

Literary Department.

PEWED CHURCHES.

By MONKTON MILNES—LORD HOUGHTON, D.C.L.

I stood, one Sunday morning,
Before a large church-door,
The congregation gather'd,
And carriages a score;
From one outstepp'd a lady
I oft had seen before,
Her hand was on a Prayer-Book,
And held a vindicte,
The sign of man's redemption
(Clear on the book was set;
But, above the cross there glisten'd
A golden coronet,
For her the obsequious benedict
The inner door swung wide,
Lightly, as up a ball room,
Her footsteps seem'd to glide;
There might be good thoughts in her
For all her evil pride,
But after her a woman
Peep'd wistfully within,
On whose wan face was graven
Life's hardest discipline;
The trace of the sad trinity,
Of weakness, pain and sin,
The few free-seats were crowded,
Where she could rest and pray;
With her worn garb contrasted
Each side in fair array;
"God's house holds no poor sinners,"
She sigh'd, and crept away,
Old heathendom's vast temples
Held men of every fate
The steps of far Benares
Counting small and great;
The dome of St. Sophia
Confounds all human state,
The sides of blessed Peter
Are open all the year,
Throughout wide Christian Europe
The Christian's right is clear,
To use God's house in freedom,
Each man the other's peer,
Save only in that England,
Where this disgrace I saw,
England where no one crouches,
In tyranny's base awe;
England, where all are equal
Beneath the eye of law,
There, too, each vast cathedral
Contracts its ample room,
No weary beggar resting
Within the holy gloom,
No earnest student musing
Beside the famous tomb,
Who shall relieve the scandal
That decorates our age,
An evil great as ever
Iconoclastic rage?
Who to this Christian people
Restores their heritage?

N. B.—This was written many years ago. Much has since been done in England and her colonies to enable "rich and poor to meet together," but much exclusiveness yet remains even where coronets are scarce.

THE CENTENARY OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

We have spoken of the inauguration of the Sunday School on several occasions of late, but the subject is of such special interest just now that we will not be thought over-doing it, we hope, if we devote considerably more space to it this week than we have heretofore done. While we heartily join with our brethren of the denominations in celebrating the Centenary of Sunday Schools, it seems most appropriate and becoming that some special services, distinctly Church of England in their character, should mark the occasion, from the fact that they were first started conjointly by a clergyman of the Church—the Rev. Thomas Stock, and a Church layman, whose name will be ever connected with the movement—Robert Raikes. It is of course difficult to carry ourselves back in imagination to the days of the first Sunday School, and yet we must try and do so in order to get a good idea of the bad state of society at that time, and the consequent great necessity that existed for just such an institution.

In a little work recently published, called "What do we owe him," we gather the following information regarding the times in which Raikes lived, and the work in which he engaged:—

"In Raikes' days things were very different from what they are now. The handsome, well-kept city was then un-

paved, undrained, unsavoury, and, of course, unhealthy. The houses were poor-looking, and the best of them hung over the street in the top storeys. There were no railways; and even coaches were great curiosities. They called them "Flying Coaches." I wonder what they would call the "Flying Dutchman" now! There were no gaslights in streets or houses, and candles and lamps were so poor that they did little more than make darkness visible. The watchman (old Charley, as he used to be called) went about all night with his lantern, calling out "Har-par—o'clock, and a starlight night," or "Har-par—o'clock, and a rainy night" (which some said only served to let the thieves know he was coming); and in the early morning the only way to procure a light, was by striking a flint till a spark happily caught some prepared tinder; for lucifer matches were a luxury hardly known even to some of our fathers and mothers.

