

**RICHERS HAVE
WINGS: A TALE FOR
THE RICH AND POOR**

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Riches Have Wings: A Tale for the Rich and Poor by T. S. Arthur

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T. S. ARTHUR

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THE RICH AND POOR**

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RICHES HAVE WINGS;

A Tale for the Rich and Poor.

BY T. S. ARTHUR,

AUTHOR OF "KEEPING UP APPEARANCES," "THE YOUNG MUSCO
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER II.	
HUMAN PRUDENCE	11
CHAPTER III.	
CONFIDENCE IN HUMAN PRUDENCE SHAKEN	24
CHAPTER IV.	
SPECULATION	36
CHAPTER V.	
ELDORADO	44
CHAPTER VI.	
LOVE AND PRIDE	52
CHAPTER VII.	
MERCENARY LOVE	64
CHAPTER VIII.	
AFFLICTION	69
CHAPTER IX.	
MENTAL PROSTRATION	75
CHAPTER X.	
A GREAT DISASTER	81
CHAPTER XI.	
CONSEQUENCES	92

	PAGE
CHAPTER XII.	
LIGHT IN DARKNESS	102
CHAPTER XIII.	
MORE REVERSES	113
CHAPTER XIV.	
FAITH TRIED AND PROVED	119
CHAPTER XV.	
WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH	125
CHAPTER XVI.	
FURTHER RETRENCHMENTS	135
CHAPTER XVII.	
THE USES OF ADVERSITY	145
CHAPTER XVIII.	
MORE SACRIFICES	153
CHAPTER XIX.	
A DISAPPOINTMENT	163
CHAPTER XX.	
SURPRISE--UNEXPECTED RELIEF--GRATITUDE	177
CHAPTER XXI.	
THANKFUL FOR EVERY THING	183
CHAPTER XXII.	
CONCLUSION	189

RICHES HAVE WINGS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

RICHES have wings. In no country is this more strikingly true than in our own. The social history of the world presents no era, nor any people, in which, and among whom, such sudden and remarkable changes in the possession of property have taken place. The man who is worth a million to-day, has no surety that he will be worth a thousand to-morrow. Children who are raised amid all the luxuries that money can procure, too often, when they become men and women, are doomed to hopeless poverty; while the offspring of the poor man, who grew up, perhaps, in the hovel beside their princely mansion, is the money lordling of their darker day.

The causes for this are various: mainly it

✓ depends upon our negation, in the beginning of our national existence, of the law of primogeniture and entailment of property. A man cannot be rich here in spite of himself. He may be born to great possessions, but has the full liberty to part with them upon almost any terms that please him; and such alienations are things of every-day occurrence. One result of this is, that property and possessions of all kinds are continually changing hands, and thus placed within the reach of nearly all who have the ability, as well as the desire, to struggle for their attainment. To superior judgment, skill, and industry, when applied to the various pursuits in life, comes the reward of wealth; while the supine and self-indulgent, or those who lack a sound judgment and business acumen, remain in moderate circumstances, or lose the property that came into their hands at majority.

There are no privileged classes here, made such by arbitrary national preferences of one over another. In the eye of the nation, every man is born free and equal. The son of the humble artisan or day-laborer can enter the same course, and start for the same goal, with the son of the wealthiest and most distinguished in the land—and beat him in the race if he

b. swifter of foot, and possess greater endurance.

The consequence of all this is, that wealth becomes a less and less stable thing every day; for, in the fierce struggle that is ever going on for its possession, as an end, and not as a means to a higher end, men become more and more absorbed in the desire for its attainment, and, as a natural result, more and more acute in their perception of the means of attaining it. And the most eager and acute are not always the most conscientious in regard to the use of means, nor the most careful lest others sustain an injury when they secure a benefit.

Great instability in the tenure of wealth must flow from the operation of these causes; for the (balance of trade must ever be suffering disturbance by the inordinate action, at some point, of those engaged in commercial and business pursuits.) This disturbance we see almost every day, in the dishonest spirit of speculation and overreaching that prevails to a melancholy extent. Business is not conducted, in this country, on the permanent, healthy, honest, and only true basis of demand and supply; but is rendered ever fluctuant and unsafe, from the reasons just given.

The apparent causes of the instability al-

leged, are mainly those that we have stated. But, as every thing that meets the eye is an effect of something interior to it and invisible, so, in this case, the things we have set forth are merely the effects of a spiritual cause, or, in other words, of a perverted state of the *mind* of the whole nation viewed as one man; for the truth that a nation is only a man in a larger form is undeniable. This perversion lies in the almost universal estimation of wealth as a means of selfish gratification, and not as a means of promoting and securing the general good; and from this it arises, that nearly every man seeks to secure wealth to himself, utterly regardless of his neighbor; and far too many not only covet their neighbors' goods, but actually seek to defraud them of their possessions.

Every man is regenerated through temptations to evil, by means of which he comes into a knowledge of his hereditary perversions; and it often happens, that he is not only tempted of his evil lusts, but yields to the temptation, and thus, in suffering the consequences that follow, is made more clearly to see the nature and ultimate tendencies of the false principles from which he had acted. And this is just as true of a body of individuals (as a nation) as it is of an individual himself. The