

Chapter XVII

Education

Throughout his life, Hardwicke had an abiding interest and involvement in education, which stemmed for the most part from the teaching and friendship of Thring and Ruskin. The former had stressed the right use of time and the value of work done well to the best possible standard, whatever its nature. Both encouraged their pupils to observe and record accurately what they saw around them, with the object of stimulating an awareness and interest in their surroundings, leading to an appreciation and love of what was good and beautiful in nature, literature, music, art and religion. The whole process culminating in developing the ability to think independently and form value judgements.

Hardwicke was an enthusiastic supporter of teachers and loved to visit schools, not only locally, but throughout the country and even abroad. He took a practical interest in all their activities and helped locally, whenever possible, by involving children in church services and public functions. Sometimes he took groups on visits to the Fitz Museum in Keswick and explained the exhibits to them. If Hardwicke had an interesting visitor staying at the vicarage, he took him or her to talk to the children in their schools. Although he was keen to preserve local traditions, especially the Cumberland dialect, he also aimed at widening Cumbrian horizons.

Several innovations were suggested by Hardwicke and adopted by many schools. One that proved most successful for many years, until the educational reorganization, led to the closure of many country schools and the advent of comprehensives, was the school garden. Some gardens had weather stations and beehives. In addition to the actual growing of plants, many other skills were developed, such as the study of soil, the cycle of nature, keeping weather records, planning and keeping accounts.

Another successful activity was concerned with the study of nature. Encouraged and supported by Hardwicke, the Bird and

Tree competition flourished and engendered much interest. This involved children in choosing a bird and a tree to study for a year. Diaries had to be kept, recording the habits and day to day progress, noting such things as migration, nesting, feeding patterns and habitats of birds, buds, leaves, fruits, bark and growth of trees.

Hardwicke, together with many of his friends, particularly Mr. and Mrs. G.F. Watts, Ruskin and Frances Cobbe, supported the Wild Bird Protection Amendment Act. On the 28 November 1894, he wrote a powerful letter to *The Times* newspaper, describing the destruction caused by the demand for the colourful plumage of such birds as egrets, kingfishers, woodpeckers and jays for the purpose of decorating ladies' hats. He deplored also, the killing and stuffing of birds for display in glass cases, the collection of eggs and the destruction of birds of prey, through the mistaken belief that they were enemies, when in fact they were friends of farmers and gardeners by their destruction of pests. The balance of nature, he pointed out, was being destroyed by such acts. Already, he claimed, that at least a dozen species had been wiped out by such practices.

At Didsbury, Manchester in 1889 the Society for the Protection of Birds had come into being as a protest against this evil trade, which caused the deaths through starvation, of many fledglings, when their parents were killed for their plumage. The Duchess of Portland, supported by many influential people, presided over this Society, from its inception in 1889 until 1954.¹ Although the Society flourished, it took some time to achieve legislation for the Protection of Birds and the destruction seems to have continued, which led to Hardwicke's letter. The work of the Society received a boost when Queen Victoria in 1899, confirmed an order prohibiting the wearing of Osprey plumes (as egret feathers were known) by the military in certain regiments. Royal support was again given in 1906 when Queen Alexandra wrote a letter to the Society, for publication, expressing disapproval at the wearing of

¹e.g. Sir Edward Grey (Lord Grey of Fallodon), Lord Lilford, W.H. Hudson, Professor Newton and Alfred Austin (Poet Laureate)

the plumes of breeding birds. It was 1921, however, before the Importation of Plumage Prohibition Act was passed. Some of the delay was caused by the 1914-1918 War. The trade had lessened during these years. Meanwhile other cruelties which the R.S.P.B. worked hard to eradicate, continued, often through ignorance. Through his work for the Bird and Tree competition and the garden scheme, Hardwicke hoped to overcome this cruel ignorance, by educating children and consequently their parents, to have an understanding and love of nature, whereby animals, birds, plants, trees and the whole countryside would be cherished and treated with respect.¹ In 1904, the Cumberland Nature Club was founded to further this purpose. Its members were mostly teachers in Elementary schools, with Hardwicke as its President.

