

Don't Forget to Pray.

"It's hard to have you leave us, John,
They all are gone but you;
We're getting old and feeble, and
Our journey'll soon be through.
But since it is God's pleasure, John,
To guide you on your way,
Accept, my boy, this precious book,
And don't forget to pray.

"This book has been a treasure, John,
To father and to me;
As it has been to millions, and
To millions more will be.
In sickness, pain, and sorrow, John,
'Twill shed a cheering ray;
Then let it be your constant guide,
And don't forget to pray.

"This world is full of wickedness,
Of luring snares and sin;
And thousands madly pressing on,
Are daily falling in.
But if you would escape them, John,
And keep the narrow way,
Oh, make God's Word your counsellor,
And don't forget to pray.

"With yearning hearts we'll pray, dear John,
For your eternal weal,
As round the family altar we
At morn and evening kneel.
In spirit you may join us, John,
Though many miles away,
If in your heart this Word you hide,
And don't forget to pray.

"Good bye! God bless and keep you, John,
Shall be our daily prayer;
And if we meet no more below,
God grant we may up there.
And we have this assurance, John,
To cheer us, that we may,
If we the Bible make our guide,
And don't forget to pray."

—New York Observer.

Fannie's Defeat.

BY MISS CARRIE R. DENNEN.

HONEY out of the slain lion! Victory through defeat! Wisdom out of folly! Strength from weakness! Strange contradiction! Yet it is God's method. So thought Fannie Osgood. She had only a few days before made a public consecration of herself to Christ in the little village church. It was a hearty, whole-souled consecration; with her entire, enthusiastic being she said "Yes" to the confession of her faith and the covenant she made with Christ and his people.

This morning she put on, as she thought, the whole armour, and was ready for the enemy. Her light should shine in the home, and in the school-room. Even the rudest should be made strong by her gentleness. "O, yes, I am ready for the trial!" She even longs to test her strength.

God doesn't wait long for a trial when we feel ourselves ready for the encounter. He soon pricks the bubble of our self-reliance and shows us our folly. We need never pray for trials; they come right along without being invoked.

The morning was cold and chilly. A November fog and loiness were in the air. Fannie was chilled through before she reached the school-room. Once there she found the fire out and the room filled with smoke. Her boys were full of mischief and up to all sorts of pranks. Her trial came sooner than she expected; she lost her patience. The smoke gave her a keen headache; little things irritated her and grated on her unstrung nerves. Cold and smoke, and twenty mischievous, rollicking boys, what wonder her patience gave way! Could you, reader, be amiable and smile under such circumstances! I sometimes wonder whether there are any school-teachers in heaven; if there are, you will find them very

near the throne; for they have plenty of tribulations!

Fannie was glad when the vexatious day was over and she could escape from her tormentors in the shelter of home. She usually put off the school-ma'am when she left the school-room, a thing not always done, but to-night she took it home with her. The first to meet and welcome her were her two little sisters. They came bounding out of the gate and rushed towards her, shouting, "O, Fannie! Fannie! mamma wants you to go down to Mrs. Brown's and get our new cloaks, and mayn't we go with you, say!" Ordinarily this would have been capital sport; for she liked nothing better than to have a good romp with her twin sisters. But to-night an evil spirit was upon her, as on Saul. She thought it had been expelled from her cleansed heart, but alas! he found the door ajar and crept back. Willy dog! How he watches his chance! Whether the gates are ever ajar in heaven or no, the gates of our disposition do get sadly ajar at times. Fannie refused the eager request of her sisters in tones that had none of the gentleness of Christ in them.

She received her message from her mother with a frown, and left the house, slamming the door with an unmistakable emphasis. She was soon in the pleasant room of the village dress-maker and stood sullenly by as she displayed the pretty garments with a just pride. Fannie received them coldly, and started home with the uncomfortable feeling that she had acted very rudely.

Mrs. Brown returned to her work, stung to the quick by Fannie's conduct, and vented her indignation before a room full of girls: "Religion is all a humbug! I don't see as people are any better or more amiable for it; leastwise it has not improved Fannie Osgood."

Supper, usually the most cheerful meal of the day, was spoiled by Fannie's silence and ill-nature. As she sat alone in her room she could hear little Nell sobbing over her harsh words; while sturdy Bell gave vent to her feelings in a most demonstrative way: "Big sisters are no good. I never mean to join the Church any way, if it makes people so awfully cross." She attempted to read, but with little success. She was hardly settled down in her comfortable chair, when her brother called to her, "Say, Fannie, I am going down town in five minutes, and will see you safely to the church door, if you aint too cross to go to meeting." She started from her chair. Was it really meeting evening? Her ill-humor had driven all thought of it from her mind. Should she go! She searched in vain for an excuse. She was too young in the Christian life to manufacture one. She put on her hat and wrap and stood in the hall ready for her brother when he came. It was a silent walk, broken only by Jack's whistling. As they reached the door of the chapel he stopped whistling and said, with a sneer in his tones, "Fannie if you don't come home in a better humor than you are in now, I shall begin to believe, what I have long suspected, that piety is a miserable farce. I have had some faith in you, but I am fast losing it." With a bow he left her.

