

MIND YOUR OWN CONCERNS.

Mind your own concerns, my friend,
For they are yours alone.
Don't talk about your neighbour's faults,
But strive to mend your own.
Suppose he does not always lead
A truly perfect life,
What matters if he sometimes frets,
Or quarrels with his wife?
Don't meddle—let him know, my friend,
Your better nature spurns
To act the spy on him or his—
Just mind your own concerns.

Yes, mind your own concerns, my friend,
And presently you'll find
That all your time is occupied
And you're quite enough to mind;
Why need you care if Snooks or Spooks
Should woe with Galle Jones?
What matter if your neighbour C
A half a million owns?
The money is not yours, my friend,
Though golden stores he earns;
So do not envy him his wealth,
But mind your own concerns.

Yes, mind your own concerns, my friend;
It is a better plan,
Than always to be spying out
The deeds of brother man.
Remember that all persons have,
Though hidden from their view,
Thoughts that to them of right belong,
And not at all to you.
And also bear in mind, my friend,
A generous nature worms
No secret from a brother's breast—
So mind your own concerns.

BREAD UPON THE WATER.

A lad was toiling up a hill near the city under the weight of a heavy basket, on the afternoon of a sultry day in August. He had been sent home with some goods to a customer, who lived a short distance in the country. The boy was slightly built, and his burden almost beyond his strength. Many times he sat down to rest himself on his hard journey up the hill, but it seemed as if he would never reach the summit. Each time he lifted the basket it felt heavier than before.

The boy was about half way up the hill with his basket, when a gentleman overtook and passed him. He had not gone on many paces when he stopped, and turning round to the boy looked at him for a moment or two and then said kindly:

"That's a heavy load you have, my boy; come, let me help you."

And the gentleman took the basket, and carried it to the top of the hill.

"There, do you think you can get along now?" said he with a smile, as he set down the basket. "or shall I carry it a little further?"

"Oh, no, thank you sir," returned the boy, and there was a glow of gratitude on his fine young face; "I can carry it now very well, and am very much obliged to you."

"You are right welcome, my little man," said the gentleman and passed on.

Twenty years from that time a careworn man, well advanced in life, sat motionless in an old arm chair, with his eyes intently fixed on the glowing grate. He was alone and appeared to be in a state of deep abstraction. In a little while, however, the door of the room opened, and the light form of a young and lovely girl glided in.

"Papa," said a low sweet voice, and a hand was laid gently upon the old man's arm.

"Is it you my dear?" he returned, with a low sigh.

"Yes, papa," and the young girl leaned against him, and parted with her delicate fingers the thin gray locks that lay in disorder about his forehead.

"I would like to be alone for this evening, Florence," said the old man. "I have a good deal to think about, and expect a person on business."

And he kissed her tenderly and sighed as he pressed his lips to hers.

The girl passed from the room as noiselessly as she had entered. The old man had been calm before her coming in, but the moment she retired he became agitated, and arose and walked the floor uneasily. He continued to pace to and fro for nearly half an hour, when he stopped suddenly and listened. The shut door bell had rung. In a little while a man entered the room.

"Pardon the intrusion, sir," he said, "but facts that I have learned this morning prompted me to call upon you without a moment's delay. My name is Green, of Green, Muller & Co."

Mr. Mason bowed and said:
"I know your house very well; and now remember to have met you oftener than once in business transactions."

"Yes; you have bought one or two bills of goods from us," replied the visitor.

Then in a changed voice he said after a moment's pause:

"Mr. Mason, I have learned to-night from a source which leaves no room to doubt the truth of the statement, that your affairs have become embarrassed—that you are in fact on the very edge of bankruptcy. Tell me frankly whether this is indeed so. I ask from no idle curiosity, nor from a concealed and sinister motive, but to the end that I may prevent the threatened disaster, if it is in my power to do so."

Mr. Mason was dumb with surprise at so unexpected a declaration. He made two or three efforts to speak, but his lips uttered no sound.

"Confide in me, sir," urged the visitor. "Trust me as you would trust your own brother, and lean upon me if your strength be

indeed failing. Tell me then is it as I have said."

