

THE PULPIT.

A SCHOLARLY SUNDAY SERMON BY
REV. DR. NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS.

Theme: The Enrichment of Life.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—For the last time until the fall the Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, pastor of Plymouth Church, preached Sunday morning. His subject was "The Enrichment of Life." The text was from John 9: 15: "I have come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly."

The time was when scientists believed that life was spontaneous. It is forty years since Huxley published his article on the *Bathylabus*. The scientist held that there was a gelatinous substance in the bottom of deep sea along the bottom of the equator. The seed of living matter enveloping the earth held the protoplasm that was the germ of all living things that creep or walk or fly. The union of the earth and the deep sea water and the tropic heat brought forth the substance that mothered all life. The theory was so novel that the Challenger was fitted out for deep sea dredging. But the expedition brought the keenest disappointment to the scientist. The investigators found white sand at the bottom of the tropic seas, and the *Bathylabus* became a mythical as the Trojan horse. Then scientists set themselves about the task of producing life by chemical means. To make sure there were no pre-existing germs they boiled the water, roasted the glass, cleaned the air and then sealed all three up in jars, which they kept at blood heat, in the hope of developing spontaneously living germs of an order no matter how low. For twenty years the experiments were continued, with the result that all scientists agree that life comes only from pre-existing life. If you want the living seed of corn, you must begin with the living seed thrust into the ground. If you want the fig or the grape, you must first get the root of the vine. The babe's life comes from the mother who lives before it. Even character comes from contact. Goodness is an importation and salvation an exotic. No man can will himself into gentleness. A profane man in his presence can see a watch upon his tongue, but planting a lid on Vesuvius does not put out the subterranean fires. The man may restrain his hatred of the enemy, but he cannot will himself into loving the false friend who attacked him in the back. The selfish man compels himself to give, but God alone can stir the generosity that makes giving a supreme joy. Jairus' daughter cannot bid herself to live; Christ standing above her gives life for dead. If you have the living want, the vital spark in the root will take up the dead soil and lend it life. And if you have the living Christ in the heart the soul that is dead in selfishness or dishonesty or falsehood can live into sympathy, justice and love and can give its own life. There is no spontaneous goodness. We lift our eyes unto the life giver, the joy producer—unto the Saviour of the soul.

Now, what all the world's seeking is life—growth in life. It is a question of vital force. Health is the overflowing, outbreathing vitality of the body. Death? It approaches when there is not life enough to take up the bread and meat and turn it into rich red blood. A little life means little work can be done. A little mind means that a few books will suffice. A small nature means that it needs only two or three friends. A great, royal, divine, universal soul, pulsating, glowing and throbbing with life, can be intellectual. This is an intellectual law. We speak of some young people as having hungry minds. The young scholar devours facts, conversation, the statements of books, and friends. He vitalizes everything he touches. The intellect is his life. He is in the morning as raw material, rags and wood pulp. The knowledge comes out of his intellect at night in the form of literature. He has a vitalized mind. He possesses life, creative life, as he has a living soul. The great authors, the great singers, and he will extract their messages. Witness the way Schiller digested the books of Goethe. Witness Miller's mastery of the old teachers. Witness Morse's swift progress in music. No imitator, these men. Every page is stamped with individuality. What is the secret of their success? Plainly, fullness of life. Without this abundant life all struggle is failure. This one youth has no other life than the struggle he is in. He has his heart, but he will die a pauper. Another tolls over his rhymes, but the inspiration will not come. The advocate stumbles on, seeking after the necessary word, if he can't get the fact. And each in turn ends the struggle and despair. What does he need? Life. More life for the intellect, as writer; more life for the imagination as artist; more life and passion as reformer and orator; more life as a saint. Men need more talent for career, more spiritual genius for purity and peace. For all talent is a gift and unique supremacy is an endowment from God. The unseen Father ordains the parents to hand forward their gift up to the child. It is essential that Christ has come to give life and to give it abundantly.

