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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for January 27th, 2023

## Electric Scotland News

MyHeritage during the last two months of 2022, added an astonishing 67 record collections containing a total of 65 million collections from all over the world! You can read more details on their blog at:

<https://blog.myheritage.com/2023/01/myheritage-publishes-65-million-records-in-november-and-december-2022/>

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COVID misinformation may have caused thousands of deaths in Canada.

The estimates are conservative because they don't capture all the 'flow-on consequences' of misinformation, such as postponed surgeries, the authors say.

Beliefs that COVID-19 is exaggerated or an outright hoax, that vaccines can alter a person's DNA or cause other "covered-up problems" cost Canada an estimated 2,800 lives and thousands of hospitalizations over nine months of the pandemic, according to a new report.

Makes you wonder certainly and you can read the report at:

<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/covid-misinformation-thousands-of-deaths-report>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines it becomes a good resource. I might also add that in a number of newspapers you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish which I do myself from time to time.

Driverless bus takes passengers across Forth Road Bridge in UK first Stagecoach, which is aiming to launch the full service in the spring, announced that the test had been successful.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-64350096>

As egg prices rise, so do seizures at US border

Soaring egg prices in the US have tempted many to cross the border, where they can be bought for half the price, to bring back the delicate cargo.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64337403>

Beano's Bash Street Kids artist David Sutherland dies

The artist behind the Beano's Bash Street Kids has died, aged 89. David Sutherland was described as the single most important illustrator in Beano history by the editor of the children's comic.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-64339747>

Canadian discount store Zellers hopes to lure shoppers with nostalgia

Zellers, a once-popular, low-cost department store in Canada, was forced to shut its doors 10 years ago. It will soon make a comeback, with hopes that shoppers' nostalgia for the brand will revive it. But is sentimentality enough to bring a business back from the dead?

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-63924365>

An Examination of the Truly Dire State of Germany's Military

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced that the country was going to invest substantially in its military. But not much has happened

since then. And now Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht has been replaced. DER SPIEGEL takes a closer look at what is ailing the Bundeswehr.

Read more at:

<https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-bad-news-bundeswehr-an-examination-of-the-truly-dire-state-of-germany-s-military-a-df92eaaf-e3f9-464d-99a3-ef0c27dcc797>

Making Brexit Work. A Book on Covid Provides Answers

A book by a Remainer leads to the conclusion that, rather than focusing too much on scrapping regulations and free trade deals, we should work to grow the economy by being more nimble, agile, and creative. Brexit freedoms will have an important role to play in this, though we are unlikely to succeed without reforming how we are governed.

Read more at:

<https://www.printfriendly.com/p/g/JJ4zEP>

The GIUK gap - The chokepoint in Britain's backyard

Although the GIUK Gap has become a strategic symbol of NATO's efforts to contain the Soviet Union at sea, the Gap has an intertwined history and long-standing influence over British strategic thinking.

Read more at:

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/the-giuk-gap-the-chokepoint-in-britains-backyard/>

MyHeritage

Wrapping Up 2022: Year in Review

Read more at:

<https://blog.myheritage.com/2023/01/wrapping-up-2022-year-in-review>

Test your knowledge of Robert Burns with our quiz

With Burns Night just around the corner, get into the spirit of things and see how much you can remember about the bard.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/test-your-knowledge-robert-burns-28949387>

Brooke Henderson, the winningest golfer in Canadian history, has only won \$10.8M in career

With 13 professional wins, the underrated Canadian golfer has now reached No. 1 on the LPGA Tour standings

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/sports/golf/brooke-henderson-wins-around-1m-a-year>

Time to break the conspiracy of silence around boys' under-achievement in school

35,000 fewer 18-year-old UK boys started university in September last year than girls of the same age.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/time-to-break-the-conspiracy-of-silence-around-boys-under-achievement-in-school>

Crokinole

The mysterious origins and enduring popularity of Canada's favourite parlour game.

Read more at:

<https://www.canadashistory.ca/explore/arts-culture-society/crokinole>

Barnbogle Castle document discovery sheds new light on Robert Burns

Documents discovered at a 13th Century castle near Edinburgh have provided a fascinating picture of Robert Burns' life on a farm in southern Scotland.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-64371857>

The limits of democracy are being tested

WE CAN ALL AGREE that even in a democracy, with an unwritten constitution, certain actions are beyond what would be reasonable for any Government to do.

