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Address—	WILLIAM BRIGGS,
	Publisher, Toronto.
C. W. COATES,	S. F. HUESTIA,
2176 St. Catherine St.,	Meth. Book Room,
Montreal, Que.	Halifax, N.S.

## Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1896.

## What the School Can Do for the Home.

It can do very much. It can bring the home into living contact with the great truths of religion. Some of the homes, alas! whose children come to the school, are Christless homes, where the Bible is not read, where prayer is not offered, where God's holy day is not observed. But even such homes prize the Sunday-school. Even bad men wish their children to be good. They recognize that no means will so promote this end as the teaching of the Word of God in the Sunday-school. These teachings react upon the home. Very often the singing of the bairn's hymns learned in the school will awaken long dormant emotions in the hearts of the parents. They may themselves have wandered far from God and goodness, but the hymns sung by their children will quicken olden memories, which often stir the fount of tears, and not unfrequently lead the parents to salvation. So is fulfilled again the words of the Scriptures, "A little child shall lead them."

Even if the home is nominally Christian, the quickened interest of the children in the

Bible and its teachings will often awaken a responsive interest in the home. The dust-laden volume will be brought out. The great family Bible, with its pictures of the life of Jesus, will be opened, and parents and children alike will drink instruction and inspiration from its pages.

New ideals will be created. In humble homes the children will be better dressed to go to school. Personal cleanliness and neatness will take the place of grime and dirt. The aforesaid frouzy mother and unkempt father themselves will share this same moral contagion. They will spruce up a bit, and will be often led to the house of God. The lazy lounging or idle pleasure-seeking on the Sabbath will give place to more moral observance of the day of rest.

The home shares the improvement of the person. The bright books and papers from the school bring a gleam of gladness and light to the dull homes and sombre lives. Often the pictures are clipped from the papers and pasted on the wall. They create a sense of beauty before unknown. The visit of the teacher to inquire about the welfare of Johnnie or Mary will kindle in lonely hearts, pining under a sense of neglect, if not of imagined contempt, a feeling of brotherhood, and will lead the poor to feel that the Church is their friend and not their enemy, and that the Christ of Nazareth, whose words it teaches and whose example it practices, is the true Saviour of the workman, and its holy Sabbath and the ordinances of its house his best heritage.

Even among the well-to-do households of our land, the school, with its winter's entertainments and summer's picnics, its Christmas *fête* and flower Sundays, becomes a social rallying ground, and leads to humanizing and Christianizing influences and acquaintanceships.

These are not far-fetched nor imaginary benefits. We saw a vital illustration of these at the great Sunday-school convention at St. Louis, Mo., three years ago. The Sunday-schools of the city marched in their thousands through the streets. Great triumphal arches and platforms were erected. Like a conquering army, with banners and music and flowers trooped the children—those too small to walk rode in vans and carriages. The schools of the poorest of the people, and of the coloured children, whose parents were born slaves, were cheered to the echo, and many a rough, hard hand furtively wiped a tear of sympathy from the eye.

The whole city seemed stirred by common joy. On two evenings the complete system of street illumination and electric lights with changing colours, created at a cost of a million dollars for great civic holidays, flashed their fires through miles of streets, and many special devices were created for this special occasion. The Sunday-school touched every home in the city. It was a demonstration of a new, strange

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