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Ove Pulpit.

The True Fountain and Broken Cisterns.

SERMON PREACHED BY

REV. A. J. MOWATT.

In St. Paul's Church, Sabbath morning, Fred ericton, Oct. 21st., 1888. "For my people have committed two

evils: they have torsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."—Jer. II. 13.

An old professor, now in Heaven, in correcting an essay or exercise I had written for him, when a theological student, in which the text in some connection came in, marked it, and appended a brief note to this effect. "A grand text; take it and preach from it." That must have been twenty-five years ago, and up to this time I have never preached from it. Many a time I have turn ed it over in my mind, and tried to shape it into something for my people, and I have even gone as far as to write an introduction, but that was all I had ever done towards carrying out the old doctor's advice. But the other day, in seeking a text, it came to me, and I thought I would try, if the Lord would be with me, to do what the good old professor so long ago advised me to do, and I am here to-day to preach to you

There is nothing difficult about the text. The lessons it teaches are on the surface and such as any one can see the beauty and force of, and the figure made use of to illustrate and apply them is one that we are all familiar with. Here is changed their gods, which are yet no would not be the drinks that high liva natural spring bubbling up out of a rocky fissure, and it is lovely water, cool, sweet, abundant, refreshing. You cannot tell whence it comes, but there it is all the year round, and what a treasure it is, what a fountain of blessing. While others have to drink their muddy, noxious, fever-producing waters, you and yours have water to drink that is wholesome, healthful, water that seems to come to you from a Divine

But as the years go by you grow in wealth and pride, and you get gradually away from the simplicity that once characterized your mode of living. You build a grand mansion, and you are they The Books of Homes....Hall's Book Store ambitious to have in it all the so-called modern improvements and conveniences. ambitious to have in it all the so-called The Books of Cicero.... Hall's Book Stsre | And among other things you resolve to coax your joyous spring with its bright bubbling waters from its native hillside to come and live with you, to come and bubble up in your grand house and play all the year round for your amusement and gratification in your garden. It is too much trouble to go to the hillside where your spring is whenever you want to slake your thirst; so with your gold you will have the spring come to you.

At great expense, therefore, you have an elegant marble cistern constructed in The Books of Herodotus. Hall's Book Store | a convenient place in your mansion, and a beautiful ornamental fountain put up l in your garden. You have your con- should walk, and how much of His vigor coming to you, a new joy gladden-Anthon's Latt. Eng. and Eng.-Lat. Dictionary;

Authon's Latt. Eng. and Eng.-Lat. Dictionary;

duit pipes laid to your spring, and you spirit we should have dwelling in us!

But alas! it may be too truly said of you. men with their pickaxes and crowbars begin to dig around it. But just when they think they have it, they find it has somehow eluded them. It fails. Its bubbling ceases. It has gone, but where no one knows. It refuses to be other than what it is. And so it comes to pass that your elegant cistern is a fraud. You go to it for water, but it has none.

Now, thus it is, the prophet teaches here, with God's people. They depart from the simplicity of the truth only to find that they have lost it. "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.'

In further illustrating and bringing home the lessons here, we have first the parties guilty of the twofold evil complained of. They are God's own people, the last people in the world you would think to be guilty of one evi!, much less two. "For my people have committed two evils."

The Lord has, and has always had, a people He calls His. In Jeremiah's day they were the Jews, and they were then, and all through their history indeed, an ungrateful and backsliding peo He had done great things for them as a people. He had done so much indeed that He could do no more, so to speak. "What could have been done more to my vineyard," He asks in the words of Isaiah, "that I have not done in it?" He had exhausted the means at His command to work out for them the good He wanted them to have, and He had failed. He had singled them out from all other peoples, and bestowed upon them special favors, and made them His as no other people were His. He had done this, not because that in themselves they were better than others, superior to others in all that gives a people superiority, and far in advance of others in character and moral and spiritual worth. That was to live in the fear and favor of God. not the case. They were not much of a

