

The Sunday-School Society

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

IN the year 1780, the modern Sunday-school movement had its beginnings in Gloucester, England, due to the sympathetic interest of Robert Raikes in the lower classes of humanity. He was a printer and publisher of the town, and a devoted Christian worker, with ideals of spiritual development far in advance of his age.

Dr. Edwin Wilbur Rice, in his exhaustive volume on "The Sunday School Movement", published in 1917, writes of Robert Raikes as follows:

"He had eyes trained to see, and a generous heart to sympathize with the suffering poor. His first efforts were to secure a reform in the conditions of jails and prisons, rendering the life of a prisoner at least endurable. Failing in this enterprise, he began his new experiment of the modern Sunday school, which swiftly gained a place among the most important of modern religious institutions."

His first school was in Sooty Alley, Gloucester, in 1780; and the scholars were from the lowest strata of society, — the primary aim of Raikes being to reach poor and neglected children. The plan commended itself to many philanthropic and thoughtful persons, and developed into one of the greatest institutions for good that the world has ever known.

In the year 1785, there was organized "The Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday Schools throughout the British Dominions." In twenty-seven years it formed or aided 3,730 Sunday schools, with a membership of 303,981.

The Rev. Oscar S. Michael, in a work entitled, "The Sunday School in the Development of the American Church," states that there was "nothing like Sunday schools in evidence before the Revolution" in America. This statement is not in agreement with researches made by Dr. Rice, who writes as follows:

"A careful investigation of first-hand records of Sunday schools reveals that, like all great moral and religious movements, the modern Sunday-school idea existed more or less clearly in many minds and sprang up in many widely separated communities.

"The places and persons claiming to have had a Sunday school previous to that of Raikes, in Gloucester, 1780, are very numerous. A controversy in regard to these rival claims has long been continued and is still an unsettled question. The question is not simply one of priority of date, nor is it one alone of the particular

form of either of these schools, although both the date and the form are elements in this dispute. Behind these is the more fundamental question in regard to which, if any, of these schools had a sufficient number of features of the modern Sunday-school movement to be recognized as similar to Raikes' movement. Sometimes the disputants seem to us to raise technical objections which amount to little more than quibbles.

"One writer [Rev. O. S. Michael] objects to the claim of Ephrata, Pennsylvania, because that school was held on the seventh day [the rest day or Sabbath observed by that religious sect] rather than on the first day, or Sunday.

"In regard to the school at Ephrata, Pennsylvania, I made a careful investigation of its history, in company with the Rev. C. Reimensnyder, who was versed in their language (Pennsylvania Dutch) and spoke it fluently. This school was under the direction of a German Community, which separated from the Dunkards or German Baptists in 1728 and were led by Conrad Beissel, who observed the seventh instead of the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath. They had a secular school, but in 1739 'Brother Obed' — a title given to Ludwig Haecker — became teacher of the school and immediately began a Sunday school also in the afternoons of every Sabbath 'to give instruction to the indigent children who were kept from regular school by employments which their necessities obliged them to be engaged at during the week, as well as to give *religious* instruction to those of better circumstances'. This much I learned from reading and translating the original records, which I found in the 'Brothers' House'. These ancient records were freely and fully shown to us and we were given ample opportunity to read and translate them."

The Sunday-School World, for 1876, pp. 17-18, quotes Dr. Fahnestock, who in 1835 wrote as follows:

"This school [Ephrata] flourished for many years. It produced an anxious inquiry among the juvenile population, which attended the school, which increased and grew into what is now termed a 'revival' of religion. The scholars in the Sabbath school met together every day before and after school hours to pray and exhort one another under the superintendence of one of the brethren."

Dr. Rice states: "When the Revolutionary War broke out these buildings were needed for a hospital, and the one where the Sabbath school was held was given up for this purpose. The early Sunday school, however, accomplished much good during its thirty years' existence, as the records of it prove, and on this account is entitled to the prominence which has hitherto been given to it."

