

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

'Cuff' A True Story of a Negro Slave.

Cuff was a negro slave who lived in the South before the war. He was a joyful Christian and a faithful servant. His master, however, was in need of money and one day a young planter, who was an infidel came to buy Cuff. The price was agreed upon and the Christian slave, was sold to the infidel. But in parting with him the master said, "You will find Cuff a good worker and you can trust him; he will suit you in every respect but one."

"And what is that?" said the master. "He will pray and you can't break him of it; but that is his only fault."

"I'll soon whip that out of him," remarked the infidel.

"I fear not," said the former master, "and would not advise you to try it; he would rather die than give it up."

Cuff proved faithful to the new master, the same as he had to the old. The master soon got word that he had been praying, and on calling him said, "Cuff, you must not pray any more, we can't have any praying around here; never let me hear any more about this nonsense."

Cuff replied, "O Massa, I loves to pray to Jesus, and when I pray I loves you and Missus all the more, and can work all the harder for you."

But he was sternly forbidden ever to pray any more, under penalty of a severe flogging. That evening when the day's work was done, he talked to his God, like Daniel of old, as he had aforetime. Next morning he was summoned to appear before his master, who demanded of him why he had disobeyed him. "O Massa, I has to pray, I can't live without it," said Cuff. At this the Master flew into a terrible rage and ordered Cuff to be tied to the whipping post, and his shirt off. He then applied the rawhide with all the force he possessed, until his young wife ran out in tears and begged him to stop. The man was so infuriated that he threatened to kill her next, if she did not leave him, then continued to apply the lash until his strength was exhausted.

Then he ordered the bleeding back washed in salt water; and the shirt on, and the poor slave to be about his work. Cuff went away singing in a groaning voice:

"My suffering time will soon be o'er, When I shall sigh and weep no more."

He worked faithfully all that day, though in much pain, as the blood oozed from his back where the lash had made long, deep furrows. Meantime, God was working on the master. He saw his wickedness and cruelty to that poor soul, whose only fault had been his fidelity, and conviction seized upon him; by night he was in great distress of mind. He went to bed but could not sleep. Such was his agony at midnight that he awoke his wife and told her that he was dying.

"Shall I call in a doctor?" she said. "No, no; I don't want a doctor—is there any one on the plantation that can pray for me? I am afraid that I am going to hell."

"I don't know of any one," said his wife, "except the slave you punished this morning."

"Do you think he would pray for me?" he anxiously inquired.

"Yes, I think he would," she replied.

"Well, send for him quickly."

On going after Cuff they found him on his knees in prayer, and when called he supposed it was to be punished again. On being taken to the master's room he found him writhing in agony. The master groaning said, "O, Cuff, can you pray for me?"

"Yes, bress de Lord, Massa I'se been prayin' for you all night," and at this dropped on his knees and, like Jacob of old, wrestled in prayer; and before the breaking of day witnessed the conversion of both master and mistress. Master and slave embraced, rare difficulties and past cruelty were swept away by the love of God and tears of joy were mingled. Cuff was immediately set free. He never worked another day on the plantation. The master took Cuff and went out to preach the Gospel; they traveled all over the south, witnessing to the power of Christ to save to the uttermost. This is what the love of God will do for a person.

The Girl With a Frown

The girl with a frown is not the help and comfort in the home that she might be if she should lose the frown and become the girl with a smile. What cheer is there in a frown? How much comfort and inspiration can it bring to the mother? An unpleasant task is performed with a frown. The mother asks her daughter to do some extra work and is met with a frown darker than common, for the girl wears her frown about her ordinary tasks. She frowns at the monotony of life. She frowns at the extra tasks that come. She frowns when her likes and dislikes are interfered with.

The trouble is not in the disposition of heart. If the heart were right the frown of discontent would vanish. The frown of selfishness would disappear. The girl with the frown would become the girl with a smile, if she would give her life to Jesus and become happy in Him.—Sel.

Novel reading is one of the most corrupting influences of the age. Three-fourths of all the volumes in the public libraries are fictitious. Tons upon tons of the trash are devoured by those who dwell in dreamland, whose minds are weakened, whose spirits are restless, who have lost all relish for the Word of God. Supply plenty of pure papers and books for the family, and eschew printed poison. Sel.

Drawn Together. Why?

There is always a reason for any liking that results in intimacy between two human beings. The reason is either a worthy or an unworthy one. Perhaps the most notorious case on record was that of the intimacy of Herod and Pontius Pilate. Their common interest was their effort to shirk responsibility for deciding the case of Jesus Christ. After the prisoner had been sent back and forth between them, mocked and in gorgeous apparel, "Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day: for before they were at enmity between themselves." What a reconciliation! No great good was likely to result from such a "friendship." No good ever comes from an intimacy that is merely the drawing together of the unworthy side of two persons. We have plenty of opportunities and temptations for the forming of such intimacies. We suffer, and others suffer with us, every time we respond to such an opportunity. Our reasons for the making of new acquaintances ought always to be such that we can look confidently to Christ for his blessing upon the relationship.—Sunday School Times.

