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NEW FALL GOODS Achor for a Door of Hope. SERMON PREACHED BY

REV. A. J. MOWATT

In St. Paul's Church, Fredericton Sunday morning Dec. 9th 1888.

"And the valley of Ackor for a door of hope."—Hosea, II. 15.

The prophet's allusion here is to the stoning of Achan in the valley of Achor. That man, at the fall of Jericho, in reck. less defiance of the express command of Jehovah, stole from among the spoils a Babylonish garment, a wedge of gold, and two hundred shekels of silver. On account of that great wickedness, for it was not merely theft, it was sacrilege the army of Israel met with a disastrous' defeat, and some thirty-six men were good account of themselves. happy family were stoned to death in the valley of Achor. The result was, we find, that great prosperity immediately attended their enterprises. The army marched out of that valley where they had perhaps buried their thirty-six battle-slain comrades, and where, with their own hands, they had stoned the thirty-seventh, to victory and glory. They were a better army, a stronger army. No enemy after that could stand the possession of the land. That valley proved a door of hope.

Now, it appears to me, that there are underlying this suggestive historical ineident certain important practical principles which it would be well for us to understand and appreciate, and which it would be worth our while to try and work out into actual results. These expressive words that I have chosen as my text on this occasion are here, not mereiv for the guidance and encouragement of God's people in Hosea's time, but they are here also for our benefit, and it is our privilege to make such use of them as we

And in further illustrating the text, I would first remark, that evil of any kind, and in whatever shape it presents itself, is a source of weakness, trouble,

Israelitish soldiers marching against Ai. The Books of Cicero Hall's Book Stsre they march from the smoking ruins of Jericho to crush and destroy Ai. They doubt not but that they will succeed. The Books of Euripides. Hall's Book Store
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The Books of Livy...... Hall's Book Store have heard of the overthrow of strongwalled Jericho, and their heroes are The Books of Juvenal. ... Hall's Book Store
The Books of Thucydides. And then, on the other hand, the Israelites are brave, strong-hearted, and alknow that there is an Achan in the camp; they do not know that the cursa of accursed Jericho in cleaving to them; Men say in works, if not in words, "What they do not know that the God of armies is not with them; they do not know that their crown of glory is already faded.

Men say in works, it not in words, "What has the Lord to do with our business-transactions? We will do business just their crown of glory is already faded. heir crown of glory The stock of Classics, as you will perceive, is complete. The French Classics also and daring. I hear the soldiers boast-break it just as the interests of our ing how they willsmash down Ai. The All information from a distance answered men of Ai see their approach, and come out to meet, and if possible, repel the invaders of their country, and defend their hearths and altars. They feel that it is do or die with them. The two armies, shouting their wild war-shouts, and with their drawn swords flashing in the morning sunlight rush together. There is the crash of steel and h lmet and cuirass as they meet, and the awful melee of a hand-to-hand encounter. grasping greed! And does the Lord How they struggle and fight! At length panic-struck, the Israelitish army breaks and flees. The men of Ai have snatched the crown from the victor's head, and there is great rejoicing in the streets of Ai, and loud lamentation in the camp of Israel.

what to make of it, or how to account door of hope opening up to you. Telephone Connection. Electric Bells. for it. He goes down on his knees like Evil is not only a bad thing in itself, A. N. PETERS, - PROPRIETOR a good soldier, and he prays to God. a source of weakness, but it alienates This is none of his warfare, it is God's, the divine favor. The assault made upand he wants to know what he is to do on Ai was divinely sanctioned, but it now. He feels that the Lord is not failed, because there was an Achan in with them, and he wants to know why the camp. And many a good enterprise He has withdrawn Himself from them. fails, because the means employed and There must be a reason. And the the agencies at work are not such as answer comes, and the answer is: "Israel the Lord can approve of. The preach-has sinned." That is the secret of their ing of the gospel is a good thing, but

world's armies. It is an Achan in the camp. Many have an idea that the less religion a man has the better soldier he will make. Religion, they think, tends to effeminate men and incapacitate them for war purposes. And there is truth in that. The gentleness and love of Jesus when they take hold of men do relax the sterner and rougher features of their nature. It melts the hardness of human hearts, and makes men lovers of peace. It is religion's mission to save. not to destroy, to suffer and sacrifice rather than fight. Christians would rather submit to what is wrong than draw the sword of war. But sometimes war becomes a terrible necessity, and when it is so, when it is right to fight, then give me an army of christians. Henry Havelock's "praying saints," as they used to be sneeringly called, were the bravest of the brave, and in the dreadful Sepoy Rebellion they gave a

If it could be ascertained, it would be found, that the licentiousness of soldiers and sailers, and their drunkenness and immorality, are a serious source of weakness to the army. Evil-doing impairs health, exposes to disease, weakens the physical energies, degrades the soul, blunts the nobler sensibilities, and alienates the favor of God, without which no army can be strong. If the nations would do more for the religious necessities of their armies, give their soldiers and sailors less grog and more gospel, they would not need so many men, nor lose so many battles. It was an advantage to Israel, the hope of the nation, to stone their Achan, and it would be an advantage to our own great nation, the hope of her army and navy, to stone out the Achans of intemperance and immorality and irreligion that are today, and have been all along, eating into the very sinews of war,

And wickedness is weakness everywhere as well as in the army. It is a drawback in every good enterprise. It would be an advantage to our railroad companies, our fishery enterprises, our lumbering interests, our shipping firms, and so on, to carry on their various enterprises with the strictest regard to christian principles, to observe the sanctity of the Sabbath, to be honest and honorable in all their transactions, to encourage religion among their people, You see yonder in other days 3000 and to have as little to do as possible with men of intemperate habits and loose morals. The Lord rules, and He will not let evil go on unpunished. There comes sooner or later a judgmentday, when men are made feel, that it does not do, it does not pay, to have any

sort of Achan in the camp. Every now and again the business distress that paralyzes trade, and drags down strong firms, and fills the land with hard times, lets us see that the Lord will not have things done in a wrong way. The season has been an exceptional season for rain, and there has been serious loss to our farming population because of it. Now, we cannot know why, but it may yet come to be known, that the Lord has some controversy with the land, and He is making as suits us without regard to a moral break it just as the interests of our business seem to demand. We will do right or wrong just as it seems to us advantageous or otherwise to our business-enterprise.'