the days of Jacob down, the synonym ing, keeping abreast of all that fashion-Lord reminds them of their humble have to dress so well, live in such style origin, the hole out of which He dug They have to spread so grand a table,

heathen peoples had done towards their them forever. gods, which were indeed no gods-it He feltthe reproach of it, for it gave the demned here. It was prophesied of the heathen world a chance to sneer. Egypt Christ that He would drink of the brook had not gone back on her gods, and that runneth in the way. I understand Babylon had not gone back on hers; but that to mean, among other things, that the Jewish people had gone back on the His life would not be a royal luxurious their calf-worship, to the Canaanites for men of the world live; but that, on the Baal and Ashtaroth, and elsewhere for contrary, it would be a simple unosother idolatries. And so He complains tentatious country life, a life such as the with a bitter complaint against His peo-ple. "For pass over to the isles of was thirty He would stoop down and and consider diligently; and see if there brook or the bubbling spring. His hath been such a thing. Hath a nation drink would be pure fresh water. It gods? but my people have changed their ing creates, the drinks that a fastidious glory for that which doth not profit and perverted taste demands, the Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, as drinks that indulgence craves, the be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, drinks that make the blood in the veins saith the Lord. For my people have boil and madden the brain, the drinks committed two evils; they have forsaken that poison, drug, kill. No. And how me the fountain of living waters, and foolish as well as wrong-doing God's peohewed them out cisterns, broken cis- ple are to forsake His fountains of livterns, that can hold no water."

Christendom occupy much the same re- demijohns, the whiskey-kegs, the beermore Heaven-favored than ever they hewed them out cisterns, broken cis were. Consider the light we have terns, that can hold no water." beaming around us, the privileges we I plead with you, my people, in the

us, of modern churches, of the Heavencan hold no water.'

I now proceed, in the second place, to point out some of the ways God's in the shape of doctrinal teaching or people to-day may fall, and are falling, practical religion, some pretentious "Lo into this dangerous twofold evil.

Lazarus to Heaven.

You may think that is putting it too strong in the faith, not grounded in the strongly, unwarrantably so. But there is truth, if we do. too much truth in it. How many in | Some of these modern isms have their

of peoples. Jew has ever been, since all, living the style of life they are liv- God, for it ignores the sacraments of Accounts Collected, Loans Negotiated.

for trickiness and meanness. And the able society demands of them. They them, and their wretched outcast state They have to entertain so much. They as He found them. Had it not been have to keep up so large and expensive for what He had done for them, they a house, and on one of the principal never could have been anything as a peo-streets. They have to maintain an ple, and they never could have grown to army of servants and useless dependents. the greatness they attained in the world, Oh the ten-thousand etceteras that men nor wielded the influence they wielded of wealth, or who have the name of beamong the mighty nations of antiquity. ing men of wealth, must pay for, and It was His kindness to them that made they cost so much, and they are of no manner of u e to them! On the con-Now, it was of this Heaven-favored trary, they are a real hurt, a drawback nation, this people He had redeemed a dead lift to carry or drag. Once they for Himself and made His own, He has could live and make money on a few to complain as being so evil. Not a hundred dollars a year. They were useword of complaint does He utter here ful and happy and respected. They against the heathen nations of antiquity owed no man anything but love. They as to how they had behaved towards worshipped and feared God, and did Him—such nations as Egypt, Babylon, what they thought was their duty. But Chaldea, Assyria, Persia. He looked they got up in the world, and now they for little else than evil at their hands. have drifted away farther and farther But that His own people, the people of from the simplicity of right living, and whom were such distinguished saints as they are hopelessly in debt, and a day of Abraham, Samuel, David, should be- judgment is coming that will whelm have towards Him as not even the them in a sea of troubles, and wreck