A Prayer at The New Year.

BY WM. MERRELL VOIRES,

Do I grow more like thee, my Master,—more

With zeal like thine for selfless service fired

Unmindful of reward or blame; unhired

Spending myself for those neglected poor

Whom thou beside the Galilean shore,

Didst seek to save,—unsought for, undesired;

Hands soiled with labor; feet with toiling tired;

Following the Way that thou hast trod before!

Or doth thine image in my soul grow dim,

My heart to more of pride and mammon yield?

My timid service in thy harvest field

Proclaim, like Peter's words, "I know not him?"

O Lord and Master, through the coming year,

Wean me away from selfishness and fear! Hachiman, Omi, Japan.—In Sunday School Times.

Life's Harvest.

Sow love and taste its fruitage pure.

Sow peace and reap a harvest bright.

Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor, and find a harvest home of light.—Brown.

"If there is anything that will make the soul any smaller than the worship of the golden calf nobody knows what it is."

Christ My Rock.

EMMAUS.

Lines written by a young lady while a suffering invalid at the Sea-side.

The tempest now is rushing nigh, Dark clouds are low'ring in the sky, And hoarsely moans the stormy main, And thickly fall the coarse, grey rain; Upon the barren, sandy shore, The heavy breakers foam and roar, And out amid a dreary sea, O, Christ, my rock, I stand on thee!

O Christ! thou everlasting rock! Against thee falls the billows' shock, They cannot move thee from thy place, For firmly founded was thy base, Before all time, on earth, or sea, And Christ, my Rock—I stand on thee!

The tempest now is rushing past, I stand uncover'd in the blast, Around the water foams and breaks, My sure foundation never shakes: Firm as the everlasting hills, I stand till Christ the tempest stills, Thus, out amid a dreary sea, Fearless I stand, my Rock, on thee.

The tempest now is nearly done, And from the clouds, the glorious sun Is breaking, like the smile of God, And tracks with fiery sandals shod The dim, gray East, and in its beams, Behold, a golden ladder gleams! Its top above the clouds I see, It rests its base, my Rock, on thee.

The tempest now is wholly past, No longer roars the stormy blast, And breaking like the smile of God, His feet with fiery sandals shod, The glorious sun, thro' mists uproll'd Is turning all the heavens to gold. That ladder bright, by which I stand, With one foot on a golden round, Has caught the brightest, purest beam, And rays of glory from its stream, And floating in the ambient air, The sound of heavenly harps I hear.

And straining all my earthly eye, I gaze up to its top so high, And there behold a spirit-band That wave to me a beck'ning hand. Whereat they stand and look on me; It must be the gate of heaven be! And so I stand and patient wait, Till they shall open the pearly gate, Patient, amid Life's dreary sea, O Christ, my Rock, I stand on thee.

Guide to Holiness, July, 1868.

Single-Handed Work.

Many young men covet the position of those who address large audiences. They fail to realize that often much more good is done in pleading with individuals singly. There is little exaltation of self in personal dealing with souls, and God honors those efforts the most where there is the most self-effacement. All our powers are called forth in such service. Then it requires more courage to fight single-handed than in companies. There fore, young men, seek to do more and more of personal work. Preach the Word by the wayside, in the workshop, behind the counter, in your boarding-house anywhere, everywhere, when you have the opportunity.

When you write letters to your friends, to plead with God. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."—Sel.

Claiming our Rights.

To give up some precious thing which is legitimately yours, to shut your eye upon visions of glory or safety or luxury which you might make your own without any blame, that is so truly one of the marks of nobleness that no man is accounted by the best standards truly noble who is not doing that in some degree. The man who is taking all that he has a right to in this life is always touched with a suspicion and a shade of baseness.

There is a paradox in it, no doubt—one of those moral paradoxes which make the world of moral study always fascinating. Man has no right to take his full rights in the world; he is not wholly noble unless he sees the higher law which declares that all is not his to take which is his legitimately to own.—Phillips Brooks.

"It was Alexander Maclaren who said with great suggestiveness, "Seekest thou a place at my right hand? Nay, I give thee more wondrous dignity. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." And something said in my soul, "Are you overcoming?"

Shut Thy Door.

Souls often grow lonely in a crowd, and starve in the midst of temples, worshippers and ordinances. God would have us alone with Him sometimes. Coming to church is not coming to Christ. "Enter into thy closet and . . . shut thy door."

Shut out nonsense, business, care and pleasure. Shut out flatteries and frowns. Shut out strangers and acquaintances. Shut out friends and foes. Shut out this world, and open the window that looks out upon the next.

Give the mind rest. Give the ear quiet. Give the tongue silence. Give the heart meditation. Give the soul communion with God; look up there are blessings waiting for you. Listen; God speaks in His still small voice. Ask; God waits to hear. See that your soul is at peace with God. See that no shade of sin hides from your sight the heavenly Father's face.

Settle the question of peace, pardon and duty in secret before the Lord; then bring everything that concerns your heart and life, for time or for eternity, and lay it before the mercy seat. "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—H. L. Hastings.

Our God Sufficient.

