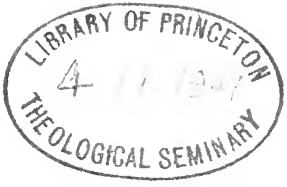

ROBERT RAIKES.

ROBERT RAIKES:

Journalist and Philanthropist.

A HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

By ALFRED GREGORY.

RAIKES' HOUSE IN GLOUCESTER.

SIXTH THOUSAND.

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CHAPTER I.

BIRTHPLACE AND PARENTAGE.

"A preaching friar settles himself in every village, and builds a pulpit, which he calls Newspaper."—CARLYLE.

GLOUCESTER, in the early part of the eighteenth century, was not the handsome, well-kept city it is now. It was then unpaved, undrained, unsavoury, and, by necessary consequence, unhealthy and incommodious. The houses were for the most part low, irregular, and projecting Instead of the numerous ships which now crowd the docks, an occasional vessel from Portugal or France deposited a few casks at the quay, and a wherry to Worcester went twice a week. As to locomotion, even the "Flying Coaches" which subsequently carried adventurous passengers to London in the course of two or three days, had not then commenced their journeys. Nor was the moral or social aspect of affairs more pleasing. The streets swarmed with rogues and vagabonds,

who were flogged through the city weekly by scores. Religion was at a low ebb. The Church seemed asleep. John and Charles Wesley had not begun their evangelizing labours, and Whitefield was known in his native city of Gloucester only as a dirty little rascal who robbed his mother's till and tried to quiet his conscience by giving part of the plunder to the poor. Wholesale executions for comparatively venial offences were the panacea of the Government for all crimes; and these same executions, with bull-baiting and cock-fighting, formed the favourite entertainments of the mob. Sunday-schools there were none, and poor schools were only just being thought of. All over the kingdom popular ignorance and prevalent vice went hand in hand. Gloucester, with all its badness, was no whit worse than the rest of the country. "Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people."

Yet as early as 1722 a gleam of light began to show itself in Gloucester. On the 9th April in that year appeared the first number of the *Gloucester Journal*, ninth in order of time among provincial papers, and in size scarcely larger than a sheet of foolscap. Its founder was a printer, named Robert Raikes, the son of a clergyman of the same name

who lived at Holderness, in Yorkshire. "Raikes the printer," as he was called, was a man of great enterprise and perseverance, and he managed his literary venture so successfully that it soon obtained an extensive circulation throughout Gloucestershire and the surrounding counties. A curious testimony to this fact is recorded in one of the early numbers, as follows:—

"A demure old farmer applied to the printer of the *Gloucester Journal*, and with great gravity of face told him that he feared the mealmen and bakers seldom read their Bibles, but as he knew they always read the newspapers, he desired a corner of his paper for the following texts: 'Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have' (Lev. xix. 36); 'Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord' (Prov. xx. 10)."

Great as was its ultimate success, Raikes' paper was not established without a hard struggle. Besides being, like every other contemporary production of the press, heavily handicapped with Parliamentary imposts—such as the duty on paper and the tax on advertisements—the *Gloucester Journal* experienced a special difficulty in the shape of an encounter with the House of Commons. The

story of that encounter will be found duly recorded in the journals of the House for 1728 and 1729. It seems that early in 1728 Mr. Raikes was bold enough to publish in his newspaper a report of certain proceedings in the House of Commons, supplied to him by Mr. Cave, of London, the celebrated founder of the *Gentleman's Magazine.* As Parliamentary reporting was at that time strictly forbidden, Raikes' temerity got him into trouble. The publication in the *Gloucester Journal* was declared to be "a breach of privilege," and Raikes himself was ordered to appear at the bar of the House for punishment. The record of his appearance on April 8th, 1728, reads thus: "Robert Raikes, in custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms, attending this House, was (according to Order) brought to the Bar; where he, upon his knees, received a Reprimand from Mr. Speaker, and was ordered to be discharged out of Custody, paying his fees." This warning did not prevent him offending again in a similar way the following year, and again he was ordered to appear at the bar. Instead of going he sent a petition, setting forth that he was ill of a fever and unable to travel, and pleading that the report complained of had been published without his knowledge, and contrary to his express

orders given to his servant before the commencement of the session not to print any of the votes or resolutions of the House. Taking these circumstances into their merciful consideration, the House "discharged Mr. Raikes from attendance;" but, as a proof of their determination to keep their proceedings secret, they passed a resolution declaring it to be "a breach of the privilege of this House for any person to presume to give, in written or printed newspapers, any account or minutes of the debates or other proceedings of this House, or of any committee thereof;" and offenders were warned that they would be proceeded against with the utmost severity. It was not till many years after this that the House of Commons abandoned its false stand against the Press, and allowed notes of its proceedings to be taken for publication. Meanwhile, Raikes' two summonses to London were so misrepresented in his own city, that he found it necessary to protest that, "Since the printer hereof hath been under the displeasure of the House, it hath been industriously and maliciously insinuated that it is for printing against the Government, which is a false and scandalous aspersion."

The columns of his paper bear abundant proof

that "Raikes the printer" was a philanthropist as well as a man of business. Whenever there was a good cause to be advocated, or a bad one to be decried, if the *Gloucester Journal* took part in the combat, it was always on the right side. Its columns were ever open to intelligence from all quarters, and to correspondence from all classes. George Whitefield, grown out of his boyish pranks and preparing for the Church, dropped some of his earliest effusions into Mr. Raikes' letter-box. Long before the labours of John Howard, attention was called to the deplorable condition of Gloucester gaol in Mr. Raikes' newspaper. Charitable objects were often aided by the publication of their claims and the gratuitous advertisement of their subscription lists. In short, among the provincial Press of that date, the *Gloucester Journal* was commendably foremost in many good works.

It was to this property that Robert Raikes, "the father of Sunday-schools," was born heir. In a house in Palace-yard, just beneath the shadow of Gloucester's grand cathedral, he first saw the light of day, on September 14th, 1735. His birthplace, bearing no indication of its distinguished associations, still remains standing among the private

dwellings within the cathedral precincts, and for many years it was inhabited by the late distinguished musical composer, Dr. Wesley. Of Raikes' mother little is known, save that she was the daughter of the Rev. Richard Drew, and was twenty-five years younger than her husband. On the monument erected in St. Mary de Crypt Church, Gloucester, to the memory of her husband and herself, she is described as "his most excellent wife;" and the exemplary after-life of her children tends to prove that her epitaph, unlike the generality of its class, was a true description of her real character. One of her sons, Thomas, became an eminent Russia merchant in London, and was for many years a director of the Bank of England. Another son, Richard, who was Robert's junior by eight years, was educated for the Church, and took his degree of M.A. at St. John's College, Cambridge. After having been a fellow of this college for some time, he married a Gloucester lady (Miss Mee), and in 1793 became perpetual curate of Maisemore, a village about two miles from Gloucester. While holding this living he resided during part of his time in Gloucester, and it is recorded to his honour that he heartily co-operated in his brother's philanthropic labours.

To the Rev. Richard Raikes also, in conjunction with two other gentlemen, is due the establishment of the Gloucester auxiliary of the Bible Society. At the time of his death he held, in addition to the incumbency of Maisemore, the appointments of Treasurer and Canon of St. David's, and Prebendary of Hereford. A monument erected to his memory in Gloucester Cathedral bears the following inscription:—"To the memory of the Rev. RICHARD RAIKES, A.M., a native of this city; eminent from his youth as a scholar, but still more eminent as a Christian. His unfeigned meekness, his unwearied benevolence, his unceasing labour, exemplified that union of industry and humility which he regarded as peculiarly characteristic of the Christian life. These qualities were in him the more conspicuous, because maintained, for nearly sixty years, under the pressure of broken health and continual personal sufferings. The principle which he felt and avowed as the source of his cheerful submission and ready obedience, was faith in his Redeemer, on whose merits alone he relied for acceptance. He was released from his labours, September 5th, 1823, in the 80th year of his age."

Respecting the youth of Robert Raikes there is

not much to record. His father, having himself achieved distinction as a journalist, intended his eldest son for the same career; and with this view Robert received an education which was both liberal and practical. It has been stated that he went to Cambridge, but this statement lacks confirmation. One of his personal friends in after life, the Rev. Samuel Glasse, D.D., wrote respecting him:—

"At a proper time of life he was initiated into the employment of his father, which was not limited to the business of a journalist, but extended itself to other branches of typography; and though I will not compliment my hero by comparing his literary amusements with those of a Bowyer or a Franklin, yet I can venture to pronounce that he entered on his line of business with acquirements superior to the nature of his employment, which, however, has always been considered by men of science and education as very respectable, and in which he is not less remarkable for his accuracy than he is for his fidelity and integrity in every part of his conduct." *

* The pamphlet from which the above extract is taken was written in January, 1788. Dr. Glasse, the writer, was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and one of the chaplains in

ordinary to His Majesty George III. He is said to have been "a very intelligent and active magistrate, and a very popular preacher." Bowyer, to whom he refers in conjunction with Benjamin Franklin, the American patriot, was a celebrated London printer.

CHAPTER II.

BUSINESS LIFE.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings."—PROVERBS xxii. 29.

ON the death of his father, on September 7th, 1757, the responsibilities of a large and important business devolved upon Robert Raikes. Not only did he become, at the early age of two-and-twenty, sole proprietor and editor of the *Gloucester Journal*—then the only newspaper in a district extending over many miles—but he succeeded also to the management of a general printing and publishing establishment, in which the personal character of the master exercised a most material influence. It soon became apparent that young Raikes, as a business man, was in no respect inferior to his father. His journal continued its prosperous career, and the other departments of his business were equally flourishing. Respecting

the typographical work done on his premises, a contemporary critic, himself a practical printer,* wrote :—"Several pieces, among which may be pointed out the works of Dr. Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, are such as will suffer nothing in comparison with the productions of modern typography." The same writer testifies to the "ability diligence, and care" with which Raikes conducted his business. Success followed as a matter of course. In process of time, the young printer grew to be one of the most influential men in his native city. The estimation in which his commercial qualities were held by others in the same profession is shown by the fact that for several years he was a member of the Court of Assistants of the Stationers' Company in London.

In 1767 he was married at St. James's Church, London, to Anne, only daughter of Thomas Trigge, Esq., of Newnham, Gloucestershire, and sister to Sir Thomas Trigge and Rear-Admiral John Trigge. At the ripe age of sixty-seven, after a business life of forty-five years, he retired upon a well-earned competency. It was on the 12th April, 1802,

* John Nichols, F.S.A., an apprentice to Bowyer, the London printer, and author of "Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century."

that he took his farewell of the readers of his newspaper, in these terms :—

"The property of the *Gloucester Journal* being immediately to be transferred to another person, R. Raikes, with the deepest sense of grateful respect, begs leave to make his acknowledgments for the distinguished favour by which, from its commencement in 1722, it has been uniformly honoured. The candid interpretation of his conduct, which he has on all occasions experienced, must ever inspire feelings of peculiar obligation, nor can he cease to cherish the flattering remembrance of the support he owes to characters of the first consideration, no less than to the community in general. Mr. D. Walker (late printer of the *Hereford Journal*) succeeds to the direction of this paper, whose best efforts, it is humbly hoped, will be rewarded by a patronage correspondent to that for which the present editor repeats his unfeigned gratitude at the interesting moment of final retreat from an undertaking of which a revered father laid the foundation, established the credit, and supported the independence. To preserve the respectability and favourable acceptance of the *Gloucester Journal* has so long been the earnest desire of the Printer, that he

cannot suppress a spontaneous wish for its future prosperity when for the last time he is about to subscribe himself as the Proprietor, with every sentiment of deference and regard to the public, R. RAIKES."

Mr. Raikes, though giving up the proprietorship, retained an interest in the newspaper, and received from it an annuity of £300 a year from the date of his retirement to his death.

The building in which Robert Raikes carried on his business is still to be seen in Southgate-street, one of the principal thoroughfares of Gloucester. It is a quaint, roomy old house with gable ends, now in the occupation of a firm of wine-merchants. The upper stories project to a considerable extent over the lower part, and the fronts are braced with stout oak timbers. As a specimen of the better class of English residences common in the eighteenth century, the house stands conspicuous, in a fine street, for its good condition, soundness, and picturesque appearance. Remembering the associations hanging round the spot, the spectator may easily recall the portly form of Robert Raikes, passing in and out beneath the gables and pursuing his philanthropic work.

A review of the old files of the newspaper

which Raikes owned and conducted so long affords many illustrations of the difference between journalism as it was then, and journalism as it is now. Leading articles, which now figure prominently in every newspaper, were then but rarely seen. Occasionally, the editor, or, as he more generally called himself, "the printer," deemed it necessary to express his opinions upon some current topic, but when he did so it was with the utmost possible brevity. "The editor of a weekly paper," wrote Raikes, "is under a necessity of suppressing pieces that might be an ornament to it, that matters of opinion may not take the place of matters of fact." When "matters of opinion" did obtrude, Raikes strove to make them as generally acceptable as possible. Of course he found that he could not please everybody. One week he was obliged to write as follows: "Whatever degree of anxiety the printer may feel to have his paper as much as possible the vehicle of nothing but what is acceptable to all his readers, in matters of party, the publisher of a country paper, of necessity open to both sides, cannot consider himself answerable for everything which may appear of that nature." "To convey to the public true and well-founded articles of intelligence," was Raikes' own definition

of his great object in the compilation of his newspaper. It was not always an easy matter to accomplish that object. Special reports by telegraph or railway were then unknown. For the general intelligence of the week country newspapers had to rely upon newspackets brought by coach from London, and it not unfrequently happened that these packets miscarried. Sometimes, even when they came, they were inaccurate, and the poor printer had to correct one week what he had stated the week before. In nothing does the printer seem to have been more frequently hoaxed than in his intelligence respecting "Births, Marriages, and Deaths,"—then a most important item in the paper. Some of the contradictions of misstatements under this head are very curious. One lady, writing to deny the report of her own death, indulged in the amiable remark that she was "in good health, and, what is more, hoped to outlive her enemies."

With announcements of marriages, it was the custom frequently to enlarge upon the eligible qualities of the contracting parties. For instance, we read one week: "On Wednesday last were concluded the happy nuptials of honour and virtue, in the persons of the worthy Mr. Charles Jones and the

accomplished Miss Harrison." Sometimes it is said that the bride has a "handsome fortune," and occasionally even the amount is mentioned as "adding to the nuptial joy." The following announcement to a correspondent is evidence that Raikes now and then received communications which he deemed too high-flown in their personal praises to be printed: "Presuming that the delicacy of the young lady might possibly be hurt by an address in the newspaper, we must beg leave to decline inserting the intended compliment to Miss P——r, of P——ck." On the other hand, there is in Raikes' journal a remarkable absence of those scurrilous personalities with which most newspapers of the eighteenth century abounded. Not a single instance of personal abuse can be found in the *Gloucester Journal* during the whole of the many years it was under the control of Robert Raikes. This fact is no slight testimony to the elevated character of the man.

Some of his notices to correspondents afford further proof of Raikes' sterling virtue. In the following paragraph he attempts to act as a peacemaker: "Our Worcester correspondent will appear in a more amiable character if he will exert the talents he is master of in reconciling his divided

neighbours rather than in keeping up that spirit of discord which has lately prevailed there." On another occasion Raikes invites an irate correspondent to dine with him, and make known his grievance to the printer in private. Frequent references by correspondents to "Mr. Raikes' well-known candour," and to the "truth and impartiality" of his paper, show that his manifest integrity of purpose in business life was generally acknowledged. Probably for this very reason he sometimes found himself entrusted with commissions that do not generally fall to the lot of literary men. One week, for instance, he announces: "The printer of this journal is desired to procure two hogsheads of the finest, richest, and pleasantest cyder which is to be got. He does not regard price. The cyder is to be compared with the finest cyder that can be procured from Normandy and from Devonshire. It is for a great foreign potentate, and it may be of service to this county to have the preference."

Raikes' independence in business transactions is shown by the fact that he required "ready money with advertisements," and that he frequently excluded advertisements from his paper to make room for news. Every now and again we read that "by

reason of the length of the foreign despatches," or "on account of the important reports of Parliamentary debates, a number of advertisements are held over, but will appear next week." There are very few newspaper proprietors who would venture on such an announcement now.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRISON PHILANTHROPIST.

"I was in prison and ye came unto me."—MATT. xxv. 36.

THE Sunday-school system, with which the name of Robert Raikes will ever be inseparably connected, may be said to have originated in the Gloucester gaols. It was there that he learned the direct connection between ignorance and crime, and there he saw the futility of punishing the effect without removing the cause. At the time he succeeded to the proprietorship of the *Gloucester Journal*, there were two gaols in Gloucester,—one for the county, the other for the city. The county gaol consisted of a portion of Gloucester Castle, a fortress built in the reign of William the Conqueror, at which time Gloucester was occasionally a royal residence, by Walter, the Constable of England. Beneath its ancient walls ran an arm of the river Severn. After the fifteenth century the castle fell into a state of desuetude, and early in the eighteenth

century the less dilapidated portion was turned into a prison. Its condition, when Raikes first knew it, was simply horrible. Though from forty to sixty fresh prisoners were received within its walls every week, there was but one court for them all. The day-room for men and women felons was only twelve feet long by eleven feet broad. Persons imprisoned for debt, of whom there was always a great number, were huddled together in a den fourteen feet by eleven, without windows, and with no provision for admitting light and air save a hole broken in the plaster wall. In the upper part of the building was a close dark room called "the main," in which the male felons were kept during the night, and the floor of this apartment was so ruinous that it could not be washed. Directly opposite the stairs leading to this sleeping-room was a large dung-hill. Owing to the utter absence of all sanitary arrangements, the whole place continually reeked with infection, and deaths were of constant occurrence. Sometimes as many as a dozen victims succumbed in a month. As far as the debtors were concerned, the only wonder is that any of them survived. No provision of any kind was made to keep them alive. No allowance was granted them, either of food or money, nor was any opportunity

given them of earning anything. At night, unless they could afford to pay for beds, they were obliged to lie upon straw, and for clothing as for food they were entirely dependent upon their own resources or the charity of the benevolent. The prisoners committed for felony, though, as a rule, less deserving, were a little better treated. They were provided with beds and clothing, and allowed a sixpenny loaf every two days. The indiscriminate hoarding together of debtors and felons, men and women, child offenders and hardened criminals, was productive of the most fearful immorality. Every new inmate, on entering this den of iniquity, was required by his fellow-prisoners to pay a certain sum of money, called "garnish," which was immediately spent in beer, bought from the gaoler, who eked out his emoluments by the profits derived from this trade. The gaoler had no salary, but was paid by fees. Attempts to escape were of frequent occurrence, and as the place was most inefficiently guarded, they were often successful.

Scarcely less deplorable was the condition of the city prison, an old building forming part of the north gate, one of the four gates which then stood at the principal entrances to the city. The gaoler received no salary, and paid the sheriff £4 14*s.* a

year for his situation. All the inmates—debtors, felons, and petty offenders—who could not pay for beds, were kept together in "the main" room, the women being separated from the other prisoners at night. There was no court, but the debtors had the "privilege" of walking upon the leads. In the matter of provisions, however, the debtors in the city gaol were much better off than their brethren in the castle, for they received three shillings a week and threepenny worth of bread per day, with "garnish."

For years before the celebrated John Howard commenced his prison crusade, Robert Raikes had been unostentatiously labouring among the miserable inmates of Gloucester Castle. His first efforts seem to have been to provide the necessaries of life for the imprisoned debtors, and with this object he was earnest in his solicitations, both through the channel of his newspaper and by personal applications to his friends. As early as 1768 we find in the *Journal* many such paragraphs as the following :—

"The prisoners confined in the castle, without allowance and without the means of subsistence by labour, most humbly entreat some little assistance from those who can pity their wretchedness. The

favours they have heretofore received will ever be remembered with gratitude."

"The unhappy wretches who are confined in our county gaol for small crimes which are not deemed felonies (for felons have an allowance of bread) are in so deplorable a state that several of them would have perished with hunger but for the humanity of the felons, who have divided with them their little pittance. A person who looked into the prison on Saturday morning was assured that several had not tasted food for two or three days before. Were a county Bridewell established they might then work for their subsistence. The boilings of pots or the sweepings of pantries would be well bestowed on these poor wretches. Benefactions for their use will be received by the printer of this journal."

