

The Family Circle.

AN EVENING HYMN.

Sweet is the close of day, When all the fields are still; Earth looks as if it list'ning lay For God to speak His will.

In the clear round of sky On one side sinks the sun— A solemn splendor, which the eye Scarce dares to look upon.

While, on the other hand, The fair moon rises clear, And harmonies swell wave-like grand, And flow from sphere to sphere.

"God's will is done in heaven!" Comes from the setting sun; And to the rising moon is given A voice, "His will be done!"

Lo! Venus, fiery Mars, Come forth as if by name; God called out one by one His stars, And one by one they came.

And in the midst I stand, Smitten with sudden awe— These worlds go forth at God's command, His will their perfect law.

Oh that I were as they, Untrifling, swift to run My course of blessing day by day! For so Thy will is done.

Lord, make Thy law my will! And these I cannot be; But help me freely to fulfill Thy purpose, loving, free!

And in that law of love, "Make all our wills as one," That "as it is in Heaven above," On earth "Thy will be done!"

place where the loving Jesus "was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities."

In a nice little letter to me she says: "Several years ago, during a course of meetings held by you in America, I gave my heart to Jesus. I still love my Saviour dearly, for 'He first loved me and gave Himself for me.' Pray for me that I may daily grow in grace. \* \* We are soon to visit that land where Jesus lived and died, and I expect much pleasure in reading your 'SKETCHES OF PALESTINE,' in those places which it describes.

"Your affectionate Friend, \_\_\_\_\_"

Now my dear little reader can you truly say: "I am God's?" He is as ready to forgive you as He was that little girl in Philadelphia. Stop and think how much the dear Saviour suffered in order that God might forgive us and make us his own obedient children.

Read the Twenty-third Chapter of Luke, which tells about the dreadful death the loving Jesus endured for us. And then go away alone and kneel down and offer this

CHILD'S PRAYER:

"O Lord I know I have not been thine; I have not loved thee nor obeyed thee. I am sorry for it. I am sorry for all my sins. But O I am the most sorry that I have never loved and trusted our precious Saviour who bled and died on the cross that we guilty sinners might be saved. O God! forgive me all my sins, and change this wicked, hard heart, and receive me as thine own child, and then I, too, can truly say, "I am God's." This I ask for Jesus sake. Amen."

THE BEAUTIFUL GATE.

"My eye!" said Cud, looking admiringly over the fence. "What of it was gold, sure enough! wouldn't I run an' git one changed, mighty quick?"

Vegetable gold they were indeed, lying in great yellow nuggets here and there over the pumpkin-vines, basking in the still warm beams of an October sun.

"Pears like dey'd took all de sunshine to derselves," said Cud, again. And so they had; for the suns of a whole summer had basked them into gold.

Perhaps my young readers are wondering who could own so queer a name as Cud. Well, the boy that owned it owned nothing else in the world, not even himself; for he was black and a slave. His real name was too large for his size. It was quite aristocratic,—Cuthbert Carter; or, as he would tell you with Virginia accent, "Kudbut Ke-arter sah! I long to de Ke-arters, one ob de berry fust families." You see they are all first families in Virginia; that is the reason why, when the war began, everybody wanted to be an officer. Poor Cud had little reason to pride himself on his owners,

—"de fust blood in Virginy." It may be that "fust blood" flows hotter and quicker than second-rate blood. It is certain that his young master, Peyton Harrison Carter, called Marse Pate for short,—possessed a fiery temper. Two years before the day that Cud was standing thinking, slowly out his own theory on pumpkins, Marse Pate, in a moment of passion, had given him a stunning blow that sent him reeling down a high flight of stone steps. One crash of pain went through him as though every bone were ground to atoms, then a great dark came whirling down, and he was picked up—lame for life. Poor little Cud!

crippled in mind as well as body by a great wrong; for you can easily understand, my little readers, that slavery had given as great a blow to his inner life as his fiery master had given to his poor dark body. Yet he was sharp in his way, too: He could not play like other children, or work as hard, either, so he had more time to think. He waited on table, and heard talk about the war, and he had his own ideas about it, Marse Pate had gone to fight, and Miss Rose, his young wife, grew pale and sad and silent. The old Miss, though,—Marse Pate's mother,—was full of fight and fury about the "nigger-stealers," as she called the Federal Army.