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2023/01/the-limits-of-democracy-are-being-tested/>

Unlocking Hamilton's masterpiece

Finding a new use for the Old Royal High School building on Calton Hill has been a major public controversy since the school vacated it

in 1968.

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/CharlieEllis644a.html>

ScARF 10 Year Anniversary

In November 2022, ScARF celebrated their 10th Anniversary with a hybrid conference event, which explored the Past, Present and Future of the Scottish Archaeological Research Framework through talks and panel discussions.

You can view this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLomxmmDt-nnKK8GoFizP4WTkANKlyfDm2>

Putin's imperial ambitions must be crushed

Quebec journalist Paule Robitaille undertakes a journey through the former Soviet Union, where she lived from 1990 to 1996.

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/paule-robitaille-putins-imperial-ambitions-must-be-crushed>

## Electric Canadian

Practical suggestions as to instruction in Farming in the United States and Canada

A Self-supporting Occupation and Opening in Life for Gentlemen's Sons and a prudent way of starting for any who desire to engage in agriculture in America (1882) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/farmingusaandcanada.pdf>

City of London, Ontario, Canada

The Pioneer Period and The London of To-day (1897) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/cityoflondononta00brem.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 22nd day of January 2023 - Not Doing

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can view this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26298-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-22nd-day-of-january-2023-not-doing>

Programs of The London and Middlesex Historical Society

Transactions 1902-1907, Pioneers of Middlesex by Sir John Carling, Founding of London by Cl. T. Campbell, M.D., (1908) (pdf)

You can read this at:

[http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/Historic\\_Sketches\\_of\\_London\\_and\\_Middlese.pdf](http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/Historic_Sketches_of_London_and_Middlese.pdf)

## Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks

January 25th, 2023 - A Child's War living on Orkney 5 of 5

You can view this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Scottish Celtic Music with Beautiful Scenic Relaxation Views of Scotland

Enjoy an hour of original Scottish Celtic music sure to stir your innermost being.

You can view this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/music/index.htm>

Pavement and Highway

Specimen Days in Strathclyde by William Power (1911) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/glasgow/pavementhighways00powe.pdf>

The Life of the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, G.C.B.  
In two volumes by J. A. Spender (1923)

You can read these volumes at:

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/atoc/bannerman2.htm>

Life of James Hamilton D.D., F.L.S.

By William Arnot (fourth edition) (1870) (pdf). Scottish minister and a prolific author of religious tracts. We've also included links to the 6 volumes of his works that are on the Internet Archive.

You can read all this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bible/james-hamilton.htm>

Artists of the Nineteenth century and their works

Containing two thousand and fifty biographical sketches by Clara (Erskine) Clement and Laurence Hutton in two volumes (1879)

You can study this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/art/artists19.htm>

Making Brexit Work. A Book on Covid Provides Answers

A book by a Remainer leads to the conclusion that, rather than focusing too much on scrapping regulations and free trade deals, we should work to grow the economy by being more nimble, agile, and creative. Brexit freedoms will have an important role to play in this, though we are unlikely to succeed without reforming how we are governed. 17th Jan 2023 (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/independence/sip/Making%20Brexit%20Work.%20A%20Book%20on%20Covid%20Provides%20Answers.pdf>

Clan Leslie Society International

Got in their January 2023 newsletter which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslieint/index.htm>

The Entire History of Orkney

A very good YouTube video which I added to the foot of our Orkney page at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/orkney/index.htm>

The Piper In Peace And War

By C. A. Malcolm, M.A., Ph.D. Published all of Part 2 & 3 which now completes this book and you can read it at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/peaceandwarndx4.htm>

MacAulay

Got in a clarification on the MacAulay name which I've added to the foot of our page for that name in the Scottish Nation.