"The little sums which have been deposited by the benevolent in the hands of the printer of this journal, for the relief of the necessities of those persons who are confined in the castle without any allowance, are now exhausted. There are near twenty persons entirely destitute of support or the means of acquiring it."

In response to these appeals Raikes received many contributions, which he personally distri-

buted among the most needy cases in the gaol John Howard, who visited Gloucester county gaol in 1773, and dined at Mr. Raikes' table, thus bears testimony to the value of his labours: "In September the felons were very pitiable objects indeed,—half-naked and almost famished. In December their appearance was much altered. Mr. Raikes and other gentlemen took pity on them, and generously contributed towards their feeding and clothing. Mr. Raikes continues his unremitting attention to the prisoners." Raikes did not content himself with relieving the temporal necessities of the prisoners. He cared also for their moral and spiritual wants. Frequently mixing among them, he endeavoured to awaken within them aspirations towards a better life. To those who were able to read he supplied good books, and he encouraged them by precept and example to instruct their less favoured fellow-prisoners. For all who were able and willing to work he endeavoured to find some kind of occupation, and he ever strove to inculcate among them the Christian principle of kindness one towards the other. To his labours in this direction the following valuable testimony is borne by the Rev. Samuel Glasse, D.D., a contemporary and friend

of Raikes, whom he termed "The father of the poor":—

"Whereas extreme ignorance was very properly considered by him as the principal cause of those enormities which brought them into their deplorable situation, precluding all hope of any lasting or real amendment from their punishment, his great desire was, if possible, to procure for them some moral and religious instruction. If, among the prisoners, he found one that was able to read, he gladly made use of him to instruct his fellow-prisoners, encouraging his diligence and fidelity in this undertaking by pecuniary rewards, and procuring for him such other kinds of indulgence as his situation would admit of. Having thus put them in a method of improving their time, he has met with instances of persons, especially among the younger offenders, who have attained to a competent proficiency in reading, which has served both as an amusement to them during their confinement, and as a recommendation of them in their restoration to the community. It may more easily be conceived than expressed what that benevolent heart must have felt (and this pleasure he has often received) when he has heard the prisoner thank God that, by being detected in his crimes, appre-

hended, and imprisoned, he has had opportunities afforded him of learning that good which otherwise he would probably have never known in his whole life. The choice of books being judiciously made, and religious instruction going hand-in-hand with other information, the teacher himself has often learnt while he was instructing others, and, from the very nature of his employment, became imperceptibly a better man. But the care of this philanthropist was not confined merely to the business of literary improvement: it was not less his desire to form their hearts, if it were possible, to sentiments of kindness to each other. Indeed, it was one of his principal endeavours to subdue in them, if it were possible, that savage ferocity of temper and behaviour which only served to ren der their situation more hateful and intolerable. Observing that idleness was the parent of much mischief among them, and that they quarrelled with one another because they had nothing else to do, he endeavoured to procure employment for such as were willing, or even permitted, to work."

By none were Howard's philanthropic schemes more warmly supported than by Robert Raikes. For years before Howard discovered the enormity of the then existing prison system, Raikes had been

denouncing in the columns of his newspaper the flagrant abuses connected with the Gloucester gaols, which he contended could be remedied only by a radical reform. Through the exertions of Howard and Sir George Paul that reform was ultimately brought about. The first step towards it was in 1774, when, by the efforts of Howard, two Bills were passed through Parliament, one abolishing gaolers' fees and assigning to gaolers a fixed remuneration out of the county rates, and the other requiring magistrates to provide for the white-washing and cleansing of prisons, the establishment of gaol infirmaries, and the proper care of prisoners. Ten years later, Gloucester Castle and its site were ceded by the Crown to the county of Gloucester, and shortly afterwards, thanks to the energy of Howard and Sir George Paul, whose plans ever had the warm support of Robert Raikes, the old county prison was abolished, and a new and commodious one, still in existence, was erected in its place. In this building, to which the prisoners from the city gaol were subsequently transferred, the separate system of Sir George Paul was first reduced to practice. To show the contrast between the old and new gaols, we may quote a statement in Miss Burney's

diary, July 19th, 1788, narrating a visit to Gloucester. With reference to the prison, whither she was conducted by Mr. Raikes and his family, she wrote:—

"Next they carried us to the gaol, to show us in how small a space, I suppose, human beings can live as well as die or be dead. The gaol is admirably constructed for its proper purpose—confinement and punishment. Every culprit is to have a separate cell; every cell is clean, neat, and small, looking towards a wide expanse of country, and, far more fitted to his supplications, a wide expanse of the heavens. An air of cleanliness and health seem to be considered, but no other indulgence."

While seeking to show his practical sympathy with the inmates of the gaol, Raikes often took the opportunity of illustrating, by a reference to their wretchedness, the contrast between the happiness of a path of virtue and the misery of a path of vice. His paper abounded with such reflections on this subject. Recording one week the deaths of several prisoners, he wrote: "It were well if those unthinking people who now enjoy but abuse their life and liberty to the violation of the law and the detriment of society, would reflect on the

danger of infection and the other miseries that await them in a crowded prison." In June, 1783, in mentioning that no less than sixty-six persons were committed to the castle in one week, he added: "The prison is already so full that all the gaoler's stock of fetters is occupied, and the smiths are hard at work casting new ones. Could unhappy wretches see the misery that awaits them in a crowded gaol they would surely relinquish the gratifications that reduce them to such a state of wretchedness." As showing that he recognised one of the chief causes of crime, there follows this significant remark: "The people sent in are neither disappointed soldiers nor sailors, but chiefly frequenters of alehouses and skittle-alleys." Another paragraph says: "The ships about to sail for Botany Bay will carry about one thousand miserable creatures, who might have lived perhaps happily in this country had they been early taught good principles and to avoid the danger of associating with those who make sobriety and industry objects of their ridicule." In 1790 a man named John Weaver, who had been convicted of stealing two geese, was ordered to be transported for seven years. "This practice," says a paragraph in the *Journal*, "of robbing the

farmers of their poultry is become so general that the Court is determined to put a stop to it as far as a severe punishment can contribute to that desirable object. It will be a dear price to pay for a couple of geese,—not only the forfeiture of liberty, but the confinement for ten or eleven months in the hold of a crowded ship, and then to be landed in a distant country, from whence the means of return are utterly hopeless." These are specimens of large numbers of paragraphs to be found in the *Journal* while Raikes was its "printer."

Among many striking incidents of gaol life which came under Raikes' notice was the following: A man named Daniel Munday had been committed to prison for stealing wood. He was a great swearer. One night, while uttering some blasphemous imprecations, his brother, who was also in prison, reproved him. Daniel continued his language, and called on his Maker to strike him dumb if he did not hang himself. Next morning the turnkey found him in bed at a late hour, "and supposing he lay there from sulkiness or ill-humour gave him some blows with a stick." Munday made signs that he was dumb, and this was found to be the case. He continued speechless for several days, and for some time after his

speech was restored he was "very exemplary in his behaviour and thankful to any of his fellow-prisoners who would read to him." His contrition was, however, short-lived. Two years later, a clergyman at North Nibley, writing to the *Journal*, said that Munday was engaged in repairing a well in that village, and was about to descend with some materials, when his companion begged him to remain on the bank, as a portion of the wall had fallen in. Munday, using an oath, declared he would go, whatever the consequences, and he commenced his descent. "The words were hardly out of his mouth when ten feet of the top of the wall fell in on the unhappy wretch and carried him to the bottom." His dead body was recovered some hours afterwards

CHAPTER IV.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

"It is my wish that every poor child in my kingdom should be taught to read the Bible."—GEORGE III.

BEFORE dealing with the circumstances of that which constitutes Robert Raikes' chief claim to the reverence of a grateful posterity—the part he took in the establishment of Sunday-schools,—it may perhaps save misapprehension at once to define the limits of his share in that work. Many controversies have waged round the question, Was Raikes the founder of Sunday-schools? The answer is entirely dependent upon the construction put upon the word "founder." If by "the founder of Sunday-schools" is meant the person with whom the idea of imparting education to the young on the Lord's day first originated, or by whom that idea was first carried into execution, Raikes is not entitled to the description. Years before Raikes commenced his work, the notion of Sunday instruction had presented itself to

several philanthropic individuals in various parts of the country, and was in isolated cases put into practice. In one sense of the term, therefore, each of these persons has a prior claim to Raikes to the title of "founder of Sunday-schools." Again, if by the term "founder" is meant the person to whom alone the establishment of Sunday-schools is due, to the exclusion of all participation in the work on the part of others, Raikes cannot lay claim to the honour; nor indeed can any other individual. In the whole of his labours Raikes had several most valuable co-workers, and to one, at least—the Rev. Thomas Stock—belongs almost, if not quite, as much credit for the institution of schools in Gloucester as to Raikes himself. Raikes' distinctive honour lies in the fact that, having in common with several other kindred spirits perceived the advantages that would attend Sunday teaching, he did not content himself, as did others, with establishing a school or schools in his own neighbourhood, but by means of his newspaper and other organs of public opinion he recommended the practice far and wide, and never ceased his advocacy till the scheme was generally adopted throughout the land. The movement, hitherto unheard of save in a few

provincial towns and villages, was by him brought into the light of day. In vigorous language he introduced it to all classes of readers. From cottager to king, all learned of the new institution through Robert Raikes. He raised Sunday teaching from a fortuitous rarity into a universal system. He found the practice local: he made it national. It is upon this ground that admirers of Raikes rest his claim to the honoured title of "founder of Sunday-schools."

The principles upon which Sunday-schools are based being as old as Christianity itself, it is not surprising to find those principles reduced to practice in numerous instances prior to the establishment of the Sunday-school system by Robert Raikes. As early as the sixteenth century Saint Charles Borromeo, nephew of Pope Pius V., and Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan, founded in the parishes of his diocese a number of Sunday-schools of which many continue to the present day. He died in 1584, at the age of forty-six. About a hundred years later, the Rev. Joseph Alleine, an eminent Nonconformist of Taunton, and author of the "Alarm to the Unconverted," adopted the plan of gathering the young together for instruction on the Lord's day. In the county of Gloucester,

years before Raikes was born, Mrs. Catherine Boevey, of Flaxley Abbey, had one of the earliest, and certainly one of the pleasantest, Sunday-schools on record. Her monument in Flaxley Church, erected after her death in 1726, records her "clothing and feeding her indigent neighbours and teaching their children, some of whom every Sunday by turns she entertained at her house and condescended to examine them herself." "Six of the poor children," it is elsewhere stated, "by turns dined at her residence on Sundays, and were afterwards heard say the catechism." In America, a Sunday-school was founded between 1740 and 1747 by one Ludwig Hacker, at Ephrata, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, among the German Seventh-day Baptists settled there. After the battle of Brandy-wine, fought between the American colonists and the British troops in 1777, the schoolroom was used as an hospital, and this event occasioned the breaking up of the school. In 1763-4 a Sunday-school was established at Catterick, Yorkshire, by the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, conjointly with a benevolent lady named Cappe. Miss Hannah Ball, a young Methodist lady, living at High Wycombe, started a Sunday-school in her native town in 1769. Writing to John Wesley in 1770

she said: "The children meet twice a week,—every Sunday and Monday. They are a wild little company, but seem willing to be instructed. I labour among them earnestly, desiring to promote the interest of the Church of Christ." Another school, on a somewhat humble scale, was established at Little Lever, a village four miles from Bolton, Lancashire, by a poor man named James Hey, or, as he was more generally termed, "Old Jemmy o' th' Hey." "Old Jemmy" employed the working days of the week in winding bobbins for weavers, and on Sundays he taught the boys and girls of the neighbourhood reading. His school assembled twice each Sunday in the cottage of a neighbour, and the time of commencing was announced by the ringing, not of a bell, but of an excellent substitute—an old brass pestle and mortar! After a while, Mr. Adam Compton, a paper manufacturer in the neighbourhood, began to supply Jemmy with books, and subscriptions in money were given him. He was thus enabled to form three branch establishments, the teachers of which were paid one shilling each per Sunday for their services. In 1778, a Sunday-school was commenced in Macclesfield by the Rev. David Simpson. And in the same year it is said that

the Rev. Thomas Stock—afterwards Raikes' co-worker in Gloucester—had a Sunday-school at Ashbury, in Berkshire.

There can be no doubt that Robert Raikes' labours in the establishment of Sunday-schools were the direct sequence of his philanthropic work in the Gloucester gaols. This is clearly brought out in the following narrative, written by the Rev. Dr. Glasse, a personal friend of Raikes, eight years after the first school in Gloucester had been started :—

"Mr. Raikes could not but have found, from painful experience, what up-hill work he was engaged in while he was endeavouring to humanize those dispositions which had been long inured to habits of uncontrolled ferocity and self-will. He could not but have observed the slowness and dulness of scholars unhabituated to any application of the mind except to mischief, and must needs have seen with concern how very unsusceptible even such as were willing to learn were of literary, moral, or religious instruction. He could not but have frequently reflected, in his intercourse with those wretched delinquents, on the profound ignorance in which they had grown up to maturity in an utter contempt of the wholesome restraints, and a professed disregard of the sacred duties, of religion.

"The return of every Sabbath, which gave liberty to the lower classes of the people to show themselves, exhibited to his view multitudes of the rising generation of the poor, pursuing, as he conceived, precisely the same plan which had been so unfortunately adopted by those already mentioned within the walls of the prison. The streets were full of noise and disturbance every Sunday, the churches were totally unfrequented by the poorer sort of children, and very ill-attended by their parents: they were nowhere to be seen employed as they ought to be. Had they been disposed to learn or attend to anything that was good, their parents were neither willing nor able to teach or to direct them; they were therefore a perpetual nuisance to the sober part of the community. They were riotous, impudent, and regardless of all authority whatsoever in their mode of behaviour, disrespectful in the extreme, and frequently detected in such petty offences as plainly indicated that they were on the high road to perdition, unless something could be done to rescue them. It occurred to him, and to a worthy clergyman (Mr. Stock), to whom he complained of the dissolute state of these poor children, that infinite would be the benefit, as well to the community as themselves, if any method

could be contrived of laying them under some proper restraint and instilling some good principles into their minds.

"The foundation, they well knew, must be laid in the fear and love of God, in a reverence for the duties of religion, and for all things relating to the Divine honour and service. Mr. Raikes soon began to make known his intentions to the parents, and without much difficulty obtained their consent that their children should meet him at the early service performed in the cathedral on a Sunday morning. The numbers at first were small, but their increase was rapid. The gentleness of his behaviour towards them; the allowance they found him disposed to make for their former misbehaviour, which was merely from a want of a better information; the amiable picture which he drew for them when he represented kindness and benevolence to each other as the source of real happiness, and wickedness, malice, hatred, and ill-will as the cause of all the misery in the world; the interest which they soon discovered him to have in their welfare, which appeared in his minute inquiries into their conduct, their attainments, their situation, and every particular of their lives—all these circumstances soon induced them to fly with eager

ness to receive the commands and be edified by the instruction of their best friend.

"Mr. Raikes very soon saw himself surrounded by such a set of little ragamuffins as would have disgusted other men less zealous to do good and less earnest to disseminate comfort, exhortation, and benefit to all around him than the founder of the Sunday-schools. The children now began to look up to him with such a mixture of respect and attention as endeared them to him and interested him still more and more in their welfare. At first they were, as may be supposed, utter strangers to the common forms of public worship, and it required some time to drill them to a decent observation even of the outward ceremonies of religion—I mean, to teach them to kneel, stand, and sit down in the different parts of the service. But they had their eyes fixed on their commander-in-chief, and they borrowed every motion from him before they could be made acquainted with the reason of it.

"But it was by no means his desire or intention that their observances of the Sabbath should end here. To prevent their running about in wild disorder through the streets during the rest of the day was the great object which he had in view, and to place them under the care of proper persons to

instruct them in their Christian duty was the prevailing object of his wishes. But how to effect this, and whence the resources were to arise, '*Hic labor, hoc opus.*'

"He lost no time in communicating his ideas to those of his friends who were as sensible of the need of some reform in this respect as himself, and a sufficient sum of money was speedily raised to procure masters and mistresses for a large number of children of both sexes to be educated in the principles of Christianity. The city of Gloucester soon began to wear a very different aspect on the Lord's day. Instead of noise and riot, all was tranquility and peace; instead of quarrelling and fighting, as heretofore, all was concord and harmony; instead of lying, swearing, and all kinds of profligacy, the children gradually imbibed principles of honesty and truth, of modesty and humility; instead of loitering about the streets in a state of indolence as painful to the observer as it was to themselves, they were now seen in decent regularity frequenting the places of public worship, evidently much happier in themselves than in their former state of irreligious idleness.

"The labours of the teachers have been much assisted, and their success has been promoted, by

the unwearied attention of Mr. Raikes to these children on every Sunday morning. When the early service is ended, it has been his constant practice to enquire minutely into their conduct, and even to inspect their persons, to reprove such as came dirty and slovenly, and to commend those that were neat and decent, however homely, in their apparel. The distribution of little rewards, and the slightest expression of displeasure from the man they love, has each its proper effect; and even the external appearance of these children demonstrates their advancement not less in civilization than morality."

Another link between Raikes' labours in prison and school has been placed on record by the daughter of a Mr. William King, a woollen card-maker of Dursley, who formed a Sunday-school in his native town some time before Raikes' movement. Mr. King's efforts failed for want of co-operation, but Mr. King himself never lost faith in the plan. The manner in which he was brought into contact with Raikes is related by his daughter, as follows:—

"My honoured father, Mr. King, being on business at Painswick one Saturday, was informed that there

were two men to suffer death at Gloucester. Instead of returning home to Dursley, his strong feeling led him to Gloucester to try if he could see and converse with them, intending to spend the night with them, if permitted, but the keeper of the prison thought it not proper, as they were desperate characters. He abode in Gloucester that night, and next morning called on Mr. Raikes. Both walked together by the Island (one of the lowest parts of the city of Gloucester), where were many boys at different sports. My father said, 'What a pity the Sabbath should be so desecrated!' Mr. Raikes answered, 'How is it to be altered?' 'Sir, open a Sunday-school, as I have opened one at Dursley, with the help of a faithful journeyman; but the multitude of business prevents me from spending so much time in it as I could wish, as I feel I want rest.' Mr. Raikes replied, 'It will not do for Dissenters' (as my father belonged to the Tabernacle, being one of the Rev. G. Whitefield's followers). 'Then,' my father answered, 'Then, why not the Church do it?' Mr. Raikes named this to a clergyman of the name of Stock, who paid a person to teach a few."

Mr. Raikes' objection to the scheme being originated by Dissenters was doubtless prompted by the

fear that if it became identified with any Nonconformist body, the Established Church, blinded by the mistaken prejudice of the age, would refuse to take it up. Hence he was desirous that the system should originate with the Church, knowing, doubtless, that its evident capabilities for good would speedily recommend it to the Nonconformists.

In the prison itself Mr. Raikes would find ample evidence of the direct connection between ignorance and crime. That this connection did not escape his notice is proved by numerous references to it in his writings. Here, for instance, is a statement he makes about a young man who was executed at the gaol for housebreaking: "He had never received the smallest instruction. He had never offered up a prayer to his Creator. He said he knew not how to pray. He was totally devoid of all sense of a future state."

In his business life, required as he was to keep himself well acquainted with the condition of contemporary society, Raikes could not fail to note that the neglected state of the juvenile population was one of the most alarming evils of the day. Very few of the children of the poor received the benefits of any education. As soon as they were able to do anything they were put to work, and in

heir intervals of leisure, of which Sunday was the chief, they were left altogether without restraint. "Ignorant, profane, filthy, and disorderly in the extreme," is one out of many similar descriptions which Raikes gives of the children he saw around him. As were the children, so were the parents. Said the Bishop of Chester, in 1786: "Our houses cannot secure us from outrage, nor can we rest with safety in our beds. The number of criminals increases so rapidly that our gaols 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 were they multiplied a hundredfold they would probably fail of the desired effect."