His interest in education was wide ranging and extended to the need for Technical Education, especially in West Cumberland, with its industries of iron, steel and coal mining. To this end, he worked and supported the building of a Technical College for that area, which it was hoped would improve these industries.

Agriculture was a major activity in Cumberland and when Mr. Henry Howard of Greystoke, Chairman of the County Council, suggested that the widespread activity of butter making in the county needed improvement, especially with regard to health and hygiene requirements, Hardwicke became his enthusiastic supporter. On farms, especially small ones, it was the practice to collect cream from the tops of bowls of milk, sometimes by means of blowing. The cream was churned and shaped into pounds and half pounds, sometimes decorated with elaborate designs by using butter pats. The butter was then taken to markets, sometimes wrapped in large leaves or ferns collected from the hedgerows in butter baskets. This was a difficult operation in hot weather, as there was no refrigeration available.

¹From A short history of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds from 1889-1961, based on an article by Dorothy Rook, Society Librarian, first published in the magazine *Birds*, July 1966.

As a result of Hardwicke's enthusiasm, a travelling van containing an exhibit on the best way to make butter, toured the county. He publicized the van's progress in the press. Then he wrote rhymes and organized classes on butter making, often attending them himself. Further interest was aroused by the addition of competitive classes for butter at Keswick Agricultural Show.

All this activity eventually led to the establishment of the Newton Rigg County Farm School near Penrith, now known as Newton Rigg College. It did valuable work in improving agricultural, farming and gardening standards for families engaged in this work. Hardwicke gave the Farm School his full support.

The Education Act of 1902 abolished the local school boards, transferring their functions to County Councils, known as Local Education Authorities responsible for all forms of education. The new Education Authority for Cumberland, quickly appointed Hardwicke as Chairman of the Committee which was responsible for secondary schools and higher education, which were practically non-existent at that time. Six new secondary schools were built, while the few in existence were improved and enlarged. Hardwicke, naturally, was keenly interested in the provision of secondary education in Keswick. This proved to be a difficult and controversial task.

As far back as 1880, suggestions had been made for the building of a new school for senior boys. In order to carry out the plan, some funds belonging to the existing Crosthwaite School would have to be used. This did not meet with unanimous approval and as a result, nothing was done. Two years later in 1882, the managers of Crosthwaite School received news that two well known Keswickian benefactors, Henry and Thomas Hewetson, had bought twenty five acres of land between Keswick Bridge and Crosthwaite, which they wished to give to the managers for the purpose of supplementing existing endowments and towards the scheme for building a new school.

There were three conditions attached to the gift, namely, 1. That the proposed new secondary school should take girls as well as boys "on an equality in all respects with boys". 2. Girls should be eligible for scholarships. 3. A pension to be paid to Mr. Peter Harrison, the Headmaster of Crosthwaite School, on his retirement.

The Charity Commissioners would not agree that girls should be admitted on equal terms with boys and wanted separate schools, which was not possible, because there was not sufficient money available to carry out such a scheme. Nor did they agree about the pension for Crosthwaite's Headmaster, as it would reduce considerably the amount available for building. It was felt that extra money could not be expected from the people of Keswick as they were already contributing to enlarge St. John's Church, extend Crosthwaite churchyard and pay bills for Fitz Park.

There was an impasse as the Hewetsons would not give way on their conditions. In 1884 they bought more land, Williamson's Close or Saw Pit Field, as a site for the new secondary school. As there was not enough money, no building took place. The next stage came in 1888 when Mrs. Arthur Dover died. Her husband had died fifteen years previously in 1873 and had left £500 to the trustees of Crosthwaite School. His wife left them another £300 in her will. During her life time she had vigorously opposed Crosthwaite money being used for building the proposed new school. The Charity Commissioners disagreed and thought Crosthwaite funds could be diverted to provide the new school. Evidently Hardwicke agreed with them and did everything possible to try and resolve what had become a very bitter controversy. He consulted with the Commissioners, J.W. Lowther, the local M.P. and had questions asked in parliament. A long, bitter and costly law suit seemed imminent.

