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**Sketches. Joseph Lancaster and His Contemporaries.  
William Allen, His Life and Labours**

**Dunn Henry**

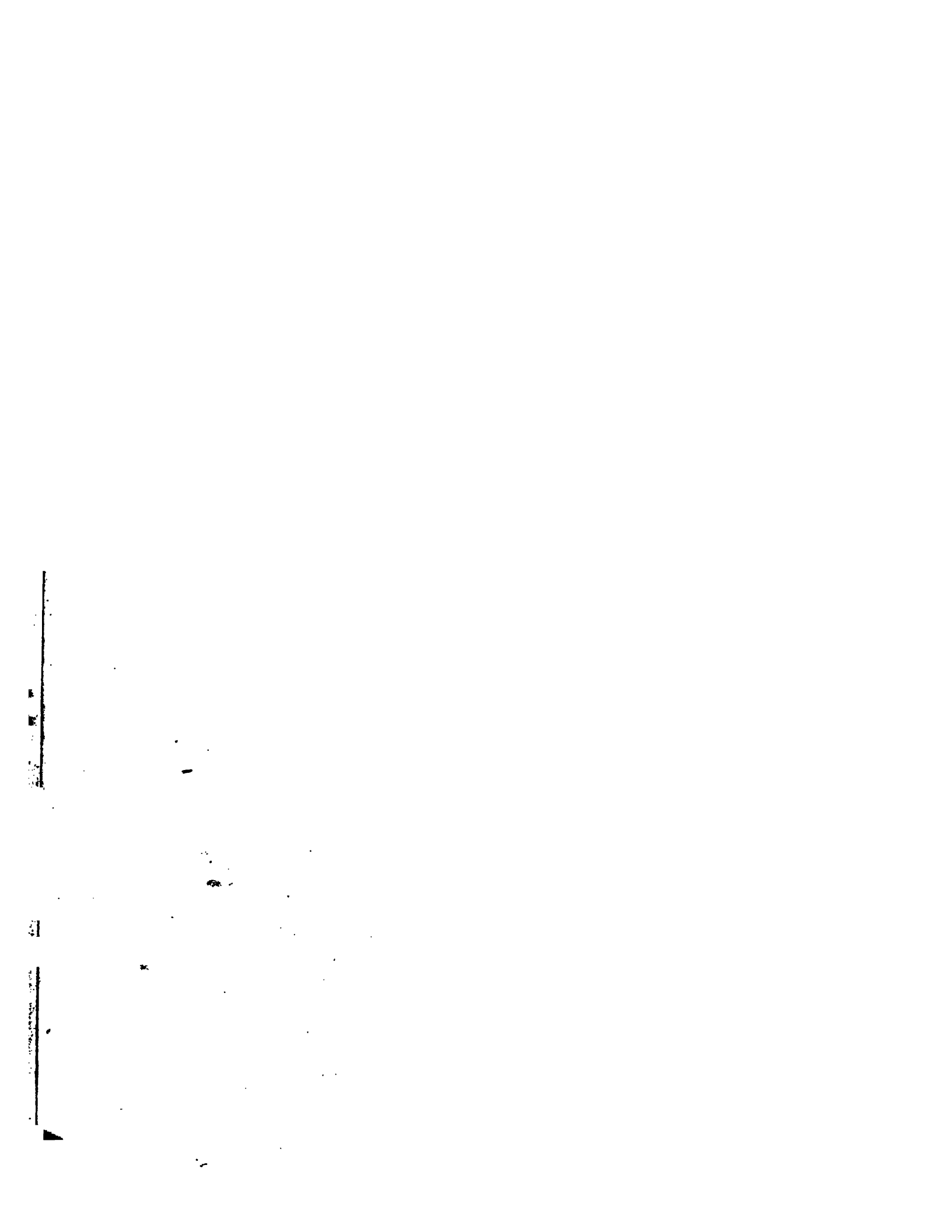
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**Title: Sketches. Joseph Lancaster and His Contemporaries. William Allen, His Life and Labours**

**Author: Dunn Henry**

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# SKETCHES.

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PART I.

JOSEPH LANCASTER,  
AND HIS COTEMPORARIES.

PART II.

WILLIAM ALLEN,  
HIS LIFE AND LABOURS.

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HENRY DUNN.

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It is right to state, that these biographical sketches have already appeared, although in a somewhat different form, in the Eclectic Review. They are taken from articles written for that journal, at the request of the editor, in the years 1845 and 1848.



**PART I.**

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**JOSEPH LANCASTER AND HIS  
COTEMPORARIES.**





## CHAP. I.

### THE FOUNDER.—JOSEPH LANCASTER.

JOSEPH LANCASTER was born in Kentstreet, Southwark, on the 27th of November, 1778. His father was a Chelsea pensioner, who had served in the British army during the American war. To the pious example and early instruction of his parents he always attributed, under the divine blessing, any acquaintance he possessed with the power of religion. 'My first impressions,' he says, 'of the beauty of the christian religion were received from their instructions.' There is something characteristic in his own account of himself as a little child, retiring to a corner, repeating the name of Jesus, and as often reverently bowing to it. 'I seemed to feel,' he says, 'that it was the name of one I loved, and to whom my heart performed reverence. I departed from my retirement well satisfied with what I had been doing, and I never remembered it but with delight.' This little incident was an epitome of the man, and, inconsistent as it may seem to be with his future religious profession as a mem-

ber of the Society of Friends, it truly shadowed forth the enthusiastic, not to say passionate feeling, which through life so eminently characterized him.

At the early age of eight years he was pondering the Gospels in secret retirement and delight, his heart 'filled with love and devotion,' with 'breathings of good will to the human race,' and with 'desires to devote his life to the service of God.' At fourteen, Clarkson's Essay on the Slave Trade came in his way, and alone, and without taking counsel of any one, he determined to go to Jamaica, to teach the poor Blacks to read the word of God.

'With a view to accomplish his purpose, he left home for Bristol, without the knowledge of his parents, having only a bible, Pilgrim's Progress, and a few shillings in his pocket. The first night he slept under a hedge, and the next under a hay-stack. On his journey he fell in with a mechanic, who was likewise going to Bristol. They walked together; and as Joseph's money was all expended, his companion sustained him. On arriving at his destination, he was penniless, and almost shoeless. He entered himself as a volunteer, and was sent to Milford Haven the next morning. On board he was at first the object of much ridicule, and was contemptuously styled *parson*. The captain

being absent one day, the officers asked him if he would preach them a sermon. He replied, 'Yes; if you will give me leave to go below for half an hour to read my bible.' They said, 'O certainly, an hour if you choose.' When he came up there was a cask placed upon deck, and the ship's company were all assembled. Having placed him upon the cask, he proceeded to lecture them upon their habits of profane swearing and drunkenness, at first much to their mirth and amusement; but after a little they began to droop their heads, when he told them if they would leave off these wretched practices, repent, and turn to the Lord, they might still be happy here and happy hereafter. After this sermon he was treated kindly—no one was suffered to laugh at him, or use him ill, during the three weeks he remained on board.

'His return home to his parents was occasioned as follows:—a dissenting minister at Clapham, happening to call in at his mother's shop, found her weeping, and in great distress. On his kindly asking the cause, she informed him that her child had left home, and she knew not what was become of him. He endeavoured to pacify and comfort her, with the hope that the Lord would restore him to her; and then inquired where she thought he was gone. She replied, 'Why