It was with this deplorable state of things that Raikes set himself to grapple. Prepared, as he was, by his previous experience, to see the advantages likely to accrue from Sunday-schools, it needed some more immediate impulse to bring him to the definite decision of founding so novel an institution. The necessary impulse came, as he himself tells us, by accident. The following is the

account which he gives of the affair in a letter to Colonel Townley, of Sheffield, who had written to the then Mayor of Gloucester for information respecting Sunday-schools:—

'GLOUCESTER, *November, 25th,* 1783.

"SIR,—My friend the Mayor has just communicated to me the letter which you have honoured him with, inquiring into the nature of Sunday-schools. The beginning of this scheme was entirely owing to accident. Some business leading me one morning into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactory) chiefly reside, I was struck with concern at seeing a group of children, wretchedly ragged, at play in the streets. I asked an inhabitant whether those children belonged to that part of the town, and lamented their misery and idleness. 'Ah! sir,' said the woman to whom I was speaking, 'could you take a view of this part of the town on a Sunday, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who, released that day from employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at "chuck," and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey

to any serious mind an idea of hell, rather than any other place. We have a worthy clergyman,' (said she) 'curate of our parish, who has put some of them to school, but upon the Sabbath they are all given up to follow their own inclinations without restraint, as their parents, totally abandoned themselves, have no idea of instilling into the minds of their children principles to which they themselves are entire strangers.'

"This conversation suggested to me that it would be at least a harmless attempt, if it were productive of no good, should some little plan be formed to check the deplorable profanation of the Sabbath. I then enquired of the woman if there were any decent, well-disposed women in the neighbourhood who kept schools for teaching to read. I presently was directed to four. To these I applied, and made an agreement with them to receive as many children as I should send upon the Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading and in the Church catechism. For this I engaged to pay them each a shilling for their day's employment. The women seemed pleased with the proposal. I then waited on the clergyman before mentioned and imparted to him my plan. He was so much satisfied with the idea that he engaged

to lend his assistance by going round to the schools on a Sunday afternoon to examine the progress that was made and to enforce order and decorum among such a set of little heathens."

In a letter to the *Arminian Magazine*, dated June 5th, 1785, Mr. Raikes gives, somewhat less in detail, the same account of the circumstances under which he established his first school. He says :—

"I have not had leisure to give the public an earlier account of my plan for a reform of the rising generation by establishing schools where poor children may be received upon the Sunday and there engaged in learning to read and to repeat their catechism or anything else that may be deemed proper to open their minds to a knowledge of their duty to God, to their neighbours, and themselves. 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 manufactory reside. I was expressing my concern to one at their forlorn and neglected state, and was told that if I were to pass through that street upon 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 found four persons who had been accustomed to instruct children in reading, I engaged to pay the sum they required for receiving and instructing such children as I should send to them every Sunday. 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, and after reading a lesson they were to be conducted to church. After church they were to be employed in repeating the catechism till half after five, and then to be dismissed, with an injunction to go home without making a noise, and by no means to play in the streets. This was the general outline of the regulations. With regard to the parents I went round to remonstrate with them on the melancholy consequences that must ensue from so fatal a neglect of their children's morals. They alleged that their poverty rendered them incapable of cleaning and clothing their children fit to appear either at school or at church. But this objection was obviated by a remark that if they were clad in a garb fit to appear in the streets I should not

think it improper for a school calculated to admit the poorest and most neglected. All that I required were clean faces, clean hands, and the hair combed. In other respects they were to come as their circumstances would admit. In a little time the people perceived the advantage. One or two clergymen gave their assistance by going round to the schools on the Sunday afternoon to hear the children their catechism. This was of great consequence. Another clergyman hears them their catechism once a quarter publicly in church, and rewards their good behaviour with some little gratuity."

The scene of Raikes' memorable conversation with the woman, as narrated in his letter to Colonel Townley, is supposed to have been an open space near the Severn, in one of the lowest parts of Gloucester, known as St. Catherine's meadows. Raikes' errand in this quarter was, we are told, to hire a gardener. The man whom he went to engage was from home, and it was while waiting for his return that Raikes had the momentous interview with the woman (the man's wife) which finally determined him to take action for the formation of Sunday-schools. In the same neighbourhood was situated the pin manufactory of which Raikes speaks.

At one time Gloucester was famous for its pin-making, and there is a tradition that the invention of pins was due to the ingenuity of an inhabitant of Gloucester, named Tilsby. This tradition was incorporated in the following verse composed at Gloucester by Charles Dibdin :—

> "The ladies, Heaven bless them all!
> As sure as I've a nose on,
> In former times had only thorns
> And skewers to stick their clothes on.
> No damsel then was worth a pin,
> Whate'er it might have cost her,
> Till gentle Johnny Tilsby
> Invented pins in Gloucester."

The art of pin-making has long since passed away from Gloucester, but in Raikes' day it was one of the staple industries of the city, and afforded occupation to a large number of workers, principally children.

The clergyman to whom Raikes represents himself as going was the Rev. Thomas Stock, at that time head-master of the Cathedral grammar school. Mr. Stock was born in 1750, and was consequently Raikes' junior by fifteen years. He went to Oxford at the age of seventeen, and after taking his degree of M.A. he remained for some years as

a fellow of Pembroke College. The first scene of his ministrations was the village of Ashbury, in Berkshire, where he was accustomed to collect the children together in the chancel of the church on Sundays for the purpose of giving them religious instruction. In 1777 he was appointed head-master of the Gloucester Cathedral school by the Dean and Chapter. In the following year the Bishop of Gloucester presented him to the vicarage of Glasbury, in the diocese of St. David's, and the Bishop of St. David's was pleased to dispense with his residence at Glasbury in order to enable him to continue the care of his school. For many years, in addition to the mastership of the Cathedral school, he held two important livings in the city of Gloucester—the rectory of St. John the Baptist and the perpetual curacy of St. Aldate. For some time, probably before his presentation to these livings, he was curate of Hempstead, a village about two miles from Gloucester. He is described by one of his contemporaries as "a man of great literary attainments and most exemplary conduct, who made it the business and pleasure of his life to go about doing good by instruction in righteousness and in works of charity, yet who never sought the applause of men." The

Gloucester Journal, recording his death on December 27th, 1803, sums up his character in the following glowing terms:—

"Possessed with sincere and ardent piety, with fervent and active charity—devout and impressive in the services of his ministry—eloquent and animated in the preaching of those awful truths of which diligent investigation had convinced his correct and learned mind—attentive, affecting, and solacing in his visitation of those who were sinking under the weight of sickness or the terror of death—scrupulously just in all his dealings—inoffensive, kind, and cheerful in domestic and social life—he will long live esteemed and lamented in the memories of his parishioners, his acquaintance, his family, and his friends."

This was the man to whom Raikes, at the very commencement of his work, appealed for counsel and co-operation. He did not appeal in vain. So thoroughly did Stock enter into the movement from its earliest stages that he appears to have had almost as much to do with the starting of schools in Gloucester as Raikes himself. Some even claim for him the credit of the original suggestion, which they say was communicated by him to Raikes and carried into effect by the combined

efforts of them both. Mr. Stock's own account of the affair, as given in a letter to a provincial paper, dated February 2nd, 1788, is as follows :—

"The undertaking originated in the parish of St. John's, in this city, of which I was curate. The fact is as follows: Mr. Raikes meeting me one day by accident at my door, and, in the course of the conversation, lamenting the deplorable state of the lower classes of mankind, took particular notice of the situation of the poorer children. I had made, I replied, the same observation, and told him if he would accompany me into my own parish we would make some attempt to remedy the evil. We immediately proceeded to the business, and, procuring the names of about ninety children, placed them under the care of four persons for a stated number of hours on the Sunday. As minister of the parish, I took upon me the principal superintendence of the schools and one-third of the expense. The progress of this institution through the kingdom is justly attributed to the constant representations which Mr. Raikes made in his own paper of the benefits which he perceived would probably arise from it."

It does not appear from the above narrative

that Mr. Stock claimed for himself the credit of first suggesting Sunday-schools in Gloucester: he rather seems to represent Mr. Raikes and himself as being both impressed with the greatness of the evil, both recognising Sabbath instruction as a probable remedy, and both co-operating in an endeavour to try the experiment in practice. This is substantially the story told by Raikes in his letter to Colonel Townley. The discrepancies on points of detail between the two accounts may be explained by supposing that Mr. Raikes had been thinking of Sunday-schools, and had taken some steps for their formation, before his interview with Mr. Stock; and that Mr. Stock, having had similar thoughts, expressed them at this interview, and then proceeded, in conjunction with Raikes, to canvass for children and get the plan into operation. This is the view of the subject taken by many competent authorities, including the Rev. Luke Booker, LL.D., F.R.S.L., vicar of Dudley, whose work, "The Springs of Plynlimmon," printed in 1834, contains the following passage:—

"Gloucester, the birthplace and cradle of Sunday-schools, was fortunate in possessing, at the birth and infancy of those schools, two individuals admirably fitted by Divine providence to foster

and train to maturity the novel institution—the Rev. Thomas Stock, a clergyman of the Church of England, and Robert Raikes, Esq. Having been invited to advocate the cause of Sunday-schools, soon after their establishment, at St. Mary de Crypt Church in Gloucester, few persons are better acquainted with their origin and originators than myself. That being Mr. Raikes' parish, he was at church, and I was more than once a guest at his table. I also knew the Rev. T. Stock, and I consider it a circumstance in which the hand of Divine providence was discernible that Gloucester possessed two such valuable men to co-operate in the same good work at the same time; for, to promote its success, that they were 'workers together with God' there are many persons like myself still alive who can prove. Which of the two had the greater portion of merit, *non nostrum est tantas componere lites.* Although exclusive claims are preferred for each of these worthy individuals, I am induced from what I know to say of them both, *et vitulæ tu dignus et hic.*"

Some of Mr. Stock's friends, however, are not content that the honour of founding Sunday-schools in Gloucester should be shared between Raikes and Stock: they claim for Stock the origination

of the scheme, and allot to Raikes to participate only in the work of carrying the idea into practice. This was the contention of Mr. George W. Counsell, the Gloucester historian, the Rev. Henry Wintle, an old pupil of Stock's, and several others. Mr. Wintle's version of the interview between Raikes and Stock is as follows :—

"On a Sunday evening Mr. Stock met Mr. Raikes in Hare-lane, and said how much he was hurt at seeing the children so desecrate the Sabbath by their sports and pastimes. 'Mr. Raikes,' said he, 'I am determined to have a school for them; they cannot err so much by learning to read and write as by their present riotous behaviour and playing.' After a few days Mr. Raikes (certainly a well-disposed man) had some further conversation with Mr. Stock, who entered more into detail respecting his plan. It was then agreed that Mr. Raikes, who was wealthy, should supply three parts of the expense of the school, and Mr Stock the remainder, with superintendence and direction."

It would be profitless to enter into the details of the controversy raised by this contention. It is possible, on the supposition that two different schools are referred to, that both sides may to some extent

be right. The supporters of the claims of Stock point as the result of his suggestion to a school in St. John's parish; whereas the advocates of Raikes agree in fixing upon a school in St. Catherine's parish as the consequence of his conversation with the woman in St. Catherine's meadow. St. Catherine's was unquestionably the first school opened in Gloucester: and it is for suggesting this one that Raikes claims credit. Mr. Stock himself speaks of his own labours as being in the parish of St. John, and he doubtless deserves the credit of originating the Sunday-school movement there. As far as the testimony of contemporary authorities goes, the weight of evidence is strongly in favour of Raikes' claim to the title of "founder of Sunday-schools." No question is made respecting it in the following dedication of a sermon preached in 1786 by the Rev. Dr. Glasse, at Painswick, and afterwards published by request:—

"To Mr. Robert Raikes, of the city of Gloucester, an instructor of the ignorant, and a father to the poor; to whose piety and zeal, in the first institution and subsequent encouragement of Sunday-schools, every friend to religion is indebted; the following discourse, preached at his request, is inscribed as a token of friendship, approbation, and esteem by the author."

Raikes himself was present while this sermon was preached, and the preacher alluded to him as follows: "Of the original author of these excellent institutions, I forbear, for obvious reasons, to say anything, both because this is not a place for language which might bear the semblance of flattery, and because his merit in this good work is beyond all praise."

The foot-notes to this sermon mention the names of several distinguished individuals who had countenanced and promoted Sunday-schools, as, for example, the Earl of Ducie, the Bishop of Chester, the Dean of Canterbury, the Rev. Mr. Hearne, of Canterbury, and others; but the name of the Rev. Thomas Stock is in no way referred to. Writing in 1786, the Rev. Mr. Hearne, of Canterbury, spoke of Sunday-schools as "the institution of Mr. Raikes, a name that every clergyman—especially those of his own city and neighbourhood—should highly reverence." In the same year, Jonas Hanway, the eminent philanthropist, attributed the institution of Sunday-schools to "the humanity and pious hopes of Mr. Raikes." Again, in 1788, a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* terms Raikes "the father and founder of Sunday-schools." In the same year, the Rev. John Berington, in an essay on "The

Depravity of the Nation, with a View to the Promotion of Sunday-schools," speaks of Raikes as "a patriotic and virtuous citizen, to whom, it is in my hope, the present generation will raise a monument of gratitude: already he possesses one (and I think that will please him best) in the breasts of his fellow-subjects. I speak of Mr. Raikes, of Gloucester, who first *proposed and realized* the scheme of Sunday-schools." Many other instances might be given to show that the origination of Sunday teaching, as a national system, was by his contemporaries ascribed, almost without question, to Robert Raikes. The whole controversy may be summed up in the words of the late Rev. John Burder, M.A., of Stroud, who said: "On the whole, I see no cause for denying to Mr. Raikes the reputation of having been the founder of Sunday-schools; at any rate, he bears to that system a relation very similar to that which Dr. Jenner bears to vaccination. Before Jenner's time it was known in some farm-houses that persons employed in milking cows did not take the small-pox when that grievous malady prevailed around them; but Jenner was the man who not only gave publicity to the fact, but also ascertained and made known to Britain and the world what steps should

be adopted in order to render vaccination a defence against that plague."

It was at the house of a Mr. King, in St. Catherine-street, that the first Gloucester Sunday-school was started, in the month of July, 1780. Mr. King was at that time steward to Mr. Pitt, who represented Gloucester in Parliament for some years. Prior to the establishment of the school, Mr. Raikes and the Rev. T. Stock went to Mr. King's house, and engaged the services of Mrs. King as the first teacher, at a salary of 1*s.* 6*d.* per Sunday, of which sum Mr. Raikes contributed a shilling and Mr. Stock sixpence. Mrs. King continued to teach for three years, at the end of which period she died Her husband then undertook the office of teacher, and retained it for many years. Among the mementoes of his work, which he highly prized, was a Bible given him at the commencement of the institution, and dated July, 1780. Mr. King lived to be eighty years of age. In recording his death, in 1832, the *Gloucester Journal* speaks of him as a man universally respected, a kind and liberal benefactor to the poor, and a Sunday-school teacher who discharged his duties with great credit and usefulness. The second school was established by Mr. Raikes alone, in his own parish of St. Mary de

Crypt, at a house at the corner of Grey Friars and Southgate-street. This school was for many years taught by a Mrs. Sarah Critchley, who lived next door. The third school is believed to have been founded by Mr. Stock, in the parish of St. John the Baptist, at the back premises of 103, Northgate-street. About the same time Mr. Stock started a school in the adjoining parish of St. Aldate, and several others sprang up in other parts of the city. Among them are enumerated a school in Oxbody-lane, taught by a Mrs. Brabant; one in St. Aldate's-square, at the house of Mr. Trickey, the sexton; one in Hare-lane; and one in Deacon-street, in a house which stood on the site of the present ragged-school. The teachers in these early schools were most of them paid for their labours at the rate of one shilling per Sunday.

If all the circumstances were fully known, it would doubtless be found that Raikes and Stock were assisted in their labours by many like-minded fellow-workers. The names of two, at least, may be placed on record. A young Methodist lady, named Sophia Cooke (who afterwards became the wife of the Rev. Samuel Bradburn, a celebrated Wesleyan preacher), was at that time living in Gloucester with her uncle, Alderman Weaver.

Compassionating the condition of the children employed in her uncle's pin manufactory, she formed the plan of gathering them together on the Sunday, giving them instruction, and taking them to the church where Mr. Stock preached. Both Raikes and Stock were greatly interested in her work, and she, in her turn, seems to have rendered them material assistance in their labours. It is said that she marched with Robert Raikes at the head of his troop of ragged urchins on the first Sunday they were taken to church. Soon after Raikes' first school was established in Gloucester, a school was founded at Sheepscombe, a village about five miles distant, by a Mr. Samuel Webb, of Stroud. A poor pious man, named John Twining, became the teacher, and continued in that office for forty-one years, during which time he received frequent visits from Mr. Raikes, who gave him a Bible with an inscription in his own handwriting. In 1841 Twining was still living, and was eighty-five years of age. As the oldest Sunday-school teacher living, a small annuity of twenty shillings was granted him by the Stroud Sunday-school Union.

CHAPTER V.

THE SPREAD OF THE MOVEMENT.

"Once by the river side
A little fountain rose;
Now like the Severn's seaward tide
Round the broad world it flows."
—J. MONTGOMERY.

IT was not till November 3rd, 1783, or more than three years after the commencement of his first school, that Raikes made the Sunday-school system public in the columns of his newspaper. He did so without any mention of his own name, and without in any way attempting to claim credit for his share in the movement. This is a significant fact, which seems to have been overlooked by those who would attempt to represent him as vain-glorious and fond of praise. Considering the part which he had taken in the establishment of Sunday-schools, he could scarcely have announced the scheme in more modest terms than he did. His words were as follows:—

"Some of the clergy in different parts of this county, bent upon attempting a reform among the children of the lower class, are establishing Sunday-schools, for rendering the Lord's day subservient to the ends of instruction, which has hitherto been prostituted to bad purposes. Farmers, and other inhabitants of the towns and villages, complain that they receive more injury to their property on the Sabbath than all the week besides: this, in a great measure, proceeds from the lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint. To remedy this evil, persons duly qualified are employed to instruct those that cannot read; and those that may have learnt to read are taught the catechism and conducted to church. By thus keeping their minds engaged, the day passes profitably, and not disagreeably. In those parishes where the plan has been adopted, we are assured that the behaviour of the children is greatly civilized. The barbarous ignorance in which they had before lived being in some degree dispelled, they begin to give proofs that those persons are mistaken who consider the lower orders of mankind incapable of improvement, and therefore think an attempt to reclaim them impracticable, or, at least, not worth the trouble."

Six months later, on May the 24th, 1784, Raikes, in his editorial capacity, again brought the movement under public notice, and again we find him modestly suppressing his own name and assigning all the credit to the clergy. He wrote:—

"Whilst the public-spirited exertions of the most distinguished characters in our county are meditating a reform of the police, by rendering our prisons, if possible, the reverse of what they have hitherto been—seminaries of every species of villainy and profligacy—several of the clergy in the county are setting forward a mode of general instruction for the children of the lower class of the people by establishing schools for their reception on Sundays, a day upon which they are given up to follow their wild and vicious inclinations free from restraint. The promoters of this design seem to concur in the idea that prevention is better than punishment, and that an attempt to check the growth of vice at an early period, by an effort to introduce good habits of acting and thinking among the vulgar, is, at least, an experiment harmless and innocent, however fruitless it may prove in its effects."

From that date, for a period of several years, Raikes' newspaper teemed with notices of new

schools and testimonies to their value. Among others we read that at Hempstead, a village near Gloucester, "the worthy clergyman" (the Rev. T. Stock) "has established a Sunday-school for receiving all the poor children, where they are not only kept from acts of mischief and roguery on that day, but their time is employed in learning their catechism and in being taught to read." At Bisley, we are informed, "the children, from being savage and filthy in their manners and appearance, are now become decent, orderly, and attentive to cleanliness." At Painswick, where a Sunday-school was established in 1784 by Mr. Webb, in 1785 (says Raikes), "upwards of 200 children have been taught to read, but that which far more strongly recommends the institution is the singular change in the manners of the children. Heretofore, their lives were marked with brutality and profaneness; but now there prevails, in a striking degree, a sense of subordination and of due respect to their superiors, quietness and decency in their behaviour, and an attention to cleanliness in their persons." Three years later, Raikes records that from this same school at Painswick no less than "200 children have been put out to service, and they now conduct themselves in such a manner as to

give the fullest satisfaction to their employers, both with respect to honesty, industry, and behaviour." Among many other places in Gloucestershire where schools were established before the close of 1784, were Badminton, Didmarton, Acton Turville, Woodchester, Stroud, Stonehouse, Nymphsfield, Tetbury, and Mitcheldean.

