

TRAIN THE CHILDREN IN BENEFICENCE.

BY W. H. H. MARSH.

In view of the haste to be rich, and the love of that ease and indolence and fashionable dissipation which money enables men to procure, and for which most men are straining every nerve, and, alas! many sacrificing every principle of honour, the necessity of beginning with the child, and of instilling into him right views of the object and use of wealth, is obvious. If we would have the men and women of the next generation benevolent in feeling and action, we must begin by training the children of this in the principles of beneficence. If this be not done, not only will the passion for wealth be, in the next generation, stronger, and more completely overmastering than in this, but men will be far more unscrupulous in the means by which they obtain it, and when possessed of it will plunge into greater excesses of vice and extravagance in its use.

The training must therefore begin with the child. It is as important that the child should be taught the right use of money, as that its mental and moral education should be attended to in any other particular. If children and youth are to remain uninstructed in this, there is great danger ahead. For we are living in an age when men are pursuing after money with an eagerness such as they never knew before. And they are engaged in this hot pursuit, for the most part, not for the sake of having thousands and millions, not as the miser gathers, that he may hoard. There is another object, no less reprehensible indeed, but far more dangerous to morals, perilling our social, domestic, and civil purity. The paramount object is ease, indolence, and unlimited enjoyment. Their very surroundings, the conversation they hear, the doings and pursuits of men they observe, and the very spirit of the age excite children to desire the accumulation of money as the great mission of life, because they see that men regard true happiness as attainable only by its possession. We must therefore counteract this by training the child.

In this work of tuition, the parent, both by precept and example, may do much. And it is a matter of devout gratitude to God that there are so many Christian fathers and mothers who, by precept and

example, are inculcating sound sentiments into the minds of their sons and daughters on this subject. We would to God there were many more—nay, that all who profess to follow Jesus would in this, as in all things else, train their children in the way they should go. Many parents have wept bitter tears, and have been hurried by overwhelming sorrow to their graves, because the money they so freely supplied to their sons and daughters became the occasion of their ruin. And doubtless the most bitter reflection to such unfortunate parents was this: they had never said one word to their children about the right use of money. If they said anything, it was of a contrary nature. They referred to money as a passport to respectability in society, a means of acquiring a more elevated station in social life, a means of appearing well in fashionable circles and of enjoying the good things of this life. Money has ruined thousands, because parents were culpable in neglecting early to instruct their children that it is only rightly used when employed for the glory of God and the good of men. Oh, that parents—all parents, but Christian parents especially—in this money-getting age, would think of this, and not forget to cultivate in their children the principle and habit of beneficence in feeling and action!

The Sunday-school is in no one direction doing a grander work than in this. The extent to which it is moulding and developing the grace of beneficence as it will appear in the next generation is incalculable. These children will not only be the members of our churches then, but they will be our professional men. They will be our bankers and merchants, our manufacturers and shipowners. They will be our capitalists and our traders, and they will give liberally of their substance, and of the first fruits of their increase. They are now hearing about missions, and about the poor. They feel interested. This feeling of interest will remain, and it will increase with their years and information. Now they give their pennies, then they will give their thousands, and influence among their associates thousands more for the increased demands of Christian beneficence. Let Sunday-school workers labour diligently in this. These offerings of children are destined to prove more acceptable to God than we think. It is a glorious prophecy of the future!—*The Lord's Treasury.*