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/nation/macaulay2.htm>

## Story

### THE EDINBURGH ORIGINAL RAGGED SCHOOL HOW IT WAS GOT UP, AND WHAT IT HAS DONE.

Edinburgh, with the exception, perhaps, of some parts of Paris, is more full than any other town of interesting relics. Modern improvements easily clear away the brick walls that accommodate single families; but massive piles of stone are not so easily removed. Rising six, ten, even twelve and fifteen storeys high, yielding large rents, and swarming with tenants, they long defy old time and modern taste. Built to last, if let alone, till the knell of doom, these old houses of Edinburgh have, with few exceptions, yielded to no element but fire—and a mighty blaze they make! Such accidents, however, being of rare occurrence, that long, lofty, rock-looking ridge, which heaves its back up from the Castle down to Holyrood, has much the same aspect that it had three hundred years ago. Since then the actors are gone, but the stage remains, so little changed, that were he to rise from the dead—though Bishop Latimer would lose himself in modern London—John Knox would feel much at home to-day in the High Street of Edinburgh. Recognising, as he went along, many lofty tenements and quaint old gables with fleur-de-lis and thistle, when he came near the Nether Bow, he would find his old house not very

much altered since the day he closed his good fight within its walls, and was carried, the city attending his funeral, to his grave beneath the shadow of St. Giles's crown.

Like Dumbarton, Stirling, Brechin, formerly all places of strength, the capital of Scotland owed its existence to its Castle rock; that formed its nucleus. In troublous times people naturally sought shelter under the wings of such a fortalice; and when invading foes swept the open country, and laid happy homesteads waste with fire and sword, the security it afforded, the asylum found within its walls, illustrate such expressions of Scripture as this, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." The High Street having begun at the Castle, and extending from it as the stem of a tree from its root, in that part which lies nearest the rock, as we might expect, its oldest and most interesting relics are found. There many visitors resort; and in autumn, when the New Town is all but deserted by its inhabitants, and the flocks on the rocky slopes of Arthur's Seat or the neighbouring Pentlands might do worse than try a day's pasture on the grass of our fashionable squares, many are the groups of bearded foreigners, and lean Americans, and rotund Englishmen that are to be seen, with guide-book in hand, diving into the dark closes; or spelling the black letter, or Greek, or Latin inscription above some low-browed door; or gazing up at the lofty tenements where a foul, half-naked creature, with savage look, has thrust its unkempt head through a window from which, once on a day, fair maids of honour, lounging on velvet cushions, watched their gallants ride down the street to drive the English back across the border, or attend Court at Holyrood. Here, with scallop shell on their cloaks, lived knights who had fought for the Holy Sepulchre; here, Mary of Guise, bringing the blood of persecution into the Stuart race, had her palace and held her gay Court; here, rudely carved coronets mark the town houses of our oldest nobility; here, "Laus Deo" on one house, "Sedes manet optima coelo" on another, on another, "Praised be the Lord my God, my Strength and my Redeemer," speak of the Reformation and the piety of its times; while here, close under the Castle guns, on this broad esplanade, where loungers gather now to see raw recruits at the goose step, Edinburgh's old burghers met to see treason punished—Lord Forbes lose his head, Lady Glamis burned alive, and traitors of meaner degree, with men and women accused of witchcraft, perish at the fiery stake. In a neighbourhood so full of interesting associations, stands a modern building that disputes the public attention with the relics of the olden time. It is the Original Ragged School; and with an open Bible (the arms of our faith) carved above its door, and nearly 300 children within its walls whom Christian charity has rescued from ruin, it forms the most interesting object there to many. Leaving antiquarians to their dusty and dry researches, many have entered our school, saying, with Moses, "I will turn aside, and see this great sight and after visiting Palace, Castle, and the crowd of interesting objects of "mine own romantic town," they have left our Institution, pronouncing it the best sight in Edinburgh. I proceed to relate its history, its rise, its progress, and its success; in all which, the hand of Providence has so often appeared, that we may surely say of it, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

Holland is the only country that appears at the period of the Reformation to have anticipated an increase of population,—and provided for it. There the State enacted that whenever a parish added two thousand to its inhabitants, it should have an additional minister. But in Scotland there never was any such provision; such wise adaptation of Church and schools to the growth of the nation, as men might have been taught by God's works in nature, where the integument that covers our bodies stretches with their expansion, and trees shed their bark, and the serpent wriggles out of its old skin, and the crab throws off, like an ill-fitting coat, its last year's shell for one suited to a twelvemonth's growth. For instance, St. Cuthbert's or the West Church, once a country parish, lying on the skirts of Edinburgh, came to have the town extended into its fields till its population rose to 60,000 souls,—but never another church rose there. It was left with its one parish church, as if the petticoats of a child were fit clothing for a man. In this way, and in the course of time, chiefly, indeed, in the last century—for Scotland never fairly started in the race of progress till the last hope of the Jacobites was quenched in blood on Drumrossie Moor—the population of our towns shot far ahead of the means of education and of religious instruction. There were no "children of Issachar which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do."

