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Robert Raikes: his work for education and social betterment

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Thesis

ROBERT RAIKES: HIS WORK FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL BETTERMENT

by

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"Pleased to do good,
He gave, and sought no more, nor questioned much,
Nor reasoned who deserved, for well he knew
The face of need."

-- Pollack.
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Introduction.

The purpose of this thesis is purely historic, and in no way is it evaluative. I have tried to give a clear picture of the times in which Raikes lived—of the conditions (living, working, intellectual) of the people, of the church and its attitudes, and of government,—and then to show how Raikes fitted into this scene and just what his contribution was. I have not tried to estimate the importance of his work, either in the light of his own generation or of ours.

Because materials about Raikes himself were so scanty and inadequate, I have covered the background in some detail, so that the reader may see the picture as clearly as possible. Raikes cannot, of course, claim definitely the title of "Founder of Sunday Schools", but at least he gave the movement a great impetus, and for that reason he will live in history.
The Religious Background of Raikes' Work.
The Religious Background of Beeke's Work.

"As different ages have been distinguished by different sorts of particular errors and vices, the deplorable distinction of ours is an avowed scorn of religion in some, and a growing disregard of it in the generality," says Bishop Butler in his "Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Durham". And this is very true for spiritual and moral life in England was at a very low ebb in the early years of the eighteenth century.

"The town abounded with men who regarded honor, honesty, and virtue as the merest phantoms;—men with whom promises were not binding, obligations were nullities, and impudence a duty;—dastards who might slander their neighbors, ridicule their superiors, be saucy to their equals, insolent to their superiors, and abusive to all; today scolds, tomorrow bullies, and at all times cowards; to whose learning was a burden, and books were baubles; vice being their delight, and virtue their aversion; demons in disguise, all order and symmetry without, and yet all rottenness and rancour within.

"The country was an apt imitator of the vices of the town. There the squire, having, by idleness and bad company forgotten the little learning he acquired at college, too often devoted himself to drinking and debauchery, while the common people were ignorant, superstitious, brutal, and bad behaved."

In 1724, speaking before the Society for the Reformation of Manners, the Bishop of Lichfield said: "The Lord's Day is now the devil's market day. More lewdness, more drunkenness, more quarrels and murders, more sin is contrived and committed on this day than on all the other days of the week together. Strong liquors are become the epidemic of this great city. More of the common people die of consumptions, fevers, dropsies, choics, colics, and apoplexies, contracted by the immoderate use of brandies and distilled waters, than of all distempers besides, arising from other causes. Sin is in general grown so hardened and rampant as that immoralities are defended, yea, justified on principle. Obscure, wanton, profane books find so good a market as to encourage the trade of publishing them. Every kind of sin has found a writer to teach and vindicate it, and a book-seller and hawker to divulge and spread it."  

The habit of gin-drinking, "the master-curse of English life, to which most of the crime and an immense proportion of the misery of the nation may be ascribed," has spread like the plague throughout every class. It has been said of Walpole--leading light of English politics in the early years of the century--that in his extreme youth his father always poured for him a double portion of liquor, saying, "Come, Robert, you shall drink twice while I drink once; for I will not permit the son in his senses to be the witness of the intoxication of his father."

3. ibid. p. 100, v. 2.
Little wonder that he grew up to be the foul-mouthed drunkard that he was! Retailers of gin were said to have hung out signs to the effect that customers could get drunk for one penny, dead drunk for two pence, and more straw for nothing. And cellars full of straw were provided for those who had completely lost their senses.

Another source of immorality—illustrated by the famous Fleet persons—was the looseness of the marriage laws. It was an established custom that mere consent of two parties and cohabitation, without any formality of license of ten shillings, made marriage valid. Every tavern had its Fleet person—usually a "poor-debtor" prisoner of infamous character—who performed ceremonies without any questioning, in garrets, in public houses, oftentimes without even knowing the names of either party. In this way, wealthy young heirs fresh from school, or drunken sailors with accumulated salaries to spend, were often seduced while under the influence of liquor, and lived miserable lives thereafter, as a price of their folly. An investigation of the situation revealed the fact that in one section in four months two thousand, nine hundred, and fifty-four such marriages had been performed, and that one "parson" alone in a single day had united in holy matrimony one hundred and seventy-two couples.

Conditions in the great centers of learning were not morally or intellectually as they should be. Adam Smith

who was at Oxford from 1740 to 1747 says, "In the Univers-
it of Oxford the greater part of the professors have for
many years given up even the pretense of teaching. The
discipline is in general, contrived, not for the benefit
of the students, but for the ease of the masters. As for
them, they wasted their time in drinking and gambling." ¹

Referring to the religious atmosphere of the same
place, Gibbon says, "Our venerable mother has contrived to
unite the opposing extremes of bigotry and indifference." ²

The opening years of the eighteenth century witnessed
the birth of the critical spirit, the distrust of authority,
and the enthronement of the goddess of reason. Preaching
had lost its prophetic strain; enthusiasm and personal
religion were frowned upon everywhere; the theology of
the times gave great prominence to external morality as
distinguished both from dogma and from all forms of emotion,
and the purely rational character of Christianity was
emphasized. The sceptics declared that Christianity
added nothing to natural religion except authority.
Sobriety, moderation, and good sense were the keynotes
of the times.

The ablest minds of the religious world were almost
completely dominated by Bacon's principles of inductive

¹ Banfield. John Wesley. p. 17.
² ibid. p. 19.
philosophy, and by Locke's criticism of unreasoning emotions, 
and by his complete and formal scepticism. It was at this 
time that the Deist controversy-- crude and superficial as 
it was-- arose in British religious circles. The Deists 
felt that heretofore religion had been based on a long 
train of perplexed historical evidence that had been re- 
vealed to a single obscure people; that the evidence from 
the prophets was imperfect; and that making rewards and 
punishments the supreme motives of virtue and bribing judg- 
ment by hope and fear was an immoral and improper practice. 

There was prevalent all during the early years of the 
century a spirit of selfishness, corruption, heartless 
cynicism, and a worship of expediency. Preachers no longer 
spoke extemporaneously and enthusiastically, but confined 
themselves to dry, learned dissertations. The spell of 
tradition and authority was broken, and the age of inductive 
reasoning and intolerance of absurdity was at hand. 

In the second decade of the century, there was growing 
among Dissenting ministers a certain repugnance to the 
Articles of Faith of the Anglican Church. It seemed to them 
that moral virtues and sincere convictions meant more to 
God than the mere signing of certain Articles, which process 
had come to be a mere official duty, with no meaning or 
sincerity behind it. The Salter's Hall meeting in 1719 
determined to do away with such a custom if possible, and 
thereby caused a split in the ranks of Nonconformity.
These were trying times for non-Anglicans, although by the middle of the century the burden was for the most part gradually being reduced. In 1689 a Toleration Act had been passed which had paved the way for more complete freedom. There were many obsolete laws left on the statute books that were left dormant, but were occasionally dragged forth by some jealous, vengeful person who wished to hurt an enemy. The Test and Corporation Acts stated that a non-Anglican could hold no commission in the army or navy, no civil office, no seat in a corporation, or no corporate office. He could take no part in the direction of the Bank of England, or in the Sudaan, Russian, South Sea, or Turkish companies though his whole fortune might be invested in these stocks.

One of the most obnoxious of these ancient laws was that passed by the Corporation of the City of London whereby any person nominated by the Lord Mayor for the office of Sheriff who refused to stand for election might be fined four hundred pounds and twenty marks. And any person who was elected and refused to serve might be fined six hundred pounds. This was an easy way for the city to make money, for in order to hold the office it was necessary to have the Sacrament of the Anglican Church, and Dissenters could not conscientiously do this. Therefore, wealthy Dissenters became an easy prey for corrupt politicians, and were systematically elected to the office. Finally, in 1767 a man named Evans had the courage to bring the matter to
court, and the House of Lords decided that there could be no fine in the case of conscientious Dissenters who refused to serve for religious reasons.

The spirit of religious enlightenment was seen to be slowly permeating all of Europe, for about the middle of the century, the Jesuit societies, strongholds of conservatism and bigotry, began to lose their grip on continental Europe, and were ousted from several countries.

In the year 1772 a petition came before Parliament asking that when undergraduates at the two great universities came up for promotion to degrees, that they might not have to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church, unless they intended taking orders. In the same year was repealed the old law that ordered the pressing to death of ecclesiastical prisoners who refused to plead their cases. In 1774 the Quebec Act, establishing Catholicism in Canada, was passed and worked so well that it was soon decided that it was stupid to have vicious penal acts for Catholics at home. Up to this time it was often necessary for a priest to wear a round frock to resemble a poor man, and families had to travel by night in carts in order to hear mass. There was a reward of one hundred pounds offered to any informer who procured the conviction of a Catholic priest performing his functions in England. Perpetual imprisonment for keeping school, inability to inherit money or purchase land, and no protection from the law unless a special oath was taken—these were some of the
burdens placed on Catholics. They were almost outlaws in their own country, and had to buy protection by regular contributions if they wished to be exempt from persecution.

In 1775 a Relief Bill was introduced to Parliament, which, moderate and reasonable as it was, caused a storm of opposition the like of which England had not seen for many years. This bill did away with a law of William the Third that subjected perpetual imprisonment to any priest celebrating mass, and every papist that kept school. Unfortunately, however, it left many Elizabethan and Stuart laws untouched, such as a fine or imprisonment for staying away from the Anglican Church Service, keeping or attending a Catholic school, or sending children abroad to be educated in Catholic schools on the Continent.

In 1780 a "Protestant Association", made up of the worst fanatics, was organized among the Scotch Presbyterians. This movement spread quickly to England and in order to have the Relief Bill repealed, twenty thousand men gathered together and stormed the Parliament buildings. The riot grew worse as time passed, and many outrages were committed. All Catholic homes and chapels were burned, and the home of Lord George Savile, proposer of the bill, was completely demolished. The destruction began on May 29 and lasted until June 7. London was a scene of pandemonium; all the military forces at hand were called out; but they proved inadequate before the fury of the mob; many officials became frightened and
fled for their lives; prisons were burned and the worst criminals let loose; and altogether two hundred and eighty-five persons were killed, and untold damage was done. By a strange twist of fate, it was on the first day of the riot that a bill was being introduced to put more power into the hands of the people by granting universal suffrage and annual parliaments.

In 1779 Dissenting ministers were admitted to the benefits of the Toleration Act with subscription to the Articles, if they proved themselves to be Christians and Protestants and believers in the Old and New Testaments. In 1789 a very comprehensive Toleration Act, which would have done away with many obsolete laws, was introduced, but the time was not ripe for such a forward-looking act and it failed to pass.

