

the beauties of God's beautiful world, the strength to work, the ability to gladden others by the exercise of special talents; the sound mind, the health of body, for anything money could give or buy?

I seem to hear a chorus of young voices answer "No. A thousand times, no." And I can imagine an unuttered prayer going up from many a heart, "Lord, let me keep the riches I have, and make me contented with the portion Thy love has allotted to me."

I was once talking to a dear lad about riches. He was but a lad, still, he was thoughtful beyond his years, and he had a way of opening his heart to me. You young listeners may like to hear what was the decision of one younger than most of you, on the subject of riches.

"I suppose," he said, "we should all like to have a bit more money if we could get it by wishing for it; but I've been looking about me a good deal lately, and I can't help feeling that I should not like to change with any one I know, if I had to take all he has along with the money."

Then he began to give instances. One gentleman had great estates, but he had lost his only son and had a sick wife whom no expenditure of money could restore to health.

Another, similarly endowed, had a family—all girls but the eldest, and he, poor lad, heir to great estates, was imbecile. A careless nurse had let him fall when an infant, and had concealed the accident for fear of the consequences to herself. The child's intellect and the parents' hopes were ruined by this deceit, and there was a shade of sorrow always hanging over a luxurious home in consequence of it.

Looking into the busy world of commerce, my boy friend noted how rich men went on toiling as if they were chained to their places of business, and many of them seemed to find time for nothing but money-making, and pleasure in nothing but owning it.

Round and round his circle of acquaintances the young mind roved. Of course, he found good, unselfish, rich people, but still there was always something that hindered him from wishing to change with them.

Could he give youth, even with poverty, for hoar hairs with wealth? Would he change his vigorous health for money with a frail body? Would he barter his generous nature which impelled him to use his little unselfishly, for the sordid spirit of the man who, having much, thought only of self in the spending of it?

"I would not change with anybody that I know," was the conclusion he came to, and I am sure he was right.

The lot which is chosen for us by Him who cannot err is the best. It is our duty and privilege to turn everything we possess to good account, instead of spending our time in vain repinings and envying those whose wealth is of a different kind from ours.

How did you and I feel when our first watch or pretty ornament was given to us? We were constantly consulting the one, or changing the position of the other in order to show it to the greatest advantage. In a little while the sense of wealth in these possessions left us, and we used them almost unconsciously. So it is with those who are richest, in a worldly sense. The high-born lady goes about in a simple serge dress and carries with her no thought of the sparkling treasures resting in her safe at home.

The possessor of many carriages walks from choice and for health's sake. The owner of many country seats has often less enjoyment out of them than those have whom he permits to wander in his wide parks at will. The humbler wayfarer, with health, sight and power to move freely, revels in the beauty around him. He sits under the shade

of glorious trees, and listens to the songs of birds, and the hum of bees, feeling that for the time at least all these good things are his, without cost and anxiety about their maintenance.

Such possessions often weigh very heavily on their owners. More than once I have heard friends say, "How I wish I could give up this large place, but I cannot. It is left me on condition that I live in it, and it costs so much that I am poor, though I am called rich, and the worst of it is I have nothing to give."

A man I knew was asked, "Why do you not live in a larger house and keep a carriage? Your children are settled in the world and you can well afford it."

"My wife and I have grown so used to walking that we prefer it, and we thank God that, now we are past middle life, our old Darby and Joan rambles can be continued. If we require a carriage we can hire one. As to our house! It is too large, or would be but for the young people's visits. We can only occupy one room at a time, and if we old folks were inclined to sulk, we could have an apartment each and there would still be a sitting-room to spare. All the dainties in the world would not tempt us to eat another morsel, for our tastes are simple. We have food 'convenient for us,' and it would add nothing to our pleasure to know that wardrobes were overflowing with garments beyond our power to use."

"It is of no use talking to an old philosopher like you," said the first speaker, and went his way.

If the other had told what was in his heart he might have said, "I should be miserable were I to spend so much on my own surroundings, as to be unable to give comfort to the needy out of the abundance God has given to me."

Surely all the vast wealth of the patriarch Job gave him less real happiness even in possession, than did the power to say, in his season of deepest affliction, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor."

How delightful it is to think that you, my dear girl friends, may each in your little way earn the right to say words like those which the patriarch said, though you have not Job's wealth. There are a thousand ways in which you can realise his blessedness. You can think of the old and easily wearied when you are going about your own business, and by carrying a message or making some little purchase, you can be feet to the lame.

Your nimble fingers which ply the needle so swiftly, can be exercised for one whose trembling hands will not allow her to darn a stocking or put on a button, or a patch. Your voices will sound like sweetest music in the ears of one who loves God's word, but whose failing sight will not allow her to read it.

That unlettered old body—in her tiny cottage, who is not able to read the letter from her son in a far-away land, and who wishes she had been young in the days when children were taught, as now—will be very grateful for your help in deciphering and answering the precious epistle. Your eyes will shine more brightly and your heart will be glad when she thanks you and, in her trembling tones, asks that God will bless and reward you, though she cannot. If you have given an hour to a lonely neighbour at a cost of some self-denial, and it may be, listened to querulous complaints

patiently and given cheery words back again, you will return to your own bright home and enjoy it the more for knowing that, in a little way, you have helped to bear another's burden.

How we enrich ourselves by every cheery word, kindly act or bit of self-denial exercised for Christ's sake!

Picture again the face of that little child to whom you gave a toy of your own devising, or the garment made out of a mere fragment of material!

Are you not richer for the memory? And do we not all find that we have much real wealth at our disposal, and that we can enrich others by the use of it, if we only have the will?

I could go on and on, but time flies and I have yet to say a word about the best riches of all—the only kind which we do not leave behind when we close our eyes on this world and all its fleeting treasures. Let us cull together a few fair flowers of heavenly wisdom, before we reach the best of all.

"There is that maketh himself rich yet hath nothing, there is that maketh himself poor yet hath great riches." "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." "By humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches and honour and life." "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

Thus wrote the wise king and the inspired prophet of old, and all through the Old Testament Scriptures we can find the same teaching, which, whilst it points out the littleness of worldly wealth, shows how great and enduring are those riches which are the portion of every true disciple of Christ and child of God.

Christ became poor that we, through His poverty, might be rich. To believe in Jesus, to dwell in Him and He in us, to know something of that "love of Christ which passeth knowledge," is to be rich indeed, however poor we may be in another sense. Is it not by the gift of the Holy Spirit that we are able to realise our riches? By this divine influence we discover our true wealth, for we see something of the riches of God's goodness towards us, the riches of His glory, the riches of His wisdom and mercy, and the riches of His grace. We find out all about the rich inheritance which awaits us, not here, where riches take to themselves wings and flee away, but one that is eternal, in the heavens. One not bought with corruptible silver and gold, but "without money and without price" so far as we are concerned. The same price which redeemed our souls from death, won for us this incorruptible inheritance—and that was the precious blood of Jesus, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

In Christ we are rich now. Rich in faith, in hope, in that peace which passeth all understanding, and with the power to enrich others by imparting to them of what we have received. As disciples of Christ it is our duty and privilege to become rich in good works done for His sake, and, though poor ourselves, like the disciples of old to make many rich, by telling what great things God has done for us.

Farewell for to-night, dear friends, each and all. Have we not solved the question "What is it to be rich?" I pray that you and I may realise in all its fulness "What it is to be rich."