Cud sometimes wished they would steal him.

"But Massa Linkum couldn't make noddin' at all out er me," he said, with a sudden thrill of pain, looking down at his shrunken limb; and a look of intense hate came into his face, that made it hideous. No mask could have changed his expression more than did the thought of Marse Pate.

But now a young lady comes out of the house, and Cud is too shy to stand staring there any longer. She walks slowly through the garden path, singing something softly to herself. Cud has heard it before, and, as she approaches the gate, he catches two lines,—

"And every prospect pleases, And only man is vile."

"Reckon dey is vile, sure enough," says Cud, "specially Marse Pate, when he's riled."

The last of the crimson chrysanthemums had burned themselves out on the garden border, where a few fiery flakes still flashed on the grass. Some of tawny red or pale yellow bloomed on sturdily still, but the young lady did not pause to gather them. She only stood a moment, and looked at the pumpkins, and a very sad face she had the while.

"Reckon she's thinkin' of her mar's pias," said Cud, as he cast a reflective glance back at her. And he longed to question her about that wonderful land,—so wonderful that to breathe the very air made one free,—where her home had been before she came South to teach. But he felt too awkward and shy to dare to speak to the fair Miss Alice, and he only slunk away on his homeward road, rather frightened to see how far the sun was sliding towards the west. He had taken a long time to walk that short mile from Wheeling.

But he limped as fast as he could, looking

neither at the white and feathery clouds, nor at the pale and waning light, only at the dusty beaten road that stretched out before him,—looking at last, as he neared his home, at something else,—something that made him stop and drop back in a frightened way. What was it that the men were carrying so tenderly through the gate? A wounded man, white and faint, with his life dripping steadily away in a precious crimson tide, a ghost-like likeness of his old enemy, a shadow of his young master,—could that be Marse Pate?

It was indeed. The fiery heart would not beat much longer; the fever of life was going out; the ashes of death whitened cheek and lip.

Cud had no time to think,—time only for a slow horror to break over him like a cold rain, when a rough voice cried: "Here, young un, run for a doctor!—any one, only be quick!"

Marse Pate's fast-dulling eye had caught sight of the shrinking figure. Something more than pain contracted the white brow. "He can't go, he's lame," he murmured. "Where's David?"

"Can you ask?" said the Virginian mother, sternly. "Where is the Yankee camp? One of these men must go and at once!"

So Cud saw his young master carried in. He wondered if he should have to wait at tea to-night,—if everything would go on as usual, while the life of the master was ebbing away. He stole furtively into the kitchen, where old Dinah had just finished baking some fragrant corn-bread, and asked her about it. "Go long, chile," she said, not unkindly, giving him a huge bit of the smoking pone; "reckon folks thinks mighty little 'ob their vittles when death's in a house!" and then she set down and threw her apron over her head, and cried behind that shield; for she had nursed Marse Pate when he was a dear little baby, fair as a lily, with shiny golden hair.

Cud stole out silently. It was not half so lonely out of doors as in that great house, where the shadows of a terrible dread had fallen; a friendly red light still warmed the western sky, and as Cud looked towards it he suddenly remembered that there was to be a meeting this very night for enlistment. There were plenty of Union men in Wheeling, and a Yankee captain and a stump speaker were coming to drum them up. It was pleasant to Cud to-night to think about a crowd; and he hurried along shaking off, as he went, the chill and deathly thoughts which had troubled him, and singing to himself, for company, a negro hymn.

He soon reached the first straggling house of the town. The door stood open, and a light was burning on the table. Some one was reading in a low but clear voice. "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee." "Dors!" said Cud, with bated breath, "I wonder what he gw! A bunk of hot gingerbread, now, would be what I'd like."