Meanwhile, this was very distressing for the Hewetsons, especially Henry whose only aim was for his beloved Keswick and the country as a whole to have the best. It was not a prosperous time and he felt that Britain was losing out to Germany in commerce, trade and industry. He felt that the solution lay in the provision

of high quality education. Although, at that time, he felt he could not donate any more money, he nevertheless was determined one way or another to see his plan come to fruition.

The arguments dragged on until 1895 when there was to be a meeting of the Trustees of Crosthwaite School. No one looked forward with any enthusiasm to this meeting. Henry Hewetson had died five months earlier. There was, however, great relief and surprise, when Mr. Joseph Broatch, clerk of the Trustees, read out a clause in Henry's will, which stated that £200 a year was designated for the projected new school and another sum was available for the same purpose, on the death of his brother and sister. Altogether, this amounted to £33,000 which meant that the school could be built. Relief and happiness, however, were short lived, as further heated arguments broke out, about the first condition, originally stipulated by the Hewetsons concerning the provision of equal opportunities for girls and boys.

Hardwicke believed firmly in co-education. Although Uppingham was a school for boys when he was a pupil there, the Headmaster, Edward Thring, had encouraged his own family and the families of masters, their wives and daughters, to mingle freely, thus creating a natural family atmosphere. He had also stressed the fine qualities and value of women, not only in the home but worldwide. This had made a lasting impression on Hardwicke and led him to work tirelessly to uphold the Hewetsons' wishes. When it became evident that the campaign for co-education was winning, an incredible letter entitled "mixed schools", a reply to Canon Rawnsley by an ex-pupil, appeared in the *Mid Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald* of the 28 August 1909, which shows how long the arguments continued, after the school was built and running successfully.

In the letter, the writer asked if any of these who advocated mixed schools had received their education at one. Only those who had done so were qualified to speak, "Co-education spells half-education to the boy impressed into the system", and that to claim women were men's equals in brain power up to a certain

age, citing a list of clever girls and women who had beaten men at their own game, proved nothing. The letter continued by stating that girls were certainly not the equal of boys of the same age in mental strength and mental activity. Therefore, the writer argued, that the girls suffered because the pace was too fast and that the boys suffered, because it was too slow. Maths was cited as a subject on which boys were keen, but which was a hopeless stumbling block to most girls, whose attempts at the subject were pitiful. Masters, it was claimed, did not understand "... the intricate mechanism of nerves in the quivering frame before him". These confrontations, the writer claimed, ended in passionate fits of weeping, while the more brutal of the lads, "... hugged themselves in silent joy at the scene, whilst the girl, degraded and humiliated before all, blindly gropes for her seat, to be comforted by her female friends as best she may." The same thing often happened in other subjects and Canon Rawnsley was quite wrong in saying that girls could keep up easily with boys, the letter continued, but in fact they only kept up because the boys were held back, spending their time in revision or in finding amusement at the efforts of girls. In conclusion the letter says,

" ... It is the little touches of hysterical femininity and sentiment, that after all, makes the womanly woman, and growing girls are bundles of nerves quivering with feminine emotion. ... The advocates of the system ... are unconsciously cruel to a future motherhood."

After all the arguments and delays, on the 6 October 1897 the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Lord Muncaster, laid the foundation stone for the new secondary school. The official opening took place on 16 September 1898. The ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Hereford, Dr. Percival who had been a pupil at Appleby Grammar School, on Saw Pit Field, according to the wishes of the Hewetson family. There was keen competition for the post of Headmaster, but eventually the Reverend Cecil Grant was chosen and the school became operational with sixty two pupils.¹

¹Information from Mr George Bott of Keswick

Hardwicke had been appointed Chairman of the Governors and had involved himself in every aspect of the enterprise, from consulting with the architects, Messrs Paley and Austen to ensure everything was of the best quality and in keeping with Keswick, to the actual organisation of the school. When the scholarship system became operational, if, as sometimes happened in Cumberland for many years, the amount of the scholarship did not cover the full cost, so that children from poor families could not take advantage of the opportunity they had gained, Hardwicke himself made sure that the extra money was forthcoming, from himself and influential friends. This often happened in Cumberland, where pupils of poor families lived in remote places from which travelling was difficult and boarding costly. Hardwicke remained Chairman for the rest of his life. After some time, when the Reverend Cecil Grant left Keswick to become Headmaster of St. George's School, Harpenden in Hertfordshire, he became also Chairman of the Governors there. Distance was no object to him and it was very rare for him to miss a meeting.