It seems reasonably certain that there were schools in America, held on Sunday, previous to 1780, in which the chief instruction

was from the Bible, which were substantially similar in type to the present-day Sunday school. These schools had many of the features as well as the form common to the modern Sunday school, which entitle them to be counted forerunners of the modern movement. It is true that they were sporadic instances. Claims have been made for the early existence of many such schools, among which are the following:

Norwich and Bethlehem, Connecticut; Roxbury and Plymouth, Massachusetts; among the Schwenkfelders, and at Ephrata, Pennsylvania; Philadelphia, under Zinzendorf and Mrs. Greening; and perhaps, Savannah, Georgia, by Wesley. The movement introduced by Raikes gave popularity to the new form and led to its almost universal adoption.

In 1790, there was organized in Philadelphia, "The First Day Society". The purpose of this organization was to instruct the rising generations by teaching them "from the Bible", and "from such other moral and religious books as the society might, from time to time, direct." Bishop William White served as its president for about forty-six years. It was incorporated in 1796, and is claimed to be the oldest existing Sunday-school society in the world.

In 1804, a "Union Society", for the education of poor female children in Philadelphia, was formed. Four years later, it was incorporated. In 1808, the Evangelical Society of Philadelphia was formed, to promote "the knowledge of and submission to the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the poor in this city and vicinity". It obtained a charter in 1812.

In January, 1816, there was formed in New York city the "Female Union Society for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools". In February of that year, also in New York city, the "New York Sunday-School Union Society" was instituted. The two societies worked in perfect harmony for several years when the former was absorbed by the latter.

In May, 1817, "The Sunday and Adult School Union", of Philadelphia, was organized. Two years later, it was incorporated by a decree of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

In the year 1814, one of the first Sunday schools in Philadelphia was organized by the Old Pine Street Presbyterian church, and is still in existence. "In the fall of 1814, Jackson Kemper and James Milnor, Bishop White's assistant clergy at Christ church, Philadelphia, began an afternoon Sunday school and a night service at Commissioners' hall, in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia, which resulted in the formation of the parish of St. John's, Northern Liberties. This was the first school officially incorporated by any religious organization in America and precluded the general adoption during the next three years of the institution in its de-

veloped form by most of the church organizations in the country.”¹

In July, 1816, a number of ladies, mindful of the general good that should result from the institution of such a school in the borough of Lancaster, met in Masonic hall, 13 West King street, and adopted resolutions preparatory to the forming of a constitution for such an undertaking. On August 24th of that year, a meeting of the Society was held at 4 o'clock in the afternoon at the Friends' meeting house, 121 South Queen street, east side, where W. Y. Haldy now has his marble yard, at which time the proposed constitution was presented for consideration, adoption and signature.

At its beginning, the Society was liberally patronized. The encouragement received exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its promoters; and fully justified the establishment of a weekly school and the employment of a teacher for the instruction of thirty-five scholars.

The Lancaster Journal of Wednesday, November 20th, 1816, contains a communication addressed to William Hamilton, editor of the paper, which refers to the good work of the Society. It is signed, "A Friend to the Poor", and is as follows:

"It is astonishing that the gentlemen in this place should suffer themselves to be so far eclipsed by the ladies in charitable deeds, as much more should be expected from them. Within these few months the ladies have established two charitable societies: one for clothing the poor, the other for educating them, both of which appear to be built upon solid foundations, and which no doubt are the most useful societies ever formed in the borough of Lancaster. But, we are sorry to say, there never has been a charitable society of any kind formed by gentlemen. There are many ways in which one might be useful and lessen the expense of the ladies' societies, such as furnishing wood for the poor, and likewise for the school; flannel for the benevolent society and books for the school. There have, to be sure, been some trifling donations made; but if there was a society formed, there might be a great many things given, with very little expense to individuals, and, at the same time, do a great deal more than the former donations. I have no doubt that the gentlemen are generous enough, but they never pay attention to such trifles, as they may so term them; but the ladies tell us, and we have no reason to believe otherwise, that there is no greater satisfaction than in alleviating the sufferings of the poor. If we were to place ourselves in the same situation, we would think ourselves very much indebted to those who had been the means of making us more happy; therefore, while we are happy, let us try to make others so, too."