One speedy result of the spread of the institution was the almost total suppression of Sunday revel and wakes throughout the county. This doubtless was one of the circumstances which induced the Gloucestershire magistrates, at the Easter Quarter Sessions of 1786, to pass a unanimous vote to the effect that "the benefit of Sunday-schools to the morals of the rising generation is too evident not to merit the recognition of this Bench and the thanks of the community to the gentlemen instrumental in promoting them." Some of the county magistrates materially aided the new institution by handing over to the funds of the Sunday-schools all fees which they received on occasions when they acted as their own clerks. The Bishop of Gloucester also gave the movement the benefit of his official sanction. At his visitation at Gloucester in July, 1786, he said "he doubted not that with proper management, and under the inspection of

the parochial clergy, Sunday-schools might be productive of great good among the children of the poor throughout his diocese." This was a statement the Bishop might safely venture on. Some of the good results of the first schools we have already incidentally referred to: here is Raikes' account (published May 24th, 1784) of what they had then effected in Gloucester:—

"The good effects of the Sunday-schools established in this city are instanced in the account given by the principal persons in the pin and sack manufactories. Great reformation has taken place among the multitudes whom they employ. From being idle, ungovernable, profligate, and filthy in the extreme, they say the boys and girls are become not only more cleanly and decent in their appearance, but are greatly humanized in their manners, more orderly, tractable, and attentive to business, and of course more serviceable than they ever expected to find them. Cursing and swearing, and other vile expressions, which used to form the sum of their conversation, are now very rarely heard among them."

Similar beneficial effects were observed elsewhere. Lord Ducie, who subsequently became one of the most generous patrons of Sunday-

schools, had his attention first directed to them by the reformation noticeable in the children in the neighbourhood of Tortworth Castle, his Gloucestershire seat. Raikes tells the story of his lordship's introduction to Sunday-school work (omitting names) in the following terms:—

"A nobleman, to whom a title and large estate in this county lately descended, was present at the parish church near his seat a few Sundays ago, where he saw the aisles filled with a great number of the poorest children in the parish. He observed silence and good order prevail among them, and that, at the close of the service, instead of running promiscuously and hastily out of church, they took their ranks and walked in order two and two like a disciplined body to the number of more than a hundred. Inquiring into this singular regulation, he learnt that with the view to keep the children out of mischief—to which the Sunday was formerly entirely devoted—the minister of the parish assembled them in little seminaries, where the day was spent in the improvement of their minds, in learning the catechism, and in attending public worship. His lordship inquired how far their general behaviour was affected by this institution, and expressed great pleasure in hearing that a

remarkable alteration in their conversation and manners had been the result; nor were the children alone benefited, for the parents were observed to be less vile and profligate since attention had been paid to the improvement of the children With this information his lordship appeared sensibly affected, and immediately determined to give the measure all possible countenance and encouragement."

Raikes was not content with endeavours to spread the institution of Sunday-schools simply in his own county. His aim was to make the movement national. At that time his newspaper circulated far beyond the limits of Gloucestershire, and the paragraphs which he wrote respecting the new institution were freely copied into other journals. Thus the attention of philanthropists throughout the kingdom was drawn to the subject, and letters came pouring in upon "the printer of the *Gloucester Journal*" from all parts, asking for further information. In answering these letters Raikes generally detailed the mode of proceeding in the original schools, with the rules adopted for their conduct. One of his replies, addressed on Nov. 25th, 1783, to Colonel Townley, of Sheffield, was sent to the *Gentleman's Magazine* by a Sheffield correspondent,

in the belief that "Mr. Urban will think the following copy of a letter from Mr. Raikes, of Gloucester, on his new and excellent scheme of Sunday-schools, worth preserving." The editor, in publishing the letter, added, "It is with pleasure we give place to this benevolent plan, which promises fair to transmit the name of Mr. Raikes to latest posterity." Additional publicity was given to the scheme in 1785, by the publication of another letter from Raikes in the *Arminian Magazine*, of which John Wesley was the editor, and which circulated widely among the then rapidly-increasing "people called Methodists." The *European Magazine* was another medium through which Raikes brought the movement into light.

No sooner had Raikes thus called general attention to his scheme, than good men and women, far and wide, began to adopt it. With but few exceptions its merits were universally recognised. Adam Smith said: "No plan has promised to effect a change of manners with equal ease and simplicity since the days of the Apostles." The poet Cowper declared that he knew no nobler means by which a reformation of the lower classes could be effected. John Wesley wrote his first notice of Sunday-schools on July 18th, 1784: "I find these schools spring-

ing up wherever I go. Perhaps God may have a deeper end therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians?" From this time forth Wesley continued to take the utmost interest in the institution of Sunday-schools. Writing in 1787 to Richard Rodda, a Cheshire Methodist, he expressed his belief that "these schools will be one great means of reviving religion throughout the kingdom. I wonder Satan has not sent out some able champion against them." Again, in 1788, he said, "I verily think these schools are one of the noblest specimens of charity which have been set on foot in England since the time of William the Conqueror."

Dignitaries of the Established Church spoke in equally warm terms. In January, 1786, the Rev. Dr. Kay, Almoner to the Queen, and Archdeacon of Nottingham, delivered a charge to the clergy of his archdeaconry on the subject of Sunday-schools. After deploring the depravity of the age, he continued thus:—

"'In the midst of judgment God has remembered mercy,' and the Divine goodness seems to have pointed out to the present age a measure so comprehensive of good, so peculiarly extensive in the advantage which it holds out to society, that it

appears formed to counteract every evil propensity of these days, and to prevent them from being injurious to succeeding generations; which embraces within its benevolent arms every sect of Christianity, every description of mankind. The measure which appears to me to possess this invaluable antidote to the poisonous manners of this depraved age is the establishment of Sunday-schools. The power and efficacy of these institutions reach to such extent of situation and of numbers as no other mode of improvement can possibly equal. Having anxiously watched their infancy and attended to their progress, I have thought their principles the most unequivocal, and their influence the most extensive, that can be employed in the cause of general reformation."

In May of the same year (1786) Bishop Porteous, who then held the see of Chester, delivered an important episcopal utterance on the subject in the shape of a charge on "the rise and progress of Sunday-schools." In somewhat cautious terms he spoke as follows:—

"During my residence at Chester last summer, I received several letters from clergymen, both in the diocese and out of it, respecting these schools. In general, I was, I must confess, from the first disposed to approve and encourage them, and

accordingly, as far as private correspondence went, I did so. But as they were then quite novel institutions, and some persons of worth and judgment had, I found, their doubts and apprehensions concerning them, I thought it prudent, before I went further, to wait a little, till time and experience and more accurate inquiry had enabled me to form a more decided judgment of their real value and their probable effects. The consequence is, that the information I have of late received concerning them from various quarters (but especially from the great manufacturing towns in my diocese), has confirmed the favourable opinion I was originally inclined to entertain of them. At the same time, they are not, I am convinced, to be adopted without some qualifications and restrictions."

The "qualifications and restrictions" referred to by the Bishop, he explains to be care on the part of the clergy as to the character of the teachers and of the books used in the schools, and the utmost caution not to make Sunday a day of rigour, but to maintain it as a day of pleasant rest by allowing the scholars "sufficient time for cheerful conversation and free intercourse with each other, and, above all, for enjoying the fresh and wholesome air and sunshine in the fields or gardens with their

relations or friends." "With these limitations and precautions," continued Bishop Porteous, "I have no doubt Sunday-schools may be productive of the best consequences." In recommending his clergy to establish them, he said: "The next generation, if not the present, will probably, in consequence of these benevolent exertions of yours, perceive an astonishing change in the manners of the common people. And they who live to see so desirable a reformation, will not, I trust, forget (most assuredly your Heavenly Father will not forget) to whose kindness and to whose labours they stand indebted for such substantial benefits."

Even at the time Bishop Porteous spoke, some of the benefits of Sunday-schools were already known to him. In his charge of 1786 he testified to their value as follows:—

"In some places in the diocese of Chester they have been established near two years, and in this space of time their good influence, I am assured, has been very apparent. A visible alteration for the better has taken place in the appearance and conduct of the children. They are now become more cleanly in their persons and dress, and more decent and orderly in their behaviour both on the Lord's-day and on other days. Many of

them, who did not so much as know their alphabet, can now read tolerably well, can repeat and seem to comprehend their catechism, and make a good use of their Bibles and prayer-books. And, what is a very material circumstance, a sense of virtue and religion has manifestly communicated itself from the children to many of the parents."

The Bishop of Salisbury also advocated Sunday-schools at this early period of their history, and drew up a series of regulations for the schools established in his diocese. A few years later (in 1789), Shute, Lord Bishop of Sarum, recommended to the clergy of his diocese the universal establishment of Sunday-schools, and stated that there were already no less than 300,000 scholars in Sunday-schools throughout the kingdom. This estimate was probably under, rather than over, the mark. As early as 1785, we learn from the Rev. Dr. Glasse, himself a personal friend of Raikes, that 250,000 children were at school, and that the system, having already been extended to Ireland, was about to be introduced into the Colonies. Dr. Glasse's words are as follows :—

"It is needless to observe how happily Mr. Raikes' ideas have met the public approbation, and how generally his excellent plan has been

adopted and encouraged. Some few persons have looked upon it with coldness and disregard; still fewer have ventured to oppose and object to it. The former, we venture to pronounce, have misconceived the nature and design of the institution. The latter are advocates for a slavish subjection in the poor, which they know will be best favoured by keeping them in a state of abject ignorance. I will not go so far as to suppose any one that calls himself a Christian capable of envying the advancement of religion, which certainly may be expected from these endeavours to instruct the children of the poor. It is now a period of four years since this institution was first set on foot, and this 'grain of mustard seed' is now grown to such an incredible extent that under its shadow not fewer than 250,000 of our poor fellow Christians are sheltered and protected. From this spark, excited by the zeal, and supported by the indefatigable exertion of a worthy individual, such a flame of piety and charity has been kindled as diffuses its brightness through our own and a neighbouring kingdom, and is even about to extend itself to our settlements in distant countries, comprehending all descriptions of the poor, and affording a most delightful prospect to every serious mind of a national reformation

of manners among the lowest orders of the people."

Among Robert Raikes' friends was an eminent London printer, John Nichols by name, who printed the *Gentleman's Magazine,* and to him, in 1787, Mr. Raikes wrote as follows :—

"It is incredible with what rapidity this 'grain of mustard seed' has extended its branches over the nation. The third of this month (November) completes four years since I first mentioned the expediency of Sunday-schools in the *Gloucester Journal,* and by the best information I am assured that the number of poor children who were heretofore as neglected as the wild ass's colt, but who are now taken into these little seminaries of instruction, amounts to 250,000. In the town of Manchester alone the schools contain 5,000. It would delight you to observe the cheerfulness with which the children attend on the Sunday. A woman told me last Sunday that her boy enquires of her every night before he goes to bed whether he has done anything in the day that will furnish a complaint against him on Sunday. You see, sir, to what care and vigilance this may lead."

Though the above letter was intended by Mr. Raikes simply as a private communication to his

friend Nichols, the printer, the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* published it for the benefit of his readers, with the remark that "Mr. Raikes' own good heart will pardon our thus divulging it." It is evident from the many references made by different correspondents to Mr. Raikes, that his name was directly associated in the popular mind with the origin of Sunday-schools, although in his own paper he had ever suppressed all reference to himself. Some of the laudations passed upon him by his admirers are somewhat high-flown. Here is one from a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1788:—

"What a spiritual 'continual feast' must the respectable father and founder of Sunday-schools, an old acquaintance, Mr. Raikes, enjoy! observing that the work of piety and charity which he so well and happily first began at Gloucester has in like manner been carried on and continued by very considerable persons, by the very best, in many, if not most, parts of the kingdom, so that the Divine pleasure hath 'prospered in his hand.' Messiah-like (whom we should all strive to imitate) may he more and more see 'the [blessed effects of the] travel *(sic)* of his soul and be satisfied.' Mr. Raikes was highly satisfied and luxuriously enter-

tained last year at New Brentford in seeing numbers of poor children so decent, orderly, and intelligent, religiously educated in his own way, to whom he bountifully presented Bibles. The worthy Mrs. Trimmer (justly honoured with royal approbation), assisted by her family, very diligently and successfully teaches and manages hundreds of them, who make a most comfortable and creditable appearance on the Lord's-day in the chapel. Her much-esteemed publications may improve and edify thousands elsewhere."

While visiting some relations at Windsor, probably about Christmas 1787, Mr Raikes had the honour of introducing his institution to the Queen. Hearing that he was in the neighbourhood, Her Majesty sent for him, and expressed a desire to know "by what accident a thought which promised so much benefit to the lower order of people as the institution of Sunday-schools was suggested to his mind, and what effects were observable in consequence on the manners of the poor." The conversation which ensued lasted more than an hour. Raikes, in accordance with his invariable habit of keeping his own name out of print, makes no mention of this memorable interview in his newspaper, but he

briefly refers to it in the following letter to the Rev. Bowen Thickens, of Ross :—

"*June 27th*, 1788.

"I rejoice to hear that Sunday-schools are producing the same happy effects with you that are springing up in all parts of the kingdom, when the high ranks of people will condescend to overlook the management. At Windsor, the ladies of fashion pass their Sundays in teaching the poorest children. The Queen sent for me the other day to give Her Majesty an account of the effects observable on the manners of the poor, and Her Majesty most graciously said that she envied those who had the power of doing good by thus personally promoting the welfare of society in giving instruction and morality to the general mass of the common people, a pleasure from which by her position she was debarred. Were this known to the ladies of the British nation it would serve to animate them with zeal to follow in the example which the Queen is so desirous to set before them. You may mention it to the ladies of Ross, who will not then perhaps be above noticing the children of their poor neighbours, if they are present."

After this interview Queen Charlotte ever took a lively interest in Sunday-schools. Mrs. Trimmer, whose schools at Brentford Raikes had visited, was a great favourite at the Palace, and with her the Queen conferred respecting the possibility of establishing Sunday-schools in Windsor. In her journal Mrs. Trimmer writes: "I have this day had the unexpected honour of attending Her Majesty, and had inexpressible pleasure in her sensible, humane, and truly Christian conversation. May her pious design of establishing Sunday-schools at Windsor be put in execution." Again, writing to a friend, Mrs. Trimmer says: "Some time in last autumn I received a message from the Queen desiring me to attend her at a certain hour. I accordingly waited on Her Majesty, who received me with the most condescending kindness, told me she had heard of the success of the schools under my inspection, and, being very anxious for their establishment at Windsor, desired to have information from me on the subject. I was honoured with a conference of about two hours. It is impossible to do justice to the charming manner in which the Queen expressed the most benevolent sentiments and the tenderest regard for the happiness of the poor."

Shortly afterwards, the King himself visited the Schools of Industry at Brentford, and won the hearts of all the children by his condescending behaviour. The promoters of Sunday-schools were much encouraged by these marks of royal favour. "General joy," wrote Mrs. Trimmer, "prevails among the conductors of Sunday-schools."

Mrs. Trimmer was not the only authoress who supported the new institution. In her Somersetshire home on the Mendip Hills, Hannah More had long lamented the ignorance of the lower classes, and in 1789 she endeavoured to enlighten them by means of a Sunday-school. Prior to starting her school she made a house-to-house visitation through the village, of which she says: "We found every house a scene of the greatest ignorance and vice: we saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot." In five years' time there were in regular attendance at the schools established by Hannah More in this country district no less than 200 children and 200 adult scholars.

A few other details, culled from Raikes' newspaper and other contemporary records, may serve to illustrate more forcibly the rapid spread of the new institution. At Leeds, in 1784, within a year

of the first promulgation of the scheme in the *Gloucester Journal*, there were twenty-six schools and 2,000 scholars, taught by forty-five masters. By the next year Manchester had no less than 2,836 of its children under Sabbath instruction, "and" (says the record) "such a general conversion of manners, such a change from noise, profaneness, and vice to quietness, decency, and order, was never seen in any former period, and was not conceived practicable till this institution took place." In his chronicles of the times Raikes incidentally mentions some curious regulations in force in Manchester for enforcing Sabbath observance. On the authority of a Manchester gentleman who visited him in 1784, he states that it was the custom of the chief magistrate of that town, attended by the churchwardens and police officers, to go out of the church while the first lesson was being read, and to compel all persons found in the streets to come into church or to pay a fine, which in the case of persons of the lower class was fixed at one shilling, and for those of higher rank half-a-crown. The Bishop of Chester, in the charge already quoted, bore testimony to the establishment of Sunday-schools in his diocese as early as 1784. In the city of Chester, six disciples

of John Wesley, led by one Richard Rodda, are said to have started the first school. They submitted their rules to the Bishop, and gained his entire approval. Another Methodist school was at Bolton, where it was founded in 1785. It is remarkable as being one of the earliest schools at which the masters gave their services without payment. Respecting the musical capacities of its scholars Wesley wrote in 1788: "This I must avow: there is not such another set of singers in any of the Methodist congregations in the three kingdoms as there is at Bolton. There cannot be, for we have near a hundred such trebles—boys and girls selected out of the Sunday-schools and accurately taught—as are not to be found together in any chapel, cathedral, or music-room within the four seas. Besides that, the spirit with which they all sing, and the beauty of so many of them, so suits the melody that I defy anything to exceed it except the singing of the angels in our Father's house." Inspired by Wesley's recommendations, the Methodists largely adopted the new institution at an early period of its history. Pleasing records may be found of the manner in which other voluntary Churches joined with the Established Church in promoting the good work.

Anxious as Raikes is said to have been that the foundation of the Sunday-school system should be laid by the Church of England, he readily recognised the aid which Nonconformists gave in raising the superstructure. For instance, in chronicling the establishment in 1786 of three schools at Witney, he says: "The Dissenters of every denomination were assiduous in their co-operating aid to give vigour and permanency to this institution." In London the first school is said to have been established about the year 1784, in connection with the Rev. Rowland Hill's congregation at Surrey Chapel.

Among Raikes' friends and fellow-workers was a gentleman named William Fox, to whose efforts was due the formation in 1785 of the first Sunday-school Society Mr. Fox's history was a remarkable one. He was born in 1736, of somewhat humble parentage, in a Gloucestershire village, and in his boyhood was employed to scare birds on his brother's farm. While there he formed the resolution of ultimately purchasing the farm; and in after life he not only fulfilled this resolution, but also became lord of the manor of his native village. He acquired his wealth by trade. Beginning as an apprentice to a draper at Oxford, he succeeded to his master's business, which flourished

greatly under his care, though his master predicted that the conscientious manner in which he conducted it would assuredly never pay. From a retail shop-keeper in Oxford, Fox grew to be a wholesale merchant in London. In all his prosperity, however, he never forgot his Gloucestershire home. Feeling deeply interested in the education of the poor, he opened a school at his own expense in the village of Clapton, Gloucestershire; but he found it impossible to give daily instruction to a circle sufficiently extended to satisfy his desires. Hence he caught eagerly at the idea of instruction on the Sabbath as a means by which he might accomplish the great end he had in view—"that every person in the world might be taught to read the Bible." At first, however, he feared that instruction one day in seven would be insufficient to teach children to read, and he communicated his apprehensions in a letter to Raikes, at the same time propounding to him a scheme for the formation of a Sunday-school Society. Raikes' reply was as follows:—

"GLOUCESTER, *June 20th*, 1785.

"SIR,—You very justly suppose that an apology was utterly unnecessary for a letter like yours.