In 1791 another Relief Act was passed which opened up the legal profession to Catholics, legalized Catholic worship and schools, took away the necessity to enroll deeds and wills, and the compulsion to take the oaths of supremacy and declarations against transubstantiation. But it also provided that all schools, chapels, and names of masters should be registered; that there should be no locked doors, no steeples, and no bells; that there should be no performances in the open air, and no monastic orders in England, or endowed Catholic schools and colleges; and that no Protestant children should be allowed in a
Catholic school. It is easy to see that there were still many disabilities placed on Catholics, but at least their position was now made secure, and they were no longer in danger of being clapped into prison upon the slightest pretext.

In these days of upheaval of much that was long since out of date, it was natural that some attention should be paid to the enormous amount of power placed in the hands of the Ecclesiastical courts. Besides being very expensive to the government, these courts had in their possession the terrible weapon of excommunication, which they used freely for many offenses. If this stigma were placed on a man, he could get almost no protection from the law. He could not be a witness or a juryman, could not bring suit in the courts, could have no Christian burial, and after forty days' resistance to authority, if he was not reconciled to the church, he might be imprisoned indefinitely until he gave in. In 1813 the first steps were taken, when the right of excommunication was taken away for contempt and non-payment of fees, and gradually the Temporal Courts took away most of the power from the hands of the narrow and biased churchmen who had no other way of forcing their communicants into submission.
Perhaps the greatest religious movement since the Protestant Reformation took place in this century in England, and did a great deal to change the attitude of English society toward theology, ethics, and the church in general.

John Wesley, usually conceded the title of "Founder of Methodism", was born in the Anglican rectory at Epworth in 1703. He was especially fortunate in having in his mother a strong personality, for Susanna Wesley was a rugged individualist, with a "masculine" intellect. From her he got his ideas on religious education, for she educated every one of her ten surviving children at home, because she did not trust the incompetent village schoolmaster. Although she paid careful attention to the minds of her little ones, she put the main emphasis upon saving their souls, and she put aside a certain time each week when she talked individually to each child on religious subjects. John's marked aptitude for learning encouraged his parents to send him on to Charterhouse and Christ Church, Oxford, where he made a fine record, and while many of his fellows spent their time in drinking, gambling, and sexual orgies, he applied himself methodically to his studies. As to religious beliefs, he dabbled about for some time—swayed one way and another—before he made his final decision. He was influenced greatly by the rationalistic thinkers of the day, by the force of natural religion, and finally the lure of mysticism and the influence of William Law.
That movement which perhaps influenced him most was Pietism, a group which protested against secularization in ethics and formalism in religion, and which placed the emphasis on personal experience. Their definition of religion was "a continual sense of total dependence on God". The Pietists took the halo of supernaturalism away from dogma, institutions, and the service of the church and gave it new connections. They found God in the redeemed soul, and not in church history, and emphasized the inner spirit.

Wesley took orders in the Anglican Church, but he worked on independent lines, and would not become tied down to any one parish. In his sermons he always emphasized: (1) the word of God as defined in the Bible; (2) personal experience and testimony. He breathed new life into British religious circles, for he had a new message. He no longer felt it necessary to remain within the embraces of the Established Church in order to lead a holy life. And this was rather a startling message to those who had been brought up on the absolute authority of the Church.

The Methodist Society began as a group of students at Oxford who got together for mutual improvement, fasted together, read and discussed the Bible, abstained from certain forms of amusement and luxury, and visited the sick and those in prisons.

Wesley himself was at first a very narrow High Churchman, but his contact with a group of Moravians on the way

to America and with their leader Peter Beehler, won him over to their simple faith and trust in God. He took to field-preaching, not because he was not wanted in the Anglican Church, but because he felt he could reach more people in this way who needed his message. He had a powerful—almost hypnotic—gift of oratory which appealed especially to the ignorant and credulous minds of the lower classes. Often his sermons created a great wave of terrorism. Lecky says, "The Methodists preached especially to the nerves." This is quite true, for when Wesley painted his gripping word pictures of sin and hell, there was great tumult in the audience. Women fainted and fell as dead; men had epileptic fits and hysteria; in some cases death followed the great emotional strain and excitement. Fitchett says of this tremendous power, "Wesley's secret, in brief, does not lie in his statesmanship, in his genius for organization, or in his intellectual power. First and last it belongs to the spiritual realm. The energy that thrilled in his look, that breathed from his presence, that made his life a flame and his voice a spell, stands in the last analysis, in the category of spiritual forces."

The Methodist movement spread because it was on the level of the common people, and satisfied a need which they had long felt, and it reached them where other religious agencies had failed. Due to the Wesleyan influence, many left their lives of sin and wantonness, and became truly

2. Fitchett, Wesley and his Century. p. 15.
pious, clean, and humble. Wesley's introduction of class-meetings and love feasts, wherein a group strove together for Christian perfection, fostered a fine spirit of Christian fellowship and gave each man a personal idea of religion, for now he could express himself through hymns of praise and testimonies.

John Wesley was a true social reformer as well as a preacher, organizer, and educator. He felt that slavery was the sum of all felonies; that the liquor traffic was a system of wholesale murder; and that as long as there was war on earth there could be no doubt of the total depravity of man. In regard to money he taught his followers that it was best to gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can. He disputed those who said that money was the root of all evil and should be done away with entirely, for he felt that the right use of money could be very beneficial. He was not "a theoretical socialist, but a self-denying, practical philanthropist", who during his lifetime gave away thirty thousand pounds to the poor, and died a voluntary pauper.

It seems to me that the finest tribute that could have been paid to Wesley regarding his ability to influence whole communities both morally, intellectually, and physically, by his simple, personal message, was that of a Cornish miner. A traveller was passing through a town which he had known to be at one time a filthy hole, abounding in crime,

licentiousness, and illiteracy. He now found the houses to be clean and orderly; the people to be happy, peaceful, and industrious; and the whole atmosphere of the village changed to one of quiet and contentment. He asked a miner what was the cause of this most miraculous change, and the brief answer was a great compliment to Wesley's reforming genius. He said, "There was once a man who came among us, and his name was John Wesley."

One of Wesley's greatest contributions to English society was in the way of religious education. His theory of personal religion, embracing the whole of the masses as it did, made access to the truths of the Scriptures necessary. Therefore, he advocated education for everybody, and long before the idea of Sunday schools had been brought before the public eye by Raikes, Wesley had established a school in Georgia, where poor children could learn the three R's, along with religion.

The purpose of religious education to him was to make children pious, to lead them to personal religion, and to insure their salvation. He saw clearly the necessity of educating them before they reached maturity, when they were pliable and easy to lead. He made no great contribution to educational theory, and was just as blind to child psychology as most of the rest of his generation, but he did feel that the uneducated masses should be given a chance in order to prepare themselves for the life beyond. He believed that the home—first of all—was the place for

religious education, where children could be trained to self-control, and freed of their love of the world. For this purpose he wrote "Lessons for Children", "Instructions for Children", and "Hymns for Children and Others of Riper Years", in which he tried to put himself down on the child's level. He felt that it was the duty of every preacher to revive and guide family worship; to teach children in various homes; and to form a society for them within the larger society, and to meet with them regularly.

Because he realized that England had not the right type of boarding schools, he established what he considered to be a model school at Kingswood. He thought that such schools ought to be in small towns so that there would be as few distractions as possible; that the selection of pupils should be very careful; that only masters should be employed who had had deep religious experience; and that all texts should be expurgated. Because the physical, moral, and religious values of play had not yet been discovered by him, it was not included in his program.

In spite of the fact that Wesley was at odds with many Anglican principles and doctrines, and because his movement is thought of as being entirely separate, he is not considered to be an Anglican, but he never broke away from the church, although he realized that his followers could not long remain a part of the mother organization. In the last year of his life he wrote, "I live and die a member of the
Church of England, and no one who regards my judgment or advice will ever separate from it.

The Educational Background of Raikes' Work.
The Educational Background of Raikes' Work.

After the barbarian conquest of Rome and the consequent disintegration of the Empire, only England and Ireland, isolated as they were from the Continent, retained any of the learning they had acquired from the conquering Romans. The only scholarship which remained alive was that necessary in the Church for its government and worship.

However, as time passed, schools sprang up in connection with the great cathedrals and in England those of York and Canterbury were especially well-known. In 670 Theodore of Tarsus and the Abbot Hadrian came to Canterbury from southern Italy to teach Latin and Greek. It was from the school at York that Alcuin, perhaps its greatest scholar, went to teach the famous Palace School of Charlemagne.

Alfred the Great who ruled over England from 871 to 901 tried to raise the standards of learning by importing scholars. He established a large palace school, and spent much money restoring monasteries.

Gradually in the early Middle Ages, monasteries were established as centers of learning where the studiously inclined could retire, away from the turbulent world, to read quietly and meditate. The rules of the various orders soon required that a school system be established, and there arose two separate types of organizations— the "oblati" for boys who were to take vows, and the "externi" for those who merely wanted the benefits of a monastic education.
In these schools were taught reading, writing, music, simple reckoning, religious observances, and rules of conduct. In addition to these there were the song or parish schools, in which choir boys were taught to sing and were given some elementary training as well. There was a custom in these times whereby a man who had sinned during his lifetime might leave in his will a sum of money in order to have a priest pray for his soul. These priests having no other employment, found much spare time on their hands, and so began to teach groups of boys, and from this sprang the chantry schools.

Advanced education was carried on in the monasteries and in the schools attached to the Cathedrals and consisted mostly of training in the seven Liberal Arts: (a) the Trivium—grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic; and (b) the Quadrivium—arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music.

The eleventh century saw the faint beginnings of a new spirit of inquiry among learned men. Many different things contributed to this: the rise of scholastic theology, the new emphasis on reasoning, the broadening spirit of the Crusades, the revival of city life, and the rise of the commercial and industrial classes with their guild schools, whose scholars began to vie with the churchmen.

Universities had gradually evolved from some of the finer schools and the studies of law and medicine had been added to the curriculum of many. The English universities of
Oxford and Cambridge felt the enthusiasm of this new learning when, in 1488, Thomas Linacre and William Grocyn, newly returned from a period of study under Chalcondyles in Florence, introduced the study of Greek into Oxford. Their work was ably seconded at Cambridge by the Dutch scholar, Erasmus, who "labored hard to substitute classical culture for the poor Latin and empty scholasticism of his time."  

As to Latin Grammar Schools, there were in the fifteenth century about two hundred in all—some connected with old monasteries, cathedrals, collegiate churches, guilds, and charity foundations, and a few benevolent schools with no connection with either church or state. The Sevenoaks Grammar School, founded in 1432 by William Sevenoaks, illustrates the type of school it was by its qualifications for teachers. In its charter it states this: "the master shall be an honest man, sufficiently advanced and expert in the science of Grammar, B.A., by no means in holy orders". Another type of school— that run under private supervision— was the Winchester Public School, founded in 1382 by Bishop William of Wykeham. This institution emphasized grammar, religion, and manners, and aimed to prepare seventy scholars for New College, Oxford. 

