

who says, "Show wherein I may be useful and command without reserve." This turning point in his life denotes the man of hope. We must remember that even kind and intelligent people believed that if parents were good, the child must be so also; that poverty and dishonesty were inseparable; that children differed but little from the brute creation. How much Mr. Raikes shared this opinion may be judged from the fact that he called his plan merely an "experiment." Now this may not seem at all a hopeful word for him to use, but had he not been a man of hope he would have left such a problem as confronted him untouched.

Probably he did not even think of the tremendous result this "experiment" was to have upon society, yet he was willing to work for small results if necessary, believing, as he himself says, that "if the glory of God be promoted in any way, even the smallest degree, society must reap some benefit." He did not go out of his way to do good and he sought for no earthly reward. He attacked those evils that lay at his door, and was thereby to show how important the "little thing" is in God's great plan; for sympathy with the children was considered a very small thing indeed.

When Mr. Raikes began to enter into child-life, he was student as well as teacher, and many were the lessons learned. It was a revelation to him to find that genius was often seen among his little multitude, and that many of the children had extraordinary memories. He was surprised that these ragged outcasts really liked to be clean and wear nice clothes.

But perhaps the greatest lesson of all was the fact that this new "science" into which he was entering, was deep and could be mastered only by love and sympathy. When we see Mr. Raikes patting the heads of the children and entering so earnestly into their lives, we must admit that he had this love and sympathy in great measure. Almost before the children had recovered from their awe at his fine clothes, we see them opening up their hearts to him. But this sympathy is not seen in its tenderness alone. Mr. Raikes tells us that often he used to "bitch" the boys, and soon after they became fast friends. An old man when speaking of the memory of his teacher said simply but touchingly, "I love it." This is but one of the many similar testimonies. How great the personal charm and influence of such a man must have been!

Because of the rapid success of the Sunday School movement mentioned above we might imagine that from the very first Mr. Raikes encountered no difficulties, but this was by no means the case. As he was sincerely loved, so was he most honestly disliked. He was isolated, laughed at, and pitied for his "hobby," and all because he was the friend of the poor. Throughout the whole country people became prejudiced against teaching the children of the poor, and Mr. Pitt was almost forced to make the suppression of Sunday Schools a state question. Many bitter things were written against the founder, but they were soon to die away, for if ever God's blessing was granted to any movement it was to the Sunday School.

When we realize that throughout all this criticism Mr. Raikes did not waver from his purpose, and that when he was practically alone he still held firm, we must admit that he was pre-eminently a man of strength.

How feeble our strongest efforts must appear in comparison with his, and what little cause we really have for discouragement—we who have the sympathy of the whole Christian world and the unprecedented example of the century! Do we, who sometimes wonder if it is all worth

while, realize that we are members of the most successful institution ever known to exist? Should we lose heart even though after our impressive tenperance lesson our little eight-year-old comes to our down-town mission school cautiously trying to conceal his father's pipe in his already overflowing pocket? Did not the founders of the Sunday School have to work against still greater odds, and cannot that which has been done already be done again? We should ever remember a principle which Mr. Raikes set forth, "Let us not despond. Let us call on Him to whom all things are possible. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

We cannot have studied such a life thus far without having been impressed by the thoroughness of the man. We see it in every action. We are told that in order to do justice to the children and fully appreciate their environment, Mr. Raikes frequently visited their homes, thus becoming acquainted with the peculiar



THE STATUE OF ROBERT RAIKES ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT, LONDON.

needs of each child. We see that he took time to learn his lessons well, and when he was sure a thing was right he never gave up. Nothing could stop him. But we cannot enumerate the many instances of this thoroughness. It is seen everywhere, it is part and parcel of the whole.

Mr. Raikes was a man of love, strength and thoroughness. Could any greater three assets be given to an individual? Yet he was not a "self-sufficient" man; his whole power lay in the fact that he felt, "Of myself I can do nothing." He read his Bible with a purpose, and was a man of prayer. Herein he found his guide through life. Do we wonder that he is able to say, "Happiness depends upon promoting the happiness of others"; and again, "I have labored for the glory of God and the good of my fellow-creatures. . . . The pleasure cannot be taken from me?"

Can we not see the hand of Providence governing the moral progress of the world in the fact that such a man as

this—"a man whose reason and will were guided by a living faith in God"—was born into the world just when needed, and in the very place and rank where he could best fulfil His service? Let us, then, as a united school thank God for the life of Robert Raikes; let us rally round our standard, inspired with his moral courage in face of every opposition, remembering that He who gave him strength and crowned his efforts with success is still our Guide, and promises that "there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

We have referred to the wonderful success which has ever attended the Sunday School movement. We shall now briefly trace the progress of the institution and the development which it has undergone from its beginning to the present time.

From a purely local institution, prompted by charity, it has become an admittedly vital part of organized church life and work.

From dependence on a few paid teachers it has grown until it enrolls hosts of willing souls, who from pure love of the work, devote time, thought and energy to it.

From a ragged school for teaching the elementary principles of education, it has become a world-wide institution whose supreme aim is the impartation of religious truth for the bringing of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ through all the world.

From disconnected and wholly local methods of organization and management it has developed into a thoroughly organized institution for all the earth, binding the churches together in a glorious unity of study of the Word of God.

From a circumscribed missionary agency to reach a few of the local poor, it has spread out to all countries and climes as one of the greatest missionary forces in existence, and has during its history given birth to some of the most powerful and influential missionary agencies in existence to-day.

In the early days of the institution, friends who were interested in the work formed what were known as "unions." The first organization of this kind was formed in 1803, and was called "The London Sunday School Union." This society has done an extensive work in the development of the Sunday School, both in England and on the Continent, and it is still a very active and useful society.

In America there were a number of societies formed in the interest of the work, but in 1824 many of these were merged into a new organization, "The American Sunday School Union." The union still continues to organize schools in destitute localities and furnishes Sunday School libraries and necessary literature.

A National Convention held in New York in 1832 was the beginning of a series of conventions that has run on through all the years until now.

The Sixth National Convention was the First International Convention, and was held at Baltimore in 1875, and included, as its name implies, delegates from our own Dominion as well as from the various States of the Union.

The first World's Convention was held in London in 1889, the second in St. Louis in 1893, and so on, the latest and sixth being fresh in our minds as held at Washington last year.

It might be of interest here to insert a part of the report by the latest committee statisticians. The Sunday School lives and thrives in 126 different countries and groups of islands, includes over 300,000 schools, nearly 3,000,000 officers and teachers, and more than 25,000,000