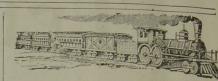
Now, that is one way of falling into was that that cut Him to the quick. this dangerous twofold evil we have con-Lord God. They had gone to Egypt for society life such as the kings and great Kittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, slake His natural thirst at the babbling | H. D. McLEOD, ing water, where they might drink free And, my hearers, we are His people and full healthful draughts, and repair to day. The churches and peoples of to the world's polluted cisterns, the lation to Jehovah—Jesus in this New barrels, and so on, and spend their C.H.B. FISHER, Q.C. G. FRED. FISHER, B.C.L. Testament age that the Jewish people oc- money for that which creates instead of cupied in the Old Testament age. quenching thirst. "For my people have We are Heaven-favored now as committed two evils; they have forsaken they were then. Indeed we are me the fountain of living waters, and

enjoy, the fulness of the blessing it is ours to have poured out upon us. And what are we that we should be thus to the simple mode of living, to eat Heaven-favored? We are not of the plain nourishing food-not that which stock of Abraham, not of the seed of feeds the pampered appetite, to drink Israel. We were Gentiles, far from God when you are thirsty pure fresh water as a people, dead in trespasses and sins. -not the wine of indulgence, to wear But His rich grace and mercy have suitable sensible clothing for comfortbrought us nigh, and now He says of not for show, to be humble and hardus, "My people." How honored! what working as the Master was, to spend a privilege! And what a trust, what a little on self-indulgence so that you may responsibility! How good we should have all the more to spend on necessary be, and how faithful! How like Him things, and especially in His cause and whose we are! How close to Jesus we for His glory, and you will find a new

Again, it seems to me, God's people favored peoples of Christendom, as it today may fall, and are falling, into this was said of the Jews in Jeremiah's twofold evil we have here condemned so times: "For my people have committed strongly, when they turn away from the two evils; they have forsaken me the living fountain of truth as we have it fountain of living waters, and hewed here in God's Word, and go after the them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that rude religious sensationalism and ear itching isms of our time.

Every now and again something new here!" or "Lo there!" thrusts itself be-And, I think, we are doing it, more fore the public and claims to do such than we know perhaps, and more wrong wonders for the good of fallen men. fully and fatally than we realize per-Some new faith or no-faith that bids fair haps, in the way we are living our life to revolutionize the world of opinion and from day to day, in such very ordinary make all things new, starts up, and for and commonplace matters as eating and a time is the rage, and lives out its day. drinking and dressing. Manners are That has been the case throughout all morals. We glorify God or otherwise the history of the church, and we are in our eating and drinking. We de- told to be on the look out for them in stroy our own souls and the souls of these latter days, for as the end draws others at our own tables. A luxurious on there are to be more and more of mode of life is fatal to christian living. them, and so like the truth are some of Who can rise from a modern banquet, them to b, and so much of the truth full to satiety with highly seasoned mixed up with their error, that even the luxuries, swollen to discomfort with in- very elect will be taken in and caught dulgence, and go and do christian work? by them. But the Wise Master cau-The rich man who fared sumptuously tions us against them. We are to be every day went to Hell; the ill-fed slow in following religious novelties. We lack wisdom, if we do. We are not

this pampered age, this age of progress, origin in a revulsion from certain evil wreck their health by what they eat and tendencies in the churches. Modern drink, and by wrecking their health Plymouthism is a recoil from the growth they wreck their usefulness they wreck of sacerdotalism in the church of Engin a very important sense their hap- land. But itself is, if possible, a more piness both for time and eternity. As dangerous error, for it would do away we grow in wealth we grow in worldli- with all churches. Then the Salvation ness. As we gather around us the Army is the outcome of the failure, or wherewithals and comforts and con- seeming failure, of the churches in the veniences of life, we depart more and great cities to reach the masses. But it more from the simplicity of living, and is only a half measure, an invention of in so far as we do that, we make it men, and, as it is, cannot do the good it harder and harder to live, and especial- seems to seek to do. My hope for it is, ly harder and harder to live righteously, that it will give up its nonsense and sensationalism, and take the whole truth. You know as well as I do, my hear- But in the meantime it is exposing itself people when He chose them. They ers, what straits many are in, how they to the curse that is pronounced upon were in many respects the least likely are driven from post to pillar, to live at those who take away from the word of



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3.15 P. M.—For Fredericton Junction,
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Boston, and points West, St. John St
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