Cud peered anxiously in. Some sick person seemed to be lying there on a bed, gasping for breath; and Miss Alice was reading solemnly the next words, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Cud forgot the political meeting and listened on. "I wish I could find that gate," he thought sadly; "that Beautiful; but reckon it's way up Norf somewhar" and he walked with a lagging step, and sang no more.

"What of I did meet Jesus or one o' them thar 'postles?" he said bravely, "reckon he wouldn't speak to a pore little nig like me; spect dat ar man dat was cured so as he could caper about so spry-like was white, for sure!"

Thinking such thoughts no wonder Cud stumbled into the wrong place, and found himself among the crowd of gray coats, where a smothered "hurrah" for Jeff Davis woke him up. It was a miserable old barn, lit by a few flaring tallow candles, and looking just ready to fall in on the whole concern. There was a good deal of confusion and eager talking; then two or three of Cud's own color, who stood at the door, were put out. Cud was so small, and the room so badly lighted, that he shrank into the shadows and stayed. What if he should hear some great secret that the Yankees would be glad to know! He would go through fire and water to tell it to them; and then his poor little heart beat quick with pride—then surely Massa Linkum would take him into his service, and give him some good place.

So he listened with his sharp little ears, and when the meeting broke up he was sure he knew something that the Yankees would be glad to know. Their camp was two miles away in a gap of the mountains,—two long miles for him to limp up hill, that he might reach them in time. A rebel attack was to surprise them before morning, so he started at once.

He knew the way, for one summer—the time before he was hurt—he had bounded along by Marse Pate's side on a hunting expedition. He thought bitterly of that time now, as he limped painfully over the steep road, each moment feeling a sharp sting of pain stabbing the injured limb. He was no hero, poor little Cud! and the tears rolled down his thin cheeks; but he never thought of turning back, not even when a white rabbit made a great whir in the leaves and ran like a flash of light over his path.

The stars came out now silently, one by one, like little sparks of fire; in the ashen gray sky. But when the first silver bar of moonlight was laid on the road, Cud shrank back as though he had seen a ghost. How the trees shivered together in the wind, and seemed full of strange whispering! What queer dark shadows ran over the ground, or danced about him like mocking imps! He began to sing again, trembling at the sound of his own voice.

"Miss we go down to sin? My Jesus opens the golden gate, And ax you for walk in."

When he stood on the bridge, he gave a quick look back at the road that stretched out white in moonlight, as if he had expected to see the tips of the shining bayonets parking through the night. What! the Secesh caught him, and shot him for a spy, "Wonder if folks would year 'bout it," he thought, "and know I done died for my country," and the slow blood quickened in his heart at the thought.

But the next moment he said, disconsolately, "Reckon I aint got no country; spect dis yer country wasn't made for nigger!" But then the beautiful North—would he ever see that?—and the Beautiful Gate, that must surely be there. And Jesus, what if he walked there as he did of old in Judea?—He reached the high ridge beyond the bridge, when a sudden strange hoot startled him. His foot slipped, the loose clay and stones slid from under him, and he fell crashing down at the feet of a Union picket, who had just emitted a hideous yawn over his weary work. He stooped tenderly enough over the boy, for he had children at home, and he forgot the color of this one.

Poor little Cud! Fiery thrills of pain were burning out his life, but he made a mighty effort to speak. "You're the despatch post, I reckon," said the man, "for you come quicker'n a streak 'o lightning."

Cud knew at once this man was a Northerner by his accent. "He felt a great whirling in his head; as though a hundred wheels were turning there, and grinding out new pains. "Would it never stop?" he thought. Ah, yes, poor little Cud, soon! But he must fulfil his mission. He raised his head a little, and said, "Don't stay here, Yank! I was gwine to warn de boys; you'll do it a heap better. Tell 'em—tell 'em de Rebels are comin' mighty quick; git 'em ready for 'em, go—"

Then the myriads of wheels stopped grinding, the pain slipped silently away, and Cud fainted.

