

## None of Our Business.

(A little girl was heard to finish her evening prayer with these words: "And I saw a poor little girl on the street to-day, cold and barefooted; but it's none of our business, is it, God?")

"None of our business!" wandering and sinful,  
All through the streets of the city they go,  
Hungry and homeless in the wild weather—  
"None of our business!" Dare we say so?

"None of our business!" Children's wan faces,  
Haggard and old with their suffering and sin;  
Hold fast your darlings on tender, warm bosoms,  
Sorrow without, but the home light within.

What does it matter that some other woman—  
Some common mother—in bitter despair,  
Wails in a garret, or sits in a cellar,  
Too broken hearted for weeping or prayer?

"None of our business!" Sinful and fallen,  
How they may jostle us close on the street!  
Hold back your garments! scorn? they are used to it;  
Pass on the other side, lest you should meet.

"None of our business!" On, then, the music;  
On with the feastings, though hearts break forlorn;  
Somebody's hungry, somebody's freezing,  
Somebody's soul will be lost ere the morn.

Somebody's dying (on with the dancing!)  
One for earth's pottage is selling his soul;  
One for a bauble has bartered his birth-right,  
Selling his all for a pitiful dole.

Ah! but one goeth abroad on the mountains,  
Over lone deserts, with burning deep sands!  
Seeking the lost ones (it is his business!)  
Bruised though his feet are, and torn though his hands.

Thorn-crowned His head and His soul sorrow-stricken  
(Saving men's souls at such infinite cost),  
Broken His heart for the grief of the nations;  
It is His business saving the lost!

## A Sister's Influence.

"If I only had a sister, Cousin Helen, but I am so lonely. You know since mamma died I have no one but papa and Hugh." The speaker was a young girl only eighteen years of age, but her earnest face was expressive of strong character.

"Why not let Hugh take a sister's place?" suggested Cousin Helen.

"How?" and Margie's eyes really sparkled.

"Talk with him about the many things, both great and small, that interest you. Brothers like to feel that their sisters can trust them."

"Margie," continued Cousin Helen, with a troubled look in her eyes, "there has recently been opened down-town an elegant saloon which is called 'The Gilded Palace,' and last evening I overheard a conversation between Hugh and his friend, Chester Winthrop, concerning it. Hugh evidently thought it an improper place for moral young men to frequent, but Chester tried to overcome his scruples by informing him that there are rooms connected with the main saloon where moral men can assemble without coming in contact with anything objectionable, and that many of the best young men in town spend their evenings there. Pardon me, dear, but have you made home attractive to Hugh of late?"

"I am afraid not, Cousin Helen, for I have fallen into the selfish habit of spending much time in my own room. Thank you for your timely suggestions."

That evening as Hugh Nelson was passing through the hall, but in hand, he was surprised to hear his sister call out from the parlor:

"Are you going out, Hugh?"

"Yes," he answered with hesitancy, for a glance into the pretty parlor, with its glowing grate-fire and open piano, made him almost wish that he were going to spend the evening at home.

"Come in a little while, please, and help me select my new suit," pleaded Margie.

"Your new suit!" echoed Hugh with astonishment. "What do I know about girls' suits?"

"I believe you can help me," urged Margie, "for you display fine taste in the selection of your own clothes. You know, Hugh, I have not been accustomed to choose for myself, and I miss mamma so much." There was a quiver in the voice that Hugh could not resist, and after hanging his hat on the rack he walked into the parlor, and was soon as deeply interested in the examination of dress-samples and fashion-plates as his little sister could wish.

From that time Margie followed her cousin's suggestion to the very letter. She laid her plans before Hugh as she would have done before an older sister, always asking his opinion concerning them, thereby making him feel that she needed his companionship and counsel. By this means there was gradually

formed between this brother and sister a bond of love which was truly beautiful.

Years passed; and one evening while Hugh and Margie Nelson were enjoying the quiet of their cosy parlor, Margie was startled by an exclamation of horror from her brother, and on turning toward him, she saw that he had dropped the evening paper and had buried his face in his hands. Catching up the paper, she anxiously glanced down the column until she came to the item:

"A young man, named Chester Winthrop, was fatally wounded last evening at the Gilded Palace saloon with a pistol-shot fired by David Holmes. Doubtless both of the young men were under the influence of liquor."

"Was Chester Winthrop once your friend?" asked Margie.

"Yes," answered Hugh, as he raised a pale face from his hands; "and but for the influence of my precious little sister I might be as he is to-night."

Margie looked incredulous, for Hugh had so many years been an earnest Christian that she could not imagine him as having sunk to such depths of degradation as Chester Winthrop evidently had done.

