

7. Sekundärliteratur

Halle Pietists in England. Anthony William Boehm and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

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Bridges and Mitchell, Wigers and Mehder

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finance and administration¹⁴ and the charity school service and sermon. When subscriptions to a charity school were insufficient, a sermon or lecture was given after which a collection was taken at the door. In addition to these local sermons, the Society itself began in 1704 to hold a yearly charity school service and sermon, at which a collection was taken and after which the sermon was published. This tradition, which continued yearly until 1877, kept the schools before the public and the subscribers.

For the first quarter of the eighteenth century the SPCK coordinated the charity school movement which spread from London and Westminster to much of the British Isles. In 1725 the Society reported that the 1597 charity schools established in London and south Britain had provided education for 32,810 children.¹⁵ W.K. Lowther Clarke, defending the SPCK from criticism that in the 1720s it relinquished its role as overseer of the movement,¹⁶ has argued that "there is no evidence to show either that education of poor children ever was its primary objective or that it had the power to lead the country".¹⁷ It is difficult in this matter to draw conclusions based on a perusal of the Society's *Minutes*; however, the testimonies of contemporaries provide solid indication that not only were charity schools the "Darling Employment" of the SPCK,¹⁸ but the members of the Society were the "chief promoters" of this design in England.¹⁹ Though it may not have created the institution, the crucial role played by the SPCK in the expansion of the charity school movement should not be underestimated.²⁰

Bridges and Mitchell, Wigers and Mehder

M.G. Jones suggests that the news of Francke's work at Halle "exercised a remarkable influence upon the charity school movement in England, Wales and Ireland" and that when the SPCK wanted to organize an education movement for the poor, "it was the religious discipline on the German pattern which they commended as a cure".²¹ In spite of this recognition the signifi-

14 See pp. 97–98 below.

15 Account of the charity schools appended to: William Berriman, *The Excellency and Reward of Charity. A Sermon Preach'd ... May the 20th, 1725* (London, 1725), p. 43. Joan Simon, "From charity school to workhouse in the 1720s: The SPCK and Mr Marriott's solution", *History of Education* 17 (1988), pp. 113f, argues that the Society's statistics for counties like Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire are inflated and unreliable. However, Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680–1730* (London, 1982), pp. 53f, asserts that there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the SPCK's statistics for the metropolitan area and that its ledger for distant counties, though not as accurate, probably erred on the low rather than the high side.

16 Jones, *Charity School Movement*, p. 59.

17 Clarke, *History SPCK*, p. 29.

18 Chamberlayne to Francke, Westminster, 29 July 1701 (*Nachlaß* 30.XXVI. 847).

19 Newman to Princess Sophia, [London,] 3 Aug. 1713, printed in: Clarke, *Eighteenth Century Piety*, p. 77.

20 *pace* Simon, "From charity school to workhouse", pp. 128f.

21 *Charity School Movement*, pp. 37f.

cance of Halle Pietism within the charity school movement has not been well documented.

The first educational contacts between Halle and England were mediated through Ludolf. Already in 1696 Ludolf had personally visited both Bishop Compton of London and Archbishop Tenison of Canterbury.²² Tenison, a key advocate of the voluntary societies,²³ had his attention turned by Ludolf to Francke. In 1699 one of Francke's associates at Halle, Johann D. Herrnschmid, told his father

For some time he [Ludolf] mediated a literary intercourse by the revered Francke with the Archbishop of London. Thus, among other things, something about the methods of the Glaucha *Pedagogium* became known to this man [the Archbishop], and since it was recommended to him, he asked the revered Francke for two zealous men, by whom every method of the *Pedagogium* had been properly examined: he will carefully use these men to provide some similar arrangement.²⁴

Later, Herrnschmid added that after the two students had arrived in England, the same person had asked Francke for yet another student. Francke had sounded out Herrnschmid about going, so Herrnschmid turned to his parents for counsel, but asked them to tell no one about the possibility, lest it be judged unfavourably if word should get out.²⁵ These comments provide the only extant evidence of a correspondence between Francke and Tenison, yet there is no reason to doubt their accuracy. Francke hoped to propagate his educational reforms throughout Europe and the growing interest in schools for the poor in England, of which Tenison gave proof before his promotion to Canterbury, gave Francke an official outlet for expansion. He did not want word of these arrangements to become public, lest it give further impulse to efforts for formal union by showing how the Anglicans and Lutherans could cooperate. His interest was not ecumenical cooperation but the spread of his own institutions and ideas.

