

and to show their practical influence upon the life. In his own character, of beautiful simplicity and consistency, his contemporaries saw a refutation of the vile calumnies with which a flippant scepticism had assailed vital religion; and, since his death, his *Practical View of Religion*, already translated into most of the languages of Europe, and having passed through more than fifty editions in the English language, still renders experimental religion respectable among the higher classes of society, and doubtless proves the means of salvation to many.

But no less important was it that the lower classes of society, in professedly Christian countries, should be enlightened and brought under the influence of the gospel. Hence God, by a very simple instrumentality, started a system which has already done much, and is destined to do much more, for the rising generation in all lands, especially for the poor and destitute. I refer to Sabbath schools, and to their humble founder, Robert Raikes. The thought that led him to collect the poor and the vicious for instruction on the Sabbath seemed probably to him an accidental circumstance; nor could he have dreamed that that thought would prove a germ from which would spring and spread a tree whose fruit should be for the healing of all nations. But in God's plan the whole system lay spread out in far wider ramifications than have yet been developed to mortal vision. And yet how appropriate the instrumentality by which it was commenced!

In order that civilization should make much progress, it was necessary that all branches of learning should be developed. And the bright names that shine, as stars of the first magnitude, along the path of literature and science, show how admirably fitted, by nature and by discipline, were the distinguished founders of the different branches of knowledge,