

The Ebb and Flow of the Tide.

BY MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

I STAND on the edge of the boundless sea
Whose waters are vast and deep;
Sometimes the billows fight furiously,
And sometimes calm 'y sleep;
Sometimes in their generous wealth they rise
Up to my very feet;
And now they are stretching so far away,
That I scarcely hear them beat;
But pleasures and troubles are coming thus
On the breast of the waters wide,
And I wait to see what shall be to me
With the ebb and the flow of the tide.

Like a boat that is stranded I lie awhile
On the tide-forsaken shore;
The hot sun beats on the barren strand,
And, oh, that the day were o'er;
Where are my waters of blessing now?
I ask of my lonely heart,
And the joyous movement and glow of life,
In which I once had part?
But a lesson in patience is given to me
While the waters from me glide;
Though the time be long, I can wait with
song
For the flow of the freshening tide.

Oh, merry and free is the sunlit sea
When the bounding waters play,
And the rhythmic leaps of the gentle waves
Keep time to my gladsome lay;
Cheerily dancing the bright hours through,
The waters rise and fall, [blue
And the beautiful skies in their cloudless
Look down and bless us all;
And every change is an added bliss,
While gently the waters glide,
And hope laughs out with a happy shout
On the ebb and the flow of the tide.

A terrible storm beats down on me,
And the waves are mountain-high,
In a tempest of anger they rise and shriek
To the black and frowning sky;
And I am out in the whirl and rush,
Helpless, alone, afraid.
The waves and the billows sweep over me
And how is my soul dismayed!
Oh, for a helper—a saving ark,
A haven in which to hide;
But after the storm a calm will come
With the ebb or the flow of the tide.

My home is away across the sea,
Where the skies and the waters meet;
That is the land where the summers last,
And the tempests never beat.
And what of the voyage that lies between
This and the other shore?
I have a boat that is safe and strong,
And a Pilot to take me o'er;
The water is low, but soon I know
I shall see the face of my Guide,
And sail away to the happy day
On the joyous glow of the tide.

Kitty's Question.

JOHN VINCENT had been a total abstainer for nearly a year, and he knew he was the better for it. In former times, before he had signed the pledge, his home had not been so comfortable as it might; not that it was a poverty-stricken home like some we could point to, but there was a lack of many of the little comforts that tend to make a house cheerful and its inmates happy. "Never," said John, "will I take another drop. I feel so much better in myself; then the children and their mother are better clothed, and yet I have managed to put something by." "Well," answered Harry Jones, to whom John was speaking, "you do as you like, it doesn't matter to me; but don't be so sure that you will never take any more." "Sure?" exclaimed John; "I am sure. I have made up my mind to it." Yes, John had quite made up his mind to it, and he did not think that anyone or anything could ever tempt him to break his resolution; he felt strong and confident about that. He persuaded himself that he had quite overcome the liking for ale, or anything else of the kind, and that the old craving, the almost need for stimulants, could never return.

Alas! he little knew how weak he was, and how little he could depend upon himself.

Hardly a week had passed after his conversation with Harry Jones before he broke his resolution and his pledge together.

It was very wrong of his shopmates, but they, some of them at any rate, had made up their minds to persuade John to forget his pledge. They had tried it many times without success, but on the morning in question something had put him a little out of temper, and when they coaxed him to take just one glass, he took it and drank it. Poor fellow it was a bad glass for him, for it did not end with the one. As a tiger which has once tasted human blood continually thirsts for it, so John longed for another glass, and from one he went to two, and from two to more.

It was a sad time for John's wife when she saw how he was, on his return home in the evening. She thought of the old days which she had hoped were gone forever. Was she to have a repetition of them? Her heart sunk within her; but she was too wise to say anything at the time. She tried to make her husband as comfortable as she could, and when he had gone to bed, which he soon did, she went into the next room where her children slept, and kneeling down, prayed to God, that He would help her husband to keep from drink in the future. And the prayer then offered in secret was rewarded openly.

When she rose from her knees, Mrs. Vincent was surprised to see her little girl Kitty looking at her with wide-open eyes.

"What were you doing, mother?" asked the little one. "Were you saying your prayers?"

"I was praying to God, Kitty."

"What about?" asked the little one.

"I was asking Him to give me strength," answered Mrs. Vincent, who felt that strength would be needed if her husband returned to his old courses.

Kitty said no more, but laid her head on her pillow, and was soon fast asleep. She did not, however, forget her mother's words.

A week or more passed by, and every night, notwithstanding his wife's expostulations, John Vincent came home the worse for drink.

It was Sunday morning; the church bells were ringing for service; the chapels were becoming filled, but John Vincent sat by his fireside gazing into the glowing coals.

"Aren't you coming, John?" inquired his wife. Never since he had taken the pledge had he missed going to a place of worship on Sunday.

"No," he answered; "I don't feel up to it. You go, and take the children; I shall stay at home to-day."

"Oh! John," exclaimed Mrs. Vincent, "I am sorry; shall I stay with you? I will if you are not well."

"No," said John, shortly. "I don't feel ill; but I don't feel exactly strong enough to go this morning."

Little Kitty laid her hand on her father's knee, and looking innocently into his eyes, inquired, "Did you ask God to give you strength, daddy?"

John started as if he had been bitten by a serpent, but he answered his little girl kindly—

"All right, Kitty, you go with mother; I shall be better by-and-by."