Soon after their arrival, Francke's two students, Wigers and Mehder, met Bridges and Mitchell, two of the charity school agents,²⁶ through whose instigation the two Germans were invited to a meeting of the newly formed SPCK.²⁷ John Chamberlayne discoursed with Wigers and Mehder when they

22 Ludolf to Dr. Charlett, London, 6 June 1696 (Bodl., *Ballard MSS* 26:78).

23 G.V. Bennett, "Conflict in the Church", in: *Britain after the Glorious Revolution*, ed. G. Holmes (London, 1969), pp. 164f.

24 "Intercessit ex aliquo tempore literarium commercium Domino Franckio cum Archiepiscopo Londiniensi. Sic inter alia de institutis Paedagogii Glauchensis nonnihil innotuit huic viro, et quoniam ipsi probabatur, petiit a Domino Franckio, ut studiosos duos mittat sibi, quibus singula de paedagogio probe sint perspecta: horum se usurum esse opera in adornando simili quodam instituto." (J.D. Herrnschmid to his father, Halle, 30 Jan. 1699, printed in: Nebe, p. 50)

25 Herrnschmid to his father, Halle, 20 July 1699, printed in: Nebe, p. 53.

26 J.B. Wigers to Francke, London, 4 May 1699 (ArFrSt B 71a:100-102).

27 Cowie, *Henry Newman*, p. 35, says that Francis Lee introduced the two Germans to his

attended; the *Minutes* say nothing other than that the Germans were ordered to attend again.²⁸ Wigers, however, reported briefly to Francke on the meeting. After visiting the SPCK and seeing the work of both the religious societies and the societies for the reformation of manners Wigers was persuaded

... that God is awake and would reform not only our Lutheran Church but also other sects, because the reputation here is that they [the voluntary societies] intend a complete reformation in the English Church; surely, my worthy Professor, you and your colleagues will strengthen [them] in their intended work and if God would unite us in spirit and in truth, then we would be able indeed to offer an acceptable offering to the Lord.²⁹

Wigers was clearly stirred by the potential connections between the voluntary societies and Halle. The role of animating these relations, however, did not fall to Wigers and Mehder; their place was limited to education.

Though Wigers and Mehder never returned to the Society, they continued to exercise an influence over the charity schools through their connection with Bridges and Mitchell. During their first summer, when their financial situation was critical, Wigers worked at Windsor with the children of Prince George's chaplain, Mecken, while Mehder stayed in London tutoring Mitchell in Hebrew. When Mehder's financial situation worsened Bridges gave him some assistance.³⁰ Bridges himself is an enigma; his importance to the charity school movement is unattested, yet Mehder said that charity schools and the support of poor children were two projects which came from Bridges himself.³¹ When the SPCK was approached about instructions for managing a charity school the Society resolved "that Mr. Bridges' method be sent ... as soon as printed".³² In the summer of 1706 he took a "Journey to all the Corporation Towns in the West of England" promoting charity schools; five years later he took another such tour.³³ Bridges told Francke of having received "large measures both of temporall as well as spiritual blessings" and that he wished to know as much as possible about educating young children, "which I design to

friend Robert Nelson who then invited them to the SPCK. This is possible, but neither Wigers nor Mehder mentions Nelson; the link with Bridges and Mitchell is more likely.