On the Continent the Protestant Reformation brought about a demand for vernacular schools, but in England the Reformation was more political than religious, and the English National Church simply took over the functions of the Roman Church, and the most important change was that of

2. Ibid., p. 277.
translating the Latin services into English. By the time of Elizabeth the conviction was settled among the English people that it was the duty of the Church to provide education, and that the state would be meddling should it attempt to control it in any way. It was the church that licensed teachers; took their oath of allegiance; and supported and supervised the schools. Some of the wealthier families provided tutors for their children, but for the poor there was no education at all, and the middle group relied entirely upon the rather feeble efforts of the church.

After Henry the Eighth's troubles with the Pope, and after the Act of Supremacy in 1534, there was a ruthless breaking down of church authority throughout England. Parliament drove out all monks and nuns, destroyed church buildings, forfeited monastic lands to the crown, and killed monasticism forever as far as England was concerned. Many of these monasteries had been fabulously wealthy, so that their endowments were now turned over to the founding of Grammar Schools or collegiate churches with schools attached. However, this monastic suppression caused a decided decrease in the number of places offering grammar school instruction, and as far as elementary education was concerned, with the abolition of song schools, chantry schools, and hospital schools, very few were left, and there was almost no free education.

Gradually, however, philanthropists and charitable
church people began to realize their responsibility toward the education of the poorer classes. Elementary vernacular schools arose, with the teacher usually the bell-ringer, grave-digger, and church-sexton (or perhaps all four offices were combined in one person). "The usual subjects of instruction were the three R's--reading, writing, and religion,--arithmetic being frequently omitted because it was too difficult for the teacher, whose chief qualification might be his unfitness for any other occupation." 

Dame schools arose after the Reformation. These were held usually in the kitchens of old women who taught for a small pittance rather than starve. The mistress gave her charges a little spelling and reading as she went about doing her washing, cooking, etc. Shenstone has written a short poem about this type of school:

"In every village marked with little spire, Embowered in trees and hardly known to fame There dwell, in lowly shed and mean attire, A matron, whom we schoolmistress name, Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame." 2

Another type of school which sprang up in the British Isles was the private-adventure or "hedge" school. This was like a Dame School except that it was taught by a man in his workshop and was usually very poor and irregular. The term "hedge" came from Ireland where Catholic priests were obliged to hold school in hedges, barns, caves,--anywhere the authorities could not apprehend them.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century John

Pounds, a poor cobbler of Portsmouth, started what grew into a system of "Ragged Schools". As he worked at his shoes, he gathered about him a group of poor, dirty children, and heard them say their tables, and read in their slow, halting manner. Often as many as forty children would crowd into his tiny shop to receive instruction. The poor little urchins had no other way to learn! So successful was his work that the movement spread quickly and in 1844 a "Ragged School Union" was formed.

Workhouse schools were set up by church parishes where orphans and poor children might be taught, and where oftentimes they were clothed and boarded as well. Here the boys were prepared for apprenticeships and the girls for domestic service. In all these schools discipline was most severe, and whipping posts were often set up in the rooms. The teaching method was very poor, and consisted in hearing recitations, testing memories, and keeping order.

In 1699 there was formed in London by the Rev. Thomas Bray the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge—with its purpose to counteract the low ebb in religion, morals, and education. The original purpose of this organization was to care for settlers and colonists, the heathen in India, and the Mohammedans in the Far East. Its originators helped to found bishoprics, aided church buildings and education, and provided Christian literature for home and mission fields. It provided Bibles, prayer books, and
testaments, and in 1831 established school lending libraries. It started schools in and around London to teach reading, writing, and the Catechism, and to attempt to eliminate vice and degradation among the lower classes. The schools were managed locally but the central society guaranteed their maintenance, inspected, advised, encouraged, and provided equipment at a very cheap rate.

In 1701 Dr. Bray founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which gradually took all foreign work away from the S.P.C.K. The general purpose of this society was to act as an auxiliary to the Anglican Church in the English colonial possessions. Its specific aims were: (1) to revivify churches by supplying more adequately trained ministers; (2) to plant churches where there had been none before, or where they had fallen into decay; (3) to train children in the Christian way of life through a well-developed school system. Its founders established many schools throughout America where they gathered children together "to make them loyal church members, and fit them for work in that station of life it had pleased their Heavenly Father to place them".

It was during Robert Raikes' lifetime that the famous monitorial system was instituted in England. In 1798, Joseph Lancaster, a zealous young Dissenter with an ardent desire to serve mankind, started a school for poor children.

at reduced rates. He was a good teacher, and his room was soon filled to its capacity. Unable to afford assistants to help him, and incapable of handling so many children at once, he devised the monitorial system as a means of helping every child who came to him. Practically everything was left to the monitors, and all the master did was to reward, punish, organize, and inspire. And because, again, he was hard-pressed for money and could not get as many supplies as he wished, Lancaster introduced reading-sheets, slates, and a new method of teaching arithmetic.

In carrying out his plans, however, Lancaster himself was his own most formidable enemy, because of his recklessness and extravagance. He built branch schools, planned a teacher-training college, gave education free to many and tried to feed and clothe those who needed it. He was continually in debt and had to leave the country to avoid his creditors. Finally, a group of his friends formed the British and Foreign School Society in order to give his system a sound financial basis. But although he tried to cooperate, his exuberance overcame his prudence and in four months he tendered his resignation. Lancaster was very unpopular with the Established Church dignitaries who were afraid that some of his Quaker ideas might be imbedded in some of their little Anglicans.

One of their own clergymen, Andrew Bell, claims for himself the title of "founder of the monitorial system"
along with Lancaster. Bell, after having taken orders in the Anglican church, went in 1787 to the East Indies to teach. His school system there grew so large, that he was obliged to hire assistants. However, his helpers did not please him very well, because they refused to obey his orders, and continued to teach just as they pleased. Finally, in desperation, he determined to train boy-monitors who would do the work as he wished it to be done. This idea proved to be so successful that he finally brought it over to England and set it up there, and in 1811 the "National Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales" was formed. Had it not been for outside interference and sectarian jealousies, Bell and Lancaster would probably have remained on very good terms, for Lancaster praised Bell for inventing the system, and Bell praised Lancaster for showing its possibilities to England.

At the same time, Robert Owen, a socialistic thinker far ahead of his century, was conducting new and unheard of experiments in his little factory town of New Lanark, Scotland. A born organizer and shrewd business man, with an almost uncanny knack for making money, he did not in his abundance forget those under him whose labor made the wheels of his factory turn. He thought a great deal about the moral, intellectual, and physical condition of his
workers. He took a certain sum each year from the profits of the business to improve living and working conditions in the town. But he recognized the principle that in order to have a strong, clean-living group he must train the children up from the earliest years. Therefore, he set up a model school system, starting with an infant school, in which even the tiniest children, oftentimes left alone by mothers who were obliged to work, might have the best in moral and physical training, combined with play and nature study, and not annoyed with books. The children were never beaten, were always spoken to kindly and were taught to make each other happy. The teacher he chose--James Buchanan, an old weaver--could scarcely read and write, but was well known for his patience and kindness. Owen's doctrine was, that as character is made by circumstances, therefore men are not responsible for their actions, and should be moulded into goodness instead of being punished. His infant school idea was copied in various forms all over Great Britain.

On the Continent events were developing much more quickly than they were in England. In France in the middle of the eighteenth century "a small but very influential group of reform philosophers attacked with their pens the ancient abuses in Church and State, and did much to pave the way for general political and religious reform".  

The leaders in this reform were Montesquieu, Turgot, Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau. But the latter with his "Emile", and Rene de la Chalotais with his "Essai d'education nationale", did most in the reform of pedagogy. La Chalotais emphasized the idea that education was the duty of the civil government, that its real purpose was to make citizens, and that the poor people deserved enlightenment.

These two writers influenced most profoundly Johann Heinrich Basedow, who was then revolutionizing the educational system of Prussia. He was most fortunate in gaining the support of Baron von Zedletz, minister of the department of instruction under Frederick the Great. Through their combined efforts the entire classical school system was reorganized, and the study of pedagogy was introduced into the universities in order to insure competent leadership in the future.

Another educator of the late eighteenth century was Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who was also deeply influenced by "Emile", and to whose efforts we owe the foundation of the modern secular vernacular elementary school. After trying various professions and failing in most of them, Pestalozzi settled down to education and writing and became very successful. The school which he established at Yverdon, in Switzerland, became a model for elementary schools all over the world. Here he taught geography, history, language, arithmetic, drawing, singing, and gymnastics; he rejected
the wholly religious aim and the teaching of mere facts and words; and "sense-impression" was his watchword. He stimulated self activity, resented brutal discipline, and believed education to be the sole means of regenerating society. He wrote several books—"Leonard and Gertrude", "How Gertrude Teaches her Children", "Guide for Teaching Spelling and Reading", and a "Book for Mothers", whose influence has been felt all over the world.

Another contemporary of Raikes whose efforts in education were praiseworthy was Jean Frederic Oberlin, a Lutheran pastor of Ban de la Roche in the mountains of northeastern France. Here, high up in the mountains, the people were oppressed by a system of feudalism, were backward, neglected, and having a terrific battle for existence because they had no trades or industries and their agriculture was of the rudest type. Oberlin realized that he must start with the children, if he wished to pull the community out of its slough of degeneration, so he planned a school system which carried the pupils from the infant school through the advanced grades. He used modern kindergarten methods, stressed play, liberty, individuality, and gave them practical things which would be useful throughout life. Every Sunday he had the children of each village in rotation assemble at the church to sing hymns. He began circulating libraries, and by means of improved transportation connected the isolated villagers with the outside world.
Thus, Raikes' lifetime is spent in the very dawn of educational reform, in an era when all the forward-looking nations of the world were beginning to emancipate their lower classes, and free them from the shackles of vice, ignorance, and superstition.
The Political and Economic Background of Raikes' Work.
The Political and Economic Background of Raikes' Work.

England at the beginning of the eighteenth century had just passed through a great revolution. The King was now only a visible symbol of the authority that had passed into the hands of others. William the Third had ascended to the throne at the express invitation of Parliament, and that body was in full control.

During the first half of the century the political situation was completely dominated by the able, corrupt, efficient Robert Walpole, whose policy was dictated solely by a belief in the economic motivation of human society. His was an era of great material progress and prosperity; an age of peace, commercial expansion, industrial development, free trade, and "laissez-faire". But he recognized only material motives, and his belief was that the law of supply and demand would take care of everything. It was at this time that the foundations of modern industrial England were laid, for the Industrial Revolution was at its height. Walpole's ascendancy was supported by the systematic corruption of the ruling classes, and it was all for the interest of the capitalist classes, with no consideration at all for the laborer.