I am full of admiration at the great and noble design of the society you speak of as forming. If it were possible that my poor abilities could be rendered in any degree useful to you, point out the object, and you will not find me inactive. Allow me to refer you to a letter I wrote a week ago to Jonas Hanway, Esq., upon the subject of Sunday-schools. If you ask him for a sight of it, I dare-say he will lend it to you. With respect to the possibility of teaching children by the attendance they can give upon the Sunday, I thought with you, in my first onset, that little was to be gained; but I now find that it has suggested to the parents that the little progress made on the Sunday might be improved, and they have therefore engaged to give the teachers a penny a week to take the children once or twice a day during the recess from work at dinner-time or morning, to take a lesson every day in the week. To one of my teachers who lives in the worst part of our suburbs I allow two shillings a week extra (besides the shilling I give her for the Sunday employ), to let as many of them as are willing come to read in this manner. I see admirable effects from this addition to my scheme. I find the mothers of the children and grown-up young women have begged to be admitted

to partake of this benefit. Sorry I am to say that none of the other sex have shown the same desire. A clergyman from Painswick called upon me this afternoon and expressed his surprise at the progress made there. Many boys now can read who certainly have no other opportunity than what they derive from their Sunday instruction. This he assured me was a fact, but I think they must have applied themselves at their homes. I hear that the people of the Forest of Dean have begun to set this machine in motion among the children of the colliers, a most savage race. A person from Mitcheldean called upon me to report the progress of the undertaking, and observed, 'We have many children who three months ago knew not a letter from a cart wheel' (that was his expression) 'who can now repeat hymns in a manner that would astonish you.'"

After receiving this letter from one so well able to speak upon the subject Fox hesitated no longer. Aided by Mr. Jonas Hanway, Mr. Henry Thornton, Mr. Samuel Hoare, and others, he organized, in August, 1785, the "Society for the Establishment and Support of Sunday-schools throughout the kingdom of Great Britain." At the first meeting of the

Society a letter was read from Robert Raikes, and Thomas Raikes, who lived in London, was appointed on the committee. At the following meeting, in 1786, another letter from Robert Raikes was read, describing the success of Sunday-schools at Painswick; and of this letter 1,000 copies were ordered to be printed for distribution among the newspapers and the subscribers to the Society. At the same time the thanks of the Society were voted to Mr. Raikes for his communication. At the general meeting of the Society in July 1787, there was unanimously adopted the following recommendation, which serves as another proof that at that time Raikes' claim to be considered the founder of the Sunday-school system was unquestioned: "Your committee, taking into consideration the humble zeal and merits of Robert Raikes, Esq., of Gloucester, who may justly be considered as the original founder as well as the liberal promoter of Sunday-schools, beg leave to recommend to the general meeting that he be chosen as an honorary member of this Society." The work done by the Society may be judged from the fact that before it had been in existence a year it had founded five schools in London, and by 1795 it had distributed 91,915 spelling-books, 24,232 Testaments,

and 5,360 Bibles, which had been applied for for use in 1,012 schools containing about 65,000 scholars. With its founder, Mr. William Fox, Raikes continued to preserve relations of mutual esteem. The following letter, written by Raikes in answer to a narrative sent to him by Mr. Fox of a school celebration at Colchester, will serve to show the regard in which Raikes held his fellow-worker:—

"GLOUCESTER, *July 27th*, 1787.

"DEAR SIR,—I regret that the variety of my business engagements when I was last in town prevented me from devoting an afternoon to the enjoyment of your company. The loss was mine, for I find few pleasures equal to those which arise from the conversation of men who are endeavouring to promote the glory of the Creator and the good of their fellow-creatures. I consider you, too, with the greatest respect, as I believe you were one of the first of my encouragers at the outset of the little plan I was the humble instrument of suggesting to the world. I thank you, my good friend, for communicating the pleasing recital from Colchester. What a wide and extensive field of rational enjoyment opens to our

view could we allow the improvement of human nature to become a source of pleasure. Instead of training horses to the course, and viewing with delight their exertions at Newmarket, let our men of fortune turn their eyes to an exhibition like that at Colchester. Impart to them a small portion of the solid enjoyment which a mind like yours must receive from the glorious sight—children more neglected than the beasts of the field now taught to relish the comforts of decency and good order, and to know that their own happiness greatly depends upon promoting the happiness of others. When the community begins to reap the benefit of these principles, let us hope that the nation will manifest to the world the blessed effects of the general diffusion of Christianity. The great reformations of past times have been only removing obstructions from our way. Let us hope that the day is approaching when 'the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.' The number of children admitted into a state of culture in this short period seems to me little less miraculous than the draught of fishes, and would incline us to think that the prophecy above quoted is advancing to its completion. Some French gentlemen, members of the Royal Academy of

Paris, were with me last week, and were so strongly impressed with the probable effects of this scheme of civilization that they have taken all the pieces I have printed upon the subject, and intend proposing establishments of a similar nature in some of their parishes in the provinces, by way of experiment. We have seen the rapid progress of Christianity. Dr. Adam Smith, who has very ably written on the wealth of nations, says, 'No plan has promised to effect a change of manners with equal ease and simplicity since the days of the Apostles.' I have sent you my paper of this week, that you may see we are extending towards Wales with the improvement of a School of Industry. I have only room to add that I am,

"Dear Sir,

"Your sincere friend and servant,

"R. RAIKES."

One of the greatest hindrances to the progress of the Sunday-school system was the expense of hiring teachers, whom it was the custom to pay from 1*s.* to 2*s.* each per Sunday for their services. From 1786 to 1800, the Society for the Establishment of Sunday-schools expended no less than £4,000 in the payment of teachers. It was probably owing

to the difficulty of finding funds for this purpose that even in Gloucester itself, about thirty years after their institution, Sunday-schools seem to have received a temporary check. It has been asserted that for a time all the schools in the city were closed; but the inaccuracy of this statement is shown by the records that still exist of the consecutive anniversaries of the school in St. Mary de Crypt parish, which was peculiarly "Raikes' own." There can, however, be no doubt that the work received an immense impetus from the introduction of gratuitous teaching. Raikes himself lived to see this radical improvement begin. In 1810, about twelve months before his death, unpaid teaching was made general in Gloucester, chiefly through the efforts of six young men, who had heard of the success of the plan in other places. Lamenting the decline of Sunday-schools in the city of their origin, these young men banded themselves together with the determination to revive them. They applied to their minister, the pastor of the Countess of Huntingdon's chapel, for leave to use that edifice for school purposes.

"No," said the minister, "the children will make too much noise." Nothing daunted, the young men renewed their application, this time

to the trustees. "No," said the trustees, "the children will soil the place." The next appeal was to the members of the church. "No," said the members of the church, "you will find no children, no teachers, and no money to pay expenses." Thus discountenanced on all hands, the young men determined, with the blessing of God, to act for themselves. Gathering one night after business hours around a post at the corner of a lane, within twenty yards of the spot where Bishop Hooper was martyred, they clasped each other by the hand, and with reverently uncovered heads resolved that, come what would, Sunday-schools in Gloucester should be re-established. As a fund to start with they subscribed a half-crown each, and then, dividing the city into districts, they canvassed it for scholars. On the following Sunday upwards of one hundred children attended, and from that time forward the work progressed with yearly-increasing success. One of these young men, at that time an assistant in a draper's shop, was afterwards known as the Rev. John Adey, pastor of the Congregational Church, Bexley Heath, Kent.

The idea of conducting Sunday-schools by unpaid teachers is said to have originated in a

meeting of zealous Wesleyan office-bearers, one of whom, while the others were lamenting their inability to hire teachers for want of funds, said, "Let us do the work ourselves." Wesley records that as early as 1785 the masters in the school at Bolton gave their services gratuitously, and a few years later the same practice became general in Stockport. Every succeeding year added to the number of unpaid teachers, the Nonconformist churches being especially ready to recognise the advantages of voluntary Sunday-school labour. By degrees paid teachers were entirely superseded, and gratuitous instruction became the universal rule. The formation of the Sunday-school Union in 1803 gave an immense impetus to the extension of the Sunday-school system. Under the auspices of the Union and at the suggestion of Mr. James Montgomery, the poet, a Sunday-school jubilee was celebrated on the 14th of September, 1831, the anniversary of Robert Raikes' birthday. Mr. Montgomery wrote two hymns, and Mrs. Gilbert a third, which, with a portrait of Mr. Raikes, were engraved on steel for use at the jubilee gatherings. Medals were also struck in commemoration of the occasion, bearing the inscription, "Robert Raikes, Esq., Founder of Sunday-schools, born at

Gloucester, September 14th, 1735." In Gloucester, the programme of the Jubilee celebration comprised an early morning prayer-meeting for teachers, a sermon to teachers and children at 10.30 a.m., a dinner to the children (about 1,000 in number) at mid-day, and a teachers' tea and public meeting in the evening, at which addresses were delivered by two teachers who had themselves been favoured with Mr. Raikes' personal instructions.

This chapter could hardly be considered complete without some reference to the spread of the Sunday-school system in the sister dominions of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and abroad. The honour of introducing the work into Wales belongs to the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, who formed the plan of removing the dense spiritual ignorance which he found in the course of his evangelistic labours to everywhere prevail by the establishment of circulating schools, movable from one place to another, at the end of nine or twelve months, or even more. The schools commenced in 1785, and rapidly spread over the whole country. One remarkable feature in them was the large proportion of adults to be found amongst the scholars: in a school at Bangor a class was to be seen of which every member wore spectacles.

The Welsh Sunday-schools were indirectly the cause of the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, an organization whose efforts to circulate God's Word throughout the world have since been attended with marvellous results. Mr. Charles found, some few years after the institution of his schools, that the demand for Welsh Bibles was far greater than the supply. This fact is said to have been brought home to him very forcibly by the following incident. Walking in the streets of Bala one day in the year 1802, he met a little girl who attended his ministry. He inquired if she could repeat the text from which he had preached on the preceding Sunday. Instead of giving a prompt reply, as was her wont, she remained silent and confused. "Can you tell me the text, my little girl?" repeated Mr. Charles. The child wept, but was still silent. At length she said,—

"The weather, sir, has been so bad that I could not get to read the Bible."

'Could not get to read the Bible! How was that?" exclaimed Mr. Charles, full of surprise.

The reason was soon ascertained. There was no copy to which she could get access, either at her own home or among her friends, and she was accustomed to travel every week seven miles over

the hills to a place where she could obtain a Welsh Bible to read the chapter from which the minister took his text. The next time Mr. Charles went to London he urged among his friends the formation of a Bible Society for Wales. At the suggestion of the Rev. Mr. Hughes the scheme was extended to the whole world, and the result was that on the 7th March, 1804, the British and Foreign Bible Society was fully established.

In Scotland, though a Presbyterian minister had a Sabbath-school in his own house as early as 1756, Sunday teaching, as a system, sprang from the efforts of Robert Raikes. In 1795, under the auspices of an unsectarian association called the "Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath-school Society," a school was opened at Portsburg, and by 1812 the society had under its care forty-four schools and 2,200 children. In the north of Scotland Sunday-schools had to contend against considerable opposition from both Church and State. The assembly of the Scottish National Church condemned in severe terms the unauthorised instructions of lay teachers, and some of the teachers were threatened with legal proceedings for violating the statutes by which teachers of religion were compelled to obtain a license and take oaths of allegiance to

the Government. Some ministers stated from the pulpit that Sabbath-school teaching was a breach of the fourth commandment, and others threatened to exclude from the communion of the Church all parents who sent their children to the Sabbath-schools. From some parts of Aberdeenshire Sunday-school teachers were marched into the city of Aberdeen, under the charge of constables, to account before the magistrates for their presumption. But all the opposition came to nought. The civil authorities, on learning the nature of the new institutions, wished the teachers God-speed, and Church dignitaries soon became warm patrons of the schools which at first they condemned. Those very religious bodies which passed resolutions against Sunday schools now have annual statistical returns of their operations.

In Ireland, the Sunday-school system had been partially anticipated by the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, curate of Bright parish, county Down, who, about the year 1770, gathered the children of his district together to practise psalmody. Gradually other branches of instruction were added, until, in 1785, Dr. Kennedy, having heard of the proceedings in England, commenced, with the aid of a gentleman named Henry, to make his school compre-

hensive and systematic, according to the English method. The spread of the system is noticed by an Irish correspondent of Raikes' newspaper on April 30th, 1787, in the following terms :—

"Dr. Woodward, Bishop of Cloyne, and Dr. Law, Bishop of Clonfort, by the establishment of Sunday-schools in their respective dioceses, have given the strongest evidence to the nation that the profligacy of our common people is to be diminished more successfully by an attention to their morals in the early period of life than by hanging thousands when they are confirmed in habits of vice and are let loose from every restraint of religion and morality. Instances of reform, so very singular and unhoped-for in some districts, have attended the labours of these pious prelates, that the governors of this country have been struck with the facts, and, in consequence, have taken the resolution to propose to Parliament a plan of education which shall embrace in its benevolent arms the lowest of the people. Mr. Orde brought it before the House a few days ago, and was heard with the most fixed attention for three hours. The House was penetrated with the force of his arguments, and unanimously agreed to support those excellent designs of Government."

In 1805 the Irish Methodist Conference passed resolutions recommending the establishment of Sunday-schools in every circuit in Ireland In 1809 was founded the Hibernian Sunday-school Society, which still exists under the title of the Sunday-school Society for Ireland, and has been exceedingly useful.

In America, isolated Sunday-schools were in existence in several localities as early as 1750 and 1760, but Sunday teaching, as a system, was not introduced till a much later date. The idea, improved by the introduction of unpaid teachers, and with greater attention to its religious character, was developed in the United States by Francis Asbury, the patriarch of American Methodism. He planted what may be termed the first American Sunday-school in Hanover county, Virginia, in 1786. In 1790 the Methodist Conference resolved on establishing Sunday-schools for poor children, white and black. In 1791 an unsectarian association called "The First Day or Sunday-school Society" was formed at Philadelphia; and in 1804 Mr. Divie Bethune, an American philanthropist who had visited England, opened in New York one of the first schools that became permanent. It is recorded that "young ladies, the

first in station, in society, and in accomplishments" were among the earliest teachers in New York. In 1810 we find Sunday-schools in existence in the West Indies. In 1815 they were introduced into France; and about the same time they were established in Asia, by Wesleyan missionaries at Ceylon, and Baptist missionaries at Serampore. Time would fail to trace the spread of the movement further. Suffice it to say that wherever Christianity, with civilization in its train, has penetrated, there Sunday-schools have found a place. Of Sunday-school teachers it may be said almost with literal truth, "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

CHAPTER VI.

RAIKES AND HIS SCHOLARS.

"More bent to raise the wretched than to rise."
—GOLDSMITH.

BY the aid of Raikes' letters and other contemporary records let us picture one of the earliest schools in Gloucester, the one known to posterity as "Raikes' own,"—because it was in his own parish and was carried on more directly under his direction than any of the other establishments he was instrumental in founding. Other schools, having been once fairly started, he left to the care of the workers who had become interested in them, but this one, in the parish of St. Mary de Crypt, was his own permanent and peculiar charge. In point of time it is supposed to have been the second established after the inauguration of the scheme by the joint efforts of Raikes and Stock. Its *locale* was a private dwelling-house in Southgate-street, almost opposite Raikes' residence, and very

near to the parish church. The teacher, a Mrs. Sarah Critchley, lived next door, and was paid for her services at the rate of one shilling per Sunday with firing and gratuities worth an additional six pence. The children, drawn for the most part from the lowest classes of the population, varied in age from six to fourteen: no provision seems to have been made for infants. The one essential qualification for the admission of scholars was cleanliness. "All that I require," said Raikes to the parents, "are clean hands, clean faces, and their hair combed." None were turned away because their clothes were dirty or ragged. "If you have no clean shirt, come in that you have on," said Raikes; and when the ragamuffins pointed to their tattered garments and shoeless feet as excuses for their non-attendance, Raikes argued with them, "If you can loiter about without shoes and in a ragged coat, you may as well come to school and learn what may tend to your good."

According to the rules drawn up by Raikes' zealous co-worker, the Rev. Thomas Stock, school opened at eight o'clock in the morning; but it was usually half-past eight before the children were all together and the proceedings actually began. Raikes himself was frequently present at the

opening, and it was his practice to inquire into the conduct of the scholars, and, if necessary, to inspect their appearance. Those who were dirty and slovenly he reproved, but the neat, however homely their apparel might be, received words of commendation. Boys and girls were taught separately. Each teacher had about twenty children under his care, and these he was accustomed to divide into four classes, with a leader, usually the best boy or girl in the class, to each. The duty of the leader was to act as monitor and pupil teacher to his class. He taught them their letters, practised them in spelling, and heard them read. Some of the more advanced received reading lessons from the New Testament, and learnt portions of the Church catechism and Watts' hymns. Emulation was excited by the occasional distribution of little rewards, such as books, combs, shoes, or articles of apparel, to the most diligent. The vice of profane swearing, at that time fearfully prevalent amongst all classes, was one against which the scholars were frequently warned, and the leaders were charged to report to the teachers every instance of the use of bad language in school. "The great principle I inculcate," wrote Raikes, "is to be kind and good-natured to each other; not to provoke

one another; to be dutiful to their parents; not to offend God by cursing and swearing; and such little plain precepts as all may comprehend."

The scholars being, almost without exception, children whose previous training had been entirely neglected, it is not surprising to find that the discipline was sometimes insufficient to prevent quarrels; and in such cases (to use Raikes' own language) the aggressor was "compelled to ask pardon, and the offender enjoined to forgive."

Raikes' original plan was to dismiss the children at the conclusion of the morning school to their own homes, assembling them again in the afternoon to be taken to church. After a while, however, the clergyman of the parish interested himself in the scheme, and at his desire the children were taken to church both morning and afternoon. Once a month, at the afternoon service, the children were publicly catechised in church, and the answers in the catechism were explained to them. On leaving church in the afternoon, scholars and teachers returned to the school-room, and instruction went on till about half-past five, when the children were dismissed. During the afternoon some patron of the school frequently looked in to inspect progress. At the schools in which he was interested the Rev.

Thomas Stock was a constant visitor in this way. He was at that time curate at Hempstead, near Gloucester, and generally called at the schools on his return from afternoon service there. Mr. Raikes' afternoon visits were only occasional. At that time the *Gloucester Journal* was published on the Monday morning, and a portion of the editorial duties, therefore, had necessarily to be done on the Sunday. Hence, during the latter part of the day, Raikes was unable to devote much personal attention to his schools. His interest in them, however, never flagged. Throughout the week he was unwearied in his efforts to promote their success. At the homes of the poor in the lowest parts of the city he was a constant visitor, and many new scholars from the Gloucester "slums" were gained by his exertions. Over all the scholars he exerted a weighty personal influence. They soon learned to court his approbation and to shun his censure. As an instance of their desire to please him, Raikes himself records: "A woman told me last Sunday that her boy inquires of her every night before he goes to bed whether he has done anything in the day that will furnish a complaint against him on Sunday." Through Mr. Raikes' example and injunctions many of the Sunday-school boys learned

to attend regularly at "the Ladye Chapel" of the Cathedral at seven o'clock for morning prayers. Sometimes as many as fifty would be present at one service. "They assemble," said Raikes, "at the house of one of the mistresses, and walk before her to church, two and two, in as much order as a company of soldiers. I am generally at church, and after service they all come round me to make their bow, and, if any animosities have arisen, to make their complaints." At these early services those boys who could read pretty well were expected to join in the responses and the reading of the Psalms. At the conclusion of the service, as the boys passed with their benefactor down the Cathedral nave, he was accustomed to distribute among them sweetmeats, gingerbread, and other similar rewards. Occasionally, when he had nothing of this kind with him, he would give them pence. Under these circumstances, the large juvenile attendance at morning prayers is not to be wondered at. On these occasions Mr. Raikes was often accompanied by other of the leading citizens of Gloucester, among whom are mentioned Mr. George Counsel, a solicitor and local historian, and Mr. James Wood, usually known as "Jemmy Wood," the miserly banker. Mr. Wood, it is said,

was never known to give anything to the boys. A pleasing reminiscence of these early services was related in the *Gloucester Journal* for 1861 by an aged correspondent who had in his youth been one of Raikes' scholars. Owing to his regular attendance at the Cathedral Mr. Raikes took more notice of him than of many of the other boys, and on one occasion he told him to ask his father to bring him to his (Mr. Raikes') office, promising if he could read a chapter in the Testament to give him a new Bible. This was before the formation of the Bible Society, and the Scriptures were then dear and scarce. The boy, delighted at the prospect of earning a handsome prize, attended in due course with his father at Mr. Raikes' office, and Mr. Raikes himself brought a stool for the boy to stand upon to reach the desk on which the book lay. The chapter chosen was the first of St. Matthew, and Mr. Raikes was so pleased with the lad's reading that he at once gave him the much-prized Bible, writing his name in it, and telling him to be a good boy and never to forget to read the good book. This is not the only incident recorded in illustration of the way in which Raikes prized the Holy Scriptures. It was, we are told, while reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah to one of his scholars that

he himself received some of his deepest impressions of the truth and power of the Gospel.