28 SPCK *Minutes*, 11 May 1699, printed in: McClure, p. 24.

29 "... so habe ich genug, daß Gott auff ist, und will nicht allein unser Luthertum, sondern auch andere Secten reformiren, denn einen solchen Nahmen hat es hier würckl. daß sie indendiren eine völlige reformation in der Englischen Kirche, welche gewiß mein wehrter H. Prof. Sie und Ihre H. Collegen stärke wird in ihren vorgenommen Werck, und wenn uns Gott wollte vereinigen im Geist und in der Wahrheit, so würden wir ja dem Herrn ein angenehm Opfer bringen können." (Wigers to Francke, London, 10 July 1699 [copy] [ArFrSt B 71a:103-109])

30 Bridges to Francke, [London,] 26 Aug. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIX.677).

31 Mehder to Francke, London, 4 Sept. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIII.562).

32 SPCK *Minutes*, 17 Aug. 1699, printed in: McClure, p. 30. Unfortunately, I cannot locate of printed copy of these instructions.

33 SPCK *Minutes*, 4 July 1706 (i.395) and 2 Aug. 1711 (v.208).

give up my self wholly to, as GOD shall order and enable me".³⁴ With his wealth, commitment, and religious society-SPCK connections, Bridges was undoubtedly an instrumental figure during the incipient years of the charity schools.

To have two such qualified teachers in London as Wigers and Mehder pleased Bridges, especially since they could teach Latin.³⁵ He asked Francke for a written recommendation of the two Germans so that the SPCK could employ them in the charity schools they were promoting, assuring the Professor

... that I am very much pleased with these two strangers and promise my self much satisfaction and benefit from them by the little acquaintance I have had with them, ... they being your Epistle themselves from the good lines imprinted on their lives.³⁶

At this same time Chamberlayne approached Mehder about the possibility of going with Bray to Maryland as a schoolmaster (Wigers was unavailable because he worked with Mecken's children). Nothing came of Chamberlayne's suggestion; besides, Mehder was unsure what he would have done since Francke had commanded them not to leave London.³⁷

Bridges had other plans for Wigers and Mehder, asking them to give him an essay on how they would instruct children according to the Halle method and promising to provide his house for their own grammar school to start in Michaelmas, 1699.³⁸ A grammar school was a possibility because, as Bridges explained to Francke, a number of parents with money "have been speaking to have a school to bring up their children after the same manner that the poor are brought up". Should he and another friend or two join Wigers and Mehder, they would "not want for those that are able to pay for their own as well as for those that contribute towards the Charge of the poor Schooling". But there was one great obstacle: in order to teach Latin or Mathematics a school must have a license from the Archbishop of Canterbury. But "Mr. Mehder seems very backward to comply with the Church of England for fear of giving offence to his Countrymen and so I suppose is Mr. Wigers". Bridges doubted whether the Archbishop would grant a license to those not of the established Church, since several priests and Jesuits had recently come into England and ignorant people considered any foreigner to be a Roman Catholic. Since Francke was "the most proper Judge in this matter", Bridges offered him some scriptural advice:

O, Sir the value of one Soul; how much more of so many Thousand: lett us therefore go on and labour while we have mind and strength or anything whereby we may be

34 Bridges to Francke, London, 7 May and 26 Aug. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIX.675-677).

35 Wigers to Francke, London, 4 May 1699 (copy) (ArFrSt B 71a:100-102).

36 Bridges to Francke, London, 7 May 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIX.674).

37 Mehder to Francke, London, 4 Sept. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIII.564).

38 Wigers to Francke, Windsor, 13 & 30 Aug. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.416f,419).

enabled to gain one for whom Christ Dyed. lett us learn to become all things to all men, that we may by any means win some; which sure is the highest wisdom.³⁹

Wigers and Mehder also expressed their anxieties to Francke over the situation, aware that parents would not trust their children to them without a license from the Archbishop. Exemption from subscription to the Anglican formularies had been requested from Bridges and Mitchell, because should the Hallensians subscribe they would

... cause a scandal among the Germans. Because both the [German] ministry here and the people would partly very much glory over the Pietists and partly interpret it as nothing other than having done it for bread.⁴⁰

