



Will No One Know?

How often people indulge in secret sins which they would shrink from with horror if they thought their friends and acquaintances would ever know. Sometimes the thoughts are allowed to stray into paths which would be carefully avoided if we knew that the people in the room with us were genuine mind-readers, and knew all we were thinking about. Is it not sometimes true that men and women are not greatly ashamed of untruthfulness or little meannesses, although they would feel terribly disgraced if they were found out and publicly exposed? But to indulge in secret thoughts or actions, thinking that no one will know, is to act rather like the ostrich in the old story, which hid its head in the sand and imagined that it was hidden from sight.

We are all aware that every secret thing is known to God. We do not question the words: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" saith the Lord. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" saith the Lord. But, are we really as much troubled by the thought that God knows our secret sins, as we should be if we thought that the men and women around us were aware of them? We can forget His disapproval, but to be disgraced in the eyes of our friends and neighbors is not a thing so easily forgotten. We all care a great deal for the good opinion of others. Possibly we may not think we care very much, but if a man loses his reputation and has everybody shrinking away from him, he will certainly feel it acutely.

But, whether we know it or not, we all live in glass houses most of the time. We can never safely indulge in secret sins without danger of exposure. So, if we are afraid of being found out, it would be far wiser to be honorable and true all through, and not only on the surface. It is almost, if not quite, impossible to successfully veneer a character. The real self underneath is sure to reveal itself sooner or later—generally sooner—by some unguarded action, word or look. Even were it possible for a man to be always on guard, his true character would still be "felt" in some mysterious way. A person may be very charming in manner and conversation, but we generally know instinctively whether the friendliness is real or assumed. If people are deceived for a time, the truth cannot long be hidden. The face is a great tell-tale, and no one has the power to keep his character from writing out a pretty correct description of itself in that public place—where it cannot be hid. There is an illustrated article by Maud Ballington Booth in last month's "Sunday Strand," describing her work in some of the prisons of America, and the pictures of the convicts have the words "vice" and "crime" plainly stamped on their faces. Isaiah's words cannot be disputed: "The shew of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sins as Sodom, they hide it not."

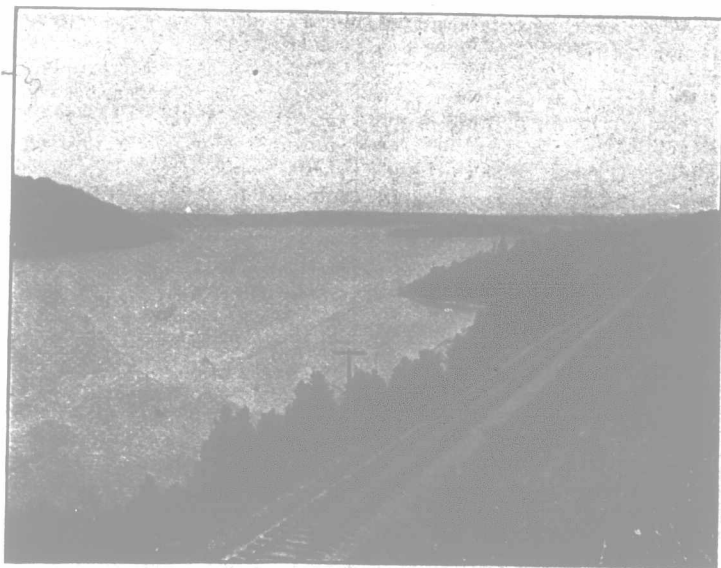
I don't think our Lord meant that it was only on the Judgment Day that secrets should be revealed when He said: "For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested, neither was anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad."

It is never safe to whisper a scandal, even in the ear of a trustworthy friend, for he has warned us that "Whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops." When He

comes again He will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." But even now "some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment." As Emerson tells us, human nature will not be concealed, but it is constantly publishing itself, and character is expressed in everything we do or say. Even when we say nothing, we need not expect to keep our opinions secret, for "silence answers very loud."



In the Public Gardens, Halifax. Intercolonial Railway System.



Bras d'Or Lakes, C. B. Intercolonial Railway System.