In these college commencement days our illustrations should come from the realm of education. Here and now we see Matthew Arnold's definition of culture—a familiarity with the best that has been done, or thought or said. And to this sentiment let us add his other word: "There is a power in the universe; not ourselves, that makes for righteousness." What is culture for the scholar? There is something in the books of great men—in the sage who thinks for us, the poet who signs for us, the orator who pleads for us, the hero who dies for us and that wisdom beyond ourselves comes in, floods the scholar's soul and transforms him. And there is a physical power in the world, not ourselves, and that we invoke for progress. Man's arm lifts 100 pounds, but there is a power in steam, in steam, in steam. Man's arm lifts 100 tons of molten steel. Man's arm runs four miles an hour, but there is a power in the flywheel of his engine that will help him to run across the continent in four days without losing breath or bringing fire. Man's voice is no stronger than it was in the days when Caesar made 10,000 soldiers hear his commands, but in a power not in himself but in electricity makes for eloquence and speech across a thousand miles of space. And how shall we explain the transformation of impetuous Peter, and passionate David and his cold, crafty, ambitious, and ambitious Saul, to this gentle Paul? There is a power in the universe not David, or Peter, or Saul, that makes for righteousness. Christ descended upon them to

give life, and to give it more abundantly. How do you explain the Italian Renaissance? There was a power in the world that made for beauty and sweetness, that descended upon the young scholar. How do you account for the German Reformation? There was a power in the universe that made for faith, and character, and self-surrender. And that power descended on Martin Luther. When came the Puritan Reformation in England? The explanation was not in John Elliot, or Sir Harry Vane, or John Pym. There was a power in the world that made for the sense of personal worth, inspiring each man to give an account of himself to God, challenging him to stand upon his own feet and assert his manhood, urging the sense of brotherhood, and that unseen power flooded the souls of the Pilgrim Fathers and the Englishmen, and descended upon the whole world. Well may the men of every great era of outbreathing genius exclaim: "We lift our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help. Our help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Let us now praise famous men of old, who have redeemed the people. But let us remember that God clothed the knight with His shining armor, that God pressed that blade with the two edges into the hero's hand; that God lent the soldiers their poems of victory; that their sing beside the camp fires; that Christ came to lead His followers forth to their holy war, giving them life, yea, life abundantly.

This principle also explains the secret of growth that begins with life. The idea was that salvation was by intellectual culture. Christ's idea is salvation by life through the new heart. Bald intellectualism says, "Blessed be wisdom," Christ says, "Blessed be character." Here is a little child. In his selfishness he seizes his sister's liltletoy and breaks it. Time and growth will increase the amount of his selfishness and make him strike his own wife and break the heart of his little child, for growth increases size, does not change the sort. Here is the youth who is sowing wild oats. Little by little he is draining off all the vital forces. The false friend says, "Don't be discouraged; he will outgrow this." But every farmer is in terror when he finds the wild oats growing amidst the tame. The wild oats drink up the rain, steal the richness from the soil, starve the tame oats. And if they do this when the false friend is sowing wild oats, the false friend will outgrow this. The wild oats are young, time and growth simply multiply the harm. Time can do nothing for a youth who is sowing wild oats save gather the harvest of pain, disaster and heartbreak. Time can turn a spark into a conflagration, growth can turn a little leak into a large one that will ruin the dike and submerge the land. Given a disease, time does not cure it, but only enlarges and spreads the poisoned tissue. Given a selfish child, growth turns him into a monster. Given an avaricious child, time and growth produce a miser. Given a tricky and cunning child, years end with a Benedict Arnold or an Aaron Burr, or a Judas and an Apostate Julian. What the wild thorn needs is the rich life of a double rose grafted within. The orchardist can use the wild root, but he cuts it from a tested peach or a cutting that turns the sour sap into sugar. It is new life we need. Jesus was right when He showed the secret, the new heart, that brings victory and peace.

Life is not to be from God, but to be to Him. We live and move and have our being in God, as our world floats in amethyst and ether, borrowing all its colors from the light that surrounds it. We have our life from Christ as the tree has its life from the rich juices of the soil, wherein the tree is rooted—the stimulating atmosphere with which the boughs are surrounded, and the all-embracing sunshine that lends warmth and heat to the sweet blossoms and the ripe fruit.

