

with a "sober, godly, and righteous life," he was able to make better use of his earnings; the result was his children soon began to have better clothes, and better food. Decent furniture also found its way into the once wretched home, and ere long he discovered that the room and the court was not decent enough for them to live in at all, and thus it came to pass, that the lessons taught in the ragged school, by God's blessing lead to the saving of souls, the making of a happy home, and giving a fixed principle to guide a family through life. And all this turned upon a young man's efforts to do good, and illustrated very clearly THE MAGIC OF KINDNESS.

TRUE RICHES.

BY S. A. HUMES.

TRUE riches are a sure evidence of God's favour. He will not trust a careless Christian with much happiness, love, joy, or peace. These are the true riches. These enable the true Christian to pass through deep waters, to sleep in the lions' den; to bear the test of furnace fires, suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, have the name cast out as evil, and willingly be of no reputation for Christ. A Christian that is ready to call to account a whole neighbourhood, to prove himself innocent of some slander, that one of Satan's band has reported, is not one to whom God will commit much of true riches. If reputation is dearer than the charity that never faileth, he will never be chosen for an especial work of faith and trust. A Christian that flares about the community when the Devil is at his heels, instead of hiding in the secret of God's pavilion, knows no better defence than his own weak reputation. He vainly thinks it his passport to heaven. Such a religion never gets beyond the human, where it must take hold of the Divine, is never so hotly pursued by the enemy as to fly to the sheltering rock, the fortress, or strong tower; and he who can meet all the vicissitudes of life in his own strength, and never feel the need of such places of security is on dangerous ground. God's people will be driven into these retreats sometimes. They are prepared for their use, and if they are overtaken, if any are slain, it is because they ventured beyond their own limits. Perhaps they played with the wine cup, or entered the charmed ball room, or sought forbidden pleasure on the Sabbath, where Satan holds full sway, and no open door is near to rush in and be safe. Such riches are corrupted, such garments are moth-eaten, and whosoever is deceived by such a religion, is not wise. They who seek for the pearls of the Bible, must not expect to find them in the pleasures of this world. Mid the glare of earthly jewels, the pearl of great price shines but dimly. In the festive dance, the garment of salvation is laid aside, "for the pride of life." "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," are the conditions upon which God bestows His true riches.

A man's heart has only enough life in it to pursue one object fully. Ye must not give half your love to Christ: and the other half to the world. No man can serve God and mammon.

There is no fairy gift which the good mother needs pray for like the gift of cheerfulness. A merry heart doeth good like a medicine. How few people seem to remember that it is right and proper to have fun at home; not simply a dead level of contentment, but real frolic and play. It would be a benison to some families if they could have once a week an evening devoted to enjoyment. For this the brothers and might plan a little beforehand. They might practise a duet or two; they might think of a conversational game, or manage in some way a surprise; as, for instance, if in the weekly paper or magazine there were a specially interesting short story or poem, it might be saved and read on this occasion. We would advise some little distinction of dress for this at-home festival. We honour ourselves by treating our exterior persons as though they were worthy of honour. So the brothers might don their best jackets and coats, the sisters put on their fresh ties and hair-ribbons, and the house be made inviting with extra lights. The dying Goethe cried with his last breath for "Light! more light!" Many a living man, woman, and child might echo his call in a most liberal way. People have often some pet frugality, and there are multitudes who, generous enough in other regards, are parsimonious concerning light. The evening's cheer and pleasure of a household is greatly helped by having the house itself radiant.

OUR ELDER SCHOLARS.

BY THE REV. ALFRED TAYLOR.

AMONG the many important questions which crowd on Sunday-school people in their discussions, is the too-much-neglected one, "How shall we keep our elder scholars?" It is one which thrusts itself forward in convention, institute, teachers' meeting, and, in fact, in all the operations of Sunday-school work. It is often dropped into the question-box of an institute, and dismissed in a moment with some such answer as, "Why, by keeping them interested, to be sure." In some instances, the sage who has given the answer seems to think the matter is thus settled beyond controversy.

"Keeping them interested" is good, as far as it goes; but the work of interesting a growing boy or girl is more of a science than most people are disposed to consider it. The teacher who succeeds in holding the attention of a boy eleven years old, may entirely fail to engage the interest of the same boy when he reaches the comparatively mature age of fifteen. It often happens that, while the boy has grown four years in mind and body, the teacher, who did all his growing years ago, has stood still. When this is the case, the boy has gone beyond him, and both parties know it. What suited the boy of eleven may fail to profit the boy of fifteen. When the boy realises that the teacher is unable to meet his wants, it is by no means unnatural that he should leave. A class of large boys recently stampeded, in a body, from one of our prominent Sunday-schools. When they were taken to task by an elderly and somewhat austere brother for their hardness of heart, in leaving the privileges of the school, their spokesman remarked, in reply, "Well, give us something worth staying for, and we'll stay." Their teacher had not been in the habit of studying his lesson, and the boys know that. He failed in his attempt to pass off his platitudes on them for Scriptural wisdom.

We cannot, in our Sunday-schools, compel the attendance of our scholars, as in weekday schools. We may grieve over the loss of our older scholars; but if we severely insist that they shall and must come back, and that they are bad and wicked children if they do not, they are apt to stand outside and laugh at us. It is our duty to try to master the art and science of teaching them, and of holding their attention, so as to compel them to come—not by any rude or merely legal process of compulsion, but by the exercise of the same kind of love "that sweetly forced us in" to the Gospel feast.

Our big boys and girls do not care for "baby talk." Sunday-school orators, men old enough to know better, often commence a speech with, "Well, my dear little children, I am very glad to see you here to-day. I love little children. I was once a little child myself," and so forth, and so forth, and so forth. This may do for children who sit at table on high chairs. But put yourself in the place of the growing lad who only this morning surreptitiously possessed himself of his father's razor to scrape off the six silky hairs which appeared on his manly upper lip. What does that young person think of such an address? Or the sixteen-year-old girl, who is wearing at least as much finery as her mother, and who thinks a great deal more of it than her mother does of hers, what says she to "my dear little girl?"

We may tell these young folks to be humble and childlike; but we ought to remember that they are just about as likely to be so as we were at their time of life.

And if we would teach these boys and girls anything calculated to give us a hold on them, we must know it ourselves in order to teach it. We must not only know it for ourselves, but be able to impart it to them. The empty teacher, who goes before a class of this kind of scholars with an unprepared lesson, will soon be found out and exposed by them. We can hardly blame the youngsters for making the exposition, either.

The faculties of these young people are wide awake. We must be as wide awake as they are. We must have no means untried to keep and hold them. After teaching and training them for several years, it is a pity to let them slip off just at the time when the most need faithful instruction.

Virtues in unregenerate men are nothing but whitewashed sins. The best performance of an unchanged character is worthless in God's sight. It wants the stamp of grace on it; and that which has not the stamp of grace is false coin.