It is folly to indulge in secret sins, thinking that "no one will know." The acts themselves may not be made exactly public—just yet—but we are all quick to read the many outward visible signs of life and character. They cannot be concealed very long, and Emerson's advice is very sensible: "If you would not be known to do anything, never do it. A man may play the fool in the drifts of a desert, but every grain of sand shall seem to see. He may be a solitary eater, but he cannot keep his foolish counsel. A broken complexion, a swinish look, ungenerous acts, and the want of due knowledge—all blab." A pure-minded woman will shrink instinctively from a bad man. She may not know any facts against his character, but she feels a natural repulsion, which is not easily reasoned away. It is, indeed, far easier to deceive ourselves than other people.

"Oh! wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as ithers see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us
An' foolish notion!"

But I must not forget to mention the brighter side of this question—a good character is as hard to hide as a bad one. How plainly this is shown in the matter-of-fact statements of Bible history. Joseph might be only a lonely young slave in a foreign land, but how soon his master found out his value and "left all that he had in Joseph's hand." He might be falsely accused and cast into prison, but how soon the gaoler "committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison." Why? Simply because his fitness for the position was very apparent. It was the same with Daniel, who, though a captive, was highly honored by at least four king's in succession. St. Paul also, although a prisoner, won the re-

bad life and fancies that he can keep the fact a secret. There is a story told of a sculptor who carved an angel's head far up in the dusky arch of a church tower. It was intended for the eye of God alone, but once a year the sunlight flashed a golden ray through the stained-glass window, lighting up the beautiful carving, which the sculptor thought he had hidden away where no one but God would ever see it. "The good works of some are manifest beforehand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."

"It was wrought for the eye of God,
and it seems
That He blesses the work of that
dead man's hand
With a ray of the golden light that
streams
On the lost that are found in the
deathless land."

HOPE.

Things that Never Die.

[Charles Dickens.]

The pure, the bright, the beautiful,
That stirred our hearts in youth,
The impulses of wordless prayer,
The dreams of love and truth;
The longings after something lost,
The spirit's yearning cry,
The striving after better hopes—
These things can never die.

The timid hand stretched forth to aid
A brother in his need,
A kindly word in grief's dark hour,
That proves a friend, indeed;
The plea for mercy softly breathed,
When justice threatens high;
The sorrow of a contrite heart—
These things shall never die.

The memory of a clasping hand,
The pressure of a kiss,
And all the trifles, sweet and frail,
That make up love's first bliss;
If with a firm, unchanging faith,
And holy trust and high,
Those hands have clasped, those lips have
met—
These things shall never die.

The cruel and the bitter word,
That wounded as it fell;
The chilling want of sympathy
We feel, but cannot tell;
The hard repulse that chills the heart,
Whose hopes were bounding high,
In an unfading record kept—
These things shall never die.

Let nothing pass, for every hand
Must find some work to do,
Lose not a chance to waken love—
Be firm, and just, and true.
So shall light that cannot fade
Beam on thee from on high,
And angel voices say to thee—
These things shall never die.

One of the Heroes.

S. E. Kiser in Chicago Record-Herald.
Here is a song of a hero:
He is one of the many whose names
Are not and never will be written
On the scroll we refer to as Fame's;
He has never rushed, cheering to battle,
He has never plunged into the wave
To rescue a child or a woman,
Yet he ought to be named with the
brave.
Each night he goes home to a scolding,
To hear the old story again
Of the talent he lacks and his failure
To claim the attention of men.

Each morning he goes to his duties
Still striving to win and still proud,
Still waiting for Fate to permit him
Some day to work up from the crowd;
Each day he goes patiently toiling
And sighing alone, if he sighs—
His sorrows are his, and his only;
Hope still is aglow in his eyes:
In spite of the wearisome scolding
And grumbling he goes to at night,
He faces the world in the morning
As though all his dreams had been
bright.

With never a mortal to praise him
For what he has done or has tried,
He still has an honest ambition
And still in his breast he has pride.
With never the hope of receiving
Approval at home he can still,
With his sorrows all carefully hidden,
Toil on with a conqueror's will;
So here is a song of a hero,
But one of the many whose names
Are not and will never be written
On the scroll we refer to as Fame's.