

Comforted.

BY LILLIAN GREY.

My eyes were heavy with weeping,
My heart was heavy with care,
For my fairest hope lay withered
Because of unanswered prayer.
And all through the long night-watches
It seemed, as I lay awake,
That life itself was a burden
To carry for others' sake.

For my hands and feet were weary
With the daily toil and care;
And my courage seemed to fail me
With the failure of my prayer.
And I thought of the strange life-journey
So full of trouble and fears,
And I said: "But the dead are blessed;
For sleepers there are no tears!"

And so with my saddened fancies
I listened the beating rain,
Forgetting that April sunshine
Would waken the flowers again;
Forgetting that hope, though baffled,
Dies not in the human breast,
And that only the upward toiling
Will lead to the mountain's crest.

Then down through the dawn came ringing
Glad peals from the old church-tower;
And I thought with a rush of feeling,
Of that strange, chill morning-hour,
When Mary within the garden
Stood weeping, and troubled, and worn;
How the Master's one word: "Mary!"
Made a glorious Easter morn.

And my heart threw off its burden
At the sound of the swinging bells;
For the thought of the Resurrection,
All querulous murmuring quells.
And because of the world's Redeemer,
It is well with the world for aye;
And my heart was sweetly comforted
That beautiful Easter Day.

"Give a Man a Chance!"

BY EDWARD LAVER.

"WELL, Jones, have you anything to say for yourself, eh?"

So spoke Captain Springfield, chairman of the County Magisterial Bench, to Charles Jones, a man of about forty years of age, who had been brought up before him charged with being drunk and incapable a day or two previously. The case was clearly proved by the constable, who had found the defendant in a helpless condition on the highway. Indeed, there was no defence.

The man looked sheepishly at the Bench, as he replied, "Well, sir, all I can say is, 'Give a man a chance!'"

"You have been a soldier, have you?" queried the magistrate.

"Yes, sir," answered the man, involuntarily springing to attention and giving the military salute.

"I thought so," was the quiet response. "I am sorry to see a man who has served his Queen and country standing in the position you are. Anything against him before, Inspector?" turning to the police officer.

"No, your worship. He could do well enough if he would keep away from the drink," replied the officer.

"Supposing I give you a chance, are you willing to work if you could get a job?" asked the magistrate of the accused.

"Yes, Captain, give me another chance, and see if I wouldn't turn over

a new leaf," respectfully answered the man.

"Very well," was the reply, "as this is your first offence you will be discharged with a caution. Don't come here again on this charge, or it will be remembered against you. If you will wait for me outside the court till the business is concluded, I should like to have a few words with you."

"Thank you, kindly, sir, I'll be there," answered the man, as, giving a salute, he turned to the right-about and left the court.

At the rising of the court Captain Springfield went outside, not much expecting, if the truth may be told, to see the man he intended to befriend.

"It's all very well, Springfield," a brother magistrate said to him in the ante-room, "your temperance notions may be all right, but you only get imposed upon after all. That fellow will get all he can out of you, then go away, get drunk out of the proceeds, and laugh at you for your pains."

"I hope not," quietly responded the Captain, as he put on his coat. "At any rate I intend trying the experiment. I saw too much of the evils of intemperance whilst on service not to be anxious to do all I can to mitigate some of it, if it lies within my power to do so."

The other laughed, and saying, "You mean well, no doubt," passed on.

Captain Springfield, it should be explained, had seen much service in various parts of Her Majesty's dominions, and had been frequently called upon to punish drunkenness among the gallant fellows under his charge, who occasionally forgot themselves and yielded to the temptations which so plentifully beset them. When placed upon the half-pay list he returned to England, settled down at his country seat, qualified as a county magistrate, and had for some years past been doing all the good he could to those around him, or with whom he was brought into contact. His magisterial duties frequently brought him face to face with the evils of the drink traffic in our midst, and he determined to take some steps to show his practical sympathy with those who were trying to inculcate habits of thrift and sobriety. He first of all tried the strictly moderate plan as the basis of his advice and example; but finding, as many others have done, that this is but a half-hearted way of getting about the work, and being really in earnest, he took the further step and came out boldly as an abstainer, and at once found his power and influence for good vastly increased, although, as a matter of course, some of his personal friends and acquaintances rather deprecated his "fanatic notions," as they called them. But, strong in the consciousness of doing right, and having the approval of his conscience, Captain Springfield kept right on, till by and by his friends not only began to respect his ideas, but also to render pecuniary assistance

when necessary to carry out any charitable design or relief scheme in which he was the prime mover.

