

# Good Morning

—By Malcolm W. Bingay—

## A RICH MAN DIES

The richest man in Detroit died the other day. He never worried about whether he would be able to take his wealth with him. He left us without any worldly estate. What money he made he spent as fast as he got it—and sometimes even before.

We know nothing about the system of celestial bookkeeping, of course, but I have an idea the archangels were singing when the soul of Louis Stone took its flight. For as the Lord said during His ministry on earth, "Whosoever shall therefore humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Few men ever understood the mind and heart of a child as did "Old Man Stone" as they called him. His philosophy was as simple as himself, all in one sentence:

"A happy child is a good child."

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THERE WAS no "odor of sanctity" about Louis Stone. You could search in vain for any saintly attributes. He was a jovial giant who lived his life with roaring gusto. He found no sin in any man. As far as I could ever find he had no religious creed and never preached. His whole life was dedicated to making children happy.

Well educated, he paid little heed to the vast volumes on juvenile delinquency or other sociological problems. He lived only to see the forlorn face of a child light up with smiles.

I said once about him: "You cannot fool a child. You can often fool a grownup because he thinks he thinks and therefore believes himself smart. Children know instinctively the ones they can trust and love. Little ones everywhere turned to Old Man Stone."

He came out of Russia as an orphan boy, born Leiba Stepansky. In grinding poverty he earned his daily bread and laughed with those who laughed at him. In War I he joined the Army and when he came back, continued his studies of pharmacy. He learned chemistry but that intangible alchemy of a child's heart was born with him.

He opened his little drug store

at Third and Stimson and all went fairly well until the old bachelor was awakened one night by the screams of a child killed by a hurtling motor car.

It seems to have changed the pattern of his life. For, some time later, there came Halloween.

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HE FOUND a boy drawing designs in soap on his windows. He did not call the police, or chase the child or curse him. He got another piece of soap and went



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out to help the boy paint his windows. When they were through with "the fun" he took him in and gave him candy.

He told all the kids in the neighborhood the next year to soap his windows all they pleased. Well, it didn't seem much fun when nobody was objecting. And all of them could have free ice cream and candy. It grew into an annual celebration.

Yes, the police came, then, but not because he called them. The police were there to protect the youngsters from the traffic. He could still remember the shrieks of that child in the night. And the police joined in the fun and before "Old Man Stone" was aware of it his Halloween parties were a Detroit institution.

It was never established by design. From out of the bigness of his heart it grew until he was known all over the Nation and was showered with honors.

"O, it takes so little to make a child happy," he used to say. "Then the whole neighborhood is happy, the police are happy and so are you and I happy. You can never, never be happy unless you are making someone else happy."

As his fame grew politicians sensed the publicity values of his parties but "Old Man Stone" never paid much attention to them.

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