"After mother died," resumed Hugh, with emotion, "I was sad and lonely. Father was absorbed in business, you spent much time by yourself, and I longed for some attractive place in which to spend my evenings. Chester asked me to go to the Gilded Palace saloon, which, he said, had every attraction heart could wish. After much urging I consented; but on the appointed evening you wished me to help you select your new suit. As I looked into the parlor which you had made bright and pretty, I thought some other night would do for my visit to the Gilded Palace, so I yielded to your persuasions and spent the evening at home.

"But, after that, I found every evening the same, for you always had some pleasant entertainment in store for me; and I finally came to the conclusion that our parlor was palace enough for me, and that it would be difficult to find more attractive company than that of my own sweet sister.

"Margie, he continued, while a soft light came into his eyes, "although I was not a Christian, you talked so freely with me about your religious experiences that I could not fail to see the deep satisfaction you found in the religion of Jesus Christ. I soon came to yearn for the peace and rest that you evidently enjoyed, and so I was led to yield my heart to the Saviour. Ah, little Margie, if all sisters were as good and wise as mine has been, the saloon-keepers would find few victims among our young men!" While Margie Nelson listened to this candid confession, her heart was raised to God in gratitude for the blessed assurance of having been the instrument through which He saved her noble brother.

—Christian Intelligencer.

## Clerical Coquettes.

Rev. Jedediah Smith is a distant relation, and always calls me "Uncle Senex." He is a good fellow and a good preacher; but he makes mistakes, now and then, like the rest of us. He wrote me a curious letter not long ago. In it he said:

"I am attached to this place where I have labored for ten years and where the Lord has blessed my labors. I think that the people are attached to me, and would be very unwilling that I should leave them. But they don't do some things that I want them to, and though they have grown in financial ability, they have not increased my salary in proportion. Now, I have thought that if I could get a call to some vacant church, it might wake them up and lead them to do better. I don't want to leave them, but I want them to realize that I don't stay with them because I have to; that I am in demand as a preacher, and that they must pay me more if they want to keep me. I learn that the church in Z—is vacant, and, as you are well acquainted there, could you not suggest my name to the session, and let them invite me to preach from time to time as a candidate?"

Your affectionate nephew,  
"JEDEDIAH SMITH."

I read this letter to my wife and she said at once: "Why, that is coquetting. I have known girls to welcome the attentions of men whom they would not think of marrying, just to make the man whom they did want hurry up. I have no respect for a woman who would do so. And it is just as bad for a minister to. I hope that you won't write to the session at Z—How can you recommend your nephew to them as a candidate, when he tells you that he may make a selfish and dishonorable use of it?"

I saw at once that my wife was right, as she generally is. So I wrote to Jedediah that I could not ask the session of a vacant church to hear him, if he had no idea of changing his field of labor. He had no right to try to use the church at

Z—as a cat's-paw to pull his chestnuts out of the fire. I thought that he would not answer my letter, or would apologize for what he had written. But not a bit of it. He wrote me that I was entirely too fastidious—that such things were done every day. He referred to the cases of men eminent in the Church, who had strengthened their position at home by getting calls that they never intend to accept or even to consider.

I don't believe a word of it. I can't see how any honorable man could do such a thing. A minister of the gospel ought to be as sensitive in regard to calls as all true women are in regard to the attention of gentlemen. They ought to be above suspicion in a matter so delicate. A pastoral call is like a proposal of marriage, and to trifle with a church in regard to it, is nothing less than clerical coquetting.—Senex Smith in Journal

## Mosquitoes.

If one lives on low lands in the vicinity of a sluggish stream or pond he is quite likely to be infested with mosquitoes. He may put nettings into the doors and windows of his dwellings and have a retreat from the importunate presentation of bills, but they will wait for him to come out, and attack him then all the more fiercely. If he changes his abode and builds his habitation on the mountain-top he will not be troubled with mosquitoes. It may be lonely up there, it may be a hard climb over a rough road to get there, but the mosquitoes will be left there also, the horizon will widen as he rises, and the view grow broader, and the skies higher as he gets nearer to them.

The mosquitoes of gossip infest the low and swampy tracts of society. They breed in lives that have no definite and high purpose running through them; they fatten on whatever is fair and tender or foul and repulsive. What they find smooth and wholesome they leave mottled and feverish. One may put nettings into his ears and over his mouth, he may shut himself away from these blood-thirsty bills, but evermore they lie in wait and sing on the outside of his defenses and watch for his appearance to pounce upon him. Perhaps some mosquito shrewder than his fellows will get inside and tell him what all the rest are saying about him, how one is ready to light on his temples, another on his nose, and another on his very heart, could it be reached. This mosquito does not always get what he deserves—instant and final suppression.