The man was waiting outside the court when the magistrate emerged from the court, so telling him to call at the Grange in half an hour, Captain Springfield entered his carriage and was driven away.

True to his time, Jones presented himself at the Grange, where the magistrate was waiting for him in his study.

"Well, my man," said the Captain cheerfully, "I am anxious to do you a good turn if I can, and I hope you are anxious to help yourself. Depend upon it, that is the best way to succeed—help yourself, and others will help you. Your worst enemy at present is, without doubt, the drink. No man can do himself or anybody else any good if he is continually on the fiddle, and I have seen enough of life—and so have you, I expect—to know that the men are most successful in life, most respected by their comrades, and most useful all round, who do not take intoxicating drinks in any form. Now, I want to make an offer to you. I will give you a chance if you will accept it."

"Only try me, sir," eagerly replied the man.

"Stop a minute," said the Captain. "There is one condition which I must insist upon. I will take you into my employment and give you a fresh start, but I must ask you first of all, are you willing to sign the pledge not to take intoxicating drinks in any form? You know your own danger, and you know how we used to get at that in the army. When a danger or a difficulty was in the way we went straight at it, and got the best of it. Now, that is what I want you to do in this matter. Go straight at it, and sign the pledge. You will conquer if you are determined to succeed. What do you say?"

Jones hung his head, and mused for a few moments before venturing to reply. The Captain waited patiently, thinking it best to let him have due time to consider the matter. At length the reply came—"I hardly know what to say about that, sir, because I am afraid of myself. I don't believe I could resist the temptation long if any drink were to come in my way; and how is a fellow to get away from it, sir?"

"Yes, I know," answered the Captain, sadly. "A man is tried and tempted at every turn, and if we had to rely upon our own exertions or our own strength we should be sure to fall. We must put our trust in One above, who will not leave us nor forsake us if we will only call upon him in our times of trial and temptation. You can join the Good Templars or the Temperance Society, and have a meeting to go to occasionally, to encourage or assist you. I have taken an interest in you, because you, like myself, have served under Her Majesty in the army, and also because of the love of him who went

about doing good, and who puts it into our hearts to speak a word in season. Think about this matter, Jones: pray to God about it, and enlist under the banner of the Captain of our salvation."

"Please God, I'll try my best, sir," responded the man, and the eagerness and heartiness with which he spoke showed that he was in earnest. "Nobody ever spoke to me like that before, sir. It has always been the way of the world to kick a man as soon as he gets down, and not give him a chance to pick himself up again; I shall have a hard fight, I know, sir, but, please God, I will get the best of it."

Captain Springfield was as good as his word: he gave the man employment, found him lodgings in rooms over the coach-house, surrounded him with safeguards, and at the end of a year was able to promote him to a position of trust. Nor was his confidence misplaced, for no one would recognize in the smart, honest-looking valet, at the Grange, the hopeless, dejected sot, who, twelve months before, was pleading before the magistrates for "a chance" to do better. Yes, temperance and godliness have changed Charles Jones from a useless encumbrance upon the State to a respected member of society, and brought him out of the mire and placed his feet firmly upon the rock.

The moral need scarcely be drawn; he who runs may read, so legible are the characters. If temperance reformers would more often give a practical turn to their opinions and their sympathies, like Captain Springfield of our sketch, there are many, very many, in this fair land of ours, who, like Charles Jones, are pleading for just another chance to do better, and who, in broken accents, are appealing to be relieved from the weight of sin and woe which oppresses them, and whom, even yet, there may be a chance to save, if we only heed the heart-piercing cry, "Give a man a chance."—*Western Temperance Herald*.

An Easter Thought.

Oh, while all things are awaking
In this busy world around,
Say, must hearts alone be breaking
For the bliss they have not found?
And must blighted souls' affection
Like dead leaves be cast aside—
Shall it have no resurrection
In a heavenly Easter-tide?

Surely, he whose power can waken
Life within the leafless tree,
And to woodlands, flower-forsaken,
Bring again the bird and bee—
He can wake to life and duty
Human souls enchained by sin,
And bring forth the hidden beauty
Of his image stamped within.

Oh, when broods the dark December
Over blighted tree and flower,
Hopefully we will remember
Beauties waked by sun and shower;
And when mists of shame and sorrow,
And thick darkness round us roll,
We will look for God's to-morrow,
Bringing Easter to the soul!