37. Study the whole chapter. Commit verses 23-31.

14. (a) Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. 23. Then (b) cried Jesus in the temple, as He taught, saying, Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am, and I am not come of myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not. 29. (c) But I know Him; for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me. 30. Then (d) they sought to take Him, but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour had not yet come. 31. And (e) many of the people believed on Him, and said, When (f) Christ cometh, will He do more (g) miracles than these which this man doeth? 32. The Pharisees heard (h) that the people murmured such things concerning Him; and the Pharisees and chief priests sought to kill Him, because they said, He doeth such signs. 33. Then (i) said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. 34. Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me; and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

THE SCARS OBLITERATED FROM THE SOUL. In his outlook the poet beholds himself the victor at last over all his temptations and sins. His figure is very beautiful. God spreads for the soul a banquet in the presence of its old enemies. As some ancient king conquers the brigands, and the enemy makes a treaty of peace, and stability of his kingdom brings in the columns round about his banqueting hall, and feasts his brave soldiers in the presence of their enemies, so David says that the time shall come when the soul shall behold its every enemy slain as a captive under the feet. The names of these captive kings are hatred, jealousy, deceit, selfishness, greed, pride, conquering all the temptations, forgiven all the sins. At last forgotten will be all the characters and follies and crimes. Some not know the richness of Christ's reward have affirmed that though man's sins be forgiven the scars will always remain. It is said that the blood spot must ever be on David's hand; that shame will be the heritage of Peter; that Macbeth may be forgiven, but the memory of his murder will always course him. The weeping girl kissing the hem of Christ's garments, who always shiver remembering the past. Nay! a thousand times nay! By what right doth man limit the pardoning, redeeming, atoning mercy of the great God? Science tells us that nature does away with the scars on the body. In childhood the boy cuts his hand. Grown a gray and 70, in building a new body each faded away. Scholars believe that did man live long enough to build a score of new bodies the scars would finally disappear. But nature, who slowly casts off the scars of the body, does not obey the behest of the higher power. For it is the infinite God who does away with physical scars as a pledge that at last the scar shall pass from the weeping Macbeth, from broken-hearted Peter, from repentant David, from erring Jacob, from that beautiful girl; at last the record shall fade from the walls of memory. For it is the sword, the smith plunges it into the fire and there tempers its glittering edge, and it comes forth new. And hath God less skill than the smith? And are His fires less forceful? Philosophy doubts. Plato exclaims, "I do not know that God has a right to forgive sins." Agnosticism questions. Materialism means. Then the Christian sage exclaims, "Behold, I show you a more excellent way. It is the way to a place named Calvary." Behold, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

REVISION CHANGES. Ver. 14. (a) But when it was now the midst. Ver. 23. (b) Jesus therefore cried and said, Teaching and saying.

LIGHT ON THE TEXT. Since our last lesson six months of a busy life, unrecorded by John, were passed by Jesus in Galilee. At the autumn thanksgiving feast Jesus goes to Jerusalem for a brief visit. The opposition began long before has not diminished, but has become fiercer from the popularity of Jesus and by His fuller statements of His nature and mission.

Mr. Ryan went to Nova Scotia in 1867, and with Mr. Brooks built the heaviest portion of the Pictou railway along the Salmon River. The same firm, Brooks & Ryan, built a large part of the European and North American line through parts of Maine and New Brunswick again with Mr. Brooks he built the line known as the Pope line, from Lennoxville, in the Eastern Townships, towards the boundary, now a part of the Canadian Pacific short line. Next Mr. Ryan was engaged in building section 22 of the International railway, including the heavy work of the bridges across the Miramichi river. In all Mr. Ryan was seven years in the maritime provinces.

LONDON. A Tribunal of Arbitration—House of Commons. LONDON, Feb. 15.—The British government has appointed Baron Edward Macdonald, lord of appeal in ordinary, to be the arbitrator in the dispute between the Argentine and Chilean frontiers.

LONDON, Feb. 15.—In the house of commons today the debate on the address to the Queen in reply to the speech from the throne at the opening of parliament on Feb. 7th was passed. The amendment introduced by Mr. W. P. Woodcock, M.P., in relation to the subject of "Guinea Pigs in Government" was defeated by a vote of 247 to 148.

MEMORANDA. BOSTON, Feb. 14.—The schooner "Silver Spray," from New York, for Oporto, was abandoned at sea. The crew was picked up by the schooner "Newfoundland," which arrived here today from Baltimore.

NOTICE TO MARINERS. TOMPKINSVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 12.—Notice is given by the Lighthouse Board that all the electric buoys in New York Lower Bay are extinguished, and it will be impossible to locate them until the remaining buoys have been carried off.

NOTICE TO MARINERS. BOSTON, Feb. 14.—Gas bell and electric buoys have been taken up in this harbor. The schooner "Lightship" has gone from her station about half a mile seaward from her station.

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