Another cause which largely contributed to the ignorance and irreligion that now pervade the low-test strata of our cities, is found in the blight under which so many of the churches withered, and some of them all but died, in the last half of the eighteenth century. How low the state of morals and religion, even among the ministers of the gospel, revealed in the autobiography of Dr. Carlyle of Musselburgh. Think of that poor old man, on the verge of his grave, boasting how he had stemmed the tide of fanaticism, and crushed the bigotry which took offence at ministers being play-goers! It appears from his Memoirs that the leading clergy of Edinburgh were in the habit of spending their evenings at taverns, in the society of leading infidels; there men that professed to preach Christ, cracked their jokes and drank their claret with men who openly denied the Saviour, and gloried in their infidelity. "I," said the Psalmist, "am a companion to all them that fear thee but in David Hume and Adam Smith the leading clergy had their bosom friends. So low, indeed, had the standard, not of religion, but of clerical decorum sunk, that the business of the General Assembly was arranged so as to allow the ministers during its sittings to spend their evenings in the theatre. So says Dr. Carlyle. He was behind the scenes, and knew all about it. And thus, in a court, constituted in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, opened with prayer, dealing with the most solemn matters, these divines hurried through their business to be in time for the Play, for the Farce at least; seeking compensation for the dreary dulness of the forenoon's work in hearty laughter over *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. This was very shocking; nor are we less shocked to read how one, who professed high orthodoxy, dared to boast of the number of bottles of claret he could carry under his belt. How could this have ended but in the utter ruin of religion, in the loss of all that our godly fathers had suffered, fought, and died to attain, unless, in answer to the prayers of a few who sighed and cried over the abominations of the land, God had returned to visit the vine his own right hand had planted, and that the boar out of the field had wasted.

This race of clergy is now extinct, like those monstrous animals which belonged to a former epoch, — and from whose ravages the world is happily delivered. But they have left more than their foot-prints behind them. The mischief they did remains. To meet the wants of a growing population, the State did nothing for education; the Church did less than nothing for religion; and we have to reap the consequence of this neglect and apathy. They stand up there in thousands and tens of thousands, in our large towns who fear neither God, nor man; who go neither to church, nor chapel; who respect neither Sabbath, nor saint's day; who neither can educate their

children, nor care to educate them; who live in the most abject poverty, and indulge in the most shocking vices; whose foul houses, hungry faces, and filthy rags are dreadful to look on in God's creatures; and who die as insensible to the future as the beasts that have no future, and dying, perish.

This is a fair description of the great mass of the people among whom I was called to labour, as one of the ministers of the Old Greyfriars' parish. It embraced a considerable portion of the Cowgate, with adjoining wynds, courts, and closes; and it was only a man in some measure imbued with the spirit of Dr. Chalmers, who could have understood him, as one day when we were looking over George Fourth's Bridge, down on smoking chimneys and old houses, and foul closes, patched windows stuffed with rags, and wretched objects creeping along the dirty street, he turned to me, and his eye kindling with enthusiasm, exclaimed, "A beautiful field, sir; a very beautiful field." It was there, or in some such locality, that, many long years ago, I got my first glimpse of the rude, ignorant, and savage state of the children that always swarm thickest where the people are poorest. A student at College, I accompanied a friend to a Sabbath school, which to accommodate an acquaintance he had undertaken to teach for that night. The room was large and dingy, dimly lighted with candles—there being no gas in those days. The door opened on such a set of ragamuffins as I had never seen before; whooping, whistling, yelling, singing. By entreaties, and dint of perseverance, some order was at length established, and a psalm given out to sing. No Orpheus to charm these unruly spirits, my friend who could not sing, would sing; and his cracked voice and nasal twang was the signal for such an uproar! Poor fellow! he was very good and patient; he held on his way till he got to the end of the singing, and calling them to join in prayer, unfortunately closed his eyes. For a moment his reverent attitude, and the voice of prayer, seemed, like the voice of Jesus on the stormy waters, to produce a great calm. But by and by I heard a curious noise, and shall not forget the sight which met my eyes on suddenly opening them; there — and behind them a crowd of grinning faces, red with efforts to suppress their laughter — stood two ragged urchins, each holding a flaming candle under my friend's nose, and I could not help thinking that there was a wicked cleverness in this; for it so happened that this feature of his face always, and especially on that winter night, looked very cold.