Mehder explained that, because they could not in good conscience subscribe, they had suggested that an Anglican teacher be attached to them who could teach the Church of England catechism.⁴¹ While waiting for a solution, the two Germans formed a school under the German chaplain Mecken hoping that eventually a grammar school could be formed under the patronage of Bridges and the religious societies.⁴²

The difficulty of subscription to the Church of England was a recurring one for Wigers and Mehder. In 1703 a fellow schoolmaster warned them that they must as soon as possible get a license to have a school or else pay a penalty.⁴³ Though they wanted to buy a license, Wigers explained that they could not subscribe, because the Book of Common Prayer does not hold to a doctrine of ubiquity in the Holy Communion as prescribed in the Formula of Concord.⁴⁴ The theological debate over the Lord's Supper was one of the most contentious between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Germany; as will be seen, the Lutheran Pietists from Halle regarded the Church of England doctrinally as essentially an extension of the Reformed Church.⁴⁵ Wigers and Mehder would not compromise this fundamental Lutheran doctrine and never did get a license, though they continued teaching for at least thirteen years.

When no acceptable resolution to the issue of subscription was forthcoming, Wigers and Mehder built up their own English school and also helped

39 Bridges to Francke, London, 26 Aug. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIX.677-679)

40 "... wo wir nicht unter der Deutschen ein ärgerniß anrichten wollen. Denn so wohl das Ministerium allhier, alß auch das Volck würden theils sehr gloriviren uber die Pietisten, theils würden sie es nicht anders außlegen, alß wirs umbs Brodt thäten ..." (Wigers to Francke, Windsor, 30 Aug. 1699 [*Nachlaß* 30.XI.419])

41 Mehder to Francke, London, 4 Sept. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIII.560f).

42 Wigers to Francke, London, 12 Dec. 1699 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.427).

43 The terms of subscription and penalties for failure to comply during this period are spelled out clearly in James Talbott, *The Christian School-Master* (London, 1707), pp. 7-13.

44 Wigers to Francke, London, 25 Apr. 1703 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.460-463).

45 See p. 209 below.

teach Latin at Bridges' school in the neighbourhood.⁴⁶ Ludolf was impressed at how much the two Germans had been able to accomplish.⁴⁷ By the summer of 1701 they had over 50 students in their own English school, an increase brought about by a particular benefactor: "Dr. Slare is our good patron, recommending our school everywhere," Wigers told Francke, "for this reason do not doubt, God will bless our work."⁴⁸ On Slare's counsel they had found a new house for their growing school,

... but he [Slare] serves us particularly by recommending to us the children of distinguished people who are able to pay the school fees, though we have with us at the same time some who give nothing.⁴⁹

The school continued to grow; by the spring of 1703 it had over 100 students and was growing weekly. They feared the possibility that Parliament might stop the schools of all foreigners not associated with the Church of England, but when the Occasional Conformity Bill was thrown out they hoped to have more room for their work.⁵⁰ In 1710 they were anxious about the recoil from the Sacheverell affair and the High Church efforts to suppress Presbyterians and Dissenters;⁵¹ indeed, Sacheverell had denounced unlicensed Nonconformist academies – legally not dissimilar to the school operated by Wigers and Mehder – as full of false brethren who

... are suffer'd to combine into *Bodies*, and *Seminaries*, wherein *Atheism*, *Deism*, *Tritheism*, *Socinianism*, with all the *Hellish Principles of Fanaticism*, *Regicide*, and *Anarchy*, are openly *Profess'd*, and *Taught*, to *Corrupt* and *Debauch* the *Youth* of the *Nation*.⁵²

But with Slare's patronage and diligent work their English school developed to the point that in 1712, after having worked daily for thirteen years, Wigers requested more help.⁵³ Francke did send help for the school, but its fate after the 1714 Schism Act is unclear. This act, which required all teachers and schoolmasters to receive Communion in the Church of England or else be ineligible to teach, excluded from its compass foreign Protestant teachers who

46 Francke to Spener, Halle, 13 Jan. 1700, printed in: Kramer, p. 431.

47 Ludolf to Francke, London, 6 Dec. 1700 (ArFrSt D 71:64–65).

48 "Der H. Dr. Shlare ist unser guter patron, recommendiret unsere Schule allenthalben, zweiffel derothalben nicht, Gott wird unsere Arbeit gesegnen." (Wigers to Francke, London, 4 Sept. 1701 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.446)).