It was Walpole who, by his ability to control Parliament and handle his own followers, perfected the Cabinet system and made the office of Prime Minister strong. He was able to do this because the King was a foreigner,
unused to British ways, and wholly unable to cope with the situation. There were no great measures, no heroic reforms, in Walpole's administration, but England had a breathing space between two wars in which to build a foundation for her material prosperity at home.

The latter half of the century was dominated almost entirely by the problems of imperialism. 1763 marked the close of the Seven Years' War—the struggle of two nations for control of world trade and territory—waged in the American wilderness, on the plains of Silesia, in the jungles of India, and on three oceans. The Peace of Paris left France stripped of her glorious empire, and perched England on such heights of victory that Horace Walpole boasted, "The Romans were triflers to us."

England in gaining so much territory in one lump bit off more than she was able for, and the next few years were spent in trying to work out the baffling problems that arose. England had adopted a policy of mercantilism which meant the creation of an economically self-sufficient state that might compete on favorable terms with rival states. "The ruling oligarchy, an alliance of the merchant with the Tory squire, controlled the government, the church, the law, the wealth, and the society of the nation....The Church justified to God the ways of this class, the University formulated its philosophy, the Law was subservient to its interests; while all united to applaud Pope's dictum that

"In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One thing is sure, whatever is, is right."  

Their interests were mechanical and commercial, and their instruments for carrying out their ideas were the troublesome Acts of Trade and Navigation so obnoxious to the American colonists. These self-reliant, enterprising, politically-conscious colonists who had made their way alone in the new country were impatient of interference, and thus the trouble started. So the century drew to a close with a disastrous war against the colonies; with a revolution raging just a few short miles across the waters of the English channel; and with trouble brewing in that hot-bed of rebellion-- Ireland. And just three years after the turn of the century England was again to find herself at war with her arch-enemy-- France.

Before the Industrial Revolution, the lower classes led a comparatively righteous and peaceful life. Any industry that was carried on at all was done at home in a very small scale, there was no competition, each family worked or played as it pleased, there were few grog houses, children were taught at home where respectable parents instilled in them a love of peace and a fear of God. According to Engels, "they could rarely read and far more rarely write; went regularly to church; never talked politics; never

conspired, never thought,....and were in their unquestioning humility, exceeding well-disposed toward the 'superior' classes. But intellectually they were dead...."

But with the coming of the Industrial Revolution--with its improved methods of transportation, its endless inventions and improvements and quickened processes,--the simple country folk began trekking to the cities in swarms in order to have jobs in the new factories which were springing up everywhere. And right here is where the trouble began. England made the terrific change from an agricultural to an industrial country too quickly, and the consequent adjustment entailed much suffering on the part of the lower classes. One of the greatest evils came about, when, with the building of the new factories, mushroom towns sprang up overnight, and the living conditions were horrible. These cities, such as Manchester and Leeds, were a mass of dirty hovels, with narrow crooked lanes, clotheslines hung from house to house, the streets unpaved, filled with animal and vegetable refuse, foul and stagnant pools; there were no sewer or drainage systems; the art of ventilation had evidently never been heard of; often whole families lived in one room with no windows at all, no beds or coverings, no furniture of any sort, and existed on stale fish or bread bought in the markets from what other people felt was unfit. One woman was found dead in her room from starvation and vermin bites. In the lodging houses there

were often six beds in one room, with four or five in each bed, with no regard for sex or age - the old and decrepit in with the young.

In this atmosphere of crime, misery, and disease the entire population was slowly rotting. It is little wonder that theft and prostitution were rampant. They must either toil, steal, or starve. Many young girls, slaves in a factory for sometimes fifteen hours a day, were glad to turn to prostitution to make a more decent living.

There could be no home life in these surroundings. The mother of the family was obliged to work along with the others, and so long were the working hours that there was no chance to really live. Most of them were so worn-out at the end of the day that they were ready to rest, and if this were not the case, they spent the remaining hours in a tavern or running about the streets like wild Indians. Naturally, children born into these surroundings and knowing nothing else, could not be expected to turn out well. The child was usually left to himself all day and so learned habits of shiftlessness; then as soon as he was able (often at five or six) he was sent to the mills, and began to pay his board at home, so that the home was turned into a lodging house. The children went to work so young, and were subject to such bad conditions and horrible accidents around the machinery, that a race of malformed and dreadfully maimed individuals was growing up. Draftiness,
standing too long in one position, long hours, poor ventilation, bad light, loss of sleep, and breathing in fibrous dust, etc. was responsible for much death and sickness. Night shifts had to be abandoned in many places because of the enormous increase in illegitimate children.

These people were virtually the slaves of the factory—and had to eat, drink, and sleep as they were told. The employer was the absolute law-giver, and could pay them as little as he pleased. To add to their already heavy burdens, the truck and cottage systems were used in many places. This meant that they were obliged to buy their food and rent their dwellings of the factory, and so exorbitant prices could be extracted from them.

The battle for existence was made even worse by the importation of Irish laborers. These people had always been used to poverty and could live on much less than the English, so that competition was increased. The Irish brought with them many bad features, including their filth, their drinking, their illiteracy, and their pigs. In some places there were piggeries every nine paces!

The condition of the other classes of workers was no better. In the mining sections little children were able to get into smaller places than grown men, so they were employed as young as four years of age to spend all their days in the dark, damp, musty atmosphere of the underground passages. Little girls were employed to push tubs of heavy
coal, with no wheels on the tubs, along the uneven floors of the mine. The result of all this was delayed puberty, distorted bodies, short stature, and an early death from consumption, heart trouble, or some such disease. And many were the calamities from gas, explosions, or cave-ins.

In the rural districts conditions were not much better, although the children did get plenty of fresh air. With the increased amount of land being used for pasture, and being taken away from farming, there were fewer employees needed, and so many were thrown out of work, that they hastened to the city in great numbers where they had heard of employment. In the small parishes there was no money for poor relief, and hundreds were starving either at home, or after making the journey to the city.

Intellectual conditions were consequently deplorable. When the children worked all day, there was no chance for education, and on Sundays there were few who cared enough to bother, for they were usually sleepy and worn-out. A few philanthropic employers did provide for the education of those under them, and gave the children a few hours out of each day in which to learn, but these were in the minority. Sometimes when teachers were employed they were ignorant and good-for-nothing. One was a convicted thief who after he left jail could find no other way to support himself.

One of the most powerful novels written about English
social conditions was Kingsley's "Yeast". His character, Tregarva, is well portrayed. This man--ignorant, desperately poor--is always trying to help others and to instil in them a desire to lead better lives. We see the wealthy men foxhunting on their large estates, caring nothing about the starving villagers nearby who are dying by hundreds of dread diseases brought on by unhealthy living conditions. Tregarva's description of the life of the young worker is especially vivid. He says, "It's only God's blessing if it is incessant, sir, for if it stops they starve, or go to the house to be worse fed than the thieves in jail. And as for its being severe, there's many a boy, as their mothers will tell, comes home night after night, too tired to eat their suppers, and tumble, fasting, to bed in the same foul shirt which they've been working in all the day, never changing their drag of calico from week's end to week's end, or washing the skin that's under it once in seven years." 1 This serves to explain the power which the employer had over his hirelings, for unemployment was a most terrible weapon.

Of this atmosphere of degradation and poverty, the upper classes (as a whole) knew little and cared less. They lived in the same cities, and yet never ventured into the poorer sections to find who their fellow men were existing. On the contrary, their life was one of great luxury and extravagance, with lavish balls, theatre parties, and fox hunts.

It cannot naturally be expected that the poorer classes were sitting back and letting this maltreatment be imposed upon them without a struggle. The first agitation for reform came in Manchester around 1796 after a terrific epidemic when the medical authorities insisted that children be prohibited in the factories at night and for longer than ten hours during the day. Gradually writers like Adam Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Mill, Cobbett, and Francis Place began to stir the lower classes to the right form of action, and to bring the situation to the attention of the more fortunate elements. Previous to this there had been a great deal of rebellion but it had all been in the form of crime—the burning down of factories, etc. Some idea of the actual conditions can be gained if one examines closely Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1802 which was considered radical. This act urged that the working hours of children be restricted to twelve hours a day; that there be no night work; that each be given a new suit each year; that they be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; that the factories be whitewashed and ventilated; that separate sleeping quarters be provided for the sexes and that only two be placed in one bed; and that they be required to go to church once a month.

Thus one can see Raikes' movement growing out of a most distressing need, which perhaps accounts for its success.
Robert Raikes and his Gloucester Movement.
Robert Raikes and his Gloucester Movement.

In 1735 Cardinal Fleury was ruling France for the boy-king and carrying on the war of the Polish Succession with Austria; Frederick William the First of Prussia, bluff and militaristic, was having difficulties coercing his son, afterward known as Frederick the Great, into his ways of thinking; Charles the Sixth of Austria was diplomatically trying to persuade the cabinets of Europe to authorize his Pragmatic Sanction, in which he was endeavouring to avoid a disastrous war like the war of the Spanish Succession by putting all his power into the hands of his daughter, Maris Theresa; and in England Sir Robert Walpole and his Whig cabinet were in the midst of their long reign of peace, Hanoverianism, and commercial supremacy.

Into such a world as this was born, on September 14, in the town of Gloucester, England, a boy who was destined to bring light and happiness into the lives of thousands of the poor. Little is known of Robert Raikes' childhood, for there are few records. He came of good respectable stock—one Thomas Raikes having taken part in the Civil War and being made Lord Mayor of Hull for three terms. Another, Robert, had been made a burgess and was held in high esteem; while still another, Richard, was a Cambridge graduate and a churchman. We know that both his father and mother were from clergymen's families; that his father, also Robert,
was the founder of the Gloucester Journal, and we can glean something of the man's sturdy, independent nature when we learn that he was twice brought to task for printing accounts of the doings of Parliament, which was strictly forbidden. Raikes was probably born in the old house next to the "Black Swan Inn", and there is a baptismal record in the old church of St. Mary de Crypt which is dated September 24, 1736, so that he may have been born in that year, although most authors give the year as 1735.

Gloucester at this time was an undrained, incommmodius, unsavory little town into whose docks an occasional ship from France or Portugal came with a cargo of wine, and where twice a week a wherry went to Worcester. The streets were swarming with rogues and rascals whose favorite form of entertainment was provided by the wholesale executions which were the government's panacea for all sorts of crime.

Raikes' father was foremost incondemning the evil conditions that existed, and in helping charity, so that it is perhaps natural that his oldest son should mould his life as he did.

Little is known of Raikes' education. We know that in 1528 a Crypt Grammar School was founded by John Coke, but there are no indications that the boy attended this. It has often been rumored that he attended Cambridge, but this has now been totally dispelled, for there are no records to uphold this contention. "The wise and generous occupations
of his manhood satisfy us that his youth was neither idle nor ill employed."