In 1907 the Secondary Schools Association was formed at Hardwicke's instigation since that branch of education had no organization to represent it, in any dealings with the Board of Education and the Government. Sir Philip Magnus was appointed Chairman, with Hardwicke as Hon. Secretary, which was another post he held for the rest of his life.

For many years Keswick was a popular meeting place for teachers when conferences were held. The National Union of Teachers organized an annual event, when several educational experts spoke on the latest trends in education. On such occasions Hardwicke was present on the platform as a representative of the Cumberland Education Committee and took a keen interest in the new ideas put forward and the debates which followed. The 'in' subject at one conference was the Montessori System of Teaching. Madame Montessori's school was in Rome and had children from three to six years of age. She claimed that the school should be in the midst of the pupils' homes with close contact between the

school and parents. The spontaneous activity of children must not be checked and they should be allowed to wander at will, even outside, thereby developing the senses of sight, sound and touch, which was the opposite of the present system in England which rendered children dumb and immobile. What took three years to teach at present, she said she could achieve in twelve weeks.

In the following discussion, the system was heavily criticized. In bringing the debate to a close, Hardwicke showed great tact by saying that he thought the system was good but would not be workable in England as a whole, as the Italian language was purely phonetic and lent itself to the new system of teaching. He suggested that there was much in the method which could be grafted on to our system with advantage.

Later, at the same conference, Hardwicke spoke about children and picture shows. He appealed to teachers to bring pressure on those responsible for licensing these shows in the county, in order to safeguard the physical and moral health of their pupils. The films could be valuable in the teaching of Geography, Nature Study, Mechanics and Vegetable Physiology, so teachers must make sure that the choice of films and the times of showing them were not harmful to children. Hardwicke always gathered a great deal of information when embarking on one of his campaigns. On this occasion he quoted statistics from abroad to prove the harm bad pictures caused, not only mentally and morally but physically, e.g. damage to eyes from flickering screens and, as reported by attendance officers, many cases of oversleeping, through watching late films. Therefore, Hardwicke suggested there should not be film shows for children after 8.30p.m. and children should always be accompanied by adults. He felt that matinées would be more suitable, but that there should not be any bribes to attend, through the provision of cheap tickets.

After complimenting Hardwicke for his able presentation and good intentions for the welfare of children which deserved serious attention, Mr. Beaton said that he felt that he had exaggerated the problem. This statement was greeted by applause. Mr. Beaton

went on to say that he had been to the cinema twice that week to give his children a treat. He did not think the films were responsible for many of the things for which they were accused. Hardwicke was noted for his work for the Temperance movement and the picture shows actually brought down the consumption of alcohol. There was more applause. He agreed about the late shows; but what really harmed children was bad housing, not pictures, and he asked Hardwicke to help in the work of housing reform. For these reasons, Mr. Beaton felt he could not totally condemn picture shows but agreed to the controls mentioned.¹

Nothing daunted, Hardwicke continued his campaign concerning film shows and cinemas. While he accepted that films were a pleasant form of entertainment and would become a permanent feature of life, he was concerned to point that they had the potential for good or evil. Many films, he had found, were depraved, sensual and an incitement to crime, citing the following examples, dogs killing rats in a rat pit; a champion prize fight; a public execution in the East; a burglar at work; a lover's escapade.

Not only did he attack some of the pictures shown in the cinema but also those outside, i.e. the posters advertising the films. Particularly, he objected to one in Carlisle entitled, "The Suicide Club", which showed men playing cards around a human skull. One of the men had turned up the ace of clubs, the death card and the horror on his face, Hardwicke felt, would haunt any child for life. Other posters showed corsets, underwear and girls in bathing costumes. He urged that there should be legislation to control the display of such posters and suggested the Chief Constable should inspect them before they were put outside in public view. On the 9 April 1910, he was able to report in the local newspaper, that the Bill Posters' Association had been of great help by restraining poster artists, thus effecting an improvement.²

¹Undated report in *Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald*, "Local Teachers in Conference - Large Gathering at Keswick".

