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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 firewood 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.

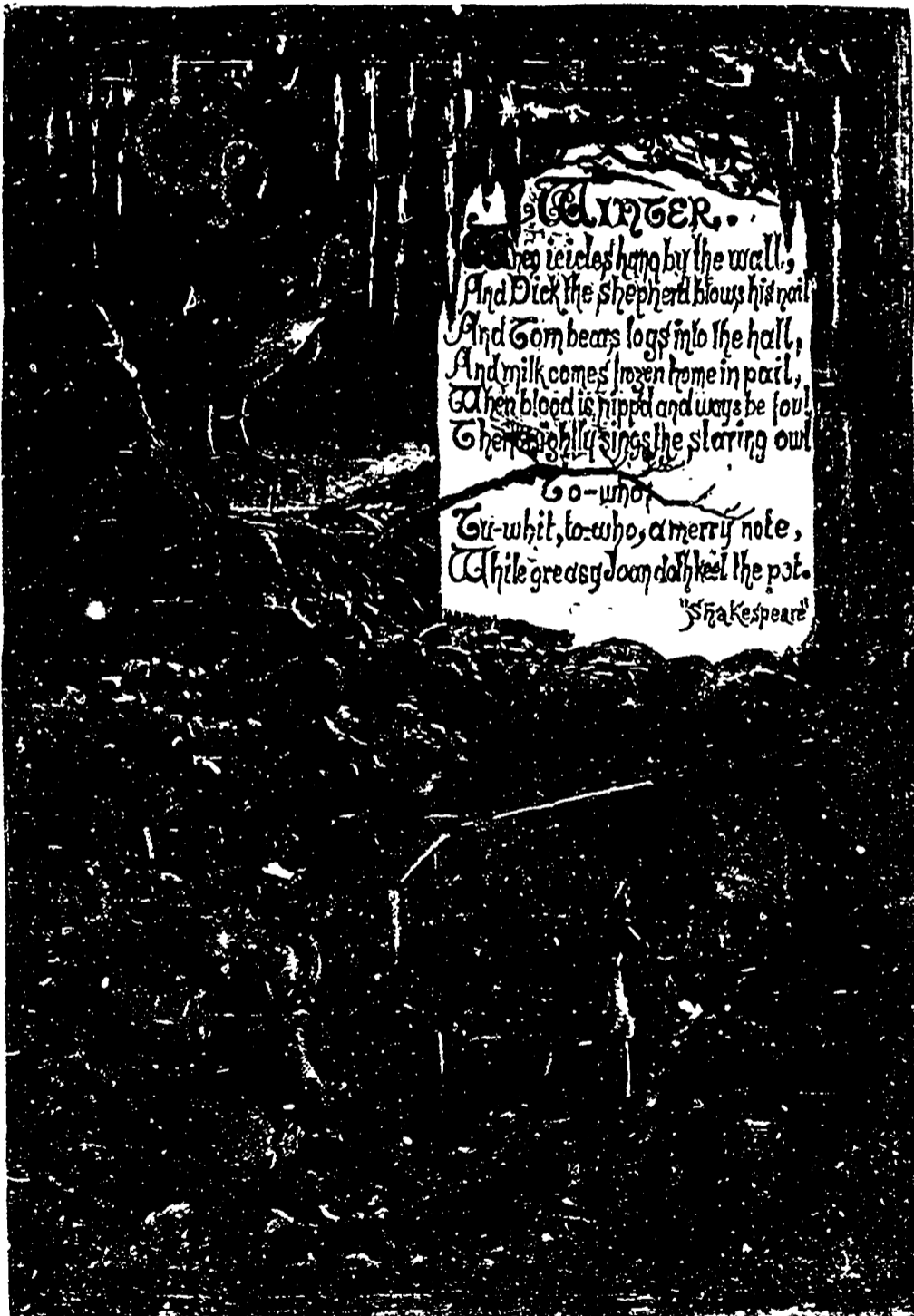
"His first thought was that he could rush on without damage to his train, but the sight of the innocent family cowering in the storm touched him, and he pulled the air brake and sent his fireman ahead.

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!

the 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.

The Beat of All.

BY EDWIN L. ARDIN.

