

The Voice of Uncle Charley

(Written by Charles Standing's niece, Ellen Standing in 1936.)

From a copy Gilbert Standing gave us to read before Meeting 5-17-1959. His sister Ellen wrote it of her uncle Charles Standing, a minister of Bear Creek Monthly Meeting, Conservative. He died 7-15-1936 at age 69 of tuberculosis. *Re-typed from EGS original by NMOJ, 4-19-2021.*

These are thoughts which came to one who was present that afternoon [*at the time of Charles Standing's funeral*]. They are passed on in the chance they may bring some little comfort to others.

"The spirit and the bride say - Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him who is athirst come, and whoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Was it the voice of Uncle Charles speaking? His clear, pleading voice full of love? The hills were still that sweet, sad summer afternoon. There was scarcely a rustle among the corn leaves. The dry grass crackled under the burning sun. The very sky seemed silent, waiting. And again the voice – "But that they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." (How often had he said those words before?) "They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

Ah, his strength will be renewed now. "His strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure."

How true that was of him, how little he dreamed his strength. The Spirit of the Lord was on him because he drank so freely of the water of life. Is he mounting now as an eagle? Will his spirit soar tirelessly on ethereal wings over the world, pleading, comforting? "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." "Let not your heart be troubled, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." From the depths of that Great Book he spoke, and from the depths of his own great heart. Because he loved us. We had only to look into his face, his eyes. A great gentleness was there – a compassionate love. We know he loved us, and it stayed with us. It didn't go even when he was hid from us. His love stayed. We could feel it as we hovered about, drying our tears and smiling to each other. His love, his voice stayed in our midst.

Again the corn leaves moved, the quietness of the fields was broken; the leaves whispered one to another and the little grasses rustled. And through it all, and above it all was the voice, "Little children, love one another." As simple as that it was.

Go back to your hospitals and your schools, your jobs and humble tasks; pick up again the broom or the plow, but remember this always, wherever you are, whomever you are with, remember this – "Little children, love one another."

We didn't bury Uncle Charles; you can't bury a man like him. You can't bury love and affection and compassion. We put the earth over his face, but it wouldn't cover his voice.

And after they all went away, even miles apart, the voice went with each of them. It softened life's cares. It made hospital corridors kinder, it caressed homes; it blessed the loneliest of the lonely; it lifted the hearts of many; it cleansed and purified.

Oh, blessed voice, go not away; stay always, soar on eagle's wings over the world, pleading – "Little children, love one another."