

"WHAT O'CLOCK IS IT?"

When I was a young lad my father one day called me to him that he might teach me to know what o'clock it was.

He told me the use of the minute-finger and the hour-hand, and described to me the figures on the dial-plate, until I was perfect in my part.

No sooner was I quite master of this knowledge than I set off scampering to join my companions in a game of marbles; but my father called me back again.

"Stop, Willie," said he; "I have something more to tell you."

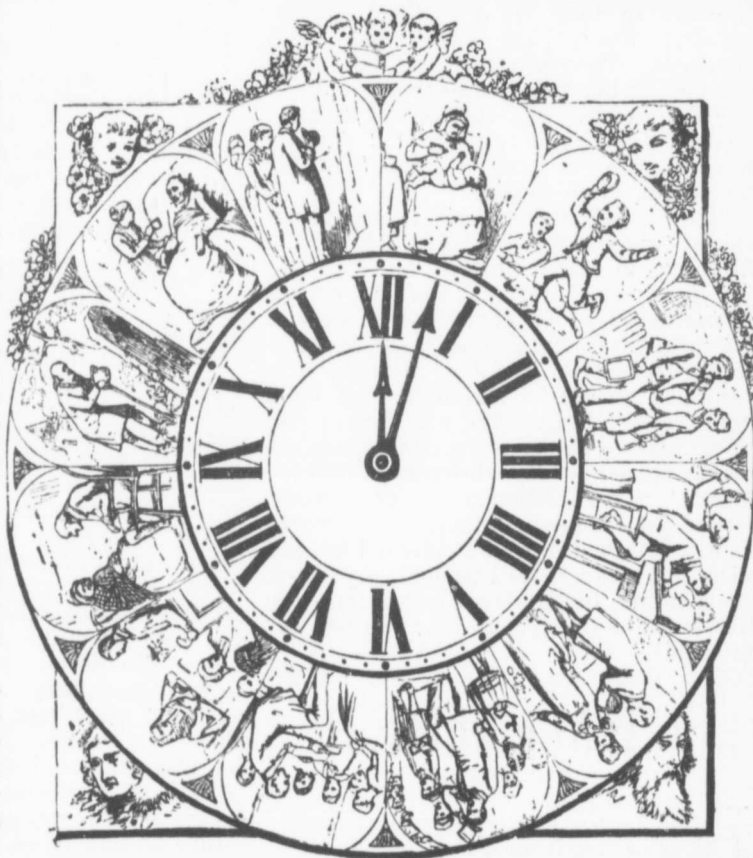
Back again I went, wondering what else I had got to learn; for I thought I knew all about the clock as well as my father did.

"Willie," said he, "I have taught you to know the time of day. I must now teach you the time of your life."

I waited rather impatiently to hear how my father would explain this further lesson, for I wished to go to my marbles.

"The Bible," said he, "describes the years of a man to be threescore-and ten or four-score years. Now, life is very uncertain, and you may not live a single day longer; but if we divide the four-score years of an old man's life into twelve parts, like the dial of a clock, it will give almost seven years for every figure. When a boy is seven years old, then it is one o'clock of his life, and this is the case with you. When you reach fourteen years old, it will be two years o'clock with you; and when at twenty-one, it will be three o'clock; at twenty-eight, it will be four o'clock; at thirty-five, it will be five o'clock; at

forty-two, it will be six o'clock; at forty-nine, it will be seven o'clock, should it please God to spare your life. In this manner you may always know the time of your life, and looking at the clock may remind you of it. My great-grandfather, according to this calculation, died at twelve o'clock, my grandfather at eleven, and my father at ten. At what hour you or I shall die, Willie, is



only known to Him who knoweth all things."

Seldom since then have I heard the enquiry, "What o'clock is it?" or looked at the face of a clock, without being reminded of the words of my father.

My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Prov. iii. 11, 12.