Had I my wish, no powerful throne, In truth, would I occupy...

A boy, with a long, long look ahead, And a past so short and near...

So short a past, that the rosy hours Quite blot from the sight the gray. And the future is only a mass of flowers...

Tis reserved for a lad of ten, indeed. To encounter lion and pard, And Indians fight, and rescues lead...

Than eyes have time to see, With crook and meadow and wood to ex- amine...

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various periodicals like The Best, Christian Guardian, and others with their prices.

WILLIAM BRIDGES, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto.

Pleasant Hours: A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 8, 1900.

LITTLE NEIGHBOURS.

My observation teaches me that birds, especially, are perpetually hungering for and seeking the love and companionship of man.

Last fall there was a sparrow that came two or three times a day and perched on the sill of the open pantry window...

A friend of mine, while tramping along some of our roads last summer, sat down to rest on a log by the wayside...

the man on the log, the squirrel presently made a dash from the tree, scurried up on my friend's shoulder...

"WRITE TO MY MOTHER."

"When we arrived at the tenement in Catherine Street that night, we found him in a miserable bed, in the fifth floor, back under the roof."

The detective trimmed the candle, rearranged the clothes on the bed, and shook up the feather in the pillow...

"Write-a-letter-to—"

The boy then sat himself down behind the table, and beneath the splutter of the candle, held his sheet of paper and his pen.

"Say," he murmured, "that that—" Then we went in a flash.

"And that I—am—coming—home."

"And that you are coming home again. Yes, my boy, yes."

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choked voice, while Meg gently pushed a chair close beside Dick's.

After all, breakfast is quite a solitary meal, and Meg brought blushing cheeks to Dick's cheeks as she gave him hints about designing girls.

"Then the neighbours dropped in, each with a word of advice or of good will, and wiled away the time."

"At last they were all gone, and nothing was left but to say good-bye. The trunk had already been carried to the wagon.

"Take me with you." "Well, no, go, Dick," said Mr. Warren, as he picked up the satchel.

"And you must go now?" She was at his side in an instant, and, putting her hands on his shoulders, gazed up into his face.

"What was the death-rattle in his throat, we heard the sobbing of the wind outside, we felt that strange glamour, the creeping lack-lustre in his vacant glance."

"Next day" he was buried in Potter's Field. The unfulfilled letter to his mother was placed up by his breast.

BREAKING HOME TIES.

By ALICE S. FREEMAN.

"The train leaves at 9.02. Better hurry, breakfast, Meg."

"Somewhat I care to do a thing this morning, to see the pantry, and when I get there forget what it is I want."

"'Upstairs, parking the satchel.'" "Poke the fire a little, will you, father, and get a mix for some Johnny-cake for Dick."

"Yes, Dick was out in the barn, with his arm around the neck of a little gray colt, Nan."

"I wish I wasn't going," he muttered, looking through the barn window at his dovecot.

"I don't think it would be so hard. But I can't stay out here, for my time is almost gone."

"Nothing seemed forgotten, and he had just completed the rounds when Meg called him to breakfast."

"How much time have I, father?" asked Dick as he entered.

"I suppose so." "Why, papa, I know so. There are lots of 'em running around without any home."

"That's what you are up to, is it? You want to twist a boy's brains up you?" "Yes, sir, it would be a great deal better than the St. Bernard dog you were going to buy me, wouldn't it?"

"Why, no," replied his father, still very much surprised. "And I can get a boy for nothing, to begin with."

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"Mother" whispered Dick in a

kinds of nice things for me—and I could do nice things for him, too, couldn't I? He could go to school and I could help him with his examples and Latin."

"I know," laughed James. "He's always up to something like that. I'll bet a dollar he wants to adopt old drunken Pete."

"Is that so, John?" "Yes, papa; John's he is running about the streets as dirty and ragged as he can be, and old Pete don't care a cent about him, and he's a splendid boy, father."

"Do you mean to tell me that you ever felt like doing such things as drinking, swearing, smoking and loafing?" "Yes, but I never felt like doing such things."

"Not now, father, I think, for I am trying to surrender all—every vice, every bad habit, unnecessary pleasure. I don't see how I could enjoy a dog or a pony when I know a nice boy suffering for some of the good things I enjoy."