When he opened his eyes again he was in a pleasant room. He was lying on a little white bed, and the first thing he saw was a picture of Christ blessing the children. The next was the sweet face of Miss Alice, bending kindly over him. He never looked at her without thinking of the white pond-lilies he had waded after many a time. Was this heaven, he wondered, and Miss Alice a lovely angel? But the old pain came thrilling back through every limb, and even ignorant little Cud knew that there is no pain in heaven. He looked at Miss Alice wistfully. "I yered you readin' last night," he said.

"Did you, and what did I read?" "I liked it a heap; 'bout a lame man gittin' cured at the Beautiful Gate."

"Shall I read it to you now?" she asked. Cud eagerly assented, but seemed very sad when she came to an end. "I thort," he said, slowly, "I was gwine to tell us how to git thar. I'm lame, you see, an' I reckon if I could once git to that gate, Jesus might feel right sorry for me, and ef he could cure me jes' by stretchin' out his han', 'pears like he'd do it mighty quick!"

Miss Alice did not smile. A tear, instead, came into her violet-like eyes. "Jesus can come to you here," she said; "just pray to him. He died for you, you know; and do you think he will not come when you call him?"

"And will he cure me?" said Cud eagerly. "I would be his slave, and work for him all my life, ef he would."

Poor little Cud could hardly take things in a spiritual sense. The great wheels were turning in his brain, and his breath came quickly; but he prayed, "O Lord Jesus, I can never find de Beautiful Gate. Come now, and make me well."

"Perhaps he will take you up to him," said Miss Alice, tenderly. "Would you give yourself to him, to serve him there as well as here?"

"Do ye think Jesus, wid de angels shinin' roun' him, wants me?" said the child, with some wonder, yet more of joy, in his tone. Miss Alice nodded, and then saw him close his eyes wearily. She went to the window and opened it. The chill gray sky was warming in the east with soft pink blushes, the morning air came in little fluttering sighs; then rifts of gold broke through the pearl, and waves of violet and crimson rose over the distant mountains like a kingly crown. Airy cloud-pinnacles melted into golden mist before the sun; while nearer rose the trees, with foliage stricken by a sudden frost into wondrous wealth of scarlet and orange.

A strain of triumphal music swept by on the fresh morning air, a sound of shouts, a snatch of the old air, "Hail Columbia!" startled the dying child.

"What—where is it?" he murmured. "There has been a skirmish," said Miss Alice, "and the Union has won."

Cud raised himself, and a strange fire flickered in his eye. "That's all a-gone o' me, Miss Alice," he said, with a sudden fervor; "I done it!"

Miss Alice thought he was wandering. She still stood at the window, watching for the doctor, for whom she had sent.

Now the sun, breaking forth from inner depths of rose, issued from the gateway of the day. Cud looked at it with clouding eyes. "I see it now," he said,—de Beautiful Gate. So he entered in.—Helen Wall Pierson in the January No. of Our Young Folks.

Mr. D. L. Moody, of Chicago, has a way of blurring out his sentiments at prayer-meetings. Not long since, at one of those meetings, some one rose and stated that the Erring Women's Refuge, in that city, was in great need, and asked the prayers of the congregation in its behalf. One of Chicago's richest men, who is said to be somewhat minute in his contributions to benevolent objects, volunteered at once to lead the meeting in a prayer in behalf of the institution named. He had scarcely closed, when Mr. D. L. Moody got to his feet, and said

that it was wrong for us to ask God to do what he had given us the power to do ourselves. "The idea," said he, "of a man who can draw a check for one hundred thousand dollars, asking God to give money to the Erring Women's Refuge is preposterous! Let him give it himself!"

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A DEATH-BED SCENE.

"I have nothing to expect, sir, but condemnation; nothing to expect but condemnation."

The speaker articulated with difficulty. He was a large man, massive of features and muscular of limb. The awful pallor of thick black hair that lay in confusion about the pillow, set off by the dead whiteness of his forehead. Struck down suddenly from full, hearty life to the bed of death, he made there and then an agonizing confession; such as racks the ear of the listener at unhappy death-bed scenes.

