

DEAN'S
Illustrated Farthing Books.

OUR GOLD DUST.



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OUR "GOLD DUST."



"FIRST, I am going to write to mother,"
said Thomas, with his eye on the clock,

parceling out Wednesday afternoon; 'next, two hours' play; next, come in and study my algebra lesson; after supper, go and hear that man lecture on Africa.' Did he? for boys as well as men make capital plans, which they do not always execute.

No sooner said than Tom took his writing materials, and sat down to write. There was a great hurrah in the street, but he never got up to look out. He went once for the dictionary, to learn how a word was spelled. "Do you care when you are only writing home?" asked one of Tom's cousins who was waiting for him. "I *always* care," answered Tom. The letter was finished, well done for a boy of his age, in about three-quarters of an hour, and he was ready to be off. And so the afternoon was filled out as promptly as that letter was filled up. That is a specimen of Tom.

"Uncle," said Tom, one day, "it seems to me your things do not look as well as they might." They were in the garden, and "the things" the boy had his eye on were the currant-bushes.

“I do not expect they do,” replied his uncle; “I’m no great hand at a garden. Well, sir, what can you improve?”

“I can *try* on the currants,” said Tom. “They want to be thinned out, and the



old wood cut off, and the right suckers trained. Do you ever dig around them, and put ashes on the roots?”

His uncle had never done one of these things; did not know they ought to be

done. He thought, he said, currants took care of themselves.

“But they can be cared for,” said Tom, “and all the better.”

“Suppose you try, boy,” said his uncle.

Tom's uncle gave him a home for two years, to attend to school and prepare for college, and that gave him time to try the bushes. In the autumn he dug around their roots, pulled up the grass, separated the large old bushes, and put out new ones. It took time, but he worked hard at it. In the spring he loosened the soil, laid on some ashes, watched the young shoots, kept some, and cut down others. His uncle did not believe much would come of it; but he had reason to change his mind. Much *did* come of it. All at once, it seemed to him, for time goes fast to an old man, his bushes were loaded with fruit, fine large currants, such as his garden had not seen for many a day, if ever before. People, when they walked in the garden, ex-

claimed, "What splendid currants you have!"



"That boy knows how to take care of

his gold dust," said his uncle often to himself, and sometimes aloud.

Tom went to college, and every account they heard of him, he was going ahead, laying a solid foundation for the future.

"Certainly," said his uncle, "certainly. That boy, I tell you, knows how to take care of the gold dust."

"Gold dust!" where did Tom get gold dust? He was a poor boy. He has not been to California. He never was a miner. Where did *he* get the gold dust? Ah! he had the *seconds* and the *minutes*, and these are the "gold dust" of time—*specks* and *particles* of time, which boys and girls and grown-up people are so apt to waste and throw away. Tom knew their value. His deceased father, a poor minister, had taught him that every speck and particle of time was worth its weight of gold; and his son took care of them as if they were. He never spent them foolishly, but only in good bargains; "for value received" was stamped on all he passed away.

It is a mistake to suppose that miners

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and the mints have all the "gold dust." You, children, have some, some of infinitely greater value than the richest mines can yield. God does not give it to you in gold bars a day, a month, or a year long; nobody can be trusted with so much time all at once; but God wisely deals it out in seconds and minutes, so that you can make the most of it. If you are robbed of one, or lose it, the loss is comparatively small. It cannot, to be sure, *ever* be made up; the *whole world* cannot ever make up for a minute lost; but if it teach you to be thoughtful and careful of the rest, you will, by and by, be rich with the golden years of an useful and happy life.

Take care of your "gold dust," children.

