

THE DAY BOOK

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A RADICAL PROPHET

By J. Stitt Wilson.

Ever hear of Amos? No? One of the greatest radicals that ever lived, a prophet of Israel, a mighty spokesman for social justice, whose hot words turned into bible? He was the pioneer of that school of reformers who attack great wrongs in the name of the Lord.

Quite fitting is it for us to write of Amos on this editorial page. Renan, the noted French critic, said that Amos was the first "irreconcilable journalist."

Picture a simple Italian peasant dashing into St. Peter's at Rome, or a Middlesex gardener marching to the altar rail at St. Paul's in London, or a rancher making down the aisle to interrupt the preacher in one of our fine American churches, and you have the raw method of this man Amos. He confronted the priest at the altar in the name of the poor—and he only a herder, or, as some say, a tree pruner!

His words were as hot as flame. He shot them out like arrows at a target. And the robed dignitary at the altar winced, for he was linked with the wrong-doers; and he sent a messenger to the king to say that a vile conspirator against the peace of society was abroad.

"O, thou seer, flee! Get thee hence!

Get out of the house of God!" said the Priest Amaziah. And Amos said: "The House of God will go to Beth-aven"—that is, to evil—if it does not rebuke social iniquity."

A half hour of spare time will give you the reading of all the recorded words of this fiery prophet. But here are a few. They would make good texts for our own day:

"They sell an honest man for silver."

"They sell the poor—cheap—for an old pair of shoes—for junk."

"They trample to the dust the head of the poor."

"They know not to do right, saith the Lord, who store up wrong and robbery in their palaces."

Juvenal, the Roman satirist, said of the legalized exploiters of his day: "To their social iniquity they owe their gardens, palaces, stables and fine old plate."

"I, the Lord, will smite summer house and winter house and great house and house of ivory."

"Hear ye! hear ye! who oppress the poor, ye who crush the needy, ye tread upon the poor and take from him his yield of labor in wheat—and build your houses of hewn stone—and—"

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

"Seek good! Hate evil! Establish justice. Let it run down like a stream."

Some preacher, Amos! And his words turned into Scripture.

TOSSING EL TORO

They say—

William Tell never lived.

There was no "black hole" at Calcutta.

Alfred the Great never hid in a peasant's cottage.

Napoleon never said, "Providence favors the greatest battalions."

Gosh! Perhaps Benny Kauff didn't really say some of the things the sporting historians have typewritten about him!