In 1757 his father died and the huge responsibility of running the Gloucester Journal was placed on the shoulders of this twenty-two year old youth. Not only was he sole proprietor and editor of the paper, but he was also manager of a flourishing printing and publishing establishment along with it. "To convey to the public true and well-founded articles of intelligence" was Raikes' own definition of his object in the compilation of his paper. He had to rely for news on the newspacket brought by coach from London, and often there was great inaccuracy, which caused him some embarrassment. One lady, writing to deny the report of her own death, indulged in the amiable remark that she was "in good health and hoped to outlive her enemies".

The importance of his business connections with the spread of the Sunday school idea cannot be overestimated. "His distinct honor lies in the fact that, having in common with several other kindred spirits, perceived the advantages that would attend Sunday teaching, he did not content himself, as did others, with establishing a school or schools in his own neighborhood, but by the means of his newspaper and other organs of public opinion, he recommended the practice far and wide, and never ceased his advocacy till the scheme was generally adopted throughout the land.... He raised Sunday teaching from a fortuitous rarity into a

2. Gregory, Robert Raikes: Journalist and philanthropist. p. 19
3. ibid; p. 20.
universal system. He found the practice local: he made it national."

Robert Raikes, busy journalist that he was, might have been a common business man, had he not answered the divine call that most men of his times did not heed. The idea that "No man liveth to himself" took deep root in his mind, and he could not shake it off. Consequently, he could not go about seeing evil everywhere without trying to do something to better conditions. We today can hardly understand the conditions which existed in the prisons of Raikes' time, and are likely to think descriptions of them highly exaggerated.

"At the time he succeeded to the proprietorship of the Gloucester Journal, there were two gaols in Gloucester,—one for the county, and the other for the city. The county gaol consisted of a portion of Gloucester Castle, a fortress built in the reign of William the Conqueroor, at which time Gloucester was occasionally a royal residence, by Walter, the Constable of England. Beneath its ancient walls ran an arm of the river Severn. After the fifteenth century the castle fell into a state of desuetude, and early in the eighteenth century the less dilapidated portion was turned into a prison. Its condition, when Raikes first knew it, was simply horrible. Though from forty to sixty fresh prisoners were received within its walls every week, there

1. Gregory, Robert Raikes: journalist and philanthropist. p.44.
was but one court for them all. The day-room for men and women felons was only twelve feet long by eleven feet broad. Persons imprisoned for debt, of whom there was always a great number, were huddled together in a den fourteen feet by eleven, without windows, and with no provision for admitting light and air save a hole broken in the plaster wall. In the upper part of the building was a close dark room called 'the main', in which the male felons were kept during the night, and the floor of this apartment was so ruinous that it could not be washed. Directly opposite the stairs leading to this sleeping room was a large dung hill. Owing to the utter absence of all sanitary arrangements, the whole place continually reeked with infection, and deaths were of constant occurrence. Sometimes as many as a dozen victims succumbed in a month. As far as the debtors were concerned, the only wonder is that any of them survived. No provision of any kind was made to keep them alive. No allowance was granted them, either of food or money, nor was any opportunity given them of earning anything. At night, unless they could afford to pay for beds, they were obliged to lie upon straw, and for clothing as for food they were entirely dependent upon their own resources or the charity of the benevolent. The prisoners committed for felony, though, as a rule, less deserving, were a little better treated. They were provided with beds and clothing, and allowed a sixpenny loaf every two days. The indiscriminate hoarding
together of debtors and felons, men and women, child offenders and hardened criminals, was productive of the most fearful immorality. Every new inmate, on entering this den of iniquity, was required by his fellow-prisoners to pay a certain sum of money, called 'garnish', which was immediately spent in beer, brought from the gaoler, who eked out his emoluments by the profits which he derived from this trade. The gaoler had no salary, but was paid by fees. Attempts to escape were of frequent occurrence, and as the place was most inefficiently guarded, they were often successful.

"Scarcely less deplorable was the condition of the city prison, an old building forming part of the north gate, one of the four gates which then stood at the principal entrances to the city. The gaoler received no salary, and paid the sheriff four pounds, fourteen shillings a year for his situation. All the inmates—debtors, felons, and petty offenders—who could not pay for beds, were kept together in 'the main' room, the women being separated from the other prisoners at night. There was no court, but the debtors were allowed the 'privelege' of walking upon the leads. In the matter of provisions, however, the debtors in the city gaol were much better off than their brethren in the castle, for they received three shillings a week and threepenny worth of bread per day, with 'garnish'."

"To relieve these miserable and forlorn wretches, and to render their situation supportable at least, Mr. Raikes

employed both his pen, his influence, and his property, to procure them the necessities of life; and finding that ignorance was generally the principal cause of these enormities which brought them to become objects of his notice, he determined, if possible, to procure them some moral and religious instruction. In this he succeeded by means of bounties and encouragement given to such of the prisoners who were able to read; and these by being directed to proper books, improved both themselves and their fellow prisoners, and afforded great encouragement to persevere in the benevolent design. He then procured for them a supply of work, to preclude every excuse and temptation to idleness."

He tried to inculcate in them a Christian kindness toward others, and by giving them something to do he hoped to keep them out of mischief. So strenuous was his publicity of the matter that in 1774 laws were passed abolishing the gaoler's fees and requiring the cleaning of prisons and the care of prisoners.

This prison reform work gradually led him to the idea of educating young children in the right way in order to have a normal, well-ordered society. For some time this observant and philanthropic journalist had been watching the children employed in the pin factories of the city. "The city itself was the home of the pin industry and largely commercial. Whole portions of the city were devoted to 'pinners' and child labor was largely employed. Heading, drawing, pointing, and sticking were the four processes

1. Lloyd, Sketch of the Life of Raikes. p. 16.
in making a pin. Whole families worked at pin-making at home. Stroud and the small towns and villages in the Golden Valley were busy with hand loom and the manufacture of pins.\

These youngsters worked six days a week and Sunday was their day of recreation. There was much drinking, bull-baiting, bear-baiting, cock fighting, running, wrestling, swearing, gambling, among even the little children. Because they earned their own living, and were self-supporting, their parents had no control over them. "He saw the little, dirty, neglected children— with the pitiable 'slubborn' look written on their faces— singing lewd or brutal songs and rioting in vice and ignorance on Sunday, in the streets of the Cathedral city. Was he to be content with the faithless acquiescent plea that 'what is everybody's duty is nobody's duty?' On the contrary he asked himself, 'Can nothing be done?' A voice within him said, 'Try.' 'I did try,' he says, 'and see what God has wrought.'"

He realized fully the principle that it was necessary to take children at an early age and train them in a healthy spiritual, intellectual, and physical atmosphere in order to have a well-ordered society.

In a letter to Colonel Townley of Sheffield, Raikes tells us the exact circumstances surrounding the beginning of his first school. He says:

"Gloucester, Nov. 25, 1783.

Sir,— My friend the Mayor has just communicated to

me the letter which you have honored him with, inquiring into the nature of Sunday schools. The beginning of the scheme was entirely owing to accident. Some business leading me one morning into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactories) chiefly reside, I was struck with concern at seeing a group of children, wretchedly ragged, at play in the streets. I asked an inhabitant whether those children belonged to that part of the town, and lamented their misery and idleness. 'Ah, sir,' said the woman to whom I was speaking, 'could you take a view of this part of the town on a Sunday, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who released from employment that day, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at "church", and cursing and swearing, in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell, rather than any other place. We have a worthy clergyman,' said she, 'curate of our parish, who has put some of them to school, but upon the Sabbath they are all given up to follow their own inclinations without restraint, as their parents, totally abandoned themselves, have no idea of instilling into the minds of their children principles to which they themselves are total strangers.'

"This conversation suggested to me that it would be at least a harmless attempt, if it were productive of no good, should some little plan be formed to check the deplorable profanity of the Sabbath. I then enquired of the woman, if there were any decent, well-disposed woman in the neighborhood who kept a school for teaching to read. I presently was directed to four. To these I applied, and made an agreement with them to receive as many children as I should send upon the Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading and in the church catechism. For this I engaged to pay them each one shilling for their day's employment. The women seemed pleased with the proposal. I then waited on the clergyman before mentioned and imparted to him my plan. He was so much satisfied with the idea that he engaged to lend his assistance by going round to the schools on a Sunday afternoon to examine the progress that was made and to enforce order and decorum among such a set of little heathens.

"It is now about three years since we began, and I could wish you were here to make inquiry into the effect. A woman who lives in a lane where I had fixed a school told me some time ago that the place was quite a heaven on Sundays compared to what it used to be. The numbers who have learned to read and say their catechism are so great that I am astonished at it. Upon the Sunday afternoons the mistresses take
their scholars to church-- a place into which neither they nor their ancestors had ever before entered with a view to the glory of God. But what is yet more extraordinary, within this month these little ragamuffins have in great numbers taken into their heads to frequent the early morning prayers which are held every morning at the Cathedral at seven o'clock. I believe there were nearly fifty there this morning. They assemble at the house of one of the mistresses, and walk before her to church, tow and tow, in as much order as a company of soldiers. I am generally at church, and after service they all come round me to make their bow, and, if any animosities have arisen, to make their complaints. The great principle I inculcate is, to be kind and good-natured to each other; not to provoke one another; to be dutiful to their parents; not to offend God by cursing and swearing; and such little plain precepts as all may comprehend. As my profession is that of a printer, I have printed a little book, which I give amongst them; and some friends of mine, subscribers to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, sometimes make me a present of a parcel of Bibles, testaments, etc., which I distribute as rewards to the deserving. The success that has attended this scheme has induced one or two of my friends to adopt the plan, and set up Sunday schools in other parts of the city, and now a whole parish has taken up the object; so that I flatter myself in time the good effects will appear so conspicuous as to become generally adopted. The number of children at present thus engaged on the Sabbath is between two and three hundred, and they are increasing every week, as the benefit is universally seen. I have endeavoured to engage the clergy of my acquaintance that reside in their parishes. One has entered into the scheme with great fervour, and it was in order to excite the others to follow the example that I inserted in my paper the paragraph which I suppose you saw copied into the London papers. I cannot express to you the pleasure I often receive in discovering genius and innate good dispositions among this little multitude. It is botanizing in human nature. I have often, too, the satisfaction of receiving thanks from parents for the reformation they perceive in their children. Often I have given them kind admonitions, which I always do in the mildest and gentlest manner. The going amongst them, doing them little kindnesses, distributing trifling rewards, and ingratiating myself with them, I hear, have given me an ascendancy greater than I ever could have imagined, for I am told by their mistresses that they are very much afraid of my displeasures. If the glory
of God be promoted in any, even the smallest, degree, society must reap some benefit. If good seed be sown in the mind at an early period, though it shows itself not again in many years, it may please God at some future period to cause it to spring up and to bring forth a plentiful harvest. With regard to the rules adopted, I only require that they may come to the school on Sunday as clean as possible. Many were at first deterred because they wanted decent clothing, but I could not undertake to supply this defect. I argue with them therefore: 'If you can loiter about without shoes and in a ragged coat, you may as well come to school and learn what may tend to your good in that garb.' I rejected none on that footing. All that I require are clean hands, clean face, and their hair combed. If you have no clean shirt, come in what you have on. The want of decent apparel at first kept great numbers at a distance; but they now begin to grow wiser, and all press in to learn. I have had the good luck to procure places for some that are deserving, which has been of great use. You will understand that these children are from six years old to twelve or fourteen. Boys and girls above this age, who have been totally undisciplined, are generally too refractory for this government. A reformation in society seems to me to be only practicable by establishing notions of duty and practical habits of order and decorum at an early age. But whither am I running? I am ashamed to see how much I have trespassed on your patience; but I thought the most complete idea of Sunday schools was to be conveyed to you by telling what first suggested the thought. The same sentiments would have arisen in your mind had they happened to have been called forth as they were suggested to me. I have no doubt you will find great improvement to be made on this plan. The minds of men have taken great hold on that prejudice, that we are to do nothing on the Sabbath day which may be deemed labor, and therefore we are to be excused from all application of mind as well as body. The rooting out of this prejudice is the point I aim at as my favorite object. Our Saviour takes particular pains to manifest that whatever tended to promote the health and happiness of our fellow-creatures were sacrifices peculiarly acceptable on that day. I do not think I have written so long a letter for some years. But you will excuse me -- my heart is warm in the cause. I think this is the kind of reformation most requisite in this kingdom. Let our patriots employ themselves in rescuing their countrymen from that despotism which tyrannical passions and vicious inclinations exercise over them, and they will find that true liberty and national welfare are more
essentially promoted than by any reform in Parliament. As often as I have attempted to conclude, some new idea has arisen. This is strange as I am writing to a person whom I never have, and perhaps never may see; but I have felt that we think alike. I shall therefore only add my ardent wishes that your views of promoting the happiness of society may be attended with every possible success, conscious that your own internal enjoyment will thereby be considerably advanced." 1