Then I wondered at the wickedness and rudeness of these boys, but I had not been three weeks ministering in the College Wynd and Cowgate, when I saw what accounted for it; and wonder was changed to pity. Of the first 150 I visited in the Old Greyfriars' parish, going from door to door, certainly not more than five attended any place of worship. I wandered in those houses for whole days without ever seeing a Bible, or indeed any book at all. I often stood in rooms bare of any furniture; where father, mother, and half a dozen children had neither bed nor bedding, unless a heap of straw and dirty rags huddled in a corner could be called so. I have heard the wail of children crying for bread, and their mother had none to give them. I have seen the babe pulling breasts as dry as if the starved-looking mother had been dead. I have known a father turn his step-daughter to the street at night—bidding the sobbing girl who bloomed into womanhood, earn her bread there as others were doing. I have bent over the foul pallet of a dying lad to hear him whisper how his father and mother — who were sitting half drunk by the fireside — had pulled the blankets off his body to sell them for drink. I have seen children blanched like plants growing in a cellar — for weeks they never breathed a mouthful of fresh air for want of rags to cover their nakedness; and I used often to observe in these dingy dwellings, where the air is poison, and the food is scanty, and the cold is bitter, and short is the gleam of sunshine, and they live in continual terror of a drunken father or mother, and where when they cry they are not kissed but beaten, that the children have an air of sadness, and look as if they never smiled. I don't recollect of ever seeing a mother in these wretched dwellings dangling her infant, or of hearing the little creature crow or laugh as he leapt with joy. There, infants have no toys; and mothers' smiles are rare as sunshine. Nobody can know the misery I suffered amid those scenes of human wretchedness, woe, want, and sin. How often did I sigh for my old country parish, with the larks in blue skies singing over my head, bean fields and golden gorse scenting the air with sweetest odours, primroses and blue-bells springing at my feet, ruddy children hunting butterflies over clover-fields, the strong and swarthy ploughman dandling his babe at the cottage door, the cattle-boy whistling as he drove the herd home, and the loved, glorious sea, emblem of God's mercy and a Saviour's righteousness, gleaming in sunshine from the golden sands, where it broke in measured dash, out beyond the Bell-Rock Tower, that stood up erect amid the surging waters like a Christian amid his trials.

But the misery into which I had plunged was not, thank God! suffered in vain. They say, a prophet is prepared in a fiery furnace; and these years of suffering prepared me to do such service as I have rendered to the Ragged School cause. I became acquainted with the condition of the poorest of the poor; and learned to pity, much more than to blame them. I was taught, by many bitter disappointments, and profitless efforts to change the adults, that, though nothing is impossible with God, the best hope of raising the sunken masses lay in working on the rising generation; and I was brought to the conclusion, that unless the yawning gulph which separates these children from education is bridged over by a loaf of bread—unless, in other words, they are fed as well as educated at school—they must remain begging, or stealing, or starving; to sink, if that is possible, into deeper depths of ignorance and crime.

In 1841, Sheriff Watson had set up a Ragged School in Aberdeen; and not very long afterwards an opportunity, though not of my seeking, occurred of repeating his experiment in Edinburgh. The congregation, of Free St. John's, after building their church, found themselves in possession of a large room in its under-ground storey. We had to consider to what good purpose it could be turned. It was proposed by some to open a Free Church school there. To this I and others objected, on the ground that there was already an adequate number of common schools in the neighbourhood; and that a school below our church could only be filled at the expense of these, and to the injury of their teachers. The neighbourhood swarmed with hundreds of ragged children who—obliged to steal, or beg their food, or starve—neither went, nor could go, to any common school; and with the view of saving a few of these, I proposed that the congregation should set up and maintain a ragged, feeding, industrial school, for some twenty or thirty waifs. The proposal was agreed to; and orders were given for the necessary apparatus of soup-boiler and porridge-pot. But the morning came; and schemes sometimes, as well as spangles, look different in day from what they do in gas, or candle-light. Some of our office-bearers got, and not very unnaturally, alarmed at the responsibilities we were about to incur; and in consequence the attempt was abandoned. But the hope of saving poor creatures from the wreck, was too dear, and had been too nearly realized to be abandoned without a further struggle. Baffled in this direction, another lay open to me. I might leave the limits of St. John's congregation, and of the Free Church, to launch out on the open