In the year 1817, quarterly meetings of the Society were held

¹ "The Sunday School", by Rev. Oscar S. Michael, pp. 64-5.

in January, April, July and October, in the office of Judge Walter Franklin, in the state house. The first annual meeting was held on Thursday, July 25th, 1817. Ann Ross, the acting secretary, informed the public through the medium of the Lancaster Journal, that those ladies who did not attend the annual meeting would be considered as "continuing members."

In its issue of Tuesday, February 3rd, 1818, The Pennsylvania Gazette, a newspaper published in Lancaster borough, presents the following report of the good work of the Society:

"The weekly school was established, and, except, for a reduction in the number of scholars, still continues upon the original plan. Here the children are taught to read, write and cipher; the female classes are also taught to sew and knit.

"In the weekly school, the Society is happy to state that the progress of the pupils has been highly gratifying. Many of the scholars who, when they entered the school, were unacquainted with the letters of the alphabet, are now capable of reading the Scriptures, of committing to memory portions of the sacred text, the catechisms of their respective denominations—and to write and cipher.

"The Sunday school consists of the scholars who compose the weekly school, together with as many others, without distinction of color, as choose to attend. This school is generally opened after divine service. The number of scholars is from twenty to eighty. These are distributed into several classes; and the young ladies of the Society, to each of whom is assigned the charge of a particular class, perform the office of tutoresses.

"In the Sunday school, also, the progress of the scholars has been such as to reflect great honor upon the tutoresses for their persevering assiduity.

"Many of the Sunday scholars have been taught to read. It is, however, the principal object of this school to inculcate the principles of piety and virtue; to habituate the infant mind to a proper sense of decorum; to inspire a serious respect for the institutions of religion; to impress upon their minds just sentiments of the Divine Being; and to accustom them to a religious observance of the Sabbath.

"Auxiliary to this subject, and in order to make a durable impression on their minds, the scholars are required to commit to memory certain portions of Scripture, hymns, prayers, and the catechisms of the several churches to which they belong.

"In order to excite a spirit of industry and emulation among the scholars, premiums are given to those who best acquit themselves at the Sunday examinations; and this mode of stimulating the youthful mind, the Society has found to be attended with much greater success than they anticipated.

“With respect to the weekly school, it may be proper to state, that the funds have been considerably reduced, owing to the circumstance of having been deprived of the assistance of many members of the association, whose loss is deeply regretted — some of whom are gone to receive the reward of their charitable deeds from Him who is the fountain of beneficence; and others have removed to distant places, in which, no doubt, they will find ample scope for their benevolence. In consequence of this reduction of the fund, however, the Society has been reluctantly compelled to reduce the original number of scholars. At present, therefore, assistance cannot be afforded to more than twenty. This is to be lamented, as applications for admission into the school are latterly very frequent. It is hoped, however, that several ladies, who have not heretofore honored the Sunday-School Society with their patronage, will now cheerfully contribute to the enlargement of the fund. Should this expectation be realized, the Society will still be enabled to extend the benefit of education to, at least, twenty weekly scholars, — an object ‘devoutly to be wished’.

“In order to exhibit a view of the state of funds, and the nature of the disbursements, the Society submits to the public, the following abstract from the treasurer’s book:

DR.

“By the amount of subscriptions received from July 30th,
1816, to January 17th, 1817: \$539.65

CR.

“1816.

“Sept. 10.	To articles purchased for the use of the scholars:	\$ 8.25
	Wood for the use of the school:	27.75
“Sept. 24.	To Miss Moore, for one quarter’s tuition:	65.00
“Nov. 17.	To cash paid Samuel Davis, for stove pipe used in school room:	11.25

“1817.