"You may have the boy, John, and may God bless the gift." "And God did bless the gift. John Rodding grew up to be a much better man because of the almost constant companionship of drunken Pete's son, and so, I think, you and your mother are touched seemed to prosper."

"His delight was in the law of the Lord. He was like a tree planted by the rivers of water, and whatsoever he did prospered."

"Don't let me ever catch you doing such things."

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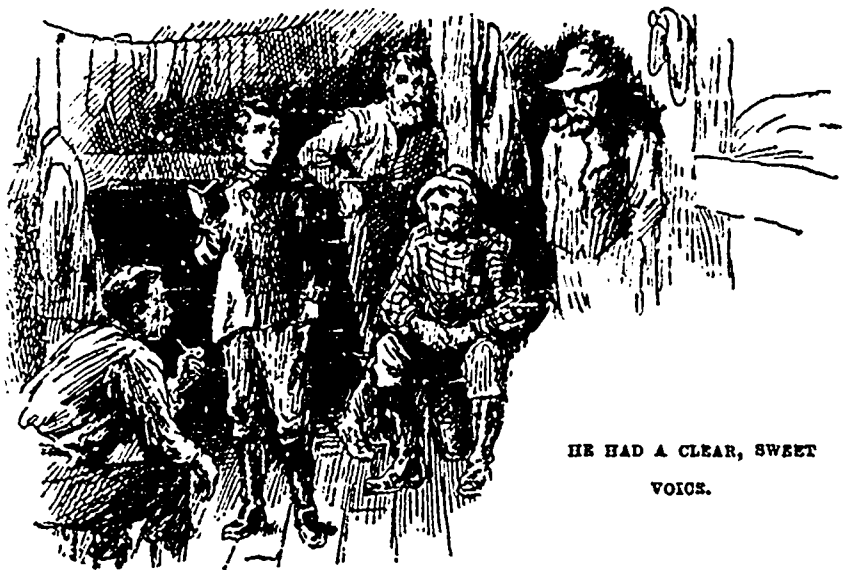
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"You may have the boy, John, and may God bless the gift."

In the Forefront of the Fire.

BY J. MACDONALD OXLEY.

When Hector Mackay, the youngest son of "Big Sandy," as the foreman of one of Hurdman & Moore's lumbering shanties was generally called, begged to be allowed to accompany his father to the woods for the winter's work, Mr. Mackay at first would not hear of it.



HE HAD A CLEAR, SWEET VOICE.

Hector was his favourite son, being of a more gentle, affectionate nature than his burly brothers; and the father feared that his slight frame might not be strong enough to withstand the rough and arduous life of the shanty. Moreover, of the four boys Hector alone had seemed to follow their mother's religion; and although Big Sandy made small pretensions to piety himself, he had entire respect for it when he found it sincere. Now, Hector's religion was as genuine as it was unobtrusive. The foreman put perfect faith in his son, and he therefore shrank from the idea of exposing his spiritual nature to the coarse atmosphere of the shanty, just as he did from risking his delicate constitution in the rude camp. And yet Hector argued him out of both objections, and succeeded in winning his consent to his going back with him into the woods.

"So be it, then, my laddie," was the foreman's final word. "I can't stand against your coaxing any longer. Since ye maun go, ye may go, and I don't mind saying I'll be right glad of your company."

Right glad, too, was Hector to carry his point; and in high spirits he said good-bye to his mother, and with his clothes and some books packed tightly into a canvas bag, constituting his whole outfit, took his place behind the pair of stout horses that would bear the foreman and himself away into the depths of the lumber district.

Among the books were two that he loved dearly. They were his Bible and a collection of "Gospel Hymns" with the music. With the contents of both volumes he was more familiar than many boys of his age; and the thought was in his mind, although he had not expressed it to his father, that if the men in the shanty would only listen to him, he would like very much to read to them his favourite chapters, and sing to them his special songs. He had a clear, sweet voice, that was well adapted for either reading or singing, and he delighted to use it when he had fitting opportunity.

