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FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

*The Address, delivered in St. Philip's Church, on Whitsun-Tuesday 1833, at the annual celebration of the Protestant Episcopal Sunday Schools, in Charleston.*

The peculiar merit of the design of Robert Raikes, the benevolent founder of Sunday Schools, did not consist in the religious teaching of *children*, for they were regarded as proper subjects for it from the beginning, or at least as soon as that command was given to the patriarch "father of the faithful:" "Thou shalt command thy household and thy children after thee, and they shall keep the way of the Lord;" the precept was repeated to Moses, "these words shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children," and it was confirmed by our blessed Lord, "suffer the *little children* to come unto me, and forbid them not."

The teaching religion to children *on Sunday* was no new idea, for it is the injunction of our Church which has been very generally obeyed, that "the minister of every parish shall diligently upon *Sundays* openly in the Church, instruct or examine so many children of his parish, sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some part of this Catechism." Neither was the religious education of the *poor* and *neglected* a solicitude peculiar to Robert Raikes, for not to remark, that this was an obvious duty implied in all missionary undertakings since the Gospel is sent to the poor in childhood as well as to those in manhood, we know of at least one Sunday charity school in which were both poor white and negro scholars, at New-York as early as 1720, that is, 60 years before Raikes appeared, and doubtless there were many others.

The committing this good work not to the clergy exclusively, but calling to their aid pious lay-persons, was a custom as ancient as the days of the apostles, for we read not merely of Lois and Eunice instructing their own child Timothy in the Holy Scriptures, but of certain persons called "Helpers," (such were Priscilla, Aquila, and Urbane,\*) who are reasonably presumed to have been catechists, since we know such were in the primitive Church, whose duty it was to impart religious knowledge to the young, and to adults who were candidates for the sacrament of Baptism. The

\* Romans xvi. 3-9.

pectfully *demur*. In our Church, the General Convention is the chief authority, and therefore a resignation to a Diocesan Convention is not valid, *until* it has been ratified by the body above named.

*Signs of the Times.*—The Hair Dressers at Portsmouth, New-Hampshire, have agreed not to open their shops on the Lord's day. They will be closed at 10 o'clock on Saturday evening. The penalty of violating this agreement is \$20.

The County Court (Rutland, Vermont) have decided that no action could be maintained on a contract made on Sunday, it being contrary to the obvious meaning of the statute relating to that day, as well as a violation of moral law.

*Sunday Schools.*—For these just and seasonable remarks, we are indebted to the "Pennsylvania Diocesan Sunday School Society." "The proper and legitimate principle of a *Sunday School* is, that it is a means and instrument of imparting religious instruction to the children committed to its care. It follows from this, that it ought to be under the control and direction of the pastor of the congregation, who is responsible for the religious instruction of all, both old and young, of his charge; and cannot, without infidelity to his trust, devolve *absolutely* upon any other, the spiritual oversight and training of any portion of his flock—and has no more right to transfer to others the responsibility and duty of training up the children of his charge in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, than to delegate to others the office of instructing in the faith his congregation at large.

"Whatever form, therefore, is given to the school, and whatever agencies may be employed in it, it ought to receive its character from, and be controlled in its operations by its pastor,—who is to consider the teachers as his *auxiliaries* in this department of his duty; who of course are to be delegated by him to their respective work, and are to be exclusively responsible to him for its faithful discharge.

"It follows necessarily from the above, that the whole religious instruction of the school is to be subservient to the edification of its pupils in religious truth and duty, according to what the pastor conscientiously believes to be required by the commandment of the Lord and by the prescription of the Church.

"And as to her ministers, how can they evade the obligation of such a course, when they have solemnly promised before God, by their own agency, and of course, by the various instrumentalities placed in their hands, to 'give faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same, according to the commandments of God, so that they may teach the people committed to their care and charge, with all diligence to keep and obey the same?'"

*Ministers Wanted.*—The Executive Committee of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society have advertised for twenty, to go