²*Mid Cumberland and Westmorland, Penrith, Kirkby Stephen, Keswick and Alston Advertiser*

Hardwicke next became aware of the appearance of mutascopes or penny in the slot machines on railway station platforms. He thought that the pictures displayed in them with such titles as, "Gay Life in London", "The Giddy Old Man", "Her First Corset"; "A Tight Fit"; "Love in a Monastery"; "Artists' Models"; "The Dandy", were indecent and degrading. He campaigned vigorously against them in speeches and the press.¹ This resulted in the removal of the machine on Keswick station with many others following the example or improving the quality of the pictures.

Another controversy which engaged Hardwicke's attention was concerned with Religious Education, which had dragged on from 1870. The British and Foreign Schools Society and the National Society, while having the same aim, of the promotion and spread of the Christian religion in education, nevertheless disagreed on the content and method. The former advocated simple Bible teaching; the latter insisted on the teaching of the doctrines and liturgy of the established church. The resulting dispute was bitter, fanatical and intolerant. This was exacerbated by the Irish famine of 1845-46 which led to an influx of Irish Catholics into Britain, which stirred up the old irrational fear of Rome and further aggravated the problem of Religious Education. In 1847 grant aid was received by Catholic schools for the first time. Bitter debates continued in the period leading up to the 1902 Education Act, when there was a radical reorganization of the educational system. The Free Churches, led by Dr. Clifford, were violently opposed to any rate aid for denominational schools. The war cry was, "Rome on the rates", which aroused passionate feelings.

The 1902 Act came to a compromise with the recognition of a dual system as an essential part of the national system of education when local authorities came into being, responsible for standards of education in both types of school. The controversy did great

¹Ibid 1910

harm to relations between the churches and to the attitude of the nation to Christianity as a whole.¹

That the Religious Education controversy dragged on can be seen in this rhyming letter received by Hardwicke on the 2 December, 1905, from Sir Wilfrid Lawson :-

"As to teaching religion dear Canon I've read
 What you and the Bishop can say for it
 But there's only one question which sticks in my head
 And that is, pray who is to pay for it?
 I venture to say I don't want to pay
 For the Baptist, the Quaker or Jew,
 Some may be inclined the money to find
 But I ask you, dear Canon, are you?
 Then in fairness I'd say if we don't want to pay
 For the persons I've named to you thus,
 Do you think it is quite judicious and right
 To make these poor men pay for us?"

Hardwicke replied at once, on the 3 December 1905, expressing his views thus :-

"Dear Sir Wilfrid, the Baptist, the Quaker, the Jew
 Are better GOOD Baptists, GOOD Jews, and GOOD Quakers,
 It's a real fine investment, at least that's my view
 To pay any price if of good men we're makers.
 And what is the use of our teaching the head
 If we don't teach the heart? Baptist, Quaker or Jew,
 Or Churchman, or Roman, would sink us like lead -
 If we don't put God's truth in the heart of the crew."²

Comic picture post cards as they were called, became his next target. He thought most of them were vulgar, crude, suggestive, indecent and even blasphemous. Some were considered to be so bad that parents would not take their children to the seaside because of them being on show there. It was appalling, Hardwicke said, that counter assistants in shops and Post Offices, had to handle such things. After studying hundreds of cards, he

¹Editor, A.G. Wedderspoon, Religious Education 1944-1984, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1966. pp114-5, Ch VII, "The Bishop of London", Robert Stopford

²Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley, Glasgow 1923, p158

reported his findings to the publishers, many of whom tried to cooperate with him. The apathy of the public to this problem amazed him and he was shocked to discover that a rural Dean had walked many times, in front of a whole window full in his own market town without noticing them. Whenever Hardwicke saw any, he took action at once, either by entering the place where they were on display and persuading the owner to remove them or by writing to the Chief Constable. Discovering that in the Isle of Man a local committee of three people had been appointed to act as censors, he agitated for such measures to be applicable everywhere.