“Jan. 24.	To Miss Moore, for one half year’s tuition: ...	130.00
“April 24.	To shoes purchased for the use of the scholars:	10.00
	To stationery, etc. for the use of the scholars:	2.55
“July 24.	To cash paid for religious tracts:	5.00
“Aug. 2.	To Miss Moore, for one quarter’s tuition:	65.00
“Oct. 29.	To Miss Moore, for tuition of twenty scholars:	40.00
	To wood for the use of the school:	27.75
	Balance in the hands of the treasurer, subject to a charge for the tuition of twenty scholars since October 24, 1817:	147.10

The Society also acknowledged the receipt of the following donations: Eight Bibles and sixteen Testaments, from the Bible Society of Lancaster; five dollars, from Mr. William Webb; forty religious tracts, from the Female Tract Society of Philadelphia; thirty-eight toy books, one dozen primers, four hymn books, one hundred premium cards, and one hundred and thirty-eight religious tracts, from Mrs. Ann Slaymaker; twenty-four Presbyterian catechisms, from the Rev. George Duffield; six Episcopal catechisms and eighteen toy books, from Mrs. [Joseph] Clarkson; six "Child's Instructor" and eighteen books, from Mrs. Henry Y. Slaymaker; eighty premium cards, six Episcopal catechisms, eight primers and four Catholic catechisms, from Miss Catharine Yeates; eight Episcopal catechisms, eight primers and ten toy books, from Mrs. [Jasper] Yeates; twelve primers, four Testaments and six catechisms, from Mrs. [William] Kirkpatrick; one hundred premium cards, from Miss Ellen Moore; six Presbyterian catechisms, from Master James Slaymaker; nineteen sermons, twelve catechisms and thirty-two religious tracts, from the Rev. James Magraw; twelve hymn books, from Master Stephen Slaymaker; ten dollars, from James Buchanan, Esq.; ten dollars, from Mr. John Yeates; five dollars, from Mrs. Conyngham; and three dollars from Mrs. [Charles] Smith. Mr. Buchanan was then a young Lancaster attorney of 27 years of age.

In the voluminous report appearing in The Gazette, the directoresses of the Sunday-School Society informed the poor people of Lancaster, that the Sunday school was still open for the reception of scholars; and that they hope the persons whose duty it is will not fail to embrace the earliest opportunity of sending them.

The directoresses also expressed the hope that the ladies in general would continue to aid and encourage the institution, which was as honorable as it was beneficial but which could not be supported without steady and persevering exertion.

The report was signed by Juliana Jordan, secretary, and the following directoresses: Ann Slaymaker, Grace Clarkson, Susan Mosher, Barbara Gundaker, Mary Dickson, Elizabeth Kirkpatrick and Anne Franklin.

At the second annual meeting, in July, 1818, the ladies who intended to continue as subscribers to the Society were requested to send the amount of their subscriptions to A. M. Graeff.

In the summer of 1818, the Rev. Mason Locke Weems, an Episcopalian clergyman who will long be remembered for his life of Washington, visited Lancaster for the purpose of selling books. He inserted an advertisement in the Lancaster Journal of Monday, August 31st, 1818, in which he thanked his numerous friends in Lancaster city and county for their patronage of his family Bibles and other books. He offered for sale a bound volume of sermons.

sixty-three in number, from the pen of the distinguished preacher, Rev. Dr. Samuel Davies, president of Princeton college, who died at the early age of 36. Subscriptions were received at the Lancaster Journal office. The price of the book was five dollars. Delivery was to be made at Christmas; and, as was customary with this author, priest and publisher, a liberal portion of the proceeds was to be given to the Sunday-School Society of Lancaster.

The third annual meeting of the Society was held in the Moravian church Saturday, July 24th, 1819, at 3 P. M. The children were examined at this meeting, and an address on the importance of Sunday schools was delivered by Samuel Bacon.

A change in the method of instruction was made in September, 1819. Three Sunday schools were established under the superintendence of four directresses; Mrs. Slaymaker, Mrs. Dickson, Mrs. Franklin and Mrs. Clarkson. A school, composed of 125 girls and taught by ladies, was started in the Moravian church. Another, consisting of 130 boys, was taught by young gentlemen. It assembled every Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock in the Friends' meeting house. There was also a school established for colored people, which met in the Friends' meeting house. There were about 120 pupils, taught by Mr. A. Thomas, assisted by four or five ladies and gentlemen.

At the quarterly meeting of the Sunday-School Society, held in the Moravian church on Monday, October 25th, 1819, a new constitution was presented for adoption. This became necessary, as the weekly school had been discontinued.

The fourth annual meeting of the Society was held in the Presbyterian church on Monday, July 24th, 1820. The annual subscription of fifty cents was payable on that date.