sea; I might throw myself on the Christian public, irrespective of sect or party; for were these children saved, it was nothing to me to what church they might attach themselves, or whose arm plucked them from destruction. Having undertaken to come forward with £70 for supporting a Ragged School under our church, and not having £70 nor £7 to spare, I had, with the view of appealing to friends for aid, laid down the keel of my First Plea. Let no man think poverty an unmitigated evil; for if I had been able to spare £70, I had never projected a Plea, nor run the risk of being crushed in the Press. And let no man lose heart, and abandon a good scheme because he meets chopping seas, and cross winds at the outset, since God may be thereby driving him on a better course, and toward greater ends than he ever dreamt of. On my little pet scheme being abandoned, I said, in the bitterness of my heart, "All these things are against me but God, who had planned a much greater and more catholic enterprise, was saying, "My ways are not as your ways; and my thoughts are not as your thoughts."

The Plea was at length prepared and published. It fell on Edinburgh as falls a spark into a powder magazine. The public mind had been prepared for the scheme; and like a great mountain-stone, which rains and melting snows had been silently undermining for years, it only needed a push to set the mass in motion. Leaving him that moved it to wonder at the effect, away it went—taking grand, joyful bounds, and bearing all before it. All men were ready to sing over the birth of this Christian enterprise. They hailed the proposal to establish it on a broad, unsectarian basis. The judges of the land, who had long mourned in secret over the practical injustice of the law, and public prosecutors who had reluctantly placed infants at the bar, and asked for sentence on creatures more fit to be pitied than punished, were among the foremost with offers of support; all sectarian feelings were engulfed in a flowing tide of common love and pity; and money poured in on as in shoals of letters, some bearing the stamp of coronets, and some the stamp of thimbles.

At length our schools were opened with an attendance of two score boys and girls; and as these were broken in, we increased the number. They all received three good meals; they came to school before breakfast, and left it after supper; they went through daily ablutions; they were trained so many hours to work, and led out so many to walk; they were taught to read, write, and cypher; they received religious instruction—reading, and being examined on the Bible.

Our superintendent, Mr. Gibb, soon won their affections, and was him-self a prince of teachers. Our Committee of Management, consisting of Episcopalians and Established Churchmen, United Presbyterians and Free Churchmen, Baptists and Independents, worked together in happy harmony; and for a while we had fulfilled to us the beautiful prayer of an Indian chief, "May your council fire never go out, and may your sky be without a cloud." The cloud came at length, and brought a storm. It happened thus. Nearly half of the wretched outcasts whom we had gathered into the school, and were saving from a life of crime and misery, were the children of nominal Roman Catholics. Some of these had no parents; and those who had, belonged to a class of Papists that had sunk like too many of their nominally Protestant neighbours into practical heathenism. These children, all foul and ragged, were taught to beg and steal, or left to starve; nor until we made an effort to save them, had either prelate or priest done else than leave them to their fate—passing by on the other side. I never, indeed, literally saw a priest pass by on the other side, for, though my almost daily walk, some twenty years ago, was in the Cowgate, I never saw a priest there at all. They might have had other duties to do than to go forth like the good shepherd after their lost sheep. But so it was. The girls were left to grow up prostitutes, and the boys to become thieves. So soon, however, as these poor children were gathered into our school, and taught to read God's blessed Word, Popery rose to rescue them from so great a danger. Father Keenan of Dundee was careless enough to show the cloven foot. He in effect boldly stated that he would prefer to see the children perish in the streets rather than get food and education and God's Word in the Dundee Ragged Schools: "For Heaven's sake," exclaimed this zealot, as if he could be ignorant that these creatures had no faith, and grew up polluted from their earliest years, "let them, spotless and with unshaken faith, perish to the world, rather than live in abundance, purchased at such risk, and perish eternally!" In Edinburgh, the tools of Rome, keeping behind the scenes, acted with more caution, shrewdly guessing that grand speeches from the lips of Popish priests, on behalf of toleration and religious liberty, would sound queer to those who had read of the fires of Smithfield and St. Andrews, of the tortures of the Inquisition, and the bloody massacre of St. Bartholomew.