The winter in the shanty proved to be quite as full of hardship as Big Sandy had anticipated; but it did not have the effect upon Hector that he had apprehended. On the contrary, the plain fare, the hard bed, and the rough-and-ready kind of life, much of it being spent out of doors breathing the cold, pure air of the pine forest, did him a world of good. He grew stouter and stronger every week, and found it easy to perform satisfactorily the various light tasks assigned him.

Not only did he benefit physically, but, instead of the shantymen exercising any deteriorating influence over him, he had not been among them a week before the influence was manifestly the other way. Without his having to say a word, they found out for themselves that oaths hurt him like blows, that foul stories and songs were like foul smells to him, and that if they were willing to restrain their bad habits for his sake he was even more willing to make compensation by telling them stories, and singing them

hymns, the like of which had never been heard in the Black River shanties before. Thus the long winter passed both pleasantly and profitably for Hector; and, as the result of the shantymen's toil, a large quantity of square timber had been got out to be floated down to Quebec. It was a particularly fine lot, and, prices being good, the foreman was very anxious to get the drive safely and speedily out into the broad, deep bosom of the Ottawa. All hands, accordingly, had been working very hard, and Hector found the occupation of watching them, and helping as he could, intensely interesting.

The men had good reason to exert themselves to the utmost, for which the spring had come a prolonged drought, which gave them no small anxiety, since if the rain held off many days more the water in the rivers and streams would get so low as to "stick the drive," and thus "hang up" the product of their winter's work until the following spring. Instead of the sorely needed rain, there were furious gales of wind, under whose influence, aided by the unclouded sun, the greath forest of pine that clothed the country became as dry as timber, and ready to flash into devouring flame at the slightest provocation.

At last, by dint of unsparring exertion, and such constant risking of life in running rapids and breaking up "jams" as only "river-drivers" know of, the great army of ponderous "sticks," each one from twenty to thirty feet in length, and from eighteen inches to three feet in length, and from eighteen inches to three feet square, had been brought within about thirty miles of the Ottawa. Only a few rapids and shoals, joining broad, easy stretches of deep water, had yet to be reckoned with, and then the worst of the work would be over.

"We're doing fine, boys," said Big Sandy at the camp-fire, rubbing his horny palms together gleefully. "If we could only get a couple of days' rain now, we'd just sail along the rest of the way."

But the rain seemed as far away as ever that night. The sun set in a perfect blaze of red, and the wind blew strong and steady from the west. "Rain long way off still," said Jean Baptiste, the plump cook of the camp, who rather prided himself upon being weather-wise. "Dis river soon dry up; not much water left now."

"You dry up yourself, Johnny," shouted Big Sandy, throwing a bit of bark at him; "none of your croaking here. You don't know any more about it than the rest of us."

"Maybe no," retorted the cook, shaking his head knowingly. "Hope not, any way."

The days that followed, however, quite fulfilled Jean Baptiste's forecast. Not a drop of rain fell, and the eagerly desired freshet showed no signs of coming to the lumbermen's assistance.

"It's no use trying to get through with this amount of water," Sandy announced, some evenings later. "I'll have to go back to Manitou dam and let out the reserve. I reckon that will carry us through all right."

No sooner had he spoken than Hector piped up with the request, "May I go, too, father?"

"You'll be only in the way, but I'll not say ye nay," was the somewhat rough response.

"Oh! I'll help all I can," responded Hector cheerfully.

Accordingly, the next morning, taking fourteen of the gang with him, and a long, swift canoe called a "racer," the foreman went back up the Manitou to the reserve dam. This had been built without a waste gate; and consequently, in order to let the water loose, it was

necessary to throw out the stones, and cut away the logs and sheeting—a job that gave all hands about five hours of hard work, during which they hardly looked about them.

In the meantime the wind arose, and before their work was finished it was blowing a regular gale. The sun had been shining brightly all morning, but suddenly a dark cloud appeared in the west, and swiftly sped across the sky until it had obscured the sun, and attracted the attention of Hector, who at once called to his father to ask its meaning. At the same moment a long, low, rumbling sound like distant thunder, but as continuous as the rushing of a long express train over an iron bridge, made itself heard, and with a shout of alarm Big Sandy called out to the men:

"The timber's a-fire, and the wind's blowing this way. We must make the lake before the fire reaches us, or we're done for."