But the sad page in the history of England at this period was the moral degradation and ignorance that so widely prevailed. Highwaymen abounded. Horace Walpole speaks of the necessity of being accompanied with one or two servants armed with blunderbusses to ensure safety a mile from home—near London—after sunset. Gambling was a notorious vice; drunkenness, cock-fighting, bull-baiting, and every species of immorality were common. The Bishop of Chester in 1786 said:—

"Our houses cannot secure us from outrage, nor can we rest with safety in our beds. The number of criminals increase so rapidly that our jails are unable to contain them, and the magistrates are at a loss how to dispose of them. Our penal code is already sufficiently sanguinary, and our executions sufficiently numerous to strike terror into the populace; yet they have not hitherto produced any material alteration for the better, and where they multiplied a hundredfold, they would probably fail of the desired effect."

As to the education of the people, printing might almost as well never have been invented. Only here and there could a laboring man be found able to read; and no shame was felt on account of the ignorance. The children of the poor had no better prospects. In the greater number of parishes, and especially in rural districts, the children of the poor had no education at all. Nearly all our rural schools have been built since 1800. As a sample parish, Hannah More states:—

"On first going to the village of Cheddar, near the cathedral city of Wells, we found more than two hundred people in the parish, almost all very poor; no gentry, a dozen wealthy farmers, hard, brutal, and ignorant. We saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot!"

Robert Raikes' spirit was moved within him by the surrounding ignorance and wretchedness of the people. He was a busy man, and had much to attend to as a leading citizen. He had his own family, too. "I am blessed," he writes in 1787, "with six excellent girls and two lovely boys." But busy men are generally the very men to take fresh work; and those who have children of their own are the most likely to feel for and desire to help the children of others not so well off. And so Robert Raikes was led to put feeling into action, and became the noble founder of Sunday Schools.

From the first, a good clergyman, the Rev. Thomas Stock, who was Master of the Cathedral School and Rector of St. John the Baptist, with St. Aldate's, in Gloucester, took the deepest interest in all that was done. Indeed, so far as Gloucester is concerned, he seems to have had almost as much to do with the starting of the schools there as Raikes himself. But it is not easy to speak positively about this. Those who do the most for Christ are never disposed to talk about it, much less to boast of it. Mr. Stock is described as one who "made it the business and pleasure of his life to go about doing good, by instructing in righteousness, and in works of charity; yet who never sought the applause of men." And Robert Raikes was like him. He used always to keep his own name back when he wrote in the Gloucester Journal about Sunday Schools, without in any way attempting to claim credit for his share in the work. Indeed, all credit is more than assigned by him to "some of the clergy."

Probably, in Gloucester, the workers never thought at all about the question which was the first among them,—a very foolish question to discuss at any time or

in any place. They were only too glad to welcome the help of all who would join them. But out of Gloucester Robert Raikes was everywhere known as the chief worker and the founder of the Sunday school system. He certainly gave it a public character and made it truly national. "From cottager to king all learned of the new institution through Robert Raikes."

Robert Raikes was a diligent teacher himself, and his interest in the children never flagged. He loved them, and he loved to teach them. "I cannot express the pleasure," he said once, "which I often receive in discovering genius and good dispositions among this little multitude. It is botanizing in human nature. I have often, too, the satisfaction of receiving thanks from the parents for the reformation they perceive in their children."

Such a movement in such wise and earnest hands could not fail to make it self felt, not only in the immediate surroundings of Gloucester, but elsewhere, and, soon, everywhere, throughout the land. Robert Raikes' object was to benefit society; but primarily to bring home to the hearts of wanderers and outcasts the loving sympathy and gracious love of the dear Saviour Jesus Christ. He gave them some instruction in reading and writing, but more particularly he grounded them in the Church Catechism, as the Church's text book of Christian doctrine, to be received and believed for the soul's health. The founder of Sunday Schools, as he tells us, and as the early history of the movement plainly shows, intended his work to be simply the hand maiden of the Church. He had all his scholars to attend regularly the services of the Church, and they were openly catechized by the good Mr. Stock before the congregation.

Now we may not inappropriately remark here that too little consideration is given to this feature of the work by the clergy of the Church now-a-days. Public catechizing is an unknown thing in a majority of our parishes; and even in the Sunday Schools sufficient regard is not paid to the training and grounding of the pupils in that most important manual—the Church Catechism.