But the Lord gives men to know that He has to do with them, with their business, their prosperity, and if they do wrong, He will judge them. Look over the business-world today; look at the reckless speculation; look at the not care how things are done? Ah! He cares, and there comes a day when judgment walks abroad, and fills the land with woe.

Men of business, I suppose you have your own way of accounting for this and that as they come about, but if I read Cor. Germain & Princess Sts. But what was the cause of the disastrous defeat? Was it bad generalship thing about Providence, I would say to on the part of Joshua? Were the three- you, when it comes to be hard with you, t ousand outnumbered by the enemy? when there are strikes among your work-Was it the impudence and recklessness men, and failures around you, that the of the soldiers, or some blundering and lord is sending you down into the valuismanagement somewhere? No. We ley of Achor to stone your Achans, and do not find the captain blaming any one, if so, you will find there, as Israel found It is a mystery. He does not know long ago, and as others have found, a

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regard as a good end. But nothing of the kind. Evil means will never receive the Divine sanction, nor enjoy the Divine favor, and the good end sought for will not be gained. Not a few things are done in the name of religion and the church that are far from being right But then it is argued, churches must be built, and congregations must be gathered, and the cause of religion must go ahead. Ah! it will not do. The Lord will have nothing to do with a cause that Achan has a hand in, and sooner or later disaster will come.

And one Achan is enough to alienate the Divine favor from a whole army, and that Achan, not the captain, but simply a private. One evil tolerated in a church will hurt it, perhaps ruin it. One unhallowed means used to gain a good end will defeat it. Let us, then, be afraid of evil in any shape, for it will prove itself a source of weakness, and will ultimately bring disaster.

Again, I would remark from the text, that the destruction of evil, in every case, even indeed where not a few sacrifices have to be made to do it, is the certain precursor of good, and the way to true and lasting prosperity.

Achan may have been a good and brave soldier. 1 do not know; I take for granted he was. He may have done his part fairly well at the siege and fall of Jericho. But perhaps not. He may have been so busy looking after his own interests, hiding away his stolen treasures, that he could not do much towards helping the army. But at all events he occupied a soldier's 11.ce among the rank and file of the Israelitish army, he counted one among the thousands of the Lord's host, and that was something.

Now, I can imagine one Israelite saying to another as they are going down into the valley of Achor to stone Achan for his crime: "Comrade, this is a bad business. I do not like it. This looks to me a somewhat strange way to defeat the men of Ai. They have had already their revenge on thirty-six of our brave fellows, and now we are going to have our revenge on the thirty-seventh. That does not look much like victory-does it? It looks like helping the enemy. It looks like making our defeat still more a defeat, and our disaster still more dis-

But, was it helping the enemy? Was it crippling their own strength, and working out their own ruin? No. The destruction of evil is strength, never weakness. The army of Israel marched out of that cloomy valley with the God of armies at their head, and His presence and help were better and stronger than a thousand Achans. No Ai in Canaan could stand before them then. The valley of Achor was their door of

And it is still as true as ever it was that the valley of Achor is a door of hope. It is true of states, and it is true of churches, and it is true of individual christians. If there is an Achan in the state, whether that Achan be a vile traitor, an unsound constitution, unrighteous laws, a bad national policy, a corrupt legislation, a government unworthy of confidence, the sooner the state goes down into the valley of Achor, and hangs its traitors, amends its onstitution, repeals its bad laws, changes its national policy, reforms its corrupt legislation, and gets a new government, the better for it. So long as rebels are tolerated in the army, how can that army hope to succeed against its enemics? One traitor in the government can do more harm to a state than a thousand enemies. So long as the constitution of a government is not sound, and not in accord with the principles of truth and justice, that government can-not be strong. It has a rotten foundation, and it cannot stand. It may make the state quake from end to end to send it down into the Valley of Achor. It may plunge it into the horrors of revolution, and all but wreck it in the storms of a civil war as it did the American Republic some years ago, but down into the Valley of Achor it must go. The United States went down into that valley-went down because she had to, and she poured out her richest blood, but out of it she came after a fierce struggle sanctified from the iniquitous system of slavery, her Achan. The Southern Rebellion was the valley of Achor to her. Some years ago Great Britain's policy

in her Indian Empire was far from be ing straightforward and consistent. Indeed I am not sure that it is at all as it ought to be even today. Still, it was worse some years ago. She had given her sanction and support to the horrors of Hinduism, and winked at much that was utterly inconsistent with her standing and profession as a Christian nation. So the Lord brought her down into the valley of Achor in the shape of the Sepoy Rebellion. Oh what a valley of tears and blood and horror it was to the British nation! It can never be forgotten. But there her Achans were stoned. Her collusion with the horrible rites and idolatries of Hinduism was put an end to, and that valley, so dark and horrible. has been, and is being, a door of hope of British India.

I fear we have in the Dominion of Canada an Achan in the shape of Continued on third page.



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3.15 P. M.—For Fredericton
St. John and points East.

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