A meek woman sat near the nurse, who was striving quietly to alleviate the suffering he endured.

"Oh, don't talk to me of pain!" he cried bitterly, "it is the mind, woman—the mind; and agony overclouded his face."

He continued slowly and deliberately: "There is a demon whispering in my ear for ever. You knew it, at the time, and at every time; you know it." "Knew what?" "Why, that a penalty must follow a broken law. Mark me—I have not opened a Bible for years—I have not entered a church; yet the very recollection that my mother taught me to pray (and she died when I was only six), has passed judgment upon all my sins. I have done wrong, knowing that it was wrong; first with a few quills, then brushing aside conscience, and at last with the coolness of a fiend. Sir, in one minute of all my life I have not lived for Heaven; no, not one minute."

"But Christ died for sinners, even the unconverted chief?"

"Oh, yes; Christ, died for sinners; but my intellect is clear, sir; clearer than ever before. I tell you—his voice sharpened, almost whistled. It was so shrill and concentrated—'I can see almost into eternity. I can feel, that unless Christ is desired, sought after, loved for—that unless guilt is repented of, His death can do no good.'"

"Do I not repent?" "I am only savage at myself; to think—to think, sir!" he lifted his right hand impressively, "that I have so cursed myself. Is that repentance? Do not try to console me; save your sympathy for those who will bear it, for I cannot."

"Thank you, no more; this as she wiped his brow, and moistened his parched lips. "I am not dead to kindness, if I am to hope. I thank you, sir, for your Christian offices, though they do me no good. If we sow thorns, you know, we cannot reap flowers; and corn will not grow from the seed of thistles. Heaven was made for the holy; without, are dogs, whoremongers, and adulterers." There's a distinction; it's all right."

After all that, till eleven o'clock, his mind wandered; then he slept a few moments. Presently, roused by the striking of the clock, he looked around dreamily, and caught the eye of the nurse, and of his friend.

"It's awfully dark here," he whispered; "My feet stand on the slippery edge of a great gulf. Oh, for some foundation!" He stretched his hand out as if feeling for a way.

"Christ is the only help—I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," whispered the man of God.

"Not for me?" and pen cannot describe the immeasurable woe in that answer. "I shall fall—I am falling!" he half shrieked in an instant after; he shuddered and all was over. The willfully blind, deaf and maimed had gone before his Judge. The despairing soul had taken that last plunge into eternity.

Dear reader—Stand in awe, and sin not. Make sure work for eternity. Through grace do it now.

OLE BULL'S FIDDLE-BOW.

We see it stated that the bow with which Ole Bull works such wonders is adorned with some very costly diamonds. Some writers say:

"The bow is about three times the ordinary weight, and two inches longer than usual. The diamonds so beautifully set in it are the gifts of friends at various times. The large one in the end was the gift of the Duke of Devonshire, and was presented to Ole Bull under the following circumstances: The duke's sister, Lady Granville, then residing in Paris, was about paying him a visit at his chateau, nine miles from London. Ole Bull and Rahini, the famous tenor, were invited to be present at the grand reception, when each contributed his skill to enliven the occasion. The duke being, however, unfortunately quite deaf, could not enjoy many of the finest points of Ole Bull's violin-playing, and privately told him so, at the same time desiring him to remain after the company had dispersed, and take dinner with him alone. After dinner he requested the artist to extemporize some fantasies on familiar opera airs; and, in order to hear and enjoy the performance, he tied a cord to the head of the violin, and taking the end in his mouth, seated himself opposite the musician. After playing for his gratification some considerable time, the duke arose, and, after expressing his thanks for the great happiness that had thus been afforded him, and with tears streaming down his cheeks, presented a magnificent diamond ring to the violinist, at the same time remarking that it was a family relic, and begging him to keep it as a souvenir of the great pleasure he had given him by his masterly performance."