

SKIP THE HARD WORDS, PLEASE.

The prevalence of the vice of profanity in our country is really alarming. Ladies on public high ways and in public conveyances, are subjected to having their sensibilities shocked by it to an extent that is painful in the extreme.

In like manner, children and youths are made liable to having their souls scarred by oaths flying around them which are literally darts of the devil. Damage may often thus be done to the jewels of the homes of our country, compared to which the loss sustained by the parents of Charlie Ross will one day be seen to have been slight. A contagion may thus take effect which had better been small-pox or scarlatina! *Obsta principis.*

Remedy of this evil seems difficult. Application of the civil law, which in most States makes swearing a fineable offence, seems usually to be inadvisable. It is a good rule, however, that "nothing will be done unless somebody tries." The press, both secular and religious, should in the future, even more than in the past, call attention to this fact. Profanity is against the laws of the land, and against the laws of good society. Therefore those who find them practising it have cause to inquire if they can do so and yet consider themselves good citizens, or even entitled to be called gentlemen.

We know good men who have seen so much of the world that their ears have become dull to this horrible vice. Though disapproving it, they hardly notice it when only casually hearing it. To us, however, it is always and only a pain to which we are keenly alive. We have almost a sickening remembrance of hearing Turkish boatmen swearing at each other in English as their swift crafts passed each other, cutting the waters of the Bay of Alexandria.

A friend of ours once succeeded in so presenting this point of its being painful to him and to others to a stage passenger who had been torturing them by his profanity, that the offender offered a public and a hearty apology to all present.

We have often spoken kindly and in quiet tones to those who were swearing. Almost without exception, they have received the reproof in the same spirit in which it was given. The whispered words "Skip the hard words, please," coupled with a kindly, quiet glance of the eye, has almost always conquered. We have had this experience among rough men, and sometimes in wild, dangerous places. It has thus also been the entering wedge almost as often of a word or two of invitation to join us in the journey to the better land.

Among these cases of the latter kind which we have in mind was that of a stage-driver on the frontier. We sat beside him on his high seat. The twilight was rapidly deepening. Dark clouds, incessantly cut by vivid lightning, were rolling up, and peals of such magnificent thunder as is seldom heard except in the far West, were reverberating in air. The driver was a kind-hearted, sociable fellow, but there was an intensity and frequency of his utterance of oaths positively unique. We might say he had a genius of swearing, he was so enthusiastically profane. Our admiration of horses, especially of his splendid "four-in-hand," was