The narrative of the work of the early Sunday schools, however, will be best told in Raikes' own words. In his letter to Colonel Townley (from which we have previously quoted) he says:—

"It is now about three years since we began, and I could wish you were here to make inquiry into the effect. A woman who lives in a lane where I had fixed a school told me some time ago that the place was quite a heaven upon Sundays compared to what it used to be. The numbers who have learned to read and say their catechism are so great that I am astonished at it. Upon the Sunday afternoons the mistresses take their scholars to church—a place into which neither they nor their ancestors had ever before entered with a view to the glory of God. But what is yet more extraordinary, within this month these little ragamuffins have in great numbers taken into their heads to frequent the early morning prayers which are held every morning at the Cathedral at seven o'clock. I believe there were nearly fifty this morning. They assemble at the house of one of the mistresses, and walk before her to church, two

and two, in as much order as a company of soldiers. I am generally at church, and after service they all come round me to make their bow, and, if any animosities have arisen, to make their complaints. The great principle I inculcate is, to be kind and good-natured to each other; not to provoke one another; to be dutiful to their parents; not to offend God by cursing and swearing; and such little plain precepts as all may comprehend. As my profession is that of a printer, I have printed a little book, which I give amongst them; and some friends of mine, subscribers to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, sometimes make me a present of a parcel of Bibles, Testaments, etc., which I distribute as rewards to the deserving. The success that has attended this scheme has induced one or two of my friends to adopt the plan, and set up Sunday-schools in other parts of the city, and now a whole parish has taken up the object; so that I flatter myself in time the good effects will appear so conspicuous as to become generally adopted. The number of children at present thus engaged on the Sabbath is between two and three hundred, and they are increasing every week, as the benefit is universally seen. I have endeavoured to engage the clergy of my acquaintance

that reside in their parishes. One has entered into the scheme with great fervour, and it was in order to excite others to follow the example that I inserted in my paper the paragraph which I suppose you saw copied into the London papers. I cannot express to you the pleasure I often receive in discovering genius and innate good dispositions among this little multitude. It is botanizing in human nature. I have often, too, the satisfaction of receiving thanks from parents for the reformation they perceive in their children. Often I have given them kind admonitions, which I always do in the mildest and gentlest manner. The going amongst them, doing them little kindnesses, distributing trifling rewards, and ingratiating myself with them, I hear, have given me an ascendancy greater than I ever could have imagined, for I am told by their mistresses that they are very much afraid of my displeasure. If you ever pass through Gloucester I shall be happy to pay my respects to you, and to show you the effects of this effort at civilization. If the glory of God be promoted in any, even the smallest, degree, society must reap some benefit. If good seed be sown in the mind at an early period of human life, though it shows itself not again for many years, it may please God

at some future period to cause it to spring up and to bring forth a plentiful harvest. With regard to the rules adopted, I only require that they may come to the school on Sunday as clean as possible. Many were at first deterred because they wanted decent clothing, but I could not undertake to supply this defect. I argue, therefore: 'If you can loiter about without shoes and in a ragged coat, you may as well come to school and learn what may tend to your good in that garb. I reject none on that footing. All that I require are clean hands, clean face, and their hair combed. If you have no clean shirt, come in that you have on.' The want of decent apparel at first kept great numbers at a distance; but they now begin to grow wiser, and all press in to learn. I have had the good luck to procure places for some that were deserving, which has been of great use. You will understand that these children are from six years old to twelve or fourteen. Boys and girls above this age, who have been totally undisciplined, are generally too refractory for this government. A reformation in society seems to me to be only practicable by establishing notions of duty and practical habits of order and decorum at an early age. But whither am I running? I am ashamed to see how much

I have trespassed on your patience; but I thought the most complete idea of Sunday-schools was to be conveyed to you by telling what first suggested the thought. The same sentiments would have arisen in your mind had they happened to have been called forth as they were suggested to me. I have no doubt that you will find great improvement to be made on this plan. The minds of men have taken great hold on that prejudice, that we are to do nothing on the Sabbath day which may be deemed labour, and therefore we are to be excused from all application of mind as well as body. The rooting out of this prejudice is the point I aim at as my favourite object. Our Saviour takes particular pains to manifest that whatever tended to promote the health and happiness of our fellow-creatures were sacrifices peculiarly acceptable on that day. I do not think I have written so long a letter for some years. But you will excuse me—my heart is warm in the cause. I think this is the kind of reformation most requisite in this kingdom. Let our patriots employ themselves in rescuing their countrymen from that despotism which tyrannical passions and vicious inclinations exercise over them, and they will find that true liberty and national welfare are more essentially

promoted than by any reform in Parliament. As often as I have attempted to conclude, some new idea has arisen. This is strange, as I am writing to a person whom I never have, and perhaps never may see; but I have felt that we think alike. I shall therefore only add my ardent wishes that your views of promoting the happiness of society may be attended with every possible success, conscious that your own internal enjoyment will thereby be considerably advanced."

The clergyman to whom Raikes refers in the above letter, as having "entered into the scheme with great fervour," was doubtless his friend the Rev. Thomas Stock. Writing again in the *Arminian Magazine* two years later (1785), Raikes describes the discipline of his schools in the following terms:—

"The children are frequently admonished to refrain from swearing; and certain boys who are distinguished by their decent behaviour are appointed to superintend the conduct of the rest, and make report of all those that swear, call names, etc. When quarrels have arisen, the aggressor is compelled to ask pardon, and the offended is enjoined to forgive. The happiness that must arise to all

from a kind, good-natured behaviour is often inculcated. This mode of treatment has produced a wonderful change in the manners of these little savages. I cannot give a more striking instance than I received the other day from Mr. Church, a manufacturer of hemp and flax, who employs numbers of these children. I asked him whether he perceived any alteration in them since they had been restrained from their former prostitution of the Lord's Day. 'Sir,' said he, 'the change could not have been more extraordinary had they been transformed from the shape of wolves and tigers to that of men. In temper, disposition, and manners they could hardly be said to differ from the brute creation. But since the establishment of the Sunday-schools they have shown that they are not the ignorant creatures they were before. When they have seen a superior come to kindly instruct and admonish them, and sometimes reward their good behaviour, they are anxious to gain his friendship and good opinion. They are also become more tractable and obedient, and less quarrelsome and revengeful.' From this little sketch of the reformation which has taken place, there is reason to hope that a general establishment of Sunday-schools would in time make some change in the morals of the lower

class; at least it might in some measure prevent them from growing worse, which at present seems but too apparent. The parish of St. Nicholas has lately established two schools, and some gentlemen of this city have also set up others. To some of the schoolmistresses I give two shillings a week extra, to take the children when they come from work during the week-days."

Yet another narrative of the operations of the early Sunday-schools has been put on record by Raikes' pen. It is contained in the following letter written by him to an old friend, Mrs. Harris, of Chelsea :—

"GLOUCESTER, *November 5th*, 1787.

"MADAM,—

"Amongst the numerous correspondents whom my project for civilizing the rising generation of the poor has led me to address, I have to no one taken up my pen with more pleasure than to you, my old friend, with whom I formerly passed so many cheerful hours. I am rejoiced to find that the people in your neighbourhood are thus ready to listen to that strong and pathetic injunction given by our Saviour a little before His ascension: 'Feed my lambs;' and if it were possible for me to afford

any hints that might be useful, great would be the pleasure I should receive. In answer to your queries, I shall, as concisely as possible, state—that I endeavour to assemble the children as early as is consistent with their perfect cleanliness—an indispensable rule; the hour prescribed in our rules is eight o'clock, but it is usually half after eight before our flock is collected. Twenty is the number allotted to each teacher; the sexes kept separate. The twenty are divided into four classes. The children who show any superiority in their attainments are placed as leaders of the several classes, and are employed in teaching the others their letters, or in hearing them read in a low whisper, which may be done without interrupting the master or mistress in their business, and will keep the attention of the children engaged, that they do not play or make a noise. Their attending the service of the church once a day has, to me, seemed sufficient; for their time may be spent more profitably, perhaps, in receiving instruction than in being present at a long discourse, which their minds are not yet able to comprehend; but people may think differently on this point. Within this month, the minister of my parish has at last condescended to give me assistance in this

laborious work, which I have now carried on for six years with little or no support. He chooses that the children should come to church both morning and afternoon; I brought them to church only in the afternoon. To those children who distinguish themselves as examples of dili gence, quietness of behaviour, observance of order, kindness to their companions, etc., etc., I give some little token of my regard, as a pair of shoes if they are barefooted, and some who are very bare of apparel I clothe. Besides, I frequently go round to their habitations, to inquire into their behaviour at home, and into the conduct of the parents, to whom I give some little hints now and then, as well as to the children. . . . It is that part of our Saviour's character which I aim at imitating: 'He went about doing good.' No one can form an idea what benefits he is capable of rendering to the community by the condescension of visiting the dwellings of the poor. You may remember the place without the Southgate, called Littleworth; it used to be the St. Giles of Gloucester. By going among those people I have totally changed their manners. They avow at this time that the place is quite a heaven to what it used to be. Some of the vilest

of the boys are now so exemplary in behaviour that I have taken one into my own service. The stipend to the teachers here is a shilling each Sunday; but we find them firing, and bestow gratuities, as rewards of diligence, which may make it worth sixpence more. I mention this as an evidence of what may be done. But I fear I am growing too prolix, and that I shall cause you to repent the opening a correspondence with your old acquaintance. I must now tell you that I am blessed with six excellent girls, and two lovely boys. My eldest boy was born the very day that I made public to the world the scheme of Sunday-schools, in my paper of November 3rd, 1783. In four years' time it has extended so rapidly as now to include 250,000 children: it is increasing more and more. It reminds me of the grain of mustard seed.

"I am, Madam,

"Your most obedient servant,

"R. RAIKES."

One day, after the Sunday-school system had been in working about two years, Raikes invited some friends to breakfast at his own house. The window of the room in which the party assembled opened into a small garden, and in this garden

were seated, in rows one above the other, the neatly-dressed children of one of the first Sunday-schools. They were purposely exhibited to the breakfast party, to excite interest in the design; but so little were the momentous consequences then appreciated that a Quaker lady rebuked Mr. Raikes in these words, "Friend Raikes, when thou doest charitably, thy right hand should not know what thy left hand doeth." The fair Quaker (adds the relator of the story) might have forgotten that there is another text, which says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Raikes' relations to individual scholars are pleasingly illustrated by several interesting anecdotes, one of which is related by himself as follows:—

"One day, as I was going to church, I overtook a soldier just entering the church door: this was on a week-day. As I passed him I said it gave me pleasure to see that he was going to a place of worship. 'Ah, sir!' said he, 'I may thank you for that.' 'Me?' said I; 'why, I don't know that I ever saw you before.' 'Sir,' replied the soldier, 'when I was a little boy, I was indebted

to you for my first instruction in my duty. I used to meet you at the morning service in this Cathedral, and was one of your Sunday scholars. My father, when he left this city, took me into Berkshire, and put me apprentice to a shoemaker. I used often to think of you. At length I went to London, and was there drawn to serve as a militiaman in the Westminster militia. I came to Gloucester last night with a deserter, and took the opportunity of coming this morning to visit the old spot, and in hope of once more seeing you.' He then told me his name, and brought himself to my recollection by a curious circumstance which happened whilst he was at school. His father was a journeyman currier, a most vile, profligate man. After the boy had been some time at school, he came one day and told me that his father was wonderfully changed, and that he had left off going to the alehouse on a Sunday. It happened soon after that I met the man in the street, and said to him, 'My friend, it gives me great pleasure to hear that you have left off going to the alehouse on the Sunday; your son tells me that you now stay at home and never get tipsy.' He immediately replied that I had been the means of this change being produced. On my expressing

my surprise at this, on account of never having so much as spoken to him before, he replied, 'No, sir, but the good instruction which you give my boy at the Sunday-school he repeats to me; and this has so convinced me of the error of my former life as to have led to my present reformation.'"

Raikes' statement that he always admonished his scholars "in the mildest and gentlest manner" is borne out by the following story: A sulky, stubborn girl, who had resisted both reproofs and correction, and who refused to ask forgiveness of her mother, was melted by his saying to her, "Well, if you have no regard for yourself, I have much for you; you will be ruined and lost if you do not become a good girl; and if you will not humble yourself, I must humble myself, and make a beginning for you." He then, with much solemnity, entreated the mother to forgive her. This overcame the girl's pride; she burst into tears, and, on her knees, begged forgiveness, and never gave any trouble afterwards.

A touching story of another of Raikes' scholars is told in a small pamphlet published some years ago, entitled "The Sea-Boy's Grave." The writer relates that he once voyaged home from the West Indies in a ship on board of which were a notori-

ously wicked sailor and a cabin boy who had received instruction in one of Raikes' Gloucester schools. The boy's name was Pelham, but among the crew he was known as "Jack Raikes." In the course of the voyage the sailor was struck down with fever, and as he daily grew worse it was feared that he would die unrepentant and without hope. "Jack Raikes," however, obtained leave to nurse him. He watched over him with womanly tenderness, told him of the Saviour he had learnt about at school, and prayed with him constantly and earnestly for salvation in the Saviour's name. After a while the hard heart melted, and bitterly were the sins of a past misspent life deplored. Then came to this poor seaman, in quick succession, the blessed consciousness of the Saviour's forgiving love, and a triumphant entrance into God's kingdom of glory. A few days afterwards a storm came on. The stout ship, while nearing her destination, was driven far out of her course. With relentless fury the tempest hurried her to destruction on a sunken rock off the northern coast of Scotland, and the sailors, as a last chance, took to the boats. The boat in which "Jack Raikes" found a place was soon overturned by the angry waves, and next morning his body was

among the number of those that strewed the neighbouring shore. The writer of the narrative, who got safely to land with a spar to which he had lashed himself, thus describes the appearance of poor Jack as he saw him lying on the floor of the village alehouse, whither, with the other victims of the wreck, he had been carried: "His countenance wore a sweet and heavenly expression, and stooping down, I robbed his bare head of a little lock of auburn hair that lay upon his temple. His effects—alas! how poor, and yet how rich—were spread upon the table in the room, and consisted of a little leather purse in which were a well-kept half-crown and a solitary sixpence. His Bible, which he had ever counted his chief riches, and from which he had derived treasures of wisdom, was placed by his side. I took it up, and observed engraved on its clasps of brass these words: 'The gift of Robert Raikes to J. R. Pelham.' 'Oh, Raikes,' thought I, 'this is one gem of purest light indeed; still, it is but one of the many thousand gems which shall encircle thy radiant head in that day when the Lord of Hosts shall make up His jewels.'"

Another sailor to whom Raikes (probably while visiting some family connections in Hertfordshire)

gave a Bible was present in the year 1836 at a tea-meeting in connection with the Tottenham Court Chapel, London, whose pastor spoke of him as "a very enlightened and devoted man." He was a master mariner, named James North, and he claimed to be one of the oldest Sunday scholars in the king dom. On the fly-leaf of a much-prized Bible in his possession was inscribed the following narrative :—

"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 consolation, 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."

Nearly thirty years after the establishment of Raikes' first school there came to visit him in his

retirement a young Quaker, named Joseph Lancaster, to whose energetic efforts was due the formation of the association afterwards known as the "British and Foreign School Society," for giving week-day instruction to the children of the poor. At that time the founder of Sunday-schools was seventy-two years of age, and past active work, but he still took a lively interest in his much-loved institution. Many were Lancaster's inquiries respecting the origin of Sunday-schools, and an interesting account has been preserved of one of Raikes' replies. Leaning on the arm of his visitor, the old man led him through the thoroughfares of Gloucester to the spot in a back street where the first school was held. "Pause here," said the old man. Then, uncovering his head and closing his eyes, he stood for a moment in silent prayer. Then turning towards his friend, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, he said: "This is the spot on which I stood when I saw the destitution of the children and the desecration of the Sabbath by the inhabitants of the city. As I asked, 'Can nothing be done?' a voice answered, 'Try.' I did try, and see what God has wrought. I can never pass by the spot where the word 'try' came so powerfully into my mind without lifting up my hands and heart to

Heaven in gratitude to God for having put such a thought into my heart."

With equal gratitude we may be assured Raikes could think of the many scholars to whom he had been a personal benefactor. Anxious to gain information as to the effects of religious instruction upon the youthful mind, Lancaster inquired particularly respecting them. Knowing that Raikes was for many years a constant visitor both at the county and city gaols, and had ample opportunities of ascertaining whether any of the three thousand children whose education he had superintended had come within the prison walls, Lancaster asked him directly whether such had ever been the case. Appealing to his memory, which even at that advanced age was strong and lively, Raikes could with confidence answer, "None."

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY SUNDAY-SCHOOLS AT WORK.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to the new."
—TENNYSON.

PROBABLY there was no part of Raikes' flourishing business more congenial to him than the printing of rules and regulations for the numerous Sunday-schools which sprang up after his public promulgation of the scheme. The rules for the Gloucester schools were drawn up by the Rev. Thomas Stock, who doubtless framed them in accordance with Raikes' own views, as enunciated in his letters already given. So generally acceptable did these rules prove, that they were adopted in the schools soon afterwards established in London and many other parts of the kingdom. Their purport may be judged from the sketch given in the preceding chapter of the operations of Raikes' own school.

The following set of rules, printed in 1784 by Raikes, and drawn up by the Rev. W. Ellis, chaplain to Earl Ducie, for use in the Stroud Sunday-

schools, will serve as a sample of the regulations generally adopted :—

"I. The master (or dame) appointed by the subscribers, shall attend [at his or her own house] every Sunday morning, during the summer, from 8 till 10·30, and every Sunday evening during the summer (except the second in every month), from half an hour after five till eight o'clock, to teach reading, the Church catechism, and some short prayers from a little collection by Dr. Stonehouse; and also to read (or have read by some of those who attend, if any can do it sufficiently) three or four chapters of the Bible in succession, that people may have connected ideas of the history and consistency of the Scriptures.

"II. The persons to be taught are chiefly the young, who are past the usual age of admission to the weekly schools, and by being obliged to labour for their maintenance, cannot find time to attend them. But grown persons that cannot read, who are desirous of hearing God's Word, and wish to learn that excellent short account of the faith and practice of a Christian, the Church catechism, are desired to attend, and endeavour to learn, by hearing the younger taught and instructed.

"III. Some of the subscribers will in turn visit these schools, to see that their design is duly pursued; and give some little reward to the first, second, and third most deserving in each school.

"IV. The subscribers will keep a blank book, in which shall be entered the names of all those parents, and other persons, who, having need of these helps, neglect to send their children, or to attend; and of those who behave improperly when they attend; with intent that they may be excluded from the alms and other charitable assistance of the benevolent. Those who will take no care of their own souls, deserve not that others should take care of their bodies.

"V. All that attend these schools shall, as much as may be, attend the public worship both morning and afternoon on Sunday; and shall assemble at church on the second evening of every month, at six o'clock, to be examined, and to hear a plain exposition of the catechism, which the minister will endeavour to give them."

In explanation of the above rules, Mr. Ellis added:—

"As an early habit of reverencing and rightly using the Sabbath must be laid in the rising generation, as one of the foundation stones of that

reformation devoutly wished for by all serious persons, the attendance on public worship is particularly insisted on. To promote which some of the rewards to be given are the most necessary articles of apparel; and through the failure of the clothing manufacture in this county, these are wanting to many who do, and to more that would attend these schools. Some of the children, who are brought up to other communions, are enjoined to attend their respective places of worship constantly and devoutly, and required to give an account of the preacher's text. The other rewards are Bibles of different sizes, New Testaments, Dr. Stonehouse's 'Prayer for private persons, families,' etc. (mentioned, rule the 1st), 'Admonitions against swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and drunkenness,' catechisms, and papers of hymns. The time before divine service in the morning is employed in learning to spell and read. The reading in the evening is performed by those who can read fluently, as it is intended for the edification of all. The rules are read every Sunday evening as soon as the children are assembled. After reading three, four, or five chapters of the Bible (more or less, as the connection of the passage may require) the prayers are repeated. The youngest are taught first Dr.

