

Give Them a Chance.

(Written for "Our Boys.")

BY CAMILLA B. SANDERSON.

Give them a chance, my brothers,
You who are strong and true,
Life is so full of blessing
For you, and such as you.
But these have been hurt and hinder'd
Since ever they saw the light,—
Heirlooms of family folly
Have scorched their lives like a blight.

Give them a chance, my brothers,
These lads of city and town,
Gay, or sullen, or reckless,
Headless of smile or frown,—
Some of them worse than orphan'd,
Some of them pampered and spoiled,
Some of them only careless,
Their young lives yet unsoiled.

Give them a chance, I pray you,
These younger brothers of ours,
Possible men of genius,
Of grand resources and powers.
Open to them life's pathways,
With worthy goals in view,
Show them the way to the higher,
All they may be and do.

They, too, are made in God's image,
They, too, are bright and strong,
Treasures of unstamped bullion,—
To whom shall the coins belong?
"Christ and the Church" demand them,
The Devil claims them too,
Who shall decide the question?
My brothers, it is you.

Jesus, the Elder Brother,
Speaks to your hearts to-day,
"These are my lambs, go feed them,
Ere they wander far away."
He asks of you but their birthright,
A place in the march of life,
One chance in the game for their innings,
Fair play on the field of strife.

Give them a chance, my brothers,
These lads so bright and brave;
Life is too short for waiting,
Hasten that you may save.
On to the rescue! stay not,
Till all through our lovely land,
These lads from the streets and highways
Are saved by the work of your hand.

Then when the game is ended,
And the last long march is done,
When the battle of life is over,
And the well-earned victory won,—
These lads, among Christ's ransom'd,
Will shout, with hearts aflame,
"Crown these, O Lord, with glory,
They saved us in thy name."
Toronto, Ont.

The Worst Boy in the Town.

A CANADIAN STORY,

BY

Florence Yarwood.

CHAPTER IX.

IN TROUBLE AGAIN.

"The ills we see—
The mysteries of sorrow, deep and long,
The dark enigma of permitted wrong—
Have all one key;
This strange sad world is but our Father's
school;
All chance and change his love shall gladly
overrule."—*Havergal.*

In a few days the talk of the town was that Bob Pierce had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared, and no one seemed to know aught of his whereabouts. Jack heard all this, but he thought but little of it—or if he thought at all it was with a sigh of relief to think that the fellow who had so often treated him unkindly had actually left the town.

One day, soon after, while walking along the beach, Jack passed by a group of rough, half-drunken fishermen, and he saw by their suspicious glances and odd gestures, that he was the subject of their conversation. "I say, Harding," called out one of the men, roughly, as Jack got opposite them, "why don't you tell us where he is?" "Where who is?" asked Jack, in surprise. "Why Bob Pierce, of course!" was the reply.

"What do I know about him?" demanded Jack, in amazement. "Well," said one of them, "a great

many people think you know a lot about it, since you were last seen with him." Jack stood motionless, staring at them in blank astonishment, not comprehending the drift of their remarks in the least.

The men laughed at his amazement, and one of them tauntingly remarked: "He looks innocent enough, now, don't he?"

"How easy it is to pretend!" thundered Jack, beginning to get very angry.

"Why, just this," said one of the men boldly. "Bob Pierce has suddenly and mysteriously disappeared; he was last seen with you, the both of you were just ready to get in a boat. Now people all know that you were not good friends, and the common opinion is that you got into another quarrel while out in the boat, and you got so angry that you chucked him down to the bottom of the lake. You have a little temper, you know," said the man, meaningly.

Yes, Jack had a little temper—in fact a great deal of it, and he was now so angry that the men drew back in fear.

"It's a lie!" shouted Jack fiercely. "I do sincerely hope that he is at the bottom of the lake, for he has been the torment of my life, but I never put him there!"

Jack was too angry to weigh his words or care what he said.

"Be careful, young man!" said one of them. "The authorities are gathering evidence, and if they find sufficient against you they will arrest you, and such remarks will not be much in your favour."

"I don't care what I say!" foamed Jack. "I was not with Bob Pierce in the boat that afternoon, at all."

"Where were you then?" was the next question.

"I was in the woods, sound asleep," said Jack.

"What a slick story!" laughed one of the men, scornfully. "And who will prove that you were there?"

