

MY TOOL CHEST

I open the lid of my tool-chest,
My helpers are waiting there,
Plane and level and square,
They shape at my will the forest.

Hard oak or plane soft-grained,
Chips and shavings fly at their stroke,
The group of my hands is their word
Of command.

They are moved by my thought,
And the wood takes form for service
Or pleasure.

Home alone in the quiet of the day,
A thoughts cut of timber or saw,
Or my hammer's cordless blow,
And my tools are used.

My labor is caught,

And the pieces I throw.

I think of tools of another kind,
Not made of iron or steel,
Tools of thought and hours of my life.

We use them for work or wear,
Pain or pleasure, good or bad.

Pain or pleasure, good or bad.

Our lives are shaped by those tools.

Music and melody or tale to view,

A mansion or hotel we build through

The years.

Higher up in the hills will show

We may darken the rooms with the

shadows of self.

Or the joy light with its cheerful

glow.

— Isaac Nixon

COMPETITION AND THE GOLDEN RULE

A few well-meaning and high-minded persons did not compete in competition, and several relatives did not. To them any form of competition seemed incompatible with the highest standards of Christian ethics. To the competition, however, there was no greater engrossing interest in any other active part in anyone else's candidacy. The competition in those fields is quite intense, and it is intense.

For some reason or other we are so constituted that we can hardly assume ourselves without some form of competition. The fact that we like competitive games and invent them for our own pleasure has nothing to do with the fact that we are not really interested in a story or play that does not picture some kind of competitive struggle thrown in. Competition has been human nature. It shows what we are really like. It probably indicates that we must have some kind of competition if not one kind, then another. If we are not really interested in competition, it is to get ourselves interested in a form of competition that produces desirable rather than undesirable results. Competitive promotion is obviously better than competitive attack. Competitive bargaining is certainly no worse than competitive attack seeking.

It is competition of any kind compatible with the Golden Rule? Does a competitor do his best? Does he want to have them do him? Is he not trying to do unto his competitors what he would not like to have done unto him?

It depends upon what kind of man he is. If he is the kind of man who, in a game of croquet, would like to have his competitor intentionally miss several wickets in order to let his own team win, then he is in accordance with the Golden Rule. If he himself should purposefully miss wickets to enable his competitor to win, then both players really try to do unto their opponents what they find themselves competing as ardently as if they were playing the game in the usual way. Each would be trying to make his wicket than the other, instead of trying to make them both wicket than the other. Their only way of avoiding competition would be to stop playing.

Again, if a business man is the kind of competitor that he has to have in order to be competitive, then he is not competitor; manager; buyer; seller; enable him to get the business, then in strict conformity with the Golden Rule, he too should manage to badly affect his competitor's business.

Instead of competing to get business away from each other, they would find themselves competing to throw business back to each other. The only way in which they could avoid competition would be to keep out of business altogether. That would result in putting all the business of the country into the hands of people who care nothing for the Golden Rule.

The kind of person who wants his competitor to "play the game"—to do his best—will be the kind of person who observes the Golden Rule, "play the game," etc. That makes a good game. He, too, the business man, who wants his competitor to do his best to win must also observe the Golden Rule, do his best to win. That makes good business. If the business is a productive one, as every business should be, the more energetically competitive promotion is carried on, the more we shall produce, and the better everyone will be fed, clothed and housed.

IT'S GOOD TO TALK TO CHEERFUL FOLKS

The other day I was standing at the end of a long line of people waiting to return books at the public library. Just in front of me was an elderly gentleman with four bulky volumes under his arm. He had just come from the "return desk." The librarian looked at his card, found the books long overdue, and added up \$4.00. The old gentleman drew out his pocket-book, smilingly remarking as he did so, "Well, I'm glad to give you the good book now and then. You know, I like to pay for using it than I do and I rather enjoy paying a good fine occasionally."

The librarian looked up at the speaker in amazement. "If you only knew," said the old man, "how much time and trouble overcomes a man of two and do their best to prove I've made a mistake in dates. My, but it's good to talk to cheerful folks like you ones in here."

As a matter of fact it is never anything but good to talk to cheerful folks. A cheerful, good-inpiring spirit starts the day off right at school, in the office, at home. A few words passed over the teacher with a smile quickly brighten immeasurably the task of shopping. Good cheer is an all which never fails to make the machinery work more smoothly wherever and whenever it is applied.

We cannot all of us be beautiful or clever, or gifted with some great outstanding talent, but we can all be cheerful. We only realize how worth while it is to be cheerful when we meet the other with a smile whose brightness reflects the light of the lamp of life. Good cheer is an all which never fails to make the machinery work more smoothly wherever and whenever it is applied.

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"I'm glad for the new day's dawning, Glad for the work you do, With a smile, yes, thank you, And it comes in your eyes, There's nothing can conquer you!" — Ruth Davis Stevens.

The Free Press' Short Story

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