49 "Er dienet unß aber sonderl. darinnen daß Er unß feiner leute Kinder recommendiret, die das Schulgeld bezahlen könnten, ob wir gleich auch unterschiedl. bey unß haben die nichts geben." (Wigers to Francke, London, 29 July 1701 [*Nachlaß* 30.XI.439])

50 Wigers to Francke, London, 26 Dec. 1702 and 26 Jan. 1704 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.458,469f); cf. N. Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker* (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 93f,97; M.R. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford, 1985 [1978]), pp. 264ff.

51 Mehder to Francke, London, 20 Apr. 1710 (*Nachlaß* 30.XIII.566).

52 Henry Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren, both in Church and State: Set forth in a Sermon Preach'd ... On the 5th of November, 1709* (London, 1709), p. 15.

53 Wigers to Francke, London, 25 Feb. 1712 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.471f).

taught children of foreigners only; since the two Germans conducted an English school, they were subject to its qualifications.⁵⁴ Though the Schism Act never came into force and was repealed in 1719, its passing, according to a 1736 Dissenting biography, "gave reason to expect much greater Severities" and numerous academies closed.⁵⁵

Why were Wigers and Mehder allowed to operate a school for English children without subscribing to the Church of England? Certainly the patronage of Slare was a factor in their avoiding prosecution. Every school was independent; despite the coordinating role taken on by the SPCK, neither the Society nor any parochial authority had control over individual charity schools. After the arrival of the Hanoverian Sovereign, the problem faced by the SPCK was not Dissent but Jacobitism. The Society made every effort to bring schools in line, but their autonomy made its task formidable.

Though the move to a new building in 1701 meant that Wigers and Mehder could no longer teach at Bridges' school, they continued on good relations. That same year Bridges visited Halle for a month and Wigers hoped that Bridges' association with Francke would be fruitful, "so that through him also much good will be brought over here".⁵⁶ After his return, Wigers informed Francke that Bridges now conducted his school "according to our method" [*nach unserer Methode*].⁵⁷ That the Halle Pietists made a lasting impression on Bridges is evident from the fact that in 1704 he suggested opening a college to train teachers for charity schools which would differ very little from Halle and at which both Wigers and Mehder would serve as instructors.⁵⁸ Though nothing came of Bridges' proposal it shows the extent to which Francke's institutions were admired by some key leaders in England.

Lee, Nelson, Hoare, Slare, and Philipps

Bridges and Mitchell were not the only early connections of the charity schools with Halle; when one looks at other persons involved in the movement the ties with Halle become even more apparent. Secondary literature has pointed to such people as Robert Nelson, Francis Lee, Henry Hoare, Frederick Slare, and Sir John Philipps as significant figures in the rise of the movement. Their personal connections to Halle are acknowledged, but they are poorly documented.⁵⁹

54 Sykes, *Sheldon to Secker*, pp. 95f.

55 J[ames] Clegg, *Assistance in Preparing for Death and Judgment. A Discourse Occasion'd by the Sudden Death of the Reverend Mr. John Ashe . . . To which is added, A short Account of his Life and Character* (London, 1736), p. 71.

56 "... auf daß auch durch ihn viel gutes herüber gebracht werde." (Wigers to Francke, London, 4 Sept. 1701 [*Nachlaß* 30.XI.444-446])

57 Wigers to Francke, London, 13 Sept. 1702 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.455).

58 Wigers to Francke, London, 26 Jan. 1704 (*Nachlaß* 30.XI.467-469).

59 Jones, *Charity School Movement*, pp. 8,37,290; Cowie, *Henry Newman*, p. 35; Secretan,