Another feature of Robert Raikes' work may be here very properly alluded to. He made it a point to visit his S. S. children during the week, and to call upon those whose children did not attend his school, until by taking so active an interest in their welfare and in the welfare of their children, he influenced very many parents to look upon him as a friend, and to yield to his wishes. This is a duty which no S. S. teacher should neglect to perform, and which cannot be neglected without injury to the work.

If it be said I have no time, I have so much to do, remember Robert Raikes, who was a very busy tradesman engaged in a large book and paper business, and who yet found time, *made the time, perhaps, might better express it*, to pay frequent visits to the families of his S. S. children. "Can nothing be done?" and the voice seemed to say "Try," he tells us "I did try"; and then he added, "See what God hath wrought."

In the language of the little work, from which we have culled much of what we have written, "follow his good example. In all difficulties, in climbing up all the hills of life, remember the little word "Try"; and always when you try do what Robert Raikes did—do not try in your own strength alone, but "take hold of God's Hand." God can always help you; and He is so good—that is what "God" means—that He always will. He helped Robert Raikes wonderfully, or we should not see, as we now see, thousands of Sunday-schools all over the land; and He will help you, too, if you really ask it."

A FEW WORDS IN CONCLUSION.

Throughout nearly every parish in

Canada some notice has probably been taken of this S. S. Centenary; and, let us hope, a renewed interest has been awakened in the cause of Sunday Schools.

In the Maritime Provinces there is much room for improvement; in many of the country parishes, and, we fear, to too great an extent in the city, many of the teachers are ill-fitted to instruct others, and but small attention is given to the work by the parents of children. It has been said by some that Sunday Schools have been of injury in enabling those outside the Church to propagate their distinctive principles. If Sunday Schools have not been made of value to the Church, whose fault is it, we ask? Why has not so admirable a scheme been utilized to the extension and promulgation of the Church and Church principles? It is too common a habit for members of the Church, who are not willing to do the work others around them in other religious bodies are doing, to decry the means at their hand as insufficient, or the soil as unfavorable to the growth of the Church, when, indeed, if they were but half as energetic and half as zealous as their neighbours, the result would be far otherwise. It is absurd to suppose that the Church cannot maintain her hold upon the masses, or that she cannot gain recruits from the bodies around her, because to admit this to be true would not only be to oppose her claim to be a branch of Christ's Church, but would also be at variance with the facts as seen in those places where she has been properly placed before the people. Now, as regards the Sunday School work, we are firmly convinced that properly carried on, with the clergyman fully convinced of its value, with well-instructed teachers thoroughly trained and deeply impressed with the opportunities presented to them, it can have no equal in advancing the Church in the world. The difficulties and drawbacks of the past have been simply these, Children have not been properly trained in Church truths, consequently as parents they have no definite views regarding the Church, and so do not exert themselves to win converts to her fold, considering proselytizing an evil thing; while the denominations around them are armed with every needful weapon, and leave no stone unturned to draw people into their net. This much we have said in answer to some opposition in certain quarters to Sunday Schools.

Let the shepherds not neglect to feed their flocks with substantial food, which the Chief Shepherd has provided, and the Lambs will grow up knowing the voice and heeding the call of those placed over them.

A REMARKABLE SUNDAY SCHOLAR.

The following remarkable statement was found among some old family MSS. It is without date, but was probably recorded about the year 1836. The J. Campbell who communicated the incident was the Rev. John Campbell, of Kingsland, the well-known African Missionary.