At one of the Bible classes held for women at a mission station in Korea, a bright, clean, earnest woman with a baby on her back walked from her home to the meeting, a distance of one hundred miles. When she told of her journey and saw the astonishment in the face of the missionary, the devoted woman said, "It was not difficult; God helped me." This simple and sincere expression of one recently brought from heathen darkness to gospel light has in it a great lesson for the Christian worker. Any hard service becomes exceedingly difficult when we attempt it in our own strength. How bright are the days and how cheering the reward when we can say of the most difficult undertakings, "It was not difficult; God helped me."—The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Land to Which I am Going.

SALLIE A. RANTER.

In the land to which I am going all hearts beat in unison. The same great theme dwells upon every tongue. All feast upon the same joys, even the smiles of God. All are clad in the same garment of purity, even the righteousness of the Son of God. All are led by the same Spirit, even the Holy Ghost, to cry "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Then can I not well afford to journey through a strange land full of discordant elements, scoffs and frowns and jeers to dwell in that land of love to which I am going.—Sel.

Willing to go Unpaid.

No one is more miserable than the person who always wants to be thanked. It is well to be doing things constantly for others, but such service is tainted and well nigh ruined by selfishness when it is accompanied by an avaricious and unhindered quest for gratitude. Nothing destroys the graciousness of our love and our life more surely than our making it evident that we look for thanks. And nothing adds more to the beauty of a service than the entire absence of any desire for thanks. This is not easily accomplished. The desire for thanks is strong in most of us. Perhaps the Devil keeps it there in order to nullify, as much as he can, the effectiveness of our service for others. But we can outdo him, if we will, by resolutely setting ourselves against this destroyer of our highest usefulness. When we have rendered a genuine service of unselfishness, let us not concern ourselves as to even knowing whether the one for whom we did it is thinking about us at all. We must not try to be thanked; we must not want to be thanked. We turn squarely away from the whole idea of gratitude getting,—and the best way to do this is to busy ourselves over some new service for some one else. If thanks ever come our way, let us look on this as an undeserved evidence of God's love, not as payment for value given.—Sunday School Times.

The best way to show your value of the religion of Christ is to practice the precepts and follow the example of Jesus everyday.—Sel.

'It's Me, Jesus.

The Ram's Horn tells this little story: "At a religious meeting in the South of London, a timid little girl wanted to come to Jesus, and she said to the gentleman conducting the meeting, 'Will you pray for me in the meeting, please? But do not mention my name.' In the meeting, when every head was bowed, this gentleman prayed: 'O, Lord, there is a little girl who does not want her name known, but Thou dost know her. Save her precious soul, Lord.' There was a perfect silence, then away in the back of the meeting a little voice said, 'Please, it's me, Jesus.' "

Some men are depressing. Their spirit, manner, and tone have a tendency to depress. Others give us inspiration, awaken new resolves within, and set us going afresh. An English preacher gives his bit of experience, which is to the point:—

"Many a time on a Thursday, as often as I could, I used to go to hear Joseph Parker at the City Temple, and he always made my mouth water to preach. When I went in tired, discouraged, dull, stale, feeling empty, I always went away saying: 'Here goes; we will have another shot at it!'"

Blessed is the man who can inspire and set the pace for better and larger service.—World's Crisis.

Not long since the good bark "Monrovia" came to anchor in New York Harbor. After her cargo was discharged, her skipper, Captain Chaso was rumaging in the hold, when a monstrous snake of python species lifted his glittering eyes, and threatened to make a square meal of him. The New York papers saw only the comical side of this incident, and gave the captain's words of humble apology for having disturbed his majesty, and the rate of speed with which he beat his retreat. But is there not a serious side to this novel circumstance. We are sending whole ship loads of snakes to Africa. Should it be thought strange that, in the spirit of reciprocity, Africa should present us with a sample of her own?—Sel.

"Of his fulness have we received," said the beloved disciple, and John was not disappointed. Neither was Paul when he found himself "filled with might in the inner man." There is a fulness of grace and love and power and peace and comfort that His redeemed children have never been able to explore, much less exhaust. I left some little brooks, nearly run dry, the other day, up in the mountains, but I found yonder harbor, fed from the fathomless Atlantic, as full as ever "Oh how shallow a soul I have to take in Christ's love," said Rutherford; "I have spilled more of his grace than I have brought with me. How little of the sea can a child carry in its hand, as little am I able to take away of my Great Sea, my boundless and running over Christ Jesus."—Selected.

Decay Assured.

An artist was once asked to paint a picture of a decaying church. To the astonishment of many, instead of putting on the canvass an old tottering ruin, the artist painted a stately edifice of modern grandeur, with a carved pulpit, magnificent organ and colored windows. But suspended from a nail in the wall hung a square box very simply painted "Collection for Foreign Missions" and over the slot was painted a cobweb.—From the Christian Herald.

"Say, if everybody supported the church with their money and presence like you do, how long would there be a holiness church to support."

Many men are called to preach the gospel; all men are called to practice it.—Sel.

When the outlook is not good, try the uplook.—Sel.