"It is," was all the old merchant could utter.

"How much will save you? Mention the sum, and if within the compass of my ability to raise, you shall have it in hand to-morrow. Will four thousand pounds relieve you from your present embarrassment? Then let your anxiety subside, Mr. Mason. That sum you shall have to-morrow morning. I will see you again. Good evening."

And the visitor arose and was gone before his bewildered auditor had sufficiently recovered his senses, to know what to think or say.

In the morning, true to his promise, Mr. Green called upon Mr. Mason, and tendered a cheque for two thousand pounds with his note of hand at thirty days for two thousand more, which was almost the same as money.

While the cheque and note lay before him, upon the desk, and ere he had offered to touch them, Mr. Mason looked earnestly at the man who had so suddenly taken the character of a disinterested, self-sacrificing friend, and said:

"My dear, sir, I cannot understand this. Are you not laboring under some mistake?"

"Oh, no. You once did me a service that I am now seeking to repay. It is my first opportunity, and I embrace it eagerly."

"Did you a service! When?"

"Twenty years ago," replied the man. "I was a poor boy, and you a man of wealth. One hot day I was sent a long distance with a heavy basket. While toiling up a hill, with the hot sun upon me, and almost overcome with heat and fatigue, you came along, and not only spoke to me kindly, but took my basket and carried it to the top of the hill. Ah, sir, you do not know how deeply that act of kindness sank into my heart, and I longed for an opportunity to show you by some act how grateful I felt. But none came. Often afterward did I meet you in the street, and look into your face with pleasure; but you did not remember me. Ever since I have regarded you with different feelings from those I entertained for others; and there has been no time that I would not have put myself out to serve you. Last night I heard of your embarrassment, and immediately called upon you. The rest you know."

Mr. Mason was astonished at such a strange declaration.

"Do you remember the circumstance to which I allude?" asked Mr. Greer.

"It had faded from my external memory entirely, but your words have brought back a dim recollection of the fact; but it was a little matter, and not entitled to the importance you have given it."

"To me it was not a little matter, sir," returned he. "I was a weak boy just sinking under a burden that was too heavy, when you put forth your hand and carried it for me. I could not forget it. And now let me return the favor at the first opportunity by carrying your burden for you, which has become too heavy, until the hill is ascended, and you are able to bear it onward again by your own strength."

Mr. Mason was deeply moved. Words failed him in his efforts to express his true feeling.

The bread cast upon the water had returned to him after many days, and he gathered it with wonder and thankfulness. The merchant was saved from bankruptcy.

A kind act is never lost, even though done to a child.

A man who pretended to have seen a ghost was asked what the ghost said to him. "How should I understand," replied the narrator, "what he said? I am not skilled in any of the dead languages."

"I wish you to make for our church," said an Episcopal vestryman, one morning to a neighboring carpenter "two new commandment boards. We want them of free, sound timber, with no knots in them." "You'd better take some of the 'notes' out of the commandments then," replied the carpenter; "I never saw a commandment board yet that wasn't full of them!"

An Irishman took a contract to dig a public well. When he had dug about twenty-five feet down he came one morning and found it had fallen in—filled nearly to the top. Pat looked cautiously around and saw that no person was near, then took off his hat, hung them on a windlass, crawled into some bushes and waited events. In a short time the neighbors discovered that the well had fallen in, and seeing Pat's hat and coat on the windlass, they supposed that he was at the bottom of the excavation. A few hours of brisk digging cleared the loose earth from the well. Just as the excavators had reached the bottom, and were wondering where the body was, Pat came walking out of the bushes and good-naturedly thanked the workers for relieving him of a sorry job. Some of the tired diggers were disgusted, but the joke was too good to allow of anything more than a laugh which soon followed.

A Brooklynite was walking along Atlantic Avenue when he was jostled and passed by a stranger. Soon after, discovering that his watch was gone, he hurried after the stranger, presented a revolver at his head, and grimly said, "Give me that watch." The stranger "forked over" at once. On reaching home the gentleman began telling the story of his adventure to his wife, when she interrupted him by saying, "Why John, you left your watch on the bureau this morning, and I have been wearing it all day."

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