

and active interest with the child problem, his evangelizing efforts among the children were but occasional, depending upon such opportunities as might be granted to visiting preachers. Hence persistent and systematic training was yet to arise.

We may now be in a better position to understand our above statement, "had the work of Robert Raikes never been done, the revival would have been largely confined to the age which gave it birth." For it was the timely fulfillment of this demand for systematic moral and religious instruction which gave to the Protestant Christian world new life and power and made possible its divinely directed work.

If we understand the conditions and consequent needs of the age as herein briefly set forth, we shall see what prompted the philanthropic Robert Raikes to found his first Sunday School. This will be still more apparent as we study

II.—THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

The Raikes family from its earliest record, consisted of farmers and later of business men; hence it was, so to speak, of the people. Each generation was energetic, independent, cautious and thrifty. Robert, promoter of Sunday Schools, was the son of Robert Raikes, a journalist and printer at Gloucester. The father was of independent mind, kind by nature, fearless in opposing intemperance, and keen in his efforts to better the conditions of prison life. He died when his son was but twenty-one years of age and left upon the shoulders of the young man the support of the family and the control of a business which steadily improved under his skillful management, for Robert, though not a great scholar, for Robert, education and was perfectly at home with men of letters or men of the world. He also possessed the sterling qualities of his father which were later to lead him into a movement for social reform.

In 1766, when thirty-one years of age, he married a lady of high social standing, and she, although she never took any active part in his philanthropic work, was in deepest sympathy with it. Early in his life Mr. Raikes visited the jails, and never wearied in his struggle for their improvement, although he was almost alone in his endeavors until Howard, the great prison philanthropist, exposed the abuses and succeeded in prison reform.

Throughout his entire life Mr. Raikes worked upon the principle that vice is preventable. This conviction lay at the root of all his prison work, and, though his method of prevention changed, this truth remained unaltered. He admitted that he had not succeeded with the adult, so he decided to try the child. He began to study child-life carefully, and after thorough and persistent effort reaped his reward.

HIS FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL.

He formed what was known as his first Sunday School in 1780. The children were to be taught reading, writing, and the catechism; the object being to furnish means for an elementary education and at the same time reform their morals and instruct them in the truths of the Christian religion.

It will be interesting to hear the description which Mr. Raikes himself gives of the commencement of the new movement. "The utility of an establishment of this sort was first suggested by a group of miserable little wretches whom I observed one day in the street where many people employed in the pin factory reside. I was expressing my concern to one at their forlorn and neglected state, and was told if I were to pass through that street on Sundays it would shock me

indeed to see the crowds of children who were spending that sacred day in noise and riot to the extreme annoyance of all decent people. I immediately determined to make some little effort to remedy the evil. Having four persons who had been accustomed to instruct children, I engaged to pay the sum they required for receiving and instructing such children as I should send to them every Sunday morning. The children were to come soon after ten in the morning and stay till twelve, they were then to go home and return at one, after reading a lesson they were to be conducted to church. After

and there are mural tablets in the church of St. Mary-le-Crypt, but the real and lasting monument to him is the vast multitude of scholars and teachers who meet every Sabbath to learn of Jesus and His love

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MAN.

The life and works of such a man as Robert Raikes speak loudly for themselves, and our humble words of praise must seem insignificant. Indeed when placed beside the nobility of his life, yet we should try to show, in part at least, our appreciation of such a character.



WHAT ROBERT RAIKES OFTEN SAW ON A SUNDAY.
From an old print.

church they were to be employed in repeating the catechism till half past five, and then to be dismissed with the injunction to go home without making a noise, and by no means to play in the street.

Mr. Raikes gave the experiment a three years' trial before he ventured to tell the world. During these years seven or eight schools, composed of both girls and boys, were opened in the city, with an average of thirty scholars each, and before this time had expired such a change had taken place in the children that even those who produced it were astonished.

In November, 1783, Mr. Raikes inserted in his paper a short notice of the success of his system—and many inquiries were consequently addressed to him.

From this time the work grew steadily and a love for humanity began to awake in many hearts where it had long lain dormant. Within a few years Mr. Raikes was admitted to an interview with Queen Charlotte who spoke of the plan to a Mrs. Trimmer, who started schools which were visited later by King George III.

In 1802 Mr. Raikes retired from business, receiving a life annuity of three hundred pounds from the Gloucester Journal. He died on April 5th, 1811, and was buried in the parish church of St. Mary-le-Crypt, where there are monuments to both him and his parents. In 1821 a jubilee was held to celebrate the fiftieth (really the fifty-first) anniversary of the movement. At this time there were one million two hundred and fifty thousand scholars and one hundred thousand teachers in Great Britain alone. In 1880 a centenary celebration was held. When Lord Shaftesbury travelled at Gloucester the model of a statue of Mr. Raikes which was to be placed in the Cathedral. This, however, has never been done, but another has been erected upon the Thames Embankment, London. In Gloucester a memorial tower has been erected

No number of single virtues or characteristics can convey to the mind a complete personality but there are outstanding features in every character which to a large extent, determine a man's true worth. In the case of Mr. Raikes, it seems we could apply no more fitting terms than *love, strength, and thoroughness*—these not working separately but woven together into a beautiful whole.

His love for humanity is seen long before he entered into Sunday School work, in his dealings with the prison. There is no official record of his unselfish devotion, and he himself makes no mention of it. Howard, however, refers to it. How passionate must his impulse of human sympathy have been, when during these years of self-sacrifice and discouragement, he continued his labors of love amidst every risk of fatal prison contagion! We can understand this only by remembering his own words, "It is that part of our Saviour's character I try to imitate; He went about doing good." This desire to imitate Christ was supreme. It was the key to his character, and how could he better fulfil this mission than by elevating the people? How often in the face of opposition and ridicule he must have said "Try again!" How many of us would have been as true to our aim when years of service had brought us but little nearer our goal?

One might imagine that Mr. Raikes gave up his prison work when he turned his attention to the children and began what was called his "botanizing in human nature"; but he did nothing of the kind. He was a man of deep conviction, and when he had once seen that the sufferings of the most unfortunate must be cured, he never shut his eyes to the fact; so throughout his entire life he visited prisons and actively opposed prison rule. He did not change his method of work because of discouragement. Discouragement does not belong to the man