I have no wish to rake up the ashes of an old controversy; and since most of those with whom we had to fight are in their graves, it would be unseemly to exult over their defeat. Requiescat in pace. We insisted that every child in our school should read and be instructed daily in the Word of God, without asking the priest's leave— whether he would or would not. We held that to be the really sectarian school that excludes the Bible from all or any; even as the Popish is really the sectarian decalogue, since it excludes the Second Commandment—and to make up the ten, splits the tenth into two. The gentleman who headed the opposition was incautious enough to state in his speech, as I heard with my own ears, and an astonished public heard with theirs, and the newspapers reported—although the statement was omitted in his revised speech—that when in Ireland he had been told by Roman Catholics themselves, "that for a consideration they would rather be guilty of shooting a man, than of eating flesh on Friday and the thrill of horror with which this was heard, proved that the citizens of Edinburgh would never consent to have the children they had adopted served with such "serpent" food. We held that in a Ragged School, whatever might be the case in other schools, the object aimed at could not be accomplished without the pure milk of God's Word for these babes, and that the principle—although some good men among our opponents seemed to have lost sight of it in the dust of battle—was the irreconcilable and eternal difference between Protestantism and Popery; the principle that God has addressed His Word to all the human family. We held firmly to this, that its free use & as much man's heaven-bestowed right, as the free use of God's air, and sun. Holding that no party, whether priest or presbyter, has any right to interfere between a parent and child, and holding also, that in having adopted these children whom we clothed, fed, and educated, we were placed to them in loco parentis—in the position of parents—we felt as much bound to instruct them as to instruct our own children in the saving truths of the gospel. We had entered on the solemn responsibility of being their "peepers and there lies the plain difference between the position of the directors of a Ragged School, and that of the patrons or managers of ordinary schools. Well, the dispute between us and those, who, some of them not intending it, fought for Popish intolerance, was referred on their own motion to the decision of an Edinburgh public. The city was stirred to its depths: the Music Hall was filled to overflowing; and after a fair stand-up fight for four hours before the leading men of Edinburgh on



the platform, and a magnificent audience in the area and gallery of the house, the question was put to the vote. I have seen nothing more glorious than the forest of hands that rose up to approve our principles, and few things so ludicrous as the five hands raised on the other side—a feeling which they indeed seemed to share to whom the hands belonged, for, greeted with a peal of laughter, the hands went down like a duck in the water at the shot of a gun. There was great joy that day in Edinburgh; and many who, like Eli, had been trembling for the Ark of God, when they saw us come back, with colours flying, from the field of a most important victory, gave thanks to Him to whom we sung, “Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.”

Believed from the presence of those between whom and us there could be no concord, our course since has been one of unbroken harmony and marvellous success.

The wretched condition of the children to whom our school has opened its arms, is set forth in the following table, taken from one of our early Reports:

Found homeless, and provided with lodgings 72  
 Children with both parents 32  
 With the father dead 140  
 Mother dead 89  
 Deserted by parents 43  
 With one or both parents transported 9  
 Fatherless, with drunken mothers 77  
 Motherless, with drunken fathers 66  
 With both parents worthless 84  
 Who have been beggars 271  
 Who have been in the Police Office 75  
 Who have been in Prison 20  
 Known as children of thieves 76  
 Believed to be so, including the preceding 148

What is this but a modern edition of the prophet’s roll, written within and without, with “lamentation, and mourning, and woe?”

The results of our School are to be found in many happy homes, the abodes of those that, once wretched, ragged outcasts, are now honest men and virtuous mothers, useful citizens and heads of families; and we have good reason to believe that some whom we picked from the dust-heap, plucked from the very gutter, are now shining in heaven, gems in a Saviour’s crown. But so far as the results are very palpable matters of fact, they may be summed up under these three heads:—

I. We—and in these results I include the influence of other, though smaller schools—have cleared the streets of Edinburgh of juvenile beggars,—a feat the Magistrates and Police, with cells and prison at their back, were so far from ever being able to achieve, that, when our School was set on foot, their name was Legion. They swarmed through all the town—it was creeping with them.

II. We are fast emptying the prisons. If, as they say, “seeing is believing,” look at the following tables:—

Our school was opened in the summer of 1847, but could not, of course, tell much on the returns of that year.

