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A CUBE TO A CUP



The Truthful Boy.

BY E. S. PAUL.

(In the London Journal.)

She was a stout, red-faced person, with a commanding voice and a firm hand. She held a fine little fellow by the hand, her exact counterpart, and every image of truth and innocence.

"This is my liddle, sir," she said, tapping into my shop, and indicating the little chap by a loving pat on the head.

"Nice boy, ma'am," I smilingly replied, wondering what she was going to treat him to, for I keep a well-stocked fancy shop.

"Yes, sir; and as I see you want a smart, honest errand boy, I thought I would suit you. He is a beautiful color."

"Ah! Been out to business before?" "Never, sir."

"Strictly honest, doesn't loiter on errands, and tells no lies?"

"Honest as the sun, swift as the zephyr and never told a lie in his life."

"Very good; well give him a trial. What is your name, my little man?"

"Hold up your hand, Tom, and answer the gentleman," commanded the other; kindly, for Tom had transferred his gaze from a wooden horse to the toe of his boot. "You see he is a little shy," she said in apology.

"So much the better, ma'am. I don't like forward boys; they're always up to mischief."

So it was settled that I was to give the Backard a trial. For the first week he was all that could be desired, and I congratulated myself in having secured, after many failures, a good model boy.

The second week, however, I was not so satisfied, and had to check him on his errands. But his excuses were always ready and good, as a truthful boy he was pardoned. His shyness wore off with wonderful quickness, and he became quite communicative and social. He had a lot of little brothers and sisters, and they used to say, so, to encourage him, I sent them some, and now I have reason to believe he took home some I never sent. The longer he was with me the more careless and lazy he grew. One day at the dinner hour he came in two hours late.

"Hullo, my fine fellow, how is this?"

I thundered out in a voice that was intended to make him quake.

"I was at a funeral, sir!" he replied, writing his name on the floor of the shop with the toe of his boot.

"A funeral!" I repeated, fully assured that for once in his life he was not telling the truth. "Look here, I'll have no more of your excuses. Whose funeral were you at?"

"My mother's!" was the tremulous answer as he squeezed a tear out of his eye with his knuckles.

I was never so taken down in all my life, and did my best to make amends for my apparent roughness. I gave him the choice of some toys to take home to his little brothers and sisters, poor things! He bore up under his loss with great courage and resignation, but then he was too young to realise his terrible misfortune.

II.

For a time after this he had much of his own way. One doesn't like to be hard on an orphan, but even orphans may try one's patience. I had to caution him often, and must say he listened to me attentively and respectfully, admitting all his faults but never mending them. One morning he was much later than usual. I was mad, but tried to look as calm as possible.

"Well, sir, what excuse this morning?" I asked with a sneer, assured he had none, although, to tell the truth of him, he displayed a fertility in framing them truly marvellous.

"Please, sir, I was minding my father," he said, quite unabashed.

"What the dickens is wrong with your father that he needs minding?" I asked, now thoroughly disgusted.

"Broken leg, sir, fell down the stairs this morning while going to his work."

"The mischief he did. Well, you are an unfortunate family, I must say. Couldn't your brothers and sisters attend to him?"

"I'm the oldest, sir."

"And the head of the house now?" "Yes, sir."

"You went for the doctor and got his leg set, I hope?"

"Yes, sir, fetched the doctor in a cab."

"Who is with him now?" "My aunt, sir."

"That'll do. You're a good, clever boy."

And I really thought so as I saw him turn away with a smile. For more than a week I asked about that unlucky fellow. One day he was well, the next ill, and the day he was very bad Tom was sure to be late. What did I say? Nothing. I couldn't be a brute. At last my patience was fairly exhausted.

"How is your father this morning?" I enquired, savagely, hoping he was well, so that the son might get a bit of my mind.

"Dead, sir! Died at a quarter to six this morning!" was the astounding reply.

I looked blankly at that boy. I could not utter a word. He looked at me compassionately, and smiled a sickly smile, as he said:

"He'll be buried to-morrow, sir; and I was going to ask if I could get away for the afternoon?"

"Certainly."

Poor fellow! I felt for his double bereavement. I forgot all his faults and excuses, and only thought of his little brothers and sisters.

"What will you do now, Tom? You'll give up the house and go and live with friends, I suppose?" I said, cheerily.

"No, sir; my uncle and aunt are coming to stay with us. Uncle'll pay the rent and taxes and keep us in food, aunt'll keep the house and look after the children; and I'll do my best to look after them all."

Not long after this he wanted another afternoon off.

"What do you want it for?"

"To see my aunt, sir."

"Where is she?"

"In the infirmary."

"Another misfortune!" I said, in horror.

"Only a tram-car; three ribs and an arm broken—that's all, sir!"

"Have you any more relations?"

"Lots, sir—plenty more."

I gave him leave and then began thinking.

III.

Clearly a lad with so many relations, and they having such a genius for getting into trouble, was not a desirable assistant. Perhaps it might be my own death-bed or funeral he would be turning up at next. Just as I had reached this dismal stage in my thoughts a shadow darkened the doorway, and the next instant I stood pale and trembling before the exact counterpart of his mother. I don't believe in ghosts or such like, but I got a shock, and truly I believe I would have fainted had it not been daylight.

"Good-day, sir. Don't you really know me? I'm Tom's mother."

"I really thought, ma—that is—"

"Certainly, sir—that I'd call to thank you for your kindness to Tom, and say how glad I am you and he are getting on so well. His father and I are delighted, and we thought you might give him a little encouragement by raising his wages a little, seeing he has turned out such a nice good boy."