In December, 1820, the Rev. William Augustus Muhlenberg entered upon his duties as associate rector of Saint James's Protestant Episcopal church. Children of his parish attended the school conducted by the Society and were instructed in the doctrines of their faith. However, the school did not fulfill all that Mr. Muhlenberg expected of it; therefore, on Sunday, May 27th, 1821, he established a Sunday school in Saint James's parish. This was the first church to separate from the association, and the movement proved to be a severe blow to the Sunday-School Society.¹

¹ The "First Annual Report of the Female Sunday School Society of St. James's Church, Lancaster," was read at the annual meeting, May 27th, 1822, and published by John Reynolds, printer, West King street, Lancaster. On page 7 of the report appears the following: "As this school was the *first* that projected a separation from what was formerly known under the name of the Union School [The Sunday-School Society of Lancaster], it is right to accord the reasons for that measure." Copies of this printed report are in the Collections of the Lancaster County Historical Society and in the Church Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Other churches in the city followed the precedent established by Mr. Muhlenberg, and soon schools were conducted in several congregations.

An editorial appeared in the *Intelligencer & Weekly Advertiser* of Saturday, March 17th, 1821, informing the public that a subscription paper for the purpose of building a house for the Sunday-School Society of Lancaster, had been left in the *Intelligencer* book store. All who felt an interest in the welfare of the rising generation were invited to call and subscribe.

The fifth, and probably the last, annual meeting of the Sunday-School Society was held in the Friends' meeting house on Tuesday, July 24th, 1821. It was unanimously agreed to continue the school if sufficient funds could be raised to support it. As the attendance at the meeting was small, the directresses decided to present to their friends and the public a statement showing the receipts and disbursements during the five years which had elapsed since the establishment of the school. This report appeared in the *Intelligencer & Weekly Advertiser* of Saturday, August 25th, 1821, under the heading of "Female Sunday-School Society of Lancaster". It is as follows:

"There being now four other Sunday schools opened in this place,² attached to different denominations, some are of the opinion that this, which belongs to no particular sect, should be dropped; but the Society thinks that the circumstance of *its belonging to no particular sect*, is a very strong argument in favor of continuing the school; particularly as there are several denominations which have not yet established Sunday schools; and there are also many children whose parents belong to no place of worship, and it is believed they would prefer sending them to a school which is not connected with any particular congregation.

"The conducters of this school have ever been solicitous to instil into the minds of the scholars the purest doctrines of the Christian religion, and to impress upon them the several duties which they owe to their parents, their neighbor and their God. Whatever catechism the parents of the children prefer, is put into their hands. No controversial or sectarian points are ever discussed, and they trust it will continue to be conducted upon the same principles.

"During the first three years, — from July, 1816, to July,

² The statement is made in this report that there were *four* other schools conducted by different denominations in Lancaster on July 24th, 1821. According to the information given in the "First Annual Report of the Female Sunday-School Society of St. James's Church, Lancaster", that school was opened on May 27th, 1821, and was the *first* to separate from the Union School. While, of course, it is possible for these two statements to be correct, yet it does seem singular that three other schools, by as many denominations, should have been started within two months after the first was organized.

1819, — the expenses of the Sunday school were much enhanced by the addition of a daily school attached to it, which, the first year, consisted of 35 scholars. The second year, it was necessary to reduce the number, in consequence of some of the subscribers withdrawing their names. This was also the case in the third year; the money collected not being sufficient to pay for the tuition of so many. At the commencement of the fourth year, it was thought best to discontinue the daily school, and reduce the yearly subscription (which had been four dollars for married and two dollars for single ladies) to fifty cents, and throw it open to both male and female subscribers. During the last two years, — from July, 1819, to July, 1821, — the school was large, consisting at one time of upwards of six hundred scholars; of course, the expenses were considerable. It now consists of about one-fifth of that number.