Instantly there was a stampede for the canoe, into which the men tumbled pell-mell, and a couple of minutes later the water was darting through the water at the bidding of many strong pairs of arms.

"Paddle for your lives, boys!" shouted Big Sandy, making his stout steersman's blade bend at every stroke, while the stalwart men put their whole strength into their work, sending the long canoe shooting like an arrow through the foaming stream, now swollen by the addition of the reserve water. In the bow crouched Hector, now keeping an eye ahead so as to give warning of rocks and shallows, now glancing anxiously behind at the awful pursuer.

They had a long stretch of narrow river to pass through, where to be caught by the fire meant certain death from falling trees or scorching flame, ere they could get out upon the broad lake, which offered their only chance of escape. Not a word was spoken save by Sandy, who from time to time cried out encouragingly to the straining, sweating paddlers:

"That's the way to do it, boys; give it to her for all you're worth. Keep that up, and we'll be all right."

Above their heads towered a black, appalling arch of smoke, borne by the blast in advance of the flames, out of whose sable bosom fiery flakes of moss or glowing fragments of wood were falling like Tartarean hail. As the canoe shot down the stream, it was accompanied along the banks by an affrighted throng of bears, wolves, lynxes, foxes, and deer; all their mutual fear or ferocity being forgotten in the general panic at the red terror which followed so fast.

"It's mighty rough that we haven't got time to get some of these skins," said Tom Martin, with a longing look at two splendid black bears which were well in the van of the hurrying herd, for Tom was a trapper as well as a shantyman, and he now saw more good dollars' worth of fur than greeted his eyes for years past.

"We'd better make sure of saving our own skins first," retorted Big Sandy grimly. "Paddle away there, and never mind the bears."

The scene as the swift canoe tore along

now kneeling in the bow, praying fervently for their preservation from the awful death that threatened. Observing what he was doing, his father called out in a tone of warm approval:

"That's right, my laddie. We never needed your prayers more. I promise you I'll be a better man if we get out of this alive."

From the countenance of the men it was clear that the foreman was not alone in welcoming Hector's appeal for divine assistance. The thought evidently cheered them all, and when, a minute later, he turned around and in a strong, sweet voice began to sing, "Nearer, my God, to thee," the effect upon them was to revive their waning energies and to put fresh force into their straining strokes.

On they rushed through the foaming water, while Hector sang verse after verse of that beautiful hymn. The fire was ever coming closer as they drew nearer to their goal of safety. As they came to where the stream lost itself in the lake, a great wall of flame seemed to bar their farther progress. Hector was the first to notice it. He at once stopped singing, and betook himself again to prayer. Big Sandy saw it then, and ejaculating, "Lord help us, we're surrounded!" shouted to the men:

"Lay on to it now, boys! Drive her! Drive her! We've got to go through it!"

They grasped their paddles for a supreme effort, bending their heads low to shield them from the burning blast, and straight at the flames they charged. The hot tongues of fire were almost touching them, when a sudden mighty blast of wind parted them to right and left, and through the opening thus providentially made the canoe darted out into the lake, where, by turning off to the south, the pursuing flames were entirely avoided, and they could rest upon their paddles while they breathed the pure air untainted by the smoke of the conflagration.

The moment the paddles paused in their work, Hector began to sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." After a little hesitation his father joined in, and one by one the other men who knew the grand old doxology lent their voices, until the anthem of praise rang out over the lake, opposing its glorious music to the roaring of the relentless flames.

When the singing ceased, Big Sandy heaved a heavy sigh, and, wiping his dripping forehead with the back of his hand, said in a voice whose sincerity there was no questioning: "I've not been the man I ought to have been; but, God helping me, I'll try to be a better one from this day out."

He kept his resolution too, and Hector and his mother soon had the happiness of seeing him become an active worker for the Lord.—The Inglenook.

When Things Don't Suit.

When things don't go to suit you,
And the world seems upside down,
Don't waste the time in fretting.



