

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XX.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 8, 1900.

No. 49.

The Thoughts That Came In.

There were idle thoughts came in the door,
And warmed their little toes,
And did more mischief about the house
Than any one living knows.

They marred the table, and broke the chairs,
And soiled the floor and wall;
For a motto was written above the door:
"There's welcome here for all."

When the Master saw the mischief done,
He closed it with hope and fear;
And he wrote above instead: "Let none
Save good thoughts enter here."

And the good little thoughts came trooping in,
When he drove the others out;
They cleaned the walls, and they swept the floor,
And sang as they moved about.

And last of all an angel came,
With wings and a shining face;
And above the door he wrote:
"Here love
Has found a dwelling place."

SAVE THE CHILDREN.

BY THE REV. W. H. WILDER, D.D.

The nineteenth century has been made luminous by the fires kindled by Methodism. No one movement has scored more or greater victories for the uplift of humanity by its touch upon individual and institutional life. Its chief glory is not to be found in numbers, wealth, organization, doctrine, or polity, but rather in its spirit. Fairly untrammelled by theological dogma and liturgy, yet loving the form of sound words, its desire to convert men from the error of their ways became a consuming passion.

With a deep, inwrought conviction of the fact and guilt of sin, of the immediate duty of repentance under grace surely vouchsafed to every person, and of the certain and infallible operation of the Divine Spirit upon the minds and hearts of men open to the truth, our fathers sought and expected to see immediate results in signs of repentance and profession of faith and in the beginnings of reformation of character. To them God in blessed communion was immanent-indwelling. To lead others into a realization of this truth was their first and supreme business in life. A passion for souls consumed alike ministers and laymen. Ever on the alert to warn, invite, and point men to Christ, the all-sufficient, present Saviour, for the last fifty years Methodism has given special attention to children and youth. Among them our greatest triumphs have been won, and among them our greatest work is yet to be done.

How many of us thank God for a wise and devout father, a zealous, praying mother, a pastor sympathetic, inviting and not repellent, a teacher of keen insight into our child consciousness who was true to her opportunity of letting light in upon conscience. My life is enriched with all these memories.

I do not know when I did not believe in God and pray unto him. But there came a day of special illumination. Can I forget it, or the human instrument in that awakening? No, never!

I was but a child. Ira Emerson was the preacher. The Rubicon Church, on the Greenfield Circuit, the place; the immediate human instrument my day-school teacher. For many nights I sat by the side of my parents during that series of meetings, and my child heart rejoiced with them over the conversion of sinners. How fervent were my mother's prayers! How solicitous was

she about the salvation of friends! Alas, it never occurred to me that those prayers were for me, or that I was the object of anybody's solicitude, until my teacher, when on the way to the church one night, placed her hand upon my shoulder and whispered:

"Billy, do you not think you ought to seek Christ to-night in conscious pardon and acceptance?"

"I do not know," was the reply.

"Well, think about it," she said.

I did think about it, and God helped me. When entering the door of the church she whispered again:

"What do you think about it now?"

My face gave answer. The sermon

EARNED HIS POCKET MONEY.

Many stories are now current regarding the late C. P. Huntington. It is interesting and profitable to observe his thrift and genius shown in many ways by these incidents. It appears that from boyhood he earned his own pocket-money. When only nine years of age he earned his first dollar by cording fire-wood for a neighbour. His school days ended when he was fourteen, and his father let him go free with the understanding that he should support himself. He took naturally to buying and selling and became a peddler. After a time he accumulated some capital and went into

SOMETHING ABOUT CORAL.

Has your grandmother some beautiful red or pink coral beads which she used to wear as a necklace when she was a little girl? Did you ever think what they were made of and how?

Coral grows at the bottom of the sea. It is not a sea plant. It is the hard skeleton or shell-like covering which a little sea animal forms about himself for protection and support. It is as though he began to build himself a little house as soon as he begins to grow himself.

Another curious thing about these little creatures is the way the young ones bud out from the old ones just as a geranium slip buds out from the parent stock. The young ones begin their houses as soon as they begin themselves, and when they die they leave them behind. Thus a whole colony grows up together and forms a branching network, until, as in the Indian Ocean, they form reefs off the coast that extend for several miles, and are anywhere from twenty yards to a mile or more broad. In some places they show above the water in little islands.

Coral does not always grow the same way. Sometimes it branches like a tree or shrub, sometimes it spreads like a fan, or grows to look like a mushroom, or a human brain. The fine coral most used for commerce is found in great abundance in the Mediterranean Sea, where there are large coral fisheries. It resembles a tree without the twigs or leaves, and is made up by French jewellers into necklaces and other ornaments.

In olden times coral was highly prized for medicine and charms. Coral necklaces were supposed to keep babies from being sick, and preparations of it were given to cure older people who were already sick. The Romans wore coral amulets to win them the favour of the gods, and the Gauls went into battle with it on their helmets and shields that it might bring them victory.

A TENDER-HEARTED ENGINEER.

"One never knows the value of an amiable deed," says The Youth's Companion. "Till he knows all its consequences, and the merit of it is in not knowing them all beforehand."

"An engineer of a passenger train on a Mississippi railroad was driving through a snowstorm, eagerly scanning the track as far as he could see, when, halfway through a deep cut, something appeared, lying on the rails. It was a sheep with her two little lambs.