Thus there was opened in 1780 the first of these benevolent schools. Mrs. King was engaged to teach a few children in her home in St. Catherine street, at one shilling and six pence per Sunday, and she taught for three years until her death, when her husband took over her duties. This first school is thought to have been started jointly with the Rev. Thomas Stock (the curate mentioned in the above letter), headmaster of the Cathedral Grammar School, who was greatly interested in philanthropy.

It is Raikes' second school, that which we know he founded entirely on his own responsibility, in which he took the greatest interest. It was called the St. Mary de Crypt school and was conducted by Mrs. Critchley in a private dwelling house next her own home on Southgate street, almost opposite Raikes' home, and near the parish church. The children— for the most part poor and ragged— were taken from the ages of six to fourteen, and there was no provision whatsoever for infants. The one essential qualification for admittance was cleanliness— clean hands, clean face, and neatly combed hair. Ragged and dirty clothes were of no consequence, and were very common.

The school opened at eight o'clock in the morning, but it was usually eight-thirty before all were assembled and work could begin. The children were then taken to church for the morning service and in the afternoon the process was repeated. Raikes was often there early to ask after the conduct of the scholars and inspect their appearance, but his journalistic work usually kept him from attending in the afternoon. Once a month the children were publicly catechised during the church service in order that the general public might know the extent of their training.

The boys and girls were taught separately, if possible a man being secured to teach the boys, and a woman the girls. Each teacher had about twenty children, and these were divided into four groups with a leader—usually the brightest boy or girl in the class—at the head to act as monitor and pupil-teacher. This child taught them their letters, practised them in spelling, and heard them read. Some of the more advanced pupils had reading lessons from the New Testament, and learned by heart parts of the church catechism, and Watts' hymns.

One of the texts used in the school—a little book containing about one hundred and twenty pages—was entitled "The Sunday Scholar's Companion; consisting of Scripture sentences, disposed in such order as will quickly ground young learners in the fundamental doctrines of our most Holy Religion, and at the same time lead them pleasantly
from simple and easy to compound and difficult words."

The first part consisted of alphabet tables, and lists of short words and short sentences arranged into lessons, beginning with sentences composed of words of one syllable, and thence advancing to more difficult exercises. As the title indicates most of it was taken from the Holy Scriptures, but some of it was obviously from uninspired sources, such as: "The talk of him that swears much makes the hair to stand up." "Strive not with a man that is full of words, and lay no sticks on his fire." Then there was reading from the church catechism, and extracts from Dr. Watts' "Advice to Children respecting Prayer". This latter treatise warned the children against the "shamefully lazy and disrespectful custom" of repeating prayers in bed, and advised them to learn their prayers by heart, so that they could say them in the dark. The rest of the book is comprised of prayers for children, an elementary catechism on the principles and proofs of the church, a series of collects, and a few hymns. The book was probably written by the Rev. C. Moore, vicar of Broughton Blaen, Kent, and was first printed by Raikes and used in his school in 1785.

Another text used was that written by Jonas Hanway, a noted traveller, entitled: "A Comprehensive sentimental book for scholars learning in Sunday schools, containing the alphabet, numbers, spelling, moral and religious lessons, lectures, stories, prayers, suited to the growing powers of

children, and for the advancing in happiness of the rising generation."

The first rule in all of these schools provided for personal cleanliness and against cursing and swearing in church. The masters and mistresses had to prevent fighting in the schoolrooms and the introduction of live badgers. Next in importance was the idea of instilling in these little ragamuffins an idea of reverence, for this was most essential before one could hope for discipline, orderly conduct, and industrious habits.

Some admonitions put up in almost every school show the complete ignorance and disorderliness of the scholars:

"When you come in church, kneel."

"When the Clergyman enters arise from your seats."

"Do not talk in church; do not eat apples or other things either there or in school; for you come to church and to school to serve God and to learn your duty, not to eat and drink."

"Do not sing at improper times."

"Those among you who have coughs should take care not to give way to them, as the noise is very disturbing to other people."

"Keep from swearing, stealing, and lying."

"Let no one tempt you to drink drams."

"Do not take birds' nests, spin cockchafer, or do anything to torment dumb creatures."
"Bow to gentlemen and ladies whenever you meet them."

"Come to school early next Sunday."

"Go home quietly."

There follows a list of the rules which the Rev. W. Ellis drew up for the Sunday school at Stroud in 1784, which were patterned after those which Raikes used for his school:

(1) The mistress shall be at her own house from 8 to 10:30 and from 5:30 to 8 in the summer to teach reading, Church catechism, and short prayers from the little collection of Dr. Stonehouse; also three or four chapters of the Bible in succession to give an idea of the history and consistency of the Bible.

(2) the purpose of the school is to teach the young past the age of admission to the weekly school and who have to work.

(3) subscribers are to visit and inspect and reward.

(4) a book is to be kept with the names of neglecting parents and misbehaving children, so that they will not get the parish aid.

(5) the children have to attend church, and be heard in the catechism.

The most diligent were emulated with presents of books,

1. Harris, Robert Raikes: the man and his work. p. 68-69.
combs, shoes, etc., and the school tried to teach them
to be kind and good-natured, not to provoke one another,
to be dutiful to their parents, and not to offend God by
cursing and swearing. There were many quarrels among the
little ruffians, and always the aggressor was compelled to
ask pardon, and the offender was enjoined to forgive.

This school was very different from the Sunday schools
of today. The children were often very hard to control, for
they had been used to much license, and severe punishment
became a necessity and a custom. Some boys came to school
with fourteen pound weights tied to their legs, so that
they could not run away. Mr. Raikes had a magnifying glass
which terrified them, because he looked at them through it
when they were bad. He was not always the gentle, kindly
soul that he has been pictured, for these boys were rough
and would not always respond to kind treatment. When one
child lied, Mr. Raikes put his fingers on the stove and
blistered them, but he saw that they were not too badly
burned. Degradation among the parents was due to ignorance
of the most elementary principles of right and wrong, and
so the children were growing up with the same evil background.
For many years, reformers had been trying to get at the
parents, but they were too hardened in the ways of life, and
Raikes realized that if anything were to be done, it must
be done with the younger generation. However, due to the
fine training which many children received, oftentimes their
parents were deeply affected by their example and mended their ways.

Raikes was very kind to the children when they were good and always gave them a shilling and a plum cake for coming to church. It is little wonder that he exercised such a tremendous influence over these ragamuffins who had known nothing but ill-treatment all their lives.

He kept close touch with the homes from which they came and often tried to help the parents. His innate knowledge of human nature and psychology is shown in one incident told about him. A certain girl in the school had been bad and sulky, so he walked home with her, and told her to apologize to her mother as the first step in becoming good. She refused to do it, so that he got down on his knees and begged the mother to forgive the girl, and then prayed and hoped that God would forgive her also, saying that she did not understand. This so moved the child, that she repented immediately, and when he said that he cared for her welfare, even though she did not, she burst into tears, and ever afterward was under the spell of his goodness.

From Raikes' own papers comes this paragraph which shows his attitude toward his scholars, for although he was a well-dressed, flourishing business man, he did not scorn the company of the dirtiest and raggedest of his flock. He says, "I have invited all my Sunday school scholars to dine with me on New Years Day (1795), on beef and plum pudding. I wish you could step in and see what clean and joyous
countenances we shall exhibit, and you would not be displeased to hear how well they sing their Maker's praise."

At Painswick, a little village outside Gloucester, Raikes provided on Christmas Day, 1785, a bountiful dinner of beef, potatoes, and pudding for three hundred and fifty of his scholars. It was noticed that one little fellow was unable to eat anything placed before him. When he was questioned it was discovered that for three days he had had nothing to eat, and for three years he had not had a plentiful meal.

Many of these schools provided food and clothing for the poorest of the children, for one of Raikes' fundamental principles was that there is no sense in trying to teach a child on an empty stomach. In the parish of Painswick each child brought a penny a week and they saved together and at the end of the year bought themselves a suit of clothes. This created a healthy spirit of self-reliance, for they were proud of these clothes and took good care of them.

One of the earliest schools established in the great, new industrial centers, where there was a most crying need for them, was that at Leeds in 1784. Here they met at one o'clock on Sunday afternoon and gave the children instruction in reading, writing, and religion. At three they were taken to church service, and from thence back to school where a portion of some useful book was read to them, psalms were sung, and the session ended with a prayer. This particular

1. Harris. Robert Raikes: the man and his works. p. 84.
school employed four "inquisitors", who spent Sunday afternoon visiting the school to see who was absent, and then during the week visited the homes of the scholars to learn the reason for the absence.

Some idea of Raikes' personal qualifications as a teacher can be gathered from a letter which he wrote to a friend in which he described his personal work among the children.

"November 8, 1793.