At the last tea-meeting in connection with one of the Schools of London, England, they were interested by the presence of an ancient mariner, who is, doubtless, one of the eldest Sunday scholars in England. He produced a Bible on the occasion, the fly-leaf of which contained a narrative, of which the following is a copy:

"This Bible was presented to me by Mr. Raikes, at the town of Hertford, January 1st., 1781, as a reward for my punctual attendance at the Sunday School, and good behaviour when there. And after being my companion fifty-three years,—forty-one of which I spent in the sea service, during which time I was in forty-five engagements, received thirteen wounds, was three times shipwrecked, once burnt out, twice capsized in a boat, and had fevers of different sorts fifteen times—this Bible was my consol-

tion, and was newly bound for me by James Bishop, of Edinburgh, on the 26th day of October, 1834, the day I completed the sixtieth year of my age. As witness my hand,

"JAMES B. NORTH."

Mr. North was a master in the navy. He is a very enlightened and devout man, in the judgment of your brother and friend,

J. CAMPBELL.

HALIFAX.

The Centenary Services of the Church of England Sunday Schools.—A very large gathering of Sunday School children was held on Sunday, the 27th ult., in St. Paul's Church, when over twelve hundred children, with their teachers, were present from St. Paul's, St. Luke's, St. George's, Garrison Chapel, Bishop's Chapel, St. Mark's, and Christ Church, Dartmouth. The lower part of the Church was well filled with the children, while the galleries contained a considerable number of the parents and others interested. Rev. G. W. Hill, D.C.L., Rev. John Abbott, Rev. Jas. B. Uniacke, Rev. J. L. Bell, Rev. R. Wylie, and Rev. G. O. Troop assisted the Lord Bishop in the service.

The service began by the singing of the HYMN, "Onward, Christian Soldiers," followed by the GOSPEL from Mark x. 13-16, after which the APOSTLES' CREED was recited by all present. Then was sung a LITANY beginning:

"Heavenly Father, from Thy Throne
Look in love and pity down
On Thy tender little ones;
Father! Lord! deliver us.

Then all kneeling.

Lord have mercy upon us,
Christ have mercy upon us,
Lord have mercy upon us."

After which the LORD'S PRAYER and several appropriate COLLECTS, and a GENERAL THANKSGIVING for the occasion, and a HYMN, "There is a Happy Land" closed the first part of the service.

After the Hymn the Bishop delivered an appropriate address to the children. His Lordship began by congratulating the children on the beauty of the day for the celebration, and called upon them to praise God for having bestowed a gracious rain upon the parched ground the day previously, and given them so fine and bright a day for this Centenary Service. He then alluded to the extraordinary character of the day,—it was a Centenary celebration, a thing which could only happen once in a hundred years, and, therefore, a service which none of other generations had ever taken part in, and which those present could never again commemorate.

His Lordship, after enumerating the blessings which flow from the Sunday School work, and the great progress which has marked the successful carrying out of Robert Raikes' small and apparently insignificant beginning, affectionately urged upon his hearers, both scholars and teachers, to consider their responsibilities, and the importance of ever keeping before their minds the solemn thought "Thou God seest me."

His Lordship emphasized the fact, too often overlooked, that the Sunday School was founded by Raikes for the especial purpose of instructing the children in the Church Catechism, and called upon the teachers present not to overlook this important instruction.

The Bishop also spoke in strong terms of condemnation of the spirit which prevails to so great an extent among the children of the land of shewing disrespect to parents and elders.

After the Address a collection was taken up for Foreign Missions. The Hymn "Brightly gleams our banner," was then sung; and two short verses with responses said, all kneeling. The service was brought to a close by the Bishop pronouncing the

BENEDICTION.

WOODSTOCK.—A "Quiet Day" for the S. S. Teachers of the Deanery was held at Woodstock on Friday, June 25th. Further particulars of this most important movement will be given at another time. Suffice it to say, that the Deanery has inaugurated one of the most useful helps ever begun in the Diocese. The Holy Communion was administered at 10 a. m., and an address delivered on "Teacher and Taught," by Rev. E. S. W. Pentreath. Mr. Pentreath delivered a second address at 2 p. m., on "Subjects and Methods of Teaching," and at 4 p. m., one on "Results," followed by a conference of Teachers, about 50 of whom were present, with the Rev. Messrs. T. Neales, Flewelling, H. Neales, Towers, and Fowler.