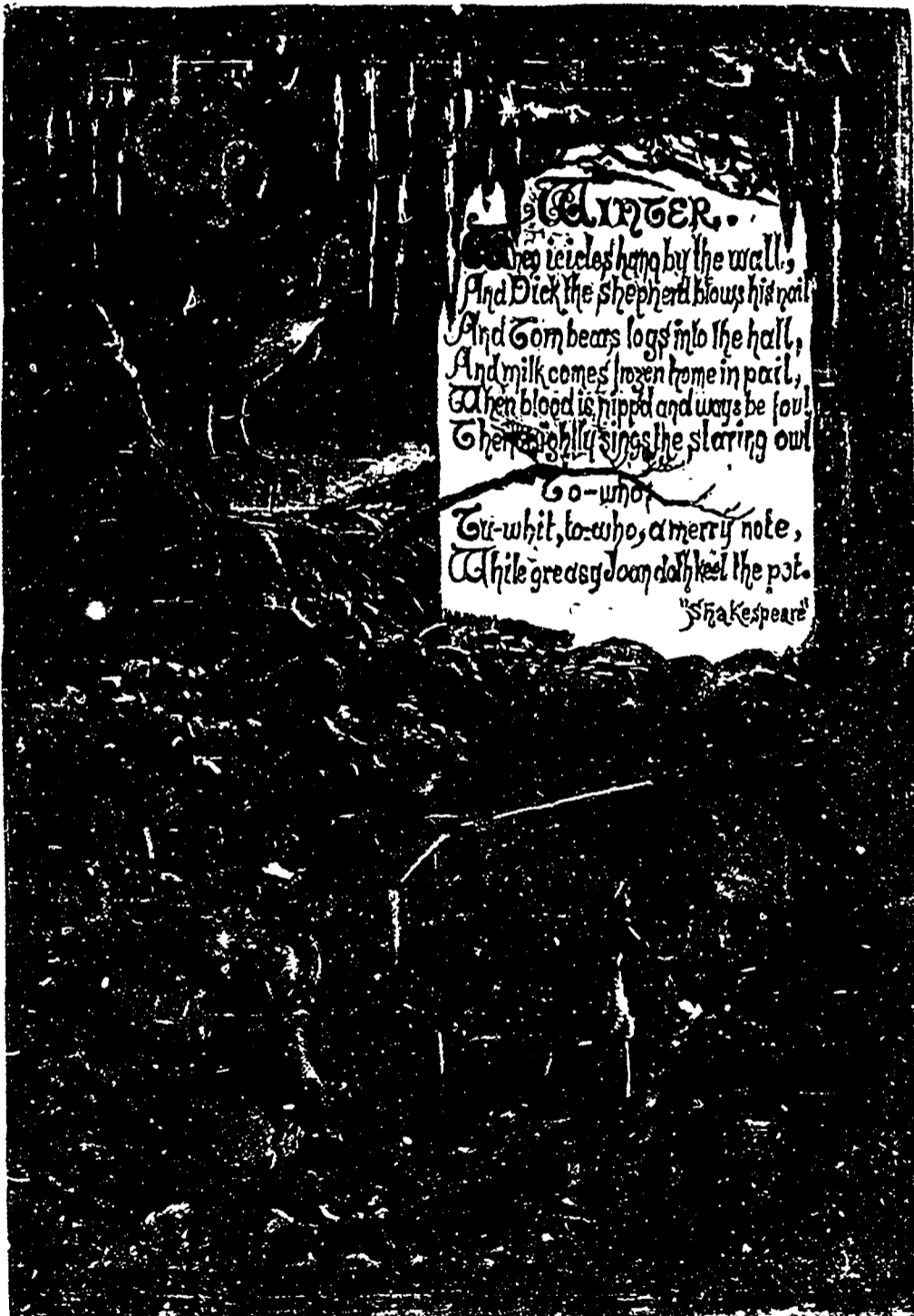
"His first thought was that he could rush on without damage to his train, but the sight of the innocent family cowering in the storm touched him, and he pulled the air brake and sent his fireman ahead.

In a few minutes the fireman came back with a terrified face. There had been a landslide, and just beyond the cut the track was covered with rocks. It seemed certain that if the train had gone on at full speed, in the blinding snow, it would have been impossible to stop in time to escape disaster.

"In the absolute sense the incident was providential, but circumstantially the passengers on that railway train owed their safety, if not their lives, to an engineer who was too tender-hearted to kill a sheep and her lambs."

The origin of almost all lies is found in cowardice.

If animals could speak they would urge us all to be more gentle.



WHEN WINTER IS HERE.

that night was too long because it preceded the invitation to the altar of confession. That whispered word aroused my conscience and was instrumental in illuminating my soul and in revealing the presence of our Lord Jesus.

Child nature is ever the same. Oh, for the fitting word, fittingly spoken to the millions of children under Methodist tuition! I can yet feel the influence of the touch of the minister's hand upon my head as I bowed and received his words of encouragement. May every child receive such a word and such a touch, and may God help us ministers, parents, and teachers to utter the word and give the encouragement!

one mercantile business in Oneonta, N.Y., but finally settled in Sacramento, Cal., where his greatest successes were achieved.

His energy and industry may well encourage like virtues in boys and men, and his rise from humble circumstances is another proof of the "fair field" open to all.

Study well to walk uprightly and be diligent in business, which is according to Scripture, success is well nigh certain if integrity and ability accompany the same.—Northern Christian Advocate.

Drunkards are saloonatics.