Watts' short prayers, pages 42 and 43 of the above-mentioned collection; when they are perfect in these, they learn the additions to them; and persons of more advanced age learn the longer prayers of Bishop Wilson and Bishop Gibson. While one is speaking aloud the prayer, or answer of the catechism, all the rest are required to repeat the same in a whisper; by which inattention and trifling are in a great measure prevented, and a rapid progress is made in fixing what is to be learned in the memory. The minister and some of the subscribers attend one of these schools every Sunday evening, and make such familiar observations on the Scripture and catechism as they think adapted to such young minds. The most deficient scholars attend one or two other evenings in the week, for about two hours, at the house of the master or dame. The teachers are sober, serious persons, whose conscientious assiduity may be depended on, and whose indigent circumstances make the moderate pay of one shilling per Sunday an acceptable recompense."

Among the rules, for the most part similar to the above, adopted at Tetbury, Gloucestershire, were the following:—

"That nothing whatever be taught in the schools

but what is suited immediately to the design of the Sabbath, and preserving young people from idleness, immorality, and ignorance.

"That the subscribers, the visitors of the school, the churchwardens, and the sidesmen be requested to pay what attention they can to the streets and environs of the town in order to prevent people from idling about and playing on the Lord's day.

"That the Committee call in a person of the faculty to examine the children if they have any cutaneous disorder."

The Rev. W. Bickerstaffe, curate of Ayleston, Leicestershire, writing to his parishioners in 1786 respecting a proposed Sunday-school, recommended them to admit fifty scholars, of an equal number of each sex, from the age of seven upwards, to be taught in the church by two masters, from eight to eleven in the morning and three to five in the afternoon, the head master to be paid 1*s.* 6*d.* a Sunday, and the second master 1*s.* "In Leicester," continued Mr. Bickerstaffe, "each teacher has thirty-five scholars, and the masters are allowed 2*s.* a day, the mistresses 1*s.* 6*d.*; though I know no reason for the difference."

One of the books for the use of Sunday-schools issued from Raikes' press contains an interesting

sketch of the first schools established in the village of Boughton Blean, Kent. The idea was suggested to the vicar of the parish (the Rev. C. Moore, who was also rector of Cuxton) by the example of the Rev. Mr. Hearne, a Canterbury clergyman, who started the first schools in the county of Kent at Canterbury, in January, 1785. Mr. Hearne was a warm admirer of Raikes' institution, and on Mr. Moore proposing to establish schools at Boughton Blean, Mr. Hearne, knowing that the 150 families who resided there were mostly poor, promised a liberal subscription in aid of the undertaking. Mr. Moore thereupon set to work. He visited every house in his parish, obtaining subscriptions from the rich and scholars from the poor. He engaged a man and his wife in one part of the village, and a woman in another, to conduct schools in their respective houses, and regularly to take the children to church, where special seats were to be appro priated for them. The opening of the schools was then publicly announced, their objects being detailed as follows :—

"To furnish opportunities of instruction to the children of the poorer part of the parish, without interfering with any industry of the week-days; and

to inure children to early habits of going to church and to spend the leisure hours of Sunday decently and virtuously. The children are to be taught to read, and to be instructed in the plain duties of the Christian religion, with a particular view to their good and industrious behaviour in their future character of labourers and servants."

The school hours at Boughton were from eight to ten, followed by morning service at the church; and from two to six. No children were admitted under five years of age. The annual expenses were about £16 a year.

The little book from which these details respecting Boughton are taken furnishes a curious specimen of the instruction bestowed upon the scholars in the first Sunday-schools. It was printed in 1794. In size it is about four inches square; it contains 120 pages; and its title is as follows: "The Sunday Scholar's Companion; consisting of Scripture sentences, disposed in such order as will quickly ground Young Learners in the fundamental doctrines of our most Holy Religion, and at the same time lead them pleasantly on from simple and easy to compound and difficult words." The first half of the book is occupied with alphabet tables, lists of

short words and short sentences arranged into lessons, beginning with sentences composed of words of one syllable, and thence advancing to more difficult exercises. As the title indicates, most of these sentences are taken from Holy Scripture, but some are obviously from uninspired sources; such, for example, are the following:—

"The talk of him that swears much makes the hair to stand up."

"Strive not with a man that is full of words, and lay no sticks on his fire."

"Laugh not a lame man to scorn."

"Hast thou found honey? eat only so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it."

"The man that is accustomed to opprobrious words will never be reformed all the days of his life."

After these reading exercises come the Church catechism and some extracts from Dr. Watts' "Advice to Children respecting Prayer," in which the scholars are warned against the "shamefully lazy and disrespectful custom" of repeating their prayers in bed, and recommended to learn their prayers by heart, so as to be able to say them in the dark. The remainder of the book comprises prayers for children, an elementary catechism on

the principles and proofs of Christianity, a series of collects, and a few hymns. Another text-book for use in Sunday-schools was compiled by no less a person than Mr. Jonas Hanway, the great traveller, who played so prominent a part in the charitable world of that day. His compilation was entitled, "A comprehensive sentimental book for scholars learning in Sunday-schools, containing the alphabet, numbers, spelling, moral and religious lessons, lectures, stories, and prayers, suited to the growing powers of children, and for the advancing in happiness of the rising generation." With this work was also published in 1786, by the same author, a "Comprehensive view of Sunday-schools," in which the new institution was earnestly recommended for general adoption.

Hitherto our examples of early Sunday-school work have been taken principally from the rural districts and small provincial towns. Turn we now to the thriving manufacturing centres of the north. At Leeds, in 1784, the town was divided into seven divisions, and had twenty-six schools, containing about 2,000 scholars, taught by forty-five masters. Each school commenced at one o'clock in the afternoon, the children being taught reading, writing, and religion. At three they

were taken to their respective churches, and thence conducted back to school, where a portion of some useful book was read, a psalm sung, and the whole concluded with a form of prayer. Boys and girls were taught separately. There were four "inquisitors"—persons whose office it was to spend Sunday afternoon in visiting the schools to ascertain who were absent, and in then seeking the absentees at their homes or in the streets. The masters were mostly pious men, and were paid from one to two shillings a Sunday for their services, according to their qualifications. Each had a written list of his scholars' names, which he was required to call over every Sunday at half-past one and half-past five. Five clergymen visited the schools and gave addresses, and the expenses of the first year, ending in July 1784, were about £234. Nowhere was Raikes' idea more eagerly welcomed than in Stockport, where a committee was formed in 1784 to give that idea effect. The town was divided into six parts, with a school in each. The schools were under the management of a committee of gentlemen belonging to various sections of the Christian Church: for some time an Episcopalian clergyman was treasurer, a Unitarian secretary, and a Wesleyan librarian. Col-

lections were made periodically in the churches and chapels of the town for the support of the schools, and for a while the teachers were each paid *1s. 6d.* per Sunday for their services. Out of this scheme grew the institution now under the gracious patronage of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and known as the Stockport Sunday-school, whose annual income exceeds £1,000, and whose premises include a room capable of seating 2,000 persons.

John Wesley, in his journal (April 20th, 1788), makes an interesting reference to the Sunday-schools at Bolton. He says:—

"About three I met between 900 and 1,000 of the children belonging to our Sunday-schools. They were all exactly clean, as well as plain, in their apparel. All were serious and well-behaved. Many, both boys and girls, had as beautiful faces as I believe England or Europe could afford. When they all sang together, and none of them out of tune, the melody was beyond that of any theatre; and what is best of all, many of them truly fear God, and some rejoice in His salvation. These are the pattern of the town. Their usual diversion is to visit the poor that are sick (sometimes six or eight or ten together), to exhort,

comfort, and pray with them. Frequently ten or more of them get together to sing or pray by themselves, sometimes thirty or forty; and are so earnestly engaged, alternately singing, praying, and crying, that they know not how to part."

The managers of the early Sunday-schools did not always content themselves with providing food for the mind. In some instances they were accustomed also to provide food and clothing for the body. The village of Painswick, near Gloucester, in which Raikes took a deep interest, furnishes an example in point. Raikes records that on the day after Christmas Day, 1785, a bountiful dinner of beef, pudding, and potatoes was given to the children, 350 in number, attending the Painswick schools, the donors of the feast themselves officiating as carvers and waiters. To show how welcome this feast must have been, Raikes adds:—

"When the meal was set before one boy it was observed that he could not eat. He was asked the reason, and the poor wretch said it was three days since he had had any food, and his stomach was gone. However, by taking a little, his appetite at last returned. Another was asked if he had eaten so plentiful a meal this twelve-months. 'No, nor these three twelve-months,' replied the boy."

At the same school at Painswick the children were encouraged to provide themselves clothing by subscribing to a clothing-club in connection with the school. Each child brought a penny weekly, and as his name was called dropped it into a box. At the end of the year the total thus gained (one year it amounted to £36) was materially increased by contributions from charitable persons, and the whole was expended in clothing for the children. This plan, it was found, promoted a healthy spirit of self-reliance among the scholars, each one priding himself upon having contributed towards the cost of his own garments. "Such is the emulation," wrote one of Raikes' correspondents, "at Painswick to make a neat appearance on Sundays, that shoes and buckles are now cleaned by those who formerly had none to wear. To a person who expressed his surprise at seeing a boy so well clad, 'Oh, sir,' said the boy, 'I paid three shillings towards it myself.' 'There is a poor boy all in rags,' replied the person, 'why are you so much better clothed than he?' 'He does not belong to our parish,' said the boy. 'We have none so ragged in our parish. He belongs to——, where no care is taken of poor boys. More regard is paid to hogs there than to the children of

the poor; the former are well looked after and have their bellies filled, which is not the case with the latter: they are almost starved.'"

That the school at Painswick was in some respects a model institution of its kind is shown by the following anecdote preserved by Raikes in his newspaper:—

"A person sent as a present lately, by one of the teachers, to the boys who attend the Sunday-schools at Painswick, a dozen of Mrs. Trimmer's *Servant's Friend*, one of the most useful publications in our language for the children of the common people. The same person inquiring the other day whether the books had been distributed was answered in the negative. 'Out of a hundred boys under my care,' said the teacher, 'I find seventy equally worthy of encouragement, by their freedom from vice and profaneness, and their decency in behaviour and cleanliness; and I therefore shall be obliged to decide the distribution by lot.'"

Connected with some of the early Sunday-schools were kindred institutions, called "Schools of Industry," for week-day instruction in industrial

arts. Mrs. Trimmer, a charitable lady well known to posterity as the author of "The Story of the Robins," propounded the scheme in a book entitled "The Economy of Charity," and among other places where it was adopted were Bath, Cardiff, Abergavenny, and Cheltenham. At Bath, we are told, the School of Industry contained 180 children, selected from the Sunday-schools of the city, and employed as follows: Thirty little boys, to knit stockings and garters and make garden nets; thirty little girls, to knit stockings and garters; thirty boys and thirty girls, to spin wool for cloth and worsted; thirty girls, to spin flax for linen; and thirty girls, to sew, make the linen, clothes, etc. The boys were clad in coats and waistcoats of olive-coloured serge, leather breeches, and serge caps with the words "Reward of Industry" round them. The girls wore jackets and petticoats of serge, and linen tippets and caps, also inscribed "Reward of Industry" in worsted. All the children were taught to read and attend Sunday-schools. The elder girls were trained to discharge the household duties of the establishment, with a view to making them good domestic servants. The School of Industry at Cheltenham was under very distinguished patronage. Among

the annual subscribers to its funds were Queen Charlotte, the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, and the Bishop of Gloucester; and the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.), during a residence in Cheltenham in 1807, presented it with twenty guineas.

Very curious to look back upon are the records of the anniversaries of the early Sunday-schools. Their nature may be judged from the following advertisement, which is a sample of many to be found in the pages of Raikes' newspaper :—

"*Mitcheldean Sunday-schools Anniversary.*

"ON SUNDAY, August 23, 1801, a sermon will be preached in the parish church of Mitcheldean, by the REV. WILLIAM PARRY, D.D., formerly Rector of the said Parish, for the benefit of the Sunday-schools.

"MR. STROUD, of the Cathedral at Gloucester, has kindly offered his Assistance, and will sing BOYCE'S CHARITY ANTHEM, and the Opening to the Messiah, '*Comfort ye my people.*'

"In the course of Divine Service will be performed, by a select band of VOCAL and INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS, from Gloucester, Worcester, Cheltenham, etc., with the Double Drums, Trum

pets, etc, the following SELECTION from the works of Handel, Boyce, Hayes, etc :—

"Overture in Esther. Charity Anthem, '*Blessed is He*,' BOYCE. To be sung by MR. STROUD. Anthem, HANDEL. To be sung by MR. MORRIS. Overture and Dead March in Saul. Hallelujah Chorus, HANDEL.

"In the Evening—Occasional Overture, HANDEL. Selections from the Messiah, '*Comfort ye my people*,' and '*Every Valley shall be exalted*.' Chorus, '*And the glory of the Lord*.' Song, '*If God be for us*.' Chorus, '*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain*.' To conclude with the CORONATION ANTHEM.

"VOCAL PERFORMERS—Messrs. Stroud, Morris, Underwood, Haynes and Sons, Moseley, etc., etc.

"INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS—Messrs. Puckingham, Chubb, Gamble, Hale, Morris, Alderidge, Hyde, Hayward, Pearce, Wood, etc., etc.

"Divine Service will begin at a Quarter before Eleven in the Forenoon, and at Half-past Three in the Afternoon.

"☞ The Performers are requested to be in Mitcheldean by nine o'clock in the morning.

"*** The Ordinary will be at the George Inn."

Respecting another anniversary we read in the announcement that "in the course of the service will be performed a selection of sacred music, in which will be interspersed three grand military symphonies by more than twenty performers." It was the custom to criticise these anniversary performances like concerts. Describing a service at Frampton, Raikes writes: "The pieces of sacred music introduced in the course of the service were full and complete. The French horns, kettledrums, etc., had a fine effect in the Coronation Anthem and the grand Hallelujah Chorus of the Messiah, reflecting great credit on the band." Quotations similar to the above might be multiplied by the score, showing clearly that it was the general practice for a period of some thirty years after the establishment of Sunday-schools to enhance the attractions of anniversary services by elaborate performances of sacred music, both vocal and instrumental. Whatever may be thought as to the expediency of such a custom, it certainly had the effect of drawing large congregations who contributed towards the funds of the schools. In Raikes' own parish of St. Mary de Crypt, Gloucester, we read of such anniversary collections as £45, £48, and £61, on

three several occasions; and even in a country parish like Painswick as much as £57 was contributed on one Sunday. Raikes himself accounts for this liberality by the supposition that people were anxious to show their gratitude for the increased security to property occasioned by the gathering into Sunday-schools of children who had previously run wild.

We cannot conclude this chapter better than with two letters written by Raikes to the committee of the Society for the Establishment of Sunday-schools, describing anniversaries at which he was present at Mitcheldean and Painswick in 1785 and 1786 respectively. The first letter, addressed to Mr. William Fox, the founder of the Society, was as follows :—

"*Aug. 29th*, 1785.

"DEAR SIR,—

"I observe by your letter that you are holding a meeting to-morrow. I regret that I am not situated near enough to attend it; but as I was present yesterday se'nnight at a meeting which is intended to be established as an anniversary at Mitcheldean, a little town in this county, on the verge of the Forest of Dean, it occurs to

me that a sketch of the pleasing scene I there beheld may not be improperly laid before the gentlemen who attend your summons to the Paul's Head Tavern. Maynard Colchester and William Lane, Esqrs., two gentlemen of property in the neighbourhood, having heard of the happy effects arising from the attention to the morals of the rising generation of the poor, determined to try what could be done among the little lawless rabble who inhabit the borders of the Forest near Mitcheldean. About Christmas last they established two schools and admitted fifty or sixty scholars of both sexes, some of them the most ignorant, uncivilized beings in the country. Ten or twelve of the respectable inhabitants of the town readily engaged to subscribe; and what was of greater moment, they took upon themselves the superintendence of the establishment, and to their zeal may be ascribed, under the Divine blessing, its success. The promoters of the undertaking did me the honour of inviting me to dine with them on their anniversary, to witness the progress that had been made in this effort at civilization. The children, though many of them in apparel very ragged, were extremely clean. They walked in great order two and two to church, where they were placed in the

gallery exposed to the view of the whole congregation, and their behaviour during the service was perfectly silent and becoming. In the repetition of the Lord's Prayer they all joined, and formed a charm that made every heart dilate with joy. The clergyman of the parish (a curate at £26 a year) gave an admirable discourse from Mark iv. 28. This valuable young man had taken great pains in admonishing the children and impressing them with due notions how greatly their happiness could be increased by introducing into their general behaviour habits of quietness and good-nature to one another. The tenor of the argument in his discourse was to prove that if good seed be sown in the moral, as in the natural, world, a plentiful harvest was no less to be hoped for; but we must look for it in the same order. It might be some time before it made its appearance, and then by small beginnings—first the blade, etc. After church the children were taken to the inn, where an examination took place of the progress made in reading. I was highly pleased to see the proficiency some of them had made. Several could read in the Testament, and I found among them two or three with extraordinary memories. They have learnt to repeat several chapters. Nearly fifty of

them were perfect in their catechism, and all could repeat some of Dr. Watts' hymns. The children were so much pleased with these pieces that two or three of them could repeat the whole book. But what pleased me most of all was the result of my inquiry into the effect upon their manners. 'That boy,' said one of the gentlemen (pointing to a very ill-looking lad about 13), 'was the most profligate little dog in this neighbourhood. He was the leader of every kind of mischief and wickedness. He never opened his lips without a profane or indecent expression; and now he is become orderly and good-natured, and in his conversation has quite left off profaneness.' After dinner the gentlemen called in six boys, who had previously been taught a hymn, which I assure you they sang to admiration. I observed that one of the singers was the boy before mentioned. The silence that prevailed among these children was remarkable. Their benefactors dined in a room adjoining, but were not disturbed by their talking."

In the following year Raikes sent to the committee of the Sunday-school Society an equally pleasing account of an anniversary celebration at Painswick, at which Mr. William Fox was also

present. Raikes' account of the affair was as follows:—

"GENTLEMEN,—

"The parish of Painswick exhibited on Sunday, the 24th ult., a specimen of the reform which the establishment of Sunday-schools is likely to introduce. An annual festival has from time immemorial been held on that day,—a festival that would have disgraced the most heathenish nations. Drunkenness and every species of clamour, riot, and disorder, formerly filled the town upon this occasion.

"Mr. Webb, a gentleman who has exerted his utmost assiduity in the conduct of the Sunday-schools in Painswick, was lamenting to me the sad effects that might be naturally expected to arise from this feast. It occurred to us that an attempt to divert the attention of the vulgar from their former brutal prostitution of the Lord's day, by exhibiting to their view a striking picture of the superior enjoyment to be derived from quietness, good order, and the exercise of that benevolence which Christianity peculiarly recommends, was an experiment worth hazarding. We thought it could do no mischief: it would not increase the evil.

It was immediately determined to invite the gentlemen and people of the adjacent parishes to view the children of the Sunday-schools, to mark their improvement in cleanliness and behaviour, and to observe the practicability of reducing to a quiet peaceable demeanour the most neglected part of the community, those who form the great bulk of the people.

"In the parish of Painswick are several gentlemen who have a taste for music: they immediately offered to give every assistance in a church service; and my benevolent friend, the Rev. Dr. Glasse, complied with our entreaty to favour us with a sermon.

"Mr. Campbell, a very active justice of the peace, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. Webb, of Ebworth, and several other gentlemen engaged to give their countenance. We were highly gratified too with Mr. Boddington's company, who kindly came from Cheltenham to take a view of this progress in civilization. He is one of your vice-presidents, and from his report you will receive a far more perfect idea than my pen can give.

"On the Sunday afternoon the town was filled with the usual crowds who attend the feast; but instead of repairing to the alehouses, as heretofore,

they all hastened to the church, which was filled in such a manner as I never remember to have seen in any church in this county before. The galleries, the aisles were thronged like a play-house. Drawn up in a rank around the church-yard appeared the children belonging to the different schools, to the number of 331.