"But, ma'am, you weren't ill lately?"

"Pshaw! I'm never ill. I'm too good-natured for that; and am a poor, hard-working woman, sir, and can't afford it."

"And your husband—he hasn't got a broken leg?"

"A broken leg! Well, that's good. A hard-working letter-carrier with a broken leg. Tom did say, there was a bee in your bonnet, and now I really believe you're daft! Why didn't you let him come home to his dinner to-day?"

"He's gone to the infirmary."

"Pretty place to send a child like that. What's he doing there?"

"Seeing his aunt."

"Oh, dear, seeing his aunt! And he hasn't an uncle nor an aunt in the world. Well I do love a liar, but I hate an awkward one!"

"You will love your son, then, ma'am!"

"I do. Are you going to raise his wages?"

"I think not, ma'am. He had better stay at home and mind his little brothers and sisters."

"He hasn't got any brothers or sisters. What put that into your head?"

"Oh, nothing. But the fact is, he won't suit me. You see, in business one must tell a lie now and again, and your son can't do it."

"No, sir, Tom couldn't do that. He's too truthful a boy to push himself forward by telling lies. Good-day, sir!"

At the Majestic.

Bryant Washburn. Excellent Book—His Part in "Poor Boob." Best of His Screen Career.

Bryant Washburn, the popular Paramount star, was seen at the Majestic Theatre in "Poor Boob," which was shown last night. From advance indications this is one of Washburn's best pictures to date. It is an adaptation of a stage comedy by Margaret Mayo. Donald Crisp directed the picture and the scenario was written by Gardner Hunting. In the cast are Vanda Hawley, Theodore Roberts, Raymond Hatton, Dick Rosson, Guy Oliver, Jane Wolf, Mary Thurman, Jay Dwiggins, Charles Ogle and others of prominence. The story deals with the fortunes of a youth who leaves his home town as a failure, and later decides to bluff the citizens into believing he is a millionaire. Luck is with him, and he not only succeeds in his bluff, but also puts himself well on the road to fortune. This week-end show was greeted by the usual crowded house.

Mainly About People.

Miss Ina Claire, one of the new stars blazing in New York's theatre firmament, keeps physically fit in rather a novel way by adopting exercises suggested by Isadora Duncan. She requires a music accompaniment for her group of exercises. Any kind of music will do—piano, violin, phonograph. Her greatest care is to take a position in sleep so that the whole body relaxes.

General Ludendorff is reported to have said openly at a meeting in the Potsdam Garrison Church that he realised that he is "considered as a representative of Prussian German militarism, and I am proud to be it." Some Berlin dispatches describe this "rally" in the Potsdam Garrison Church as a "political scandal of the first order," and there was intimation of discipline for the Nationalistic Potsdam pastor as well as for the functionaries of the supposedly democratic Prussian State Church.

Admiral Enrico Millo, who without royal authority annexed Dalmatia to Italy, is a greater man than d'Annunzio and has under him a larger army and navy. He is a Senator and was an ex-Cabinet minister. He has a good war record. At the time of the armistice he was made governor of Dalmatia, to remain until the peace conference was over. His announcement that he will remain permanently may cause many complications. He is very determined, energetic, and has the confidence of his men.

The recent activities of Princess Mary of England remind one that she has a reputation among the royal family for wit. She is fond of joking at the expense of her brothers. When the Prince of Wales first went to Dartmouth for naval training, he was rather proud of his cadet's uniform, and longed to wear it on all manner of occasions. One morning he found a parcel on his plate. The Prince tore the package open, to find a doll inside dressed in the best Prince Edward manner, naval uniform correct in every detail, and a label attached with the words in his sister's handwriting: "Isn't he pretty?"

The late Andrew Carnegie was probably the second richest man in the world—Rockefeller came first—and gave away more than any other millionaire. His gifts total about \$850,000,000. A curious characteristic of his was his dislike of parting with small change. Libraries—by all means. Quarters! That worried him. He often went about with nothing in his pocket in order that he might not be pestered, and this one led to an amusing incident. Mr. Choate, then American Ambassador in London, was astonished to see Mr. Carnegie bursting in upon him. "Look here, Choate, lend me a quarter," said Carnegie. Choate thought it was a joke. "But I might never see it again!" he protested. "Come, come, it's no laughing matter!" retorted Carnegie. "My cabman's waiting at the door, and I haven't a cent!"

The Land Celebration.

On January 10, 1645, during the reign of Charles the First, William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, was beheaded on Tower Hill, in the City of London, in his seventy-second year, having been born the son of a clothier at Reading in 1573. He declared at the scaffold that he could find in himself no offence which deserved death according to the known

T. J. EDENS.

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laws of the kingdom, and expressed his pity for the Church of England as then treated, and then, after prayer, moved to the block, and after praying again, laid his head upon it, and it was cut off. He was buried in the chapel of All Hallows' Church, Barking, but on July 24, 1663, when Charles the Second had been restored to the throne, Laud's remains were removed to the chapel of Saint John's College, Oxford, and buried beneath the communion table; he having been elected a Fellow of it, and in 1611 its President, having taken his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1594, and been ordained in 1601. On January 10, 1895, the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of his execution was celebrated in the schoolroom attached to that

London church by an exhibition of relics connected with him, and by an open air service held on the spot where he was beheaded, which is now Trinity Square. Laud was condemned because while he would not deny the sincerity of piety in Christians who were not Episcopalians, yet was opposed to such irregularity of ministry for the Church of England.