“STATEMENT

“All the monies received by the Society, during the first three years, — from July, 1816, to July, 1819, — by subscriptions and donations, amounted to:	\$760.40
“The expenses incurred during the same period:	760.55
	<hr/>
“Leaving the Society in debt:	\$.15
“Monies collected the fourth year, — from July, 1819, to July, 1820, — amounted to:	\$168.16
“Expenditures:	143.01
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“Balance in hands of the treasurer:	\$ 25.15
“Monies collected from July, 1820, to July, 1821, amounted to:	52.00
	<hr/>
	\$ 77.15
“Expenses for the same year:	61.16
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“Now remaining in treasurer’s hands:	\$ 15.99

“The directresses take this opportunity of returning thanks to those gentlemen and ladies who subscribed to the erection of a building to be called the ‘Sunday-School House’; and inform them that the Society has relinquished the intention of building, as the school is so much smaller that it is sufficiently accommodated in its present situation.”

In all probability, the last meeting of the Female Sunday-School Society, which had so bravely, and at first so successfully, struggled to elevate the spiritual, moral and social condition of the

children of Lancaster, was held on Wednesday, May 22nd, 1822, in the Friends' meeting house. This was not an annual meeting. No notices of subsequent meetings appear in the local papers. It is, therefore, naturally assumed that the Society passed out of existence about this time, and that the good work which it had so nobly instituted was continued by schools organized by the several religious denominations of the city.

All honor to this noble company of self-sacrificing and devoted women, who for love of God and humanity thus rendered such signal service in their efforts, through five fruitful years, to train little children "in the fear and admonition of the Lord," and who by so doing set in motion influences which will be as far-reaching as eternity, and which so materially contributed to make for many of our young people of an earlier day,

— "life, death and that vast forever,
One grand, sweet song."

OTHER SCHOOLS

Shortly after the Sunday-school movement was launched in Lancaster borough similar institutions were started in various places in the county. The Lancaster Journal of Friday, November 5th, 1819, contains an obituary of a Mrs. Merkle in which it is stated that she was an active and useful teacher in the African Sunday school in Columbia.

On Tuesday, May 31st, 1820, a number of inhabitants of Earl township gathered at Cedar Grove Presbyterian meeting house for the purpose of forming a Sabbath-school association. Hugh Thompson was chosen chairman, and John Davies secretary. A committee of five, consisting of Hugh Thompson, John Davies, William L. Smith, Davies Wallace and James Galt, Jr., was appointed to draft a constitution.

At a meeting held on Wednesday, June 14th, the constitution was presented to the members and adopted unanimously. It was as follows:

ARTICLE 1.

This Society shall be formed into an association, and be known by the name of the Grove Sabbath-School Society.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 1. The business of the Society shall be conducted by a board of managers, consisting of 12, who shall be elected this 14th day of June; and annually on the first Wednesday after the first of June, if a quorum appears; if not, on the next special meeting when a quorum appears.

Section 2. The members of the board may consist of the officers or members of the society.

Section 3. The managers shall have power to appoint teachers to the different classes, to make by-laws for their government, and adopt systems for the regulations of schools under their charge.

ARTICLE 3.

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall consist of a president and three vice-presidents, who shall be elected by the Society; and one corresponding secretary, one recording secretary, and one treasurer, who shall be elected by the board.

Section 2. The president and vice-presidents shall be elected at the annual meeting of the society, if a quorum appears; if not, at the next special meeting of the Society, and shall continue in office until the next election.

Section 3. Secretaries and treasurer shall hold their offices at the pleasure of the board.

ARTICLE 4.

Section 1. The president shall have power to call a special meeting of the Society, at any time, at the request of the board; and a special meeting of the board, at the request of three members.

Section 2. The president shall preside at the meeting of the board; shall have the casting vote in case of a tie; shall enforce the by-laws and preserve order.

ARTICLE 5.

Section 1. The vice-presidents shall superintend the schools, and shall fulfill all the duties of the superintendents hereafter prescribed in the by-laws; they shall also have power to act in capacity of a president on all occasions of his absence.

ARTICLE 6.

Section 1. The annual meeting of the Society shall be held on the first Wednesday, after the first of June, in every year.

Section 2. Twelve members of the Society shall constitute a quorum.