During his many travels, Hardwicke took note of what passengers were reading on their journeys. Most of the material appeared to be of a low standard. He therefore decided to make a study of railway bookstalls. After collecting an enormous number of examples which he stacked in Crosthwaite Vicarage and studied carefully, his worst fears were confirmed. He then tried by speaking and writing to rouse public opinion against this evil. The result was the formation in 1908 of an influential committee, consisting of representatives from all the Churches, with Hardwicke as Chairman and the headquarters in London. The group worked hard until the outbreak of war in 1914 and was able to influence Scotland Yard, the Home Office and many publishers.

The *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald* of the 27 June 1908 carried a report entitled, "Canon Rawnsley's Outspoken Speech". This speech, which was given to the Pan Anglican Congress, dealt with the growing problem of immoral literature. He began by attacking, "the flabbiness of public opinion", and continued by saying that arguments over the legal definition of the words, "indecent" and "obscene", had "... allowed to grow up a great industry of indecent publications, far reaching in its poisonous influence and flagrant in its public display." Lord Chief Justice Cockburn had given the definition as, "... anything leading to deprave and demoralize youth", but to no avail. Hardwicke recalled that five years previously a Judge had said that nearly

half a million copies of indecent papers were being circulated every week and that four tons of the worst of these were being exported to the Colonies. This had been allowed to continue unchecked, resulting in double the circulation.

Hardwicke next drew attention to novels, which claimed to be philosophical treatises on sex problems, which were published and exposed for sale on bookstalls. This was a shameful and horrifying situation in his view, and he appealed to the Churches, especially those of the Anglican community,

" ... to rise to the occasion and so to move public opinion that this hydra-headed monster, which no longer lurks in secret places, but has now come out into the open to poison the life of our youth, should, in the name of Christ, be trampled under foot."

He was supported by other speakers and R.B.C. Corfe, who was responsible for the appointment of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which was to consider the matter of indecent publications.

In a letter to the Co-operative Holidays Association, meeting at Halifax, which was published on the 8 January 1910 in the *Mid Cumberland and North Westmorland, Penrith, Kirkby Stephen, Keswick and Alston Advertiser*, Hardwicke wrote, "The foul, pornographic novel, the filthy illustrated weekly and the disgustingly vulgar and degrading postcard are injuring our English manhood and womanhood in their most vital part." He added that he had a list of one hundred and nineteen novels published by firms that previously would not have allowed them to be printed. He hoped that the situation was improving since circulating libraries and the Free Library Association were refusing to accept such books. Hardwicke ended by suggesting that if editors refused to review such nasty books, publishers would not be able to make any gain from them. On the 30 April 1910 Hardwicke continued his campaign at the meetings of the Sunday School Teachers' Union and reiterated all the evils mentioned previously, adding that he had a blacklist of one

hundred and twenty novels, each one corrosive and abominable in their pandering to animal passions and immorality.

At the Public Morals Conference, also held in 1910, Hardwicke reported some progress, since one firm of publishers and one distributor had been prosecuted, while a certain book had been threatened with legal proceedings in the Bow Street Police Court, unless it was withdrawn from circulation. This had resulted in an improvement in the books on sale, especially on railway stations. Librarians in charge of Public Libraries had been warned to look out for unsuitable books. Frequently Hardwicke was threatened with libel actions but he continued his activities, quite unconcerned and they came to nothing.

Being a member of the Education Committee, he made sure that suitable books were available for schools and was instrumental in establishing a central library to which Head Teachers could apply for an approved selections of books.

In 1879 Hardwicke began writing Moral Rhymes for Children which, although they contained amusing elements, attractive to the young people for whom they were written, had a serious purpose. Throughout his life he kept adding more rhymes to the collection. The following are examples of the Rhymes,

Boys who pull the hair or twist
Little sister's arm or wrist
Turn out cruel, beat their wives
And in prison end their lives.

Little girls are much preferred
Who are seen but never heard;
Little girls who talk, you know,
Into nuisances will grow.

Boys who wriggle at the table
Grow up restless and unstable;
But the boys who quiet sit
For a great career are fit.

Boys who will the scraper use,
And on the doormats rub their shoes,
Grow up orderly and neat;
Put the world beneath their feet."¹

¹Rawnsley, E.F., Canon Rawnsley. Glasgow, 1923, pp165-6