And Jack's heart sank within him as he remembered that there was no one at all to prove this—no one but the flowers, the stately trees, and the silvery stream, and they were all such silent witnesses—they would not speak either for or against him.

"Take my advice, young man, and skip out of here as quick as you can. Everything looks against you, and they'll have you arrested in a few days," said one of the men.

"I shall stand the consequences, whatever they may be," said Jack, walking proudly away.

As he passed through the streets he was aware that many people cast strange, suspicious glances at him. It had been hinted all over the town that he knew more about Bob Pierce's disappearance than anyone else, and public opinion was strongly against him—not that people thought that he would fully do such a dark deed—but they knew what a terrible temper he had, and they suspected that he had been too angry at the time to know what he was doing.

When he entered Miss Grey's both Mildred and her father were so startled at the look on his face that they sprang to their feet with a cry of alarm, for he was still so angry that his face was as white as death.

"Jack, what is the matter?" they both exclaimed.

"Have you heard that Bob Pierce has suddenly and mysteriously disappeared? Well, because I was last seen with him, and knowing we had not been very good friends, they think I got in a temper with him about something, and threw him into the lake," said Jack desperately.

"Both his listeners turned very pale when they became aware of the serious nature of the crime their young friend was in danger of being charged with, and Mr. Grey anxiously said:

"But surely, Jack, there is not enough evidence against you to warrant an arrest?"

"I think there is plenty," said Jack. "Everything looks against me; no one will believe in my innocence but you two. And believe in my innocence a little if you will assure me that you believe me when I tell you that I know nothing of Bob Pierce's whereabouts." "We do believe you," said both Mildred and Mr. Grey, earnestly.

"I hope he is at the bottom of the lake, for he has been the torment of my life!" exclaimed Jack, fiercely: "but I never put him there."

"Hush, Jack, hush!" said Mildred gently. "Don't you know that such remarks would go very much against you, were they to get out?"

"I can't help it, Miss Grey; you can't imagine how much that fellow has tormented me! and I firmly believe that the trap I have got into now is one of his own planning." And Jack told his friends how hard he had urged him to accompany him for a boat-ride.

"It looks very much like it," said Mr. Grey, thoughtfully.

"But you were in the woods all that after-

noon," said Mildred, eagerly. "Can't you think of some way of proving that you were there?"

"No, Miss Grey, I have nothing but my own word for it, and it isn't worth anything. I told the men where I was that afternoon, but they only laughed at me. I am aware that it does sound like a made-up story, but it is not."

"But, Jack, can't you think of anyone who might have seen you either enter or come out of the woods?" said Mildred, anxiously.

"Yes, my boy," said Mr. Grey, "if you can just prove that you were there that afternoon, you will have no more trouble."

"I don't think a single soul saw me, and I can't prove that I was there," said Jack, gloomily. "It sounds exactly like a made-up story."

CHAPTER X.

A HEART AT REST.

"There is no ruined life beyond the smile of heaven,
And compensating grace for every loss is given."

It was a late hour that night when the three dispersed to their various rooms for the night. They sat up trying to think of some way of helping Jack out of his trouble; but all the planning they could think of amounted to naught. They felt that the only thing that would clear him would be to prove that he was asleep in the woods that afternoon; but if no one saw him how could they prove it? And when at last they separated for the night they were still deeply puzzled.

Jack felt that it was impossible for him to sleep with such a terrible weight on his mind, so he put out his light and sat by the open window.

It was a clear, beautiful night, and softly the silver moonlight rested on the silent town—all was restful, calm and still, while Jack's heart was well-nigh broken with its weight of care and anxiety. To know he was innocent and yet not be able to prove his innocence—how torturing the thought!

He fancied to himself how trying it would be—if the worst came to the worst—to stand up in a crowded court-room and tell them that he was asleep in the woods that afternoon; how they would all laugh at him, and call it a made-up story.

And another thing which would help to condemn him was the fact that he was considered to be the worst boy in the town. He was continually getting into some racket—sometimes it was his own fault, sometimes it was someone else's—mostly the latter.

The more Jack thought of his awful position the more dejected he felt over it. His anger was all gone now, and in its place was a feeling of heart-broken sorrow—a feeling that life and the future were quite beyond his endurance.

"I certainly cannot bear it!" he said to himself, in bitterness of heart, as he looked up into the starry sky above.