In a moment all her evil conduct came up before her. Its fatal consequences stared her in the face. She crept to one of the back seats and hid her face in her hands. How earnestly she had prayed for her brother's con-

version! How she had longed to do him good, and persuaded him to lead a Christian life! Now in one day she had lost her influence over him, and undone all she had ever done. What could she do! The meeting was about to close. She had heard nothing. Her meeting was with her God and her conscience. She commenced the day with high resolves, all ready to meet the enemy. At night-fall she was routed, defeated, crushed. She had given a false impression of religion, had betrayed her Saviour, had given aid and comfort to His enemies. She could almost hear their derisive laugh. The sneer of her brother stung her. Defeated! defeated! rung in her ears.

Just as the meeting was about to close, a stranger rose, after a long debate and struggle with himself, and hesitatingly said, "I am a stranger to you all, and ought, perhaps, to apologise for occupying your time. But in reading this morning, I came upon a passage which has been a great comfort to me all through the day. It has been bread and water to my hungry soul, just what, in my circumstances, I needed. A light seemed to stream out upon me from every word and letter. It was a familiar passage, but one whose full meaning and helpfulness I never realized before. It may help and comfort some one before me, as it has me. It was this, 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.'

Fannie was roused at the sound of a stranger's voice. How many, many times she had heard those words repeated without ever realizing their meaning. They now meant her. Weak! Yes, she was that one. Denied her Maker! Yes, she was the denier. Jesus seemed to pass before her. His sorrowful eyes looked out of every word and letter of the passage, and rested on her. She wept bitterly. She repented then and there.

She went out of that meeting a wiser and stronger woman. Out of her defeat sprang a real victory. She had fallen, but risen again. She knew herself better, and understood better what it meant to live godly in Christ Jesus. She confessed her faults to those whom she had injured. A new gentleness and sunshine came into her heart and life. She had the joy of hearing her brother say, not long after, "Fannie, your religion is not a farce; I have watched you; you live what you profess; I want your religion." Little Nell never cried again over Fannie's harshness, and even sturdy Bell loved her big, pious sister. Ah! strength comes from weakness, and victory springs all wreathed and blooming from defeat. Religion is a life, and not simply a profession.

Running in Debt.

HORACE GREENEY in treating on this subject, earnestly wrote:

"I dwell on this point, for I would deter others from entering that place of torment. Half the young men in the country, with many old enough to know better, would go into business—that is, into debt—to-morrow, if they could. Most poor are so ignorant as to envy the merchant or manufacturer, whose life is an incessant struggle with peculiar difficulties, who is driven to constant 'shining,' and who, from month to month, barely evades the insolvency which sooner or later overtakes most men in business; so that it

has been computed that but one man in twenty of them achieves a pecuniary success. For my own part, I would rather be a convict in the State prison, a slave in a rice swamp, than to pass through life under the harrow of debt. Let no young man misjudge himself unfortunate, or truly poor, so long as he has the full use of his limbs and faculties, and is substantially free from debt. Hunger, cold, rage, hard work, contempt, suspicion, unjust reproach are disagreeable, but debt is infinitely worse than them all. And if it had pleased God to spare either or all of my sons to be the support of my declining years, the lesson which I should most earnestly seek to impress upon them, is 'never run in debt.' Avoid pecuniary obligations as you would pestilence or famine. If you have but fifty cents and can get no more for a week, buy a peck of corn, parch it, and live on it rather than owe a dollar!

Not a Myth.

SOME little time since a woman delivered a lecture in Lancashire, England, against Christianity, in which she declared that the gospel narrative of the life of Christ is a myth. One of the mill bands who listened to her obtained leave to ask a question. "The question," said he, "I want to ask the lady, is this: Thirty years ago I was a curse to this town, and everybody shrank from me that had any respect for himself. I often tried to do better, but could not succeed; the teetotallers got hold of me, but I broke the pledge so often that they said it was no use trying me any longer; then the police got hold of me, and I was taken before the magistrates, and they tried; and next I was sent to prison, and the wardens tried what they could do; and though they all tried, I was nothing better, but rather worse. Now, you say that Christ is a myth. But when I tried, and the teetotallers, the police, the magistrates, and the wardens of the prison all tried in vain, then Christ took hold of me, touched my heart, and made me a new man. And now I am a member of the church, a class-leader, a superintendent of the Sunday-school, and I ask, if Christ is a myth, how comes it to pass that that myth is stronger than all the others put together!" The lady was silent. "Nay, Miss," said he, "say what you will, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation."

"DIME NOVELS' AND PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES.—Pernicious stories of the 'dime novel' class continue to do their mischievous work. The latest recorded victim was a New London boy, aged fourteen, who shot himself during a period of mental aberration caused by reading dime novels. Parents who hear of such cases and fear for their own boys, usually wish that some one would kill the writers and publishers of the vile trash that most boys read when they can get it; but such wishes do not mend matters in the least, for there is no one to do the killing. The only antidote to the dime novel is good reading matter that is not provy; there is plenty of it in the market, and fathers who do not see that their boys are well furnished with it have only themselves to blame if the youngsters are compelled to find their own literature for want of a paternal supply."