Spiritual Religion.
If our religion is to be real and truly spiritual, it must be rooted and grounded in brotherly love. He that hateth his brother cannot know God, nor can he know man. The precious Christian quality of love will open the eyes of our spirits to the abiding beauty of every human soul, to the temptations resisted, as well as to the sins which have conspired to the aspiration after something higher struggling like a plant in a dark dungeon towards the light, to the glorious possibilities hidden in the being of every child of God. That clear perception of the good concealed within our brothers and sisters will help us to catch some bright glimpses of our Father in Heaven. It is human selfishness, which hides the true nature of God's children, however defective they may have become by their own fault or the fault of others, from our sight; it is the same deep, leaden shadow which darkens our own perception of God. Through brotherly love filial affection to God's love in human hearts, and when that sacred emotion has once filled our whole being, spiritual religion is known and loved.—Arthur W. Fox.

The Cause of Much Trouble.
All kinds of doubts, disappointments, vexations and sins come to the professing Christian who makes his religion secondary. If his main concern is to get on in the world, to make money, to have a comfortable life, to indulge a taste or inclination, then come in a troop the things which cause war and doubt. Our usefulness, our happiness, our growth, our triumph, are to come, if they come at all, as the result of giving the accept of our lives to our spiritual interests. Let us be Christians and make first things first, or trying to deceive ourselves and others by claiming to be Christians when we are not.—Baptist Argus.

LED INTO TEMPTATION.
"Didn't I see the grocer's boy kiss you this morning, Martha?"
"Yes'm. But he ain't to blame, ma'am. 'Twas the leman set him the bad example."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

TOUCHY.
"Got a summer cold, I see."
"And your next remark, I presume, will be to the effect that they are the worst kind."
"Oh, no; I think winter colds are just as bad."—Pittsburg Post.

A PROTEST.
"Say, you Impire!"
"Well, what is it?"
"Cut out dem steam-roller declensions. Dis ain't no political convention."—Pittsburg Post.

HAVANAS.
"What was the feature of the Cuban campaign?"
"The cigars," replied the absent-minded veteran, who was deeply interested in politics.—Cleveland Press.

The Sunday-School

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 6.

Subject: Saul and Jonathan Slain in Battle, 1 Sam. 31—Golden Text: Amos 4:12—Commit Verse 6—Read 1 Sam. 27; 2 Sam. 1.

TIME.—1056 B. C. PLACE.—3100.
EXPOSITION.—I. The Death of Saul and His Sons, 1-6. With this lesson we come to the end of Saul's career, so promising in its beginning, so gloomy in its ending. It is sadly instructive, as showing how much a man may have and yet his life prove an utter failure after all. He was a goodly young man—"There was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he" (1 Sam. 9:2). His father was a "mighty man of valor" (1 Sam. 9:1). He was humble (1 Sam. 10:12), and considerate of others (ch. 9:5). But we find him later in life a monster of pride, arrogance and self-will (chs. 18:7-11; 19:10; 20:30-33; 22:9-19). Here we have a lesson of how little real worth there is in merely natural virtue and how easily it is transformed into devilish sin. But there was promise in the life of Saul for other reasons. God's grace was manifest to him (ch. 10:7-9), the Spirit of God came upon him (ch. 10:10; 11:6); he undertook valiant battle against the enemies of the Lord, and won a great victory (ch. 11). So we see that a man may know something of the power of the Spirit, can turn to a certain extent in the energy of the Spirit, and win victories for God, and yet after all, become an apostate and his earthly life close in hopeless gloom (Matt. 7:22, 23). Saul seems to have been a striking example of such an one. With a decline was step by step (ch. 13:8-14; cf. 14:18-20). His loss of the kingdom was foretold at this first step away from God. He takes a long step further downward by positive disobedience (ch. 13:12-23). With this comes his rejection from the kingdom is declared in no uncertain terms. Finally, falling to get any answer from the Lord about the battle with the Philistines, he turns to the devil (ch. 28:6, 7), and this crowning act of apostasy leads to the awful judgment and ruin of our lesson (1 Ch. 10:12, 14). No matter how often or how completely Israel rots the Philistines, the Philistines are always sure to gather strength and renew the attack (v. 1). The Philistines had been effectively subdued in the days of Samuel (ch. 7:13). There was a great victory under Jonathan (ch. 14). David won a great victory (ch. 17:52), but in our lesson the Philistines renew the war. And the men of Israel fled. Here we see a chain of events, the days of Samuel and Saul's early days. Thus the enemies of the Lord fled (ch. 7:10; 11:11). There is a return to the days of Hophni and Phinehas (ch. 4:10). The explanation is simple. Saul had forsaken God (ch. 13:8-12; 28:15-19). 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