In 1847 the centesimal proportion of children under 14 years of age in prison was 5.6  
 1848 3.7  
 1849 2.9  
 1850 1.3  
 1851 0.9  
 1858 1.7  
 1859 1.2

There has been also a remarkable decrease in the commitments of prisoners from 14 to 16 years of age.

The number of prisoners between 14 and 16 years of age was,

1848 .....552  
 1849 .....440  
 1850 .....361  
 1851 .....227  
 1858 .....138  
 1859 .....130

I have it from gentlemen, members of Prison Boards, that the most remarkable feature of our time is the steady and even rapid decrease of crime — a most gratifying circumstance, and one which those most competent to judge attribute chiefly to the influence of Ragged and



Reformatory Schools. A part of our jails will by and by be to let; and already our jailers are suffering from ennui. A gentleman in an official position told me the other day, that a large jail in the west of Scotland having been found too large for the common class of prisoners, a part of it had been appropriated to convicts; and having some of that class to find room for, he went to this jail to see whether they could be accommodated there. He knocked—the grim door opened—and a very dull, sad, and gruesome-looking man appeared. On my acquaintance telling who he was, and what he called for, the countenance of the jailer instantly lighted up, as when one lets on the full stream of gas,—he was so happy at the prospect of getting something to do—of getting idle time off his hands.

III. The Original Ragged School alone has rescued from great misery and certain ruin not less than five hundred children. They are now blessings to society. This number does not include the many who have received at our school a partial education, nor that considerable number whose parents, finding their circumstances improved, have removed them from ours to higher schools. I have heard statistics of Ragged Schools of the couleur-de-rose kind. They were too good to be true; and a cause which needs not the help of exaggeration is only damaged by such displays of imposition or credulity. The statistics I give may be thoroughly trusted. Now, of those five hundred children, who are, take them all in all, playing their part well in life, let us suppose that but one-half had run a career in crime. That is a very low supposition, but take it. Since every criminal costs the country on an average £300, the State, before it was done with punishing them, would have incurred an expense of £75,000. What have we saved the public purse by saving these children? Our school, during its twelve years' existence, has been maintained at an outlay of some £24,000. Sinking, therefore, all considerations of a humane, moral, and religious kind, and looking only to the pounds, shillings, and pence view of the case, we have saved the country a sum equal to the difference between £24,000 and £75,000, which is £51,000. And if we make the much more probable supposition, that but for our school—its useful, kind, and holy training—two-thirds of those five hundred children would have developed into full-blown criminals, we have saved the country not less than £72,000.

It is strange and sad that I should have to charge our Government with a niggardly treatment of schools they should have fostered, patronized, and liberally supported as one of the most holy and blessed remedies for evils that it baffled the whole power of the State to cure. What it could not do with its gallows, its prisons, its police, and penal settlements, we have done. The light of education, the knowledge of the gospel, the kindness of Christian hands, and the love of Christian hearts, have conquered those that defied the boasted terrors of the law. The devil-possessed whom chains could not bind, is there—sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. One would think that those who saved the lost, and helped the neediest, would have shared most largely of the funds the country puts into the hands of the Privy Council for promoting the interests of education. But, strange to say, the rule of the Government seems to be, to give much to educate those that need little help, and little to educate those who need much. A sum of £1,200,000 is voted by Parliament for the purposes of education; and while hundreds of thousands go to educate children whose parents are in circumstances to give them a fair education at their own expense, all the help we receive is half a farthing per day for each child we save from a life of misery and crime. Mockery, and miserable economy ! Surely a Christian country will rise to remonstrate against the State—to use the words of Lord Brougham—abdicating one of its most important duties. Our employment is eminently like His who came to seek and to save the lost; and who put into the mouth of the prodigal's father, words so descriptive of these reclaimed outcasts, "This my son that was dead is alive again, that was lost is found." Governments may turn a deaf ear to our petitions; though, when we have burst the bands of red tape, and breaking through the outer circle of mere officials, have got our case fairly set before them, I hope better things of men in power. Meanwhile let the prayers and liberality of all baptized into the spirit of Jesus support us; this be the picture of their life:—

"I live for those that love me,  
For those that know me true,  
For the heaven that smiles above me,  
And waits my coming too,

"For the cause that lacks assistance,  
For the wrongs that need resistance.  
For the future in the distance,  
For the good that I can do."

THOMAS GUTHRIE

END

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you and I hope you'll be able to attend a Burns Supper somewhere near you.

Alastair