When Mrs. Vincent and the children were gone, John opened a cupboard, and from a hiding-place took out a

half-gallon jar of ale. He had brought it home the night before, and had meant drinking it when he was alone, but he did not feel as if he could enjoy it now. Every time he looked at the jar, and then at the glass he had brought in, little Kitty's inquiring eyes seemed to be before him, and her question, "Did you ask God to give you strength?" came to his mind.

"Dear little thing," he said to himself, "she doesn't know I have broken the pledge. I wish I hadn't; but now I must have a little." "Ask God to give you strength" rang in his ears; the little childish voice sounded over and over again and the bright eyes haunted him.

For some time he sat; but at last he started up, and speaking out as loud as if answering a question, he said, "No, I didn't, but I will now," and fell on his knees.

For some time John remained kneeling, and when he rose he took the stone jar with a firm hand, and carried it into the kitchen and emptied its contents into the sink.

"God be thanked!" he exclaimed as the last drop disappeared. "He has given me strength, and He will again if I ask Him. And God bless little Kitty, too, for asking the question."

That day was a turning-point in John Vincent's life.

It is years since this occurred, but he has never returned to his old habits. Whenever he has been tempted to break the temperance pledge, he has thought of his little one's question, "Did you ask God to give you strength?" and then he has sent up a secret prayer to God for help, and God has heard the prayer and answered it.

There are many who try to resist temptation in their own strength. They are sure to fail; without the help of God we can do nothing.—Selected.

Cracked.

'Twas a set of Resolutions,
As fine as fine could be,
And signed in painstaking fashion,
By Nettie and Joe and Bee.
And last in the list was written,
In letters broad and dark,
(To look as grand as the others),
"Miss Baby Grace, X her mark!"

We'll try all ways to help our mother;
We won't be selfish to each other;
We'll say kind words to every one;
We won't tie Pussy's feet for fun;
We won't be cross and snarly, too;
And all the good we can, we'll do."

"It's just as easy to keep them,"
The children gaily cried;
But Mamma, with a smile, made answer,
"Wait, darlings, till you are tried."
And truly, the glad, bright New Year
Wasn't his birthday old,—
When three little sorrowful faces
A sorrowful story told.

"And how are your resolutions?"
We asked of the baby, Grace,
Who stood with a smile of wonder
On her dear little dimpled face,
Quick came the merry answer
She never an instant lacked,—
"I don't fink much of 'em's broken,
But I dess 'em's 'bout all cracked!"

It is now twenty-two years since the Wesleyan Missionary Society began work in Italy. In the Rome District there are now 14 circuits and 19 Italian ministers, and 369 church members. In the Naples and Sicily District there are 18 circuits, 10 Italian ministers, and 575 members. In Spezia alone their day schools are giving Christian training to nearly 400 scholars.

Brevities.

"WHAT makes the sea salt?" asked Johnny's teacher. "Because there are so many salt fish in it, ma'am," said Johnny.

"PLEASE, I want to buy a shilling's worth of hay." "Is it for your father?" "Oh, no, it's for the horse; father doesn't eat hay!"

School Mistress: "You see, my love, if I puncture this indiarubber ball, it will collapse. Do you understand?" Child: "Oh, yes, I understand; if you prick it, it will go squash."

A poor Irishman offered an old saucepan for sale. Some children gathered around him and inquired why he parted with it. "Ah, my honeys," answered he, "I would not be after parting with it but for a little money to buy something to put in it!"

MODEST persons are not the soonest frightened. "I wonder what they will think of me," is not the inquiry of humility, but of vanity.

"How could you think of calling auntie stupid? Go to her immediately and tell her you are sorry." Freddie goes to auntie and says: "Auntie, I am sorry you are so stupid."

ONE morning one of the horses got loose Marcy came running to grandma in great excitement. "O gramma," she cried, "Nellie's going off up the road bare-headed!" Nellie hadn't any harness on.

LITTLE George, aged four, saw and heard a violin for the first time. He thought it very funny, and this is the way he described it: "Why, mamma, I couldn't help laughing. The man had the funniest little piano you ever saw, and he held it up to his neck and pulled the music out with a stick."

"You just take a bottle of my medicine," said a quack doctor to a consumptive, "and you'll never cough again." "Is it as fatal as that?" gasped the consumptive.

Student (reciting): And — er — then he — er — went — er and — er —"
The class laugh. Professor: "Don't laugh, gentlemen. To err is human."

"Yes," said Miss Coffin, "I always congratulated myself that I should improve my name when I married, and here I'm going to become Mrs. Tombs."

Bridget: "Wot's the most genteel thing for a lady as is a lady to carry in the street, Nora?" Cook: "Sure, thin, some prefers a three-volumes book, but I prefers a roll of music meself, quite careless and easy-like."

THERE is something exquisitely cool in a Yankee's reply to the European traveller, when he asked him if he had just crossed the Alps: "Wall, now you call my attention to the fact, I guess I did pass risin' ground."

AMY BELL, a little girl seven years old, entered the Savings Bank of Manchester, N.H., and timidly said that she would like very much to be shown around the institution as generally as was convenient. As Amy is a very attractive little maid, her request was complied with. It was a dull time of the day, and the treasurer, ex-governor Smyth, escorted her all over it, exhibited the workings of the big locks, and laughingly introduced all the gentlemen to her. When going out Miss Amy thanked them, and said: "You see, my papa has 'posited five dollars here for me, and I wanted to be sure it was in a real safe place. Thank you"—and out she marched, radiant with relief.