"LAY ON TO IT NOW, BOYS! DRIVE HER! DRIVE HER!"

was magnificent and terrible beyond all description. The flames curled fiercely over the tops of pines that towered full a hundred feet in the air, and great billows of smoke, in marvellous shades of blue, black, purple, and blood-red, rolled up to the sky.

The men were perfectly silent now, the only voice being Big Sandy's, as he from time to time urged on their paddling. The stream widened as it approached the lake, and Hector no longer found it necessary to keep a look out for dangers ahead. Relieved from his duty, he was

But drive away that frown,
Since life is oft perplexing,
'Tis much the wisest plan
To bear all trials bravely,
And smile whenever you can.

Why should you dread to-morrow,
And thus despoil to-day?
For when you borrow trouble
You always have to pay.
It is a good old maxim,
Which should be often preached—
Don't cross the bridge before you
Until the bridge is reached.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.
STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 16.
ZACCHEUS THE PUBLICAN.

Luke 19. 1-10. Memory verses, 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—Luke 19. 10.

OUTLINE.

1. Seeking the Saviour, v. 1-4.
2. Finding the Saviour, v. 5-7.
3. The Results of Salvation, v. 8-10. Time.—Near the end of March, A.D. 30. Place.—The confines of Jericho.

LESSON HELPS.

1. "And Jesus entered"—Still continuing his last journey toward Jerusalem. The end came fast. "Jericho"—A rich and influential city and a centre of trade.

2. "Zaccheus"—Probably a Jew by birth (see verse 9), but because he had engaged in a business so infamous in the eyes of the Jews he was considered a more heathen "Chief among the publicans"—Tax collector general of a province, with officers who collected for him. "Rich"—The tax-gatherers were allowed a large percentage of their receipts, and often took more than their just dues; hence were a rich but a greatly hated class.

3. "He sought"—Literally, was seeking. "The verb expresses vividly the oft-repeated attempts of the little man to get a glimpse of the Prophet as he passed."—Plumptre. "To see Jesus"—"It is probable . . . that already Zaccheus was affected with something more than mere curiosity, which led him, perhaps he knew not why, to desire to see Jesus."—Curry. "Press"—Two crowds jostled each other—the Galilean pilgrims, hundreds of whom probably flocked about Jesus, and the sightseers of Jericho.

4. "Ran before"—In advance of the moving crowd. "Sycamore"—A lofty and shady tree, the sycamore was planted along the wayside for the benefit of the pedestrian. Its stem is short and frequently fifty feet in circumference, and its boughs extend horizontally to a great distance."—Bible Plants. "That way"—The road to Jerusalem.

5. Zaccheus, make haste"—Our Lord by divine power evidently read Zaccheus' heart. From the beginning of this last southward journey he had acted as a monarch; he no longer enjoins secrecy upon his apostles, and his peremptory command to Zaccheus is in keeping with the triumphal entry to Jerusalem which was so soon to follow. "Abide"—"Possibly overnight, but it is more likely that it was to be a midday rest. "At thy house"—The words gain a fresh significance if we remember that Jericho was at this time one of the chosen cities of the priests. Our Lord passed by their houses and those of the Pharisees in order to pass the night in the house of the publican."—Plumptre.

6. "He made haste"—"If Zaccheus had not been alert now, he would have failed of his only opportunity." "Came down"—A changed man. Conversion is a short process. "He must have been converted somewhere between the branches and the ground."—Moody. "Received him joyfully"—Which he would not have done if he had not previously longed for him.

7. "They all murmured"—Till a man is converted he can never be pleased with the way God dispenses his favours. "A sinner"—A sinner in our sense of the term, but more also. Being a publican he was an outcast from society and regarded as a traitor to his country, an unscrupulous official, and a grinder of the poor. Probably there was not a man in all the crowd who did not hate him.

8. "Stood"—"A formal act, as of one who is about to make a solemn declaration."—Vincent. "I give"—He is speaking not of his past custom, but of his present purpose. "By false accusation"—It was common for the publicans to put a fictitious value on property or income, or to advance the tax to those unable to pay, and then to charge usurious interest on the private debt. "I restore fourfold"—The Roman law obliged publicans to make fourfold restitution when it could be proved that they had abused their power.