"My dear---, I have lately had a new flock of children come about me from a singular circumstance. I was showing my Sunday scholars a little time ago how possible it is for an invisible power to exist in bodies which shall act upon other bodies without our being able to perceive in what manner they act. This I prove to them by the powers of the magnet. They see the magnet draw the needle without touching it. Thus, Hell them; I wish to draw them to the paths of duty, and thus lead them to Heaven and happiness; and as they saw one needle when it had touched the magnet then capable of drawing another needle, thus when they become good they would be made the instruments in the hands of God, very probably, of making other boys good.

"Upon this idea those children are now endeavouring to bring other children to meet me at church and you would be diverted to see with what a group I am now surrounded every morning at seven o'clock prayers, at the Cathedral, especially upon a Sunday morning, at which time I give books, or combs, or other encouragements. Sometimes they read to me a part of the Gospel for the day, which I explain to them in a manner suited and applied to their own situations, and comprehensions. They were reading that verse in St. Luke, the other morning, where our Saviour says: 'The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. The Kingdom of God is within you.' 'Who can tell me,' says I, what we are to understand by that expression, "The Kingdom of God is within you"?' They were
all silent for some minutes. At last the boy who was reading said: 'I believe it means when the Spirit of God is in our hearts.'

"Don't you think this is encouragement enough to cultivate the lower orders of the people? I could recount to you numberless incidents of this nature that recur to me, to render my scheme of 'botanizing in human nature' pleasant and agreeable. But I have already been too prolix." 1

This letter shows that Raikes knew the limits of his scholars and was able to get down to their level of intelligence and reach them with his simple stories. This was one of the greatest factors in his success as a teacher of little children.

From 1780 to 1783 the plan was experimentered on and was kept rather quiet, until it should become perfected. But in November of 1783 an announcement appeared in the Gloucester Journal., as follows:

"Some of the clergy in different parts of this county, bent upon attempting a reform among the children of the lower classes, are establishing Sunday schools for rendering the Lord's Day subservient to the ends of instruction, which has hitherto been prostituted to bad purposes. Farmers, and other inhabitants of the towns and villages, complain that they receive more injury in their property on the Sabbath, than all the week besides; this in a great measure proceeds from the lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint. To remedy this evil, persons duly qualified are employed to instruct those that cannot read; and those that may have learnt to read are taught the Catechism and conducted to church. By thus keeping their minds engaged, the day passes profitably, and not disagreeably. In those parishes, where this plan has been adopted, we are assured that the behaviour of the children is greatly civilized. The barbarous ignorance in which they had before lived being in some degree dispelled, they begin to give proofs that those persons are mistaken who consider the lower

orders of mankind as incapable of improvement
and therefore think an attempt to reclaim them
impracticable, or at least not worth the trouble."

That these schools not only improved the minds and
intellects of the lower classes, but also worked miracles as
far as their morals and manners were concerned is rather
vividly shown in a letter which Raikes wrote to the Executive
Committee of the Sunday School Society regarding the reform
worked by the movement.

The letter follows:

Gloucester, October 7, 1786.

Gentlemen:— The parish of Painswick exhibited on
Sunday, the twenty-fourth, ult., a specimen of the
reform which the establishment of Sunday schools
is likely to produce.

An annual festival has from time immemorial
been held on that day— a festival that would have
disgraced the most heathenish nations. Drunkenness
and every species of clamor, riot, and disorder,
formerly filled the town upon this occasion. Mr.
Webb, a gentleman who has exerted the utmost assiduity
in the conduct of the Sunday school at Painswick,
was lamenting to me the sad effects that
might be naturally expected to arise from this
feast. It appeared to us that an attempt to divert
the attention of the vulgar from their former brutal
prostitution of the Lord's Day, by exhibiting to
their view a striking picture of the superior en-
joyment to be derived from quietness, good order,
and the exercise of the benevolence which Chris-
tianity peculiarly recommends, was an experiment
worth hazarding.

We thought it could do no mischief— it would
not increase the evil. I was immediately deter-
mined to invite the gentlemen and people of the
adjacent towns to view the children of the Sun-
day schools— to mark their improvement in clean-
liness and behaviour, and to observe the practic-
ability of reducing to a quiet and peaceable
demeanor the neglected part of the community,
those who form the great bulk of the people....

On the Sunday afternoon the town was filled
with the usual crowds who attend the feasts, but

instead of repairing to the alehouses, as heretofore, they all hastened to the church, which was filled in such a manner as I never remember to have seen any church in this country before. The galleries and the aisles were filled like a playhouse....

Young people, lately more neglected than the cattle in the field—ignorant, profane, filthy, clamorous, impatient,—were here seen clean, quiet, observant of order, submissive, courteous in behavior, and in conversation free from that vulgarity which marks our wretched vulgar....After the public service, a collection for the benefit of the institution was made at the door of the Church. When I consider that the bulk of the congregation were persons of middling rank, husbandmen, and other inhabitants of the adjacent villages, I concluded the collection, if it amounted to 24 or 25 pounds, might be deemed a good one.

My astonishment was great indeed when I found that the sum was not less than 57 pounds. This may be accounted for from the security which the establishment of Sunday schools has given to the property of every individual in the neighborhood. The farmers, etc., declare that they and their families can now leave their homes, gardens, etc., and frequent the public worship without danger of depredation; formerly they were required to leave their servants, or stay at home themselves, as a guard, and this was insufficient as the most vigilant were sometimes plundered.

In the meantime, the town was remarkably free from those pastimes which used to disgrace it—wrestling, quarreling, fighting, were totally banished; and all was peace and tranquillity."

This letter shows the conditions that existed in the towns, and the change wrought by the establishment of Sunday schools, and it places Raikes and his workers in the light of social reformers as well as educators.

The Personal Traits of Mr. Raikes.
The Personal Traits of Mr. Raikes.

Very little is known about the personal traits of Robert Raikes, for, widespread as was his influence, he seems to have buried his private life in comparative obscurity.

We do know from his portraits that he was above medium height, and comfortably stout. He was always very well-dressed, and was meticulous about his personal appearance. He had rather a "buckish" air, a certain swagger, which was obnoxious to some people who have accused him of excessive vanity. He has also been accused of being over-proud of his accomplishments, and of taking all the credit for himself for the founding of Sunday schools. At one time he had a short interview with the Queen, and she inquired as to the work he was doing. He was severely criticized because in his reply to her he made no mention of the contribution of Mr. Stock. And one critic came to the conclusion that Mr. Raikes was getting his reward here on earth, but that Stock's would come in heaven. This, however, seems to me to be rather a pointless accusation because probably he realized that the Queen was merely trying to be polite, and he made his answer as brief as possible, and tried not to drag in any unnecessary details.

Raikes, being a flourishing business man, did a great deal of entertaining at his home, and he walked with the best society. He owned a very fine home, extended every

hospitality to his guests, and his wife was a most charming hostess. He kept several servants and was noted for his kindliness to them. He had a strong home instinct, and took great pride in his six lovely daughters, and two excellent sons.

As to his degree of culture very little is known. His youngest daughter, Mrs. Ladbroke, tells that her father was "well-informed, wrote French fluently, and was a first-rate geographer". His correspondence shows that he had a clear, smoothly-running style, and a keen intellect. He must have had a love of learning, else why should he take so much pains to train the lower classes?

Raikes was a keen student of pathology and psychology although he never formally studied either. His journalistic work necessitated a keen eye and a fine sense of observation, and he became deeply interested in the study of human nature.

That he was a most humane man can easily be gathered from his work in prison reform, and in the establishment of Sunday schools. There is an example of his sympathetic nature in the story of a poor prisoner accused of sheep stealing, who was about to be hanged. Raikes went to visit him in prison, and found that the man had truly repented in his heart, and had been won over to the Christian way of life. Consequently, Raikes used all his influence with the state officials, and although he could not obtain a full pardon for the man, he did see to it that the death

sentence was removed. Later the man was sent as an exile to Botany Bay, and there he founded a Sunday school which had a wonderful influence over the lives of the inmates of the prison colony there.

In politics Raikes was a conservative. He had the type of mind which deliberated long, but when once made up could not be moved. He never held public office, but this may have been due to the heaviness of his business duties. He hated Tom Paine and others of his fry, and sometimes felt that England had been abandoned by God because of the actions of these radicals. His political ideas are well-expressed in a little jingle printed in his paper:

"As to our politics, 'tis known
We love the king-- support his throne--
Staunch sticklers in the People's cause
Yet reverence the Church and Laws!" 1

As to Raikes' personal religion, we know as little as we do of his other characteristics. We know that he was a communicant of the Established Church, and yet his attitude toward Nonconformity was liberal and understanding, and he especially liked the Methodists and the Society of Friends.

In a book, "Robert Raikes, his Sunday Schools, and his Friends" the Rev. Joseph Belcher says: "Of the strictly religious history of this eminent man, we know even less than we do of his early life. Forty years ago, we were well acquainted with a distinguished Christian gentleman, in

London, who was intimately acquainted with Mr. Raikes at the time he commenced Sabbath schools; and he was entirely convinced that his friend (Raikes) at that time was inexperienced in the religion of the heart; and that he was resting his expectations of eternal life on the morality of his conduct, and his observance of the forms of devotion.

This was to the effect that Mr. Raikes' first thorough conviction of sin, and his first approach to the Cross of Christ for mercy was the result of reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah to a little girl, one of his own Sunday scholars."

Although he never held a church office, he was a conscientious church attendant of the evangelical type, leaning rather strongly toward mysticism. One rather uncharitable critic feels that--shrewd business man that he was--he attended church each Sunday for the sole purpose of gaining trade. His sympathetic and emotional nature was uppermost in the presence of physical suffering, and thus his biographers have never been able to distinguish between his benevolence and his religion. Most of those who have written about him feel that his movement was established for charitable rather than religious reasons. I cannot see how any man, having been so influential in leading others into a Christian way of life, and teaching them a love of God and each other, could have been totally barren of some personal religion.

One rather amusing side of his religious belief is shown in his idea (shared with many others of his time) that Satan was quite capable of setting up formidable opposition, and in the case of Raikes this took the form of a "petty-fogging" lawyer. Raikes inserted in his paper an advertisement of a lost bank bill, for which the owner had offered five guineas reward, and "no questions asked". Some petty enemy of Raikes, in order to have revenge, dug up an ancient law prohibiting this latter phrase, and a law suit ensued, at the close of which Raikes was obliged to pay a fine of fifty pounds.

Mr. Raikes was also accused of being a "Sabbath-breaker". Because the newspacket from London arrived on Saturday, and because he wished to pass along the current events as quickly as possible, Raikes printed his newspaper on Sunday. This caused a storm of protest among many of the church people (who probably were the most eager to learn the news). In spite of this opposition, Raikes continued to use the Sabbath as his day of publication, for he was not particularly concerned with what the general public felt, if his own conscience was not troubled.