OFFICERS

The officers of the Grove Sabbath school were as follows:

President, James Galt, Sr.; vice-presidents, Hugh Thompson, Margaret Smith and Elizabeth Kibler; corresponding secretary, William L. Smith; recording secretary, John Davies; treasurer, Davies Wallace. The managers were as follows: James Galt, Jr., Hugh Thompson, Davies Wallace, William L. Smith, William Galt, Alexander Price, Margaret Smith, Catharine Sheafer, Nancy Thompson, Harriet Wallace, Elizabeth Kibler and Mary Ann Kibler.

A Sunday school was started in Christ Episcopal church, Lea

cock, soon after that church was organized. In the Lancaster Journal of Friday, September 29th, 1820, appears a communication addressed to teachers of this school. There was also a school in Churchtown prior to February, 1821; and one in New Holland before February, 1822.

The Sunday and Adult School Union of Philadelphia united with the New York Sunday-School Union Society on May 25th, 1824, under the title of the American Sunday-School Union. Sunday schools in Lancaster city and county, connected with the Sunday and Adult School Union, which assented to its change of name to the American Sunday-School Union, were as follows:

<i>Name of School</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Officers and Teachers</i>	<i>Number of Scholars</i>
Presbyterian S. S. S., Lancaster county,	1	20	215
Female, St. James's church, Lancaster county,	1	15	100
Male, St. James's church, Lancaster county	1	15	100
Lancaster, Lancaster county,	1	6	30
Evangelical Lutheran, Lancaster county,	1	68	480
Marietta, Lancaster county,	3	25	213
Caernarvon, Churchtown, Lancaster county,	1	15	81
Methodist, Beam's meeting house, Lancaster county,	1	10	93
New Holland, Lancaster county,,	1	12	90
Methodist, Lancaster county,	1	12	55
Columbia, " "	2	16	139
Cedar Grove, " "	2	10	80
Strasburg, Female, Lancaster county, ...	1	14	107
Christ church, Leacock, Lancaster county,	1	26	74
Pequea, Lancaster county,	1	22	110
Compass, " "	1	21	80
Soudersburg, Lancaster county,	1	19	75

Dr. William Augustus Muhlenberg composed two hymns which were sung at the anniversary of the American Sunday-School Union in 1831.¹

OPPOSITION TO SCHOOLS

Mr. Harry Pringle Ford, in an article appearing in The Continent of September 24th, 1925, writes as follows:

"It is a fact that Sunday schools were once opposed in Philadelphia as being dangerous innovations. It was regarded as a

¹ Rice, p. 464.

desecration of the Sabbath to teach the ignorant even to read though by so doing the Bible would be open to them.

“Robert Raikes, in Gloucester, England, had instituted this important work as early as 1780, but the movement was of comparatively slow development in this country until after the close of the War of 1812, because the churches here regarded it as an unwise enterprise and were suspicious of it, partly because of its English origin. Ministers declared that it was a wicked use of holy time to hold such schools on the Sabbath. Other ministers believed that it was an invasion of their peculiar rights.

“The churches regarded the schools not as connected with themselves but as a philanthropic effort to improve the moral condition of the ignorant and neglected classes outside of the church; and there were many who believed that the movement seriously imperiled the usefulness of the church. It was claimed to be ‘a profanation of the Sabbath thus through the medium of the Scriptures to dispel the mists of darkness and open the flood-gates of divine light on regions of moral darkness’.

“Some thought the movement too sectarian; others, that it was too latitudinarian; and, still others, that it was inimical to denominational progress. The higher social circles feared that the movement would prove disadvantageous to them by preventing them from securing servants; and the lower classes opposed the schools as they felt they would greatly interfere with their Sunday amusements, games and tipplings; while the inn keepers were convinced that the business of their ale houses and taverns would be seriously impaired.

“Even as late as 1827, when the American Sunday-School Union sought to be incorporated, the movement was opposed by many prominent people on the ground that the institution was dangerous; that it threatened the liberties of the people; that it concealed its real purpose; and that underneath an ostensible aim to promote education, there lurked a plot ‘to subject the consciences and persons of the free citizens of these United States to the tyranny of an ecclesiastical domination.’ The charter was finally granted in 1845.

“There are but few evangelical churches in the country to-day which do not have schools connected with them and regard them as their most important field of Christian activity.”

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