9. "And Jesus said"—Apparently both to Zaccheus and the listening Jews "Salvation"—The Messiah himself, and the pardon which he had spoken. "A son of Abraham"—Doubtless he was a Jew, and therefore descended from Abraham, but this phrase would seem to imply something deeper. His faith had brought him into spiritual kinship with the father of the faithful.

10. "To seek," etc.—"We learn from this that, though Zaccheus seemed to seek the Lord to see him, yet the Lord was secretly seeking Zaccheus."—Sadler.

How did he address Zaccheus?
Is there any other instance of Christ offering himself as a guest?
What spiritual lesson may be drawn from this?
How did Zaccheus respond?
Can it be otherwise than joyous if Christ is our guest?
3. The Results of Salvation, v. 8-10.
How did the crowd feel about Christ's action?
What proof did Zaccheus give of a change of heart?
How did Christ receive it?
How was he doubly "a son of Abraham"?
If any have erred is that any reason why they should be kept from salvation?
Golden Text.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson do we learn—
1. That Jesus is no respecter of persons?
 2. That the way to begin to seek Jesus is to begin to do right?
 3. That the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost?

Courage in Dying.
BY CHARLES WESLEY.

Happy soul! Thy days are ended,
All thy mourning days below;
O, by angel guards attended,
To the sight of Jesus go!
Waiting to receive thy spirit,
Lo, the Saviour stands above,
Shows the purchase of his merit,
Reaches out the crown of love;

Struggle through thy latest passion,
To thy dear Redeemer's breast,
To his uttermost salvation,
To his everlasting rest!
For the joy he sets before thee,
Bear a momentary pain;
Die, to live the life of glory;
Suffer, with thy Lord to reign!

HOLD ON, BOYS!

Hold on to virtue; it is above all price to you in all times and places.
Hold on to your good character, for it is and ever will be your best wealth.
Hold on to your hand when you are about to strike, steal, or do any improper act.
Hold on to the truth, for it will serve you well and do you good throughout eternity.
Hold on to your good name at all times, for it is much more valuable to you than gold.
Hold on to your temper when you are angry, excited or imposed upon.
Hold on to God. He is the best treasure of earth and heaven.
Hold on to innocence with a tighter grip than you hold on to life.



A RESULT OF CARELESSNESS.

Lost—Who can measure the depths of this great word?

HOME READINGS.

- M. Zaccheus the publican.—Luke 19. 1-10.
Tu. The gracious call.—Matt. 9. 9-13.
W. Author of salvation.—Heb. 5. 1-9.
Th. Use of opportunity.—Isa. 55. 6-13.
F. The last first.—Matt. 21. 23-32.
S. Seeking the lost.—Matt. 18. 7-14
Su. Confession and salvation.—Rom. 10. 1-10.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Seeking the Saviour, v. 1-4.
What miracle had Jesus just performed?
Where did the incidents of this lesson take place?
Who sought Jesus?
Who was Zaccheus?
What was his position?
What obstacles were in the way?
How did he surmount them?
Was this a brave thing to do for a man in his position?
If we are really in earnest will difficulties in the way stop us?
Is there anything between you and Jesus?
2. Finding the Saviour, v. 5-7.
Did Jesus know his heart's desire?
Is he always ready to meet those who seek him?

A RESULT OF CARELESSNESS.

The boys have run out of school the moment their lessons are over, and taking their skates with them, make for the pond at once. As soon as the skates are on they begin to fly up and down the frozen surface, very few of them thinking whether the ice is equally strong all over and will bear their weight in the middle as well as at the sides. The consequence is that one of them has tumbled in, and we see in the picture how all the other boys are doing their best to rescue him. We have no doubt that they will succeed; but it is no easy thing to pull a person out of a hole in the ice. All round the edges the ice is weak and yielding, and if two persons get in, it is almost impossible to pull them out without a third tumbling in as well. The best way is to place boards on the ice, as they are about to do. This youth will learn caution, we hope; and in the long and tedious hours of lying in bed, there may come to him that reflection which will make him a sadder and a wiser boy. After all, we profit most from what experience teaches us, for we rarely forget it.

A truly courageous man is one who will follow his convictions, even if they should lead him over a precipice.

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