

# Northern Messenger

W Bronscombe 30 09

VOLUME XLIV. No. 21

MONTREAL, MAY 21, 1909.

40 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid

'No paper so well fitted for the general needs of Canadian Sabbath Schools.'—Wm. Millar, McDonald's Corners, Ont.

## The Training of Children.

(Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, in the 'Sunday-School Chronicle and Christian Advocate.')

New methods and new ideals concerning children have made men question the absolute accuracy of the Old Testament words in Proverbs xxii., 6: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it.' I, nevertheless, intend to treat it as an inspired statement, as a declaration of truth. The first thing I desire to say is that training involves an ideal. We are living in an age when even in the Christian Church the ideals we have for our children are very low. Too often the aim for our boys is that they shall be educated, gain a position for themselves, and 'get on in the world.' Too often for our girls we have the ideal that they also shall be educated, refined, and accomplished, and presently, again to use a phrase which, if I could, I would cancel absolutely from the thinking of Christian parents, 'get settled.' These as ideals are anti-Christian and pagan. I am not undervaluing education. It is the duty of every man to give his children the best education possible. I am not undervaluing position. Let every lad be ambitious to be the best carpenter, the best doctor, the best lawyer in the whole district. Let our girls, in very deed and truth, be educated, cultured, and refined; but if these constitute the ultimate, then in what are we removed from pagans?

What, then, should be our ideal? That the child should realize Jesus Christ's estimate of greatness. A man is great if his character is what it ought to be. In the manifesto of the King not a single blessing is pronounced upon having, nor upon doing. All the blessings are upon being. The true ideal toward which we are to move in the training of our children must be the realization of the character upon which Jesus Christ has set the sevenfold chaplet of His benediction. That the boy may be a godly man, that the girl may be one of the King's daughters, is the supreme matter. To neglect that as the ultimate, to lose sight of that as the goal, is to ruin our children by a false love. Next, the training of a child involves 'personal discipline.' You will make your boy what you are, and not what you tell him to be. You cannot expect your boy to be a Christian athlete if you are weak and anaemic in your Christianity. If you neglect prayer, and if the family altar is a thing you can lightly lay aside, your boy will not be likely to erect it in his own home. If I am to train my child, I must see the goal towards which I desire him to press, but I must go that way, too.

Then, again, training involves a recognition of certain facts about the child. First of all, account for it as you will—I care very little about the philosophy, but care a great deal about the fact—there is enough iniquity in the heart of every child to effect the ruin of the race if it works itself out. I remember this also, that there is not a child born that is not born to the inheritance of the grace of God, and that is far mightier than

the forces which are against them. So I have these two things to remember in the training of every child, that there is in the child, first of all, the capacity for evil, but beneath it, deeper than it, truer than it, is the capacity for good, and at the disposal of the child for the realization of the good as against the evil, is all the grace of God.

I suppose it is necessary in these days that we should teach children in crowds. Would to God we could escape from it. Every child is a lonely personality, a special individuality. When God made you, he broke the mould, for no two men are alike. You cannot find in any one home two children alike. Train up your family of two, or three, or four, or five, on exactly the same lines, and you may hit the goal in the case of one and miss it in all the rest. No, you must specialize. Every child demands special consideration. We have suffered in every way, socially, poli-

tically, and most certainly religiously, by the habit of imagining that we can deal with children in crowds, and treat them all the same way. It cannot be done. For the teaching of certain things which they must know, it is necessary; but when you are going to train a child it is a matter of education rather than instruction. There is all the difference in the world between instructing and educating. To instruct is to build in; to educate is to draw out.

Training must be twofold. It must, first of all, be positive. The children must be taught that they belong to Christ, and led to the point of recognizing this fact and yielding themselves thereto. In the second place the children must be taught that sin is their enemy, and therefore God's enemy, and it is therefore to be fought perpetually. Our first business is to bring the child into a recognition of its actual relationship to Christ, and