To drop the figure, what is the use of repeating to one's friend or acquaintance what the neighbors are saying about him or her, unless some good is to be the result of such telling? Isn't this pure mischief-making? There is nothing so interesting as people; we never tire of studying human nature; but the ways in which this study is conducted differ widely. The gossip doesn't object to mild vivisection, and he loves to see the whelk follow the insertion of his probe and the blood start as his scalpel goes in. Charming person, this gossip!

Agassiz was once condoled with because of some newspaper attacks on lectures he had delivered. He at once comforted his condoler with the declaration: "I have not read a newspaper for seventeen years, and I am alive yet." He lived on a mountain top where mosquitoes never came.

If one has a little ammonia and sweet-oil to apply to a mosquito bite, very well; if not, it is the worst policy in the world to scratch it; that only spreads the poison and makes the swelling and irritation worse. Simply let it alone and soon it will disappear. In like manner perfect silence is the best cure for gossip—silence when hearing it, dumbness afterward. "A dog that will fetch a bone will carry a bone," if he can find one to carry. Let the gossip have only the bone to carry that he brings, and his occupation will be lightened, if not taken away from him.

## Something to Avoid.

A little personal pique, a bit of wounded vanity, a sudden flame of anger, often undoes the most substantial and faithful work, and nullifies the most intelligent and wise action. It is one of the painful things in experience that effort is often defeated by these small, purely personal, and often momentary feelings, which are generally unintelligent and unwise. Life would be freed from some of its most painful features if men always acted to each other on a basis of real justice and intelligence, and left their small personal feelings and prejudices out of sight. A man's work ought to be judged by itself and for itself alone, and the strength of a man's position ought to rest solely upon what he is able to do. And yet most of us are contently neutralizing the best work of others because it is not done in our way, and are constantly failing

to do justice to others because of some small personal prejudice against them. The really strong, clear-sighted man is the man who is able to put himself out of the question, and to judge others by what they really are and do, not by their relations to him. In this working world there is neither time nor strength to be always coddling our small vanities and still smaller prejudices. The world does not stand in order that we may be pleased. It stands as a place for the doing of honest work in the best way, and if that work can be better done in some other way than the one we prefer our business is to let it be done and rejoice in it. If you wish to see things clearly, and to be just with your fellow-men, keep clear of the fumes of vanity and the thick atmosphere of mere personal feeling. Make it a rule to see what a man is and does, and to value him by these things. A person may be very distasteful to us and yet be eminently useful and successful in the world.

—Christian Union.

## Lazy Loafing.

It is considered a disgrace to be lazy. He who is too indolent to work for his own living becomes a by-word and reproach. But there is a very common form of laziness which is not always noticed; it is that of the mind. We first become conscious of it in our young days when we "don't feel like study." We dawdle over the book with our thoughts half asleep, and as a result give a fine exhibition of stupidity in the recitation room. This sort of indulgence in youth is very dangerous, for it becomes a habit, and the mind grows rusty and dull in the very prime of life, when it should be at its best.

On the heels of this form of laziness comes another bad habit—that of intellectual loafing. What loafing is in the common sense we all know; it is hanging about with no definite aim or purpose, idling away the time without profit. Well, there is mental loafing as well, and it is known in the dictionary as "reverie." It is a dreamy state of the mind, when the thoughts go wool-gathering. This habit, so common to young people, is fatal to mental growth; many a promising youth is ruined by over-indulgence in it. It wastes time and enfeebles the mental powers. It is really a form of laziness, and it should be sternly corrected at the very outset. The action of the mind should be kept under control. When the thoughts begin to wander, it is time to whip them into order. A resolute will will do it.

GOOD SENSE—Chauncey M. Depew is not a preacher. He has common sense, and in his after dinner speeches, among other good things, he says:

They tell us there is no more a Creator, only a cosmic dust. Who made the dust? There is only protoplasm, indeed. Who made protoplasm? They tell us of evolution from dust to monkey and then to man; but all the scientists have never found the missing link. The simple gospel of the humble son of a carpenter, preached by twelve fishermen, has survived the centuries, and outlives all other philosophies of eighteen hundred years. They tell us God must disappear; that praying is begging; that the Holy Communion is cannibalism. When did such a religion send out a missionary? When you show me a colony of ten thousand people who have come to live decently by its teachings I may believe it. But I say now that the Christian faith of my mother is good enough for me. If we believe this faith, what harm? If we disbelieve it, and thereby do wrong, what of our future?

When a man permits his conscience to become distorted into a peevish censor, it will prove a torment to him. Under such an authority he can have neither liberty nor comfort.

Men change in their opinions, and therefore in their behaviour, as they become broadened under the influence of contact with the world. A recluse always tends towards narrowness.

We are too fond of our own will. We want to be doing what we fancy mighty things; but the great point is, to do small things, when called to them, in a right spirit.—R. Cecil.

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