Whatever else can be said of the character of Raikes, it is clear that he was a kindly, loving man who won the hearts of every little child who came to him. This is evident for when he died on April 5, 1811, hundreds of

1. Harris, Robert Raikes: the man and his work, p. 201.
little ones followed his coffin to the grave, singing hymns, and then, according to his last will and testament, were given a piece of plum cake and a shilling, as had been his custom to do when they were good.

The Spread of the Movement.
The Spread of the Movement.

"The efforts of any individual, however wise or active he might be, would be productive of but little benefit, when compared with the good resulting from the combined exertions of many benevolent persons. Raikes might have laboured till the termination of his long life, surrounded by a few Sunday scholars in the vicinity of his residence, had he not aroused the attention of his country men to his plans and directed their energies to these institutions."

"In detached situations, with different plans of instruction, and without any means of communication with each other, Sunday school teachers continued for a considerable time to proceed silently in their benevolent employment... But it was found that zeal thus private and retired would be likely soon to languish... Hence the necessity of a Sunday School Union in which gratuitous teachers from different parts might assemble to encourage and direct each other in their arduous labours."

This Sunday School Union was formed in 1803 by William Fox, a benevolent and keen-minded business man. The Society was well-organized and had an efficient administrative policy. By way of advertising itself and gaining support, it sent out the following circular letter to various ministers to be read in public:

2. ibid. p. 61.
Sir,— The deplorable ignorance of the children of the poor, in many parts of the Kingdom, and the corruption of morals frequently flowing from that source, have long been matters of deep concern to all who are solicitous for the welfare of their country.

In manufacturing towns where children from their infancy are necessarily employed the whole week, no opportunity occurs for their receiving the least degree of education. To remedy this evil, some gentlemen, actuated by the most benevolent motives, have established, in some of these towns, Sunday schools, where children and others are taught to read, and are instructed in the knowledge of their duty as rational and accountable beings.

The Sunday, too often spent by the children of the poor in idleness and play, or in contracting habits of vice and dissipation, is by the children of the schools employed in learning to read the Bible, and in attending the public worship of God, by which means they are trained up in habits of virtue and piety, as well as industry, and a foundation is laid for their becoming useful members of the community.

The numerous benefits arising from Sunday schools, of which the most indubitable testimonies have been given, and the great importance of extending their salutary effects have induced a number of gentlemen, stimulated by the successful attempts to establish a Society in London, for the support and encouragement of Sunday schools in the different counties of England.

It is the intention of this Society, on application being made to the committee from any place, to assist in establishing a school or schools therein, until the good consequences shall be so apparent, to the inhabitants, as to encourage an exertion, which may render any further assistance from the society unnecessary.

In forming the plan of this Society, the most liberal and catholic principles have been adopted, in hopes that persons of all denominations of the Protestant faith, will be induced to unite in carrying it into execution with greater energy. The committee, therefore, beg leave to recommend to every minister of a congregation where these schools may be established, to make it known to the people of their respective charges and to preach a collection sermon for the support of such schools as often as occasion may require.
If any further argument in favor of these schools was necessary, a striking one presents itself in the contemplation of our crowded prisons and frequent executions, which shock the feelings of humanity, and disgrace our country. The sad history of these wretched victims to their crime and to the laws, too plainly evinces that to the want of an early introduction into the paths of virtue and religion, to which this institution would lead, may be attributed in a great degree, their unhappy end. In this point of view then, this institution may be considered a political, as well as a religious one, claiming the attention even of those, who, if not particularly zealous in the cause of Christianity, cannot be insensible to the advantages that would accrue to society from the preservation of good order, and the security of persons and property.

The Committee flatter themselves that they shall find in you a friend to this cause, and that your exertions, in union with theirs, will be crowned with success, in producing a reformation of morals in the lower ranks of the rising generation.

By order of the committee;
Henry Thornton, Chairman. " 1

The objectives of this Union were:

(1) to stimulate and encourage those who were already teachers.

(2) to improve the methods of tuition.

(3) to enlarge the schools already in existence, and to see where they were most needed.

(4) to get supplies in large quantities and for a cheaper rate.

(5) to help everywhere to establish new schools.

The spread of the Sunday School movement was given its greatest impetus, perhaps, because of its wide advertising.

From Raikes' little notice in the Gloucester Journal, other papers copied the paragraphs and John Wesley in his "Arminian Magazine" gave it attention, and this influenced greatly the Methodists, who were peculiarly adapted to this rather democratic type of movement. Wesley says in his Journal, "I found these schools springing up wherever I go. Perhaps God may have a deeper and therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians."

Dignitaries of the Established Church were equally as enthusiastic. Dr. Glasse's words about the system are as follows:

"It is needless to observe how happily Mr. Raikes' ideas have met the public approbation, and how generally his excellent plan has been adopted and encouraged. Some few persons have looked upon it with coldness and disregard; still fewer have ventured to oppose and object to it. The former, we venture to pronounce, have misconceived the nature and design of the institution. The latter are advocates for a slavish subjection in the poor, which they know will be best favoured by keeping them in a state of abject ignorance. I will not go so far as to suppose that any one that calls himself a Christian capable of envying the advancement of religion; which certainly may be expected from these endeavours to instruct the children of the poor. It is now a period of four years since this institution was first set on foot, and this grain of mustard seed is now grown to such an incredible extent that under its shadow not fewer than 250,000 of our fellows are sheltered and protected. From this spark, excited by the zeal of a worthy individual and supported by his indefatigable exertion, such a flame of piety and charity has been kindled as diffuses its brightness through our own and a neighboring kingdom, and is even about to extend itself to our settlements in distant countries, comprehending all descriptions of the poor, and affording a most delightful prospect to every serious

mind of national reformation of manners among 
the lowest orders of the people." 1

It is not true, however, that everyone praised Raikes' efforts as highly as did these two churchmen whose testimonies have been given. Opposition was very bitter at first, and among thorough-going Christians as well as those who hated to see the poor given a chance. Many Dissenters objected because they said it was a desecration of the Sabbath. Others criticized Fox because he made his pupils attend the Anglican Church service and confined their reading to the Bible. One critic in a letter to the Protestant Dissenter Magazine in 1794 objected because the Sunday school had been in existence for nine years and as yet there was no evidence of good. He felt that the clergy would do well to educate the parents first, and let them pass their training on to the younger generation.

A letter printed in the "Gentlemen's Magazine" in 1797 reads as follows:

"We may therefore conclude that the Sunday school is as far from being the wise, useful, and prudent institution (it is said to be), that it is in reality productive of no valuable advantage, but, on the contrary, subversive of that order, that industry, that peace and tranquillity which constituted the happiness of society; and that, so far from deserving encouragement and applause, it merits our contempt, and ought to be exploded as the vain, chimerical institution of a visionary projector." 2

The movement was not confined to England but spread throughout the entire United Kingdom. In Wales the Rev. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowron, in the country of Garmathen, gave the first impulse to the work of educating the people by means of catechising his parishioners every Sunday at the public service in the parish church. So successful was this effort, that in a few years he established Circulating Charity Day Schools, which moved about from place to place, in order to give as many as possible a little learning. It was Rhys Hugh, an old man who had lived with Mr. Jones, who educated and gave his first religious impression to the boy who afterward became known as the Raikes of Wales--Thomas Charles of Bala. This young man as he grew up moved to North Wales, where the people lived in the grossest ignorance, and here he established schools similar to those of Mr. Jones. These day schools did not last, but at least they were the means for training teachers for the Sabbath schools which grew out of them. The distinguishing principle of the Welsh schools was that they were for adults as well, and were not intended primarily to teach spelling and reading, but to bring all the classes together to examine the word of God and exchange ideas on its content. He also started the custom of holding regular public meetings in connection with the Sabbath schools, where the public might assemble to hear the catechising of several schools from different localities.
These large gatherings left a lasting impression upon the minds of the people.

In Scotland the need for Sunday schools was not nearly so great as it was in the rest of the United Kingdom, because of the strict habit of religious instruction in the family, and the close examinations given regularly by the ministers. Therefore, the opposition to the establishment of Sunday schools was very strong as witnessed by a sermon preached by the Rev. Thomas Burns. He says in part,

"I can see no necessity for the institution, and I am afraid men do not consider the effects that are likely to follow. In England necessity may be pleaded, as we are told there are few parents in common life who are qualified to instruct their children in the principles of true religion.... There can be no such argument with regard to Scotland. From the wise institution of parochial schools, every parish in Scotland is provided with the means of instruction. Children are taught, at least, to read and write, and instructed in the principles of our holy religion, as contained in our confessions of faith and catechisms longer and shorter... Be that as it may, I repeat again, my great objection to Sunday schools is that I am afraid they will in the end destroy all family religion."

Conditions in Ireland were, if possible, worse than they were in England, because of the down-trodden state of the people. The Rev. Dr. Kennedy, curate of the parish of Bright, in the county of Down, was struck with the utter disregard for the Sabbath which was widespread among the upper classes as well as the lower. His parish consisted

mostly of lowly, humble, illiterate peasant folk, greatly oppressed by absentee landlords. He felt that something must be done so he secured a competent parish clerk, and had the boys and girls gather together on Sunday morning for an hour and a half before service in order to practice psalmody. Then, as the numbers increased he began reading with them the Psalms and the lessons for the day.

This work had been going on for about ten years in a rather informal and haphazard way (but with remarkable success), when the philanthropic doctor heard of Raikes' work and so he patterned his school after the one in Gloucester, and soon had it running on a more systematic basis than before.

An Irish correspondent to Raikes' paper said: "These schools have given strongest evidence to the nation that the profligacy of our people is to be diminished more successfully by an attention to their morals in the early period of life, than by hanging thousands when they are confirmed in the habits of vice and are let loose from every restraint of religion and morality."

Sunday schools had been established in the United States long before Raikes came into prominence. As early as 1680 there were church schools for the children. In the Pilgrim Church at Plymouth there was a school under the supervision of the Rev. John Robinson, and in 1737 John Wesley started a similar organization in Georgia. We could

go on "ad infinitum" naming various schools which had been founded before Raikes', but that seems rather beside the point here for Raikes seems to have exercised little influence over these pioneers who had ideas of their own and didn't need as much prodding as their more conservative English brethren, who felt that state intervention in education was uncalled for. It is necessary to take into consideration the fact that in America the idea was established early in the minds of the populace that it was the duty of the state to educate all its children to be citizens.

Thus Raikes must be given the credit not for thinking up the idea of Sabbath schools— for they were as old as the ancient Israelites— but for impressing upon the minds of the people that fact that in order to have a well-balanced civilization one must educate the younger generation up in the right way of living. He helped to make the church see that it alone could not control learning. He contributed to the well-being of the lower classes not only intellectually, but physically and spiritually as well. He had a keen, sympathetic, forward-looking mind which perceived the needs of the people, and did its best to right the situation with the opportunities presented. Sunday schools of his type have long since lost all usage, and would be out of place in our generation, but in his day they went a long way toward relieving a most distressing need.
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