And the stars whispered back these sweet words of Divine consolation to him:

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

All these consoling promises flashed through his mind one after the other, and, with a heart yearning for help and comfort, he exclaimed:

"Oh, my Saviour, I feel ashamed to call upon thee now in my greatest need—and yet—and yet I feel that I cannot bear this awful weight of sorrow unless thou dost help me! I beseech thee to blot out all my transgressions, and take my life—my miserable life—into thy dear keeping for evermore!"

And while he was yet speaking, his prayer was answered. A great peace, such as the world cannot give, neither can it take away, crept into his heart, and it seemed to him that the loving, tender face of the Saviour smiled down upon him from the starry sky above.

He was surprised at his own happiness; he had never dreamed before that such peace and joy would be his, or he would have sought this resting-place long, long ago.

Alas, how difficult it is to make unsaved people understand how great is the joy of abiding in Christ! Hearts would turn to the Saviour much quicker if they but fully comprehended it.

Jack no longer dreaded the future. With Christ, the Royal Prince of heaven, on his side, what mattered it to him how many were against him?

He went to bed and slept peacefully, and when he awoke next morning and saw the sun shining in his room he felt that it could

not be compared with the sunshine in his heart.

When he went down to the dining-room his face was so joyous and peaceful that Mildred exclaimed:

"Why, Jack, what has happened? Have you thought of some way out of your trouble?"

"No," said Jack, "but I have found rest—the rest and peace that Jesus gives, and I am not afraid of the future now, with such a Helper on my side."

Mildred was too overjoyed to speak; while Mr. Grey said, "Let us kneel and give God the praise," and very earnest and touching was the prayer that followed.

"You see," said Jack, "I felt that I couldn't bear my life alone, so in my greatest need I appealed to Christ to help me, and he has been so merciful."

"All of us can truly say that. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, or rewarded us after our transgressions," said Mr. Grey.

(To be continued.)

IN THE WOODS.

WHAT folly to suppose there is no life about you because it eludes your search! I might have searched in vain for half a day, yet found nothing among the trees. It would seem as if every creature anticipated the possible visit of a Paul Pry, and was cunning enough to outwit him. The greater the effort made by the intruder, the less are his chances of seeing much. Let him be patient. Often a moment or two spent leaning against a tree effects more than a mile of noisy ploughing through the brittle, crackling leaves. The careless snapping of a twig may not startle you, but it telegraphs your whereabouts to creatures many a rod away. How do I know this? In this way: Not long since I was watching a weasel as it tripped along the rough rails of an old worm-fence. It was intently engaged, following the trail of a ground-squirrel, perhaps. Suddenly, as if shot, it stood in a half-erect posture, turned its head quickly from one side to the other, then rested one ear on or very near the rail, as I thought; then resumed a semi-erect position, gave a quick, barklike cry, and disappeared. There was no mistaking the meaning of every movement. The animal had heard a suspicious sound, and, recognizing it as fraught with danger, promptly sought safety.

Extremely curious myself to learn what the weasel had heard, for I was sure it was the sound of an approaching object, I sat perfectly still, awaiting coming events. The mystery was quickly solved; a man drew near. In about two minutes I heard footsteps, and in two more saw the man approaching. Calculating the element of time in the succession of events, it appeared that the weasel heard the approaching footsteps first fully one minute before I did, and about six elapsed before the man reached me, from the time of the weasel's disappearance; in all, some seven minutes. Now, allowing twenty paces to the minute, and two and one-half feet to the pace, this man was considerably more than one hundred yards distant. Indeed, I think he was walking faster and took longer steps than I have allowed in my calculation, and was really still further away than 116 yards when the weasel caught the sound of his approach. Is it any wonder, then, that the woods seem silent as we saunter carelessly along?—*The Christian Union.*

THAT LAST WORD.

A YOUNG girl once heard a bit of wisdom from the lips of a very aged woman—a woman who had rounded the full term of ninety years, and with eyes still bright and clear looked out upon the inrolling waters of eternity. The girl was impressed by the emphasis with which the venerable dame said to her, "Bessie, never insist on having the last word." The determination to have the final word leads to more quarrels and more bitterness of feeling at home than almost anything else in domestic life. The fact is, that one may so control her tongue and her eyes that she may allow her opponent the pleasure of this coveted concluding thrust and yet placidly retain her own opinion, and, in the homely colloquial parlance of the up-country, where one finds strong-willed people living together in great peace with the most pronounced diversity of characteristics, "do as she's a mind to."