"The gentlemen walked round to view them. It was a sight interesting and truly affecting. Young people, lately more neglected than the cattle in the field, ignorant, profane, filthy, clamorous, impatient of every restraint, were here seen cleanly, quiet, observant of order, submissive, courteous in behaviour, and in conversation free from that vileness which marks our wretched vulgar. The inhabitants of the town bear testimony to this change in their manners. The appearance of decency might be assumed for a day; but the people among whom they live are ready to declare that this is a character fairly stated. After the public service a collection for the benefit of the institution was made at the doors of the church.

"When I considered that the bulk of the congregation were persons of middling rank, husbandmen, and other inhabitants of the adjacent villages, I concluded that the collection, if it amounted to

£24 or £25, might be deemed a good one. My astonishment was great indeed when I found that the fund was not less than £57. This may be accounted for from the security which the establishment of Sunday-schools has given to the property of every individual in the neighbourhood. The farmers, etc., declare that they and their families can now leave their houses, gardens, etc., and frequent the public worship, without danger of depredation. Formerly, they were under the necessity of leaving their servants, or staying at home themselves, as a guard, and this was insufficient: the most vigilant were sometimes plundered. It is not then to be wondered at that a spirit of liberality was excited on this occasion.

"A carpenter put a guinea in the plate, and afterwards brought four more to Mr. Webb. 'It was my fixed design,' said he, 'to devote the fund that I received for a certain job of work to the support of Sunday-schools. I received five guineas; one only I put in the plate. It did not become me to put more; it would have looked like ostentation; but here are the other four,'—giving them to Mr. Webb. Another instance of the same spirit occurred in a man upwards of eighty years of age, who seemed about the rank of

yeomanry. 'Oh, that I should live,' said he, 'to see this day, when poor children are thus befriended, and taught the road to peace and comfort here and happiness and heaven hereafter!' The old man gave a guinea, and said he would leave another in the hands of a friend if he should die before the next anniversary. When the matter of the collection was settled, we went to the schools, to hear what progress was made in reading, etc. The emulation to show their acquirements was so very general that it would have taken up a day to have gratified all the children.

"In the meantime the town was remarkably free from those pastimes which used to disgrace it. Wrestling, quarrelling, fighting, were totally banished: all was peace and tranquility.

"I fear I have been too prolix, but I could not convey the complete idea that I was desirous of imparting to the generous promoters of Sunday-schools without writing these particulars.

"I forgot to mention that Mr. Fox, one of the worthy members of your committee, was present with us at Painswick.

"The Sunday-schools were first established at Painswick in the summer of the year 1784. The children had been bred up in total ignorance. Of

the number that attend the school 230 can read in the Bible or Testament, eighty can read in the 'Sunday-scholar's Companion,' and above twenty-one are in the alphabet.

"The children have no teaching but on the Sunday; what they learn at the leisure hours in the week is the effect of their own desire to improve. Many have their books at their looms, to seize any vacant minute when their work is retarded by the breaking of threads.

"To relieve the parish from the burthen of clothing these poor creatures, Mr. Webb proposed that such children as by an increase of industry would bring a penny every Sunday towards their clothing should be assisted by having that penny doubled. This had an admirable effect. The children now regularly bring their pence every Sunday; many of them have been clothed, and the good consequences of laying up a little are powerfully enforced.

"It is pretty evident that were every parish in this kingdom blessed with a man or two of Mr. Webb's active turn and benevolent mind, the lower class of people in a few years would exhibit a material change of character, and justify that superior policy which tends to prevent crimes rather than to punish them.

"The liberality with which the members of your Society have stood forth in this attempt to introduce a degree of civilization and good order among the lowest ranks entitles them to the thanks of the community, and particularly of an individual who will be ever proud to subscribe himself,

"Your most obedient servant,

"R. RAIKES.

"*Gloucester, Oct. 7th,* 1786.

"P.S. — The gentlemen of Painswick intend making a request to Dr. Glasse to publish his sermon. The happy choice of the text had a remarkable effect in commanding the attention of the audience. The Scriptures could not have furnished a passage more literally applicable to the subject. It was taken from Deut. xxxi. 12, 13: 'Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God.'"

CHAPTER VIII.

PUBLIC LIFE.

"A life in civil action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent."
—TENNYSON.

RAIKES' prison and school labours, even though combined with the duties of a flourishing business, were far from sufficient to absorb his untiring energies. As became a leading citizen of Gloucester, he took a prominent part in many public movements, especially those which were of a patriotic or philanthropic nature, or which gave him scope for the exercise of his hospitable instincts. He seems to have found especial pleasure in entertaining any distinguished guests who might be visiting his native city. "He was a good-natured, hospitable man, doing the honours of the place to any conspicuous strangers who visited it, among whom I may mention the celebrated prison reformer Howard, whom I once met at Mr. Raikes' table, and

Mr. Hanway." So writes the Rev. Arthur B. Evans, formerly master of the Gloucester Cathedral School, and curate of St. Mary de Crypt, Gloucester, at the time when Raikes still resided in the parish. On one occasion, probably while His Royal Highness was staying with his regiment in Gloucester, Prince William, Duke of Gloucester, nephew of George III., honoured Mr. Raikes with a visit, and partook of refreshment at his house. His Royal Highness talked of Sunday-schools, and greatly praised Mr. Raikes' work in their establishment. It has been urged as an instance of Mr. Raikes' vanity that he did not on this occasion mention to his distinguished visitor the share which had been taken in the work by the Rev. Thomas Stock; and Mr. Raikes' brother, the Rev. Richard Raikes, is said to have remarked in reference to this omission, "Never mind; my brother has his reward on earth: Mr. Stock will have his in Heaven." It seems, however, a little unreasonable to accuse Raikes of vanity simply on the supposition (unsupported by evidence) that in a short interview with a royal prince he did not detail to him all the circumstances of an event to which the prince, in all probability, referred only out of politeness to his host. History nowhere records that Prince William of Gloucester took any

special interest in the subject of Sunday-schools, and his remarks respecting them to Mr. Raikes were doubtless of a purely complimentary nature. Under such circumstances etiquette would forbid anything more than polite assent on the part of Raikes. Had he presumed to enlarge on the respective merits of Stock and himself his conduct would have savoured of rudeness as well as vanity. As it was, there appears in the story handed down to us no evidence of either.

Another occasion on which Raikes was brought into contact with the royal family was in 1788, when George III., Queen Charlotte, the Princess Royal, and the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth spent a month at Cheltenham, then, as now, a fashionable health resort.. The royal party arrived in Cheltenham (which is distant about nine miles from Gloucester) on the evening of Saturday, July 12th, and took up their residence at Fauconberg Hall, which had been prepared for their reception. Among their attendants was Miss Burney (afterwards Madame D'Arblay), in whose "Diary and Letters" the following account is given of a visit to Raikes on July 19th, 1788, by which time the royal party had been at Cheltenham a week:—

"The Queen commanded Miss Planta and me

to take an airing to Gloucester, and amuse ourselves as well as we could. Miss Planta had a previous slight acquaintance with Mr. Raikes, and to his house therefore we drove. Mr. Raikes was the original founder of Sunday-schools, an institution so admirable, so fraught, I hope, with future good and mercy to generations yet unborn, that I saw almost with reverence the man who had first suggested it. He lives at Gloucester with his wife and a large family. They all received us with open arms. I was quite amazed, but soon found that some of the pages had been with them already, and announced our design; and as we followed the pages, perhaps they concluded that we also were messengers, or *avant courières*, of what else might be expected. Mr. Raikes is not a man that without a previous disposition toward approbation I should greatly have admired. He is somewhat too flourishing, somewhat too forward, somewhat too voluble; but he is witty, benevolent, good-natured, and good-hearted, and therefore the overflowing of successful spirits and delighted vanity must meet with some allowance. His wife is a quiet and unpretending woman. His daughters seem common sort of country misses. They seem to live with great hospitality, plenty, and good

cheer. They gave us a grand breakfast and then did the honours of their city."

Miss Burney mentions among the sights she was shown in Gloucester "the fine old cathedral," the gaol, and the infirmary. The Raikeses would not take her to the pin manufactory on account of the dirt in that quarter of the city. Continuing her diary, she says: "It was all interesting to see, though I will not detail it, for any Gloucester guide would beat me hollow at that." She concludes her account of this visit thus:—

"Mr. Raikes is a very principal man in all these benevolent institutions, and while I poured forth my satisfaction in them very copiously and warmly, he hinted a question whether I could name them to the Queen. 'Beyond doubt,' I answered, 'for they are precisely the things which most interest Her Majesty's humanity.' The joy with which he heard this was nothing short of rapture. The King and Queen intend going to Gloucester soon."

It is evident from the above narrative that Mr. Raikes, "witty, benevolent, good-natured, and good-hearted" as he is said to have been, had scarcely enough self-restraint to please Miss Burney. The thriving citizen was a little too

exuberant in his enthusiasm to please the courtly lady. Probably if he could have simulated a little high-bred *insouciance* he would have found more favour in her eyes. Yet, after all, it was but the manner of the man that she objected to: of the man himself she speaks in terms of the warmest praise. Raikes' desire to have his benevolent enterprises brought under the notice of the Queen was doubtless inspired by the recollection of the interest Her Majesty had taken in the subject of Sunday-schools in the memorable interview (referred to in a previous chapter) to which she had invited him at Windsor not many months before.

The visit to Gloucester, which Miss Burney says the King and Queen contemplated, came off on Thursday, July 24th. The King and Queen, with the three Princesses and several members of their suite, arrived at the Bishop's palace about eleven o'clock in the morning, and "were received," says Raikes, "by the Bishop and his lady, Mrs. Halifax; their fine young family, dressed in a judicious style of neat simplicity, being prepared to strew the way with flowers." Loyal addresses were then presented to the King by the Bishop on behalf of the clergy, and by the Mayor on behalf of the corporation and citizens. Visits were then paid by the royal party to

the Cathedral, the pin manufactory, the infirmary, and the new prison, after which refreshments were partaken of at the Bishop's palace, and the King, Queen, and Princesses, with their attendants, returned to Cheltenham. At the infirmary their Majesties expressed great satisfaction at the universal cleanliness and neatness which they observed; and respecting the new prison the King said he never saw any structure executed with more judgment and masterly workmanship. Two more visits were paid by the King to Gloucester during his stay at Cheltenham. On one occasion, he came in company with the Queen, to be entertained by Mr. George Augustus Selwyn, at Matson; and subsequently he rode over, attended only by his equerries, to make a morning call on Bishop Halifax. The customs of the Court at Cheltenham were marked by great simplicity. Raikes records that King George rose very early, and was generally to be seen on the walks about six o'clock. After breakfast, the King, Queen, and Princesses, were accustomed to make excursions into the country, and about six or seven in the evening they again appeared on the public walks.

"The frequency," writes Raikes," with which their Majesties have shown themselves upon the

walks and in the town has now, in some degree, divested them of the inconvenience of an attendant crowd. Such is their amiable and engaging demeanour that the idea of royalty seems to give place to the contemplation of pre-eminence in those virtues that constitute the happiness of private life."

Among the loyal subjects who during the first part of the King's visit thronged the Cheltenham walks to see their monarch was Raikes himself. A few days after her visit to Gloucester, Miss Burney recognised him from her place among the royal suite, and she thus records the fact :—

"Mr. Raikes and his family were come from Gloucester to see the royal family on the walks, which were very crowded, but with the same respectful multitude, who never came forward, but gazed and admired at the most humble distance." (July 20th, 1788.)

Raikes mentions several incidents of the King's visit to Gloucestershire, illustrative of His Majesty's demeanour to his subjects. When asked what guards should attend him to Cheltenham, King George replied, "I shall take no guards. Can I have better guards than my people?"

While on the promenade at Cheltenham early one morning the King met a farmer in a great heat.

"So, friend," said His Majesty, "you seem very warm."

"Yes, sir," replied the man; "I have come a long way, for I want to see the King."

"Well, my friend," said His Majesty, putting half-a-guinea into his hand, "here is something to refresh you after your walk."

"But where, worthy sir," asked the farmer, 'can I see the King?"

"Friend," replied the monarch, "you see him now before you."

A few days later, while riding into Tewkesbury, King George observed a number of people standing upon the walls of a bridge to get a glimpse of him. Considering the situation dangerous, he called out to them,—

"My good people, I am afraid that some of you may fall. Don't run such hazards to see your King. I will ride as slowly as you please, that you may all see him."

Raikes appears to have always been a loyal supporter of his monarch. At the civic banquets which his position required him to attend, no one honoured more heartily than he the toast of "King and Constitution," even when that toast was proposed (as it once was, by a citizen whose

patriotism was better than his orthography), under the style of "the two K's." Soon after his succession to the editorial chair of the *Gloucester Journal*, we find Raikes advocating a scheme for celebrating the coronation of King George III. and Queen Charlotte by giving marriage portions to young women of virtuous characters. The notion was heartily taken up. On Coronation day (September 22nd, 1761), a collection was made in its behalf at the Cathedral, and realized £40; other donations swelled the amount to £110; and the whole was distributed by a committee of ladies among eleven deserving young women, each of whom received £5 on her wedding day and (with one exception) a second £5 twelve months after marriage. It is characteristic of the times that the committee found it necessary to reassure the recipients of their bounty against a needless alarm in the following terms: "As to the notion which has been spread all over the country concerning the children of such marriages, as if the sons would be taken away to serve as soldiers, assure yourselves that this is a very great untruth, invented by wicked persons who, not willing to do good themselves, are desirous of preventing any good being done by others. Your children,

whether sons or daughters, will be as much the free-born subjects of the realm as the children of the greatest person in it."

At a later period of King George's reign (January, 1793), when the French Revolution was encouraging the avowal of many anti-royalist doctrines, we find Raikes joining with his fellow-citizens in an address declaring their "loyalty and attachment to their King, and their veneration for the British constitution as by law established." "We are determined," say Raikes and his fellows, "with our lives and fortunes to maintain and defend this our most excellent and envied constitution of government, as consisting of King, Lords, and Commons." Shortly afterwards, England's great struggle against the first Napoleon having commenced, the city of Gloucester sent £500 to London as a contribution for the defence of the country, and all civic entertainments were suspended during the war. In 1803, when war was resumed after the brief breathing-time afforded by the peace of Amiens, Gloucester raised a subscription to equip a volunteer force, and Raikes was among the contributors. In a very short time no less than 400,000 men voluntarily enrolled themselves in different parts of the kingdom.

The ladies of Gloucestershire showed their sympathy with the troops serving abroad by sending them flannel shirts, made after a pattern approved by one of the commanding officers, and deposited for general inspection at Raikes' office. Raikes himself took an active part in relieving the distress caused among the poor in the neighbourhood of his native city by the high prices consequent upon the long continuance of war. For a period of several years during the great anti-Napoleonic struggle, corn was so scarce that the inhabitants of the Forest of Dean, a mining district of Gloucestershire, could hardly be prevented, even by military force, from seizing the few loads of wheat and barley which they saw being carried along their highways and down their rivers to other parts. Again and again we read of hungry mobs stopping wagons on the highroad, and barges on the Severn and the canal, and carrying off all the corn with which they were laden. To alleviate the misery of which these acts of violence were the outcome, Raikes devoted both his purse and his pen. In his newspaper he preached the duty of the rich to assist the poor, and in his contributions he exemplified his precepts by practice. He also strove as much as

possible to economise the scanty corn supply by advocating the use of bean and barley flour and rice as substitutes for wheat. Soup kitchens and plans for the distribution of coal among the poor were other schemes to which he gave his hearty co-operation. For many years he was a warm supporter of a charitable organization, called the Gloucestershire Society, for apprenticing poor boys belonging to families in the county, and for relieving distress in the district generally.

Raikes' opinions respecting slavery—an institution which many good people in his day defended as of Divine appointment—may be deduced from some of the short paragraphs which in the newspapers of the eighteenth century took the place of leaders. Writing in 1791, he praises, as "an enterprise of singular benevolence," a scheme propounded by Mr. Grenville Sharpe, Mr. Thornton, and other gentlemen for the formation of a negro settlement on the coast of Africa, where the natives might "exhibit the advantages of cultivating their own soil, instead of employing their lives in making each other slaves to foreigners." From another article, written in the following year, it may be gathered that Raikes, like most judicious philanthropists of his times, though advocating

the immediate abolition of the slave trade, did not recommend that slavery in the Colonies should at once be put an end to. He saw that long-continued degradation had rendered the slaves unfit for freedom, and that until something was done to elevate them in the scale of humanity, the gift of liberty would be to them, not a blessing, but a curse. No more slaves shall be made, and those already in bondage shall be set free *gradually:* that was Raikes' creed, and in accordance with that creed, some twenty years after Raikes' death, the abolition of slavery in the British dominions was ultimately brought about.

The great controversy respecting Church and State, now so zealously waged, had scarcely begun to agitate the popular mind when Raikes lived and wrote. As to which side his sympathies lay there can be little doubt. He was a conscientious Churchman, firm in the maintenance of his own principles, and liberal towards those who differed from him. While admitting that the Established Church was imperfect, he desired to see its blemishes removed by some less extreme process than what he deemed to be the uncertain remedy of separation from the State. The following notice, addressed by him in 1795 to a correspondent,

whose letter he declined to publish, may perhaps be regarded as indicative of his views on this question :—

"Our correspondent will excuse us subjoining the reflection which experience is frequently forcing upon us—namely, that defects are inseparable from every human system. Whilst an establishment has so much excellence as in the instance alluded to, and continues to receive the sanction of the community, its imperfections must be regarded with some delicacy of regard by the editor of a public paper."

Raikes' liberality of sentiment towards other religious bodies is evident from the friendly way in which he speaks of Nonconformists generally, and especially of Methodists and members of the Society of Friends.

Whatever he might have done had he been simply a private citizen, Raikes as a journalist found it was one of the duties of his position to notice such dramatic performances as took place at intervals in Gloucester. His views on the subject of the drama and popular amusements generally may be gathered from the following notice written by him to a correspondent whose

notions were evidently more strict than Mr. Raikes' :—

"Our pious correspondent, when he would admonish the printer, and censure theatrical amusements, should preserve some bounds in his enthusiastic zeal for good morals, and not betray such melancholy ignorance of the true spirit of our religion as to act in opposition to its fundamental principle, charity. If he will quote Scripture, let him do it impartially, and then he will find enough to deter him from so gross an attack upon the 'higher powers' by whose laws these amusements are allowed, and upon those magistrates who give their sanction to a temperate indulgence in them. A plainer precept cannot be found in Scripture than 'Judge not,' which our correspondent, with too gloomy a mind, having entirely forgotten, proceeds with presumptuous temerity to pass sentence."

The following curious announcement, published in Raikes' newspaper on May 2nd, 1785, proves that, while deprecating uncharitable strictures on dramatic performances, he was too prudent to sanction any connection between his Sunday-school scheme and associations which many good people would deem unfit :—

"The printer having received a letter requesting to know the reason why the produce of the play lately performed in this city for the benefit of Sunday-schools, has not yet been publicly acknowledged, acquaints the writer that he had no concern in the scheme, and the persons engaged in the performance have never communicated to him any particulars on the subject."

CHAPTER IX.

CLOSING SCENES.

"Such graves as his are pilgrim shrines,
Shrines to no code or creed confined."
—HALLECK.

RELINQUISHING the cares of business and professional life at the age of sixty-seven, Robert Raikes retired to spend the remainder of his days in well-earned repose. Though he had ever been too benevolent to accumulate riches as some men in his position would have done, he had secured by nearly half a century of industry a competency amply sufficient for the wants of his old age. From the *Gloucester Journal*, after his retirement from its proprietorship, he received an annuity of £300; and he was the owner of two small freehold estates in the neighbourhood of his native city, at Saintbridge and Matson. As was natural to a man verging on threescore and ten, he seems to have felt that his time was come for rest;

and hence, while retaining to the last the liveliest interest in all philanthropic schemes, he resigned to younger men the honour of assisting them by personal labour. Tended by a loving wife, and surrounded by an affectionate family, he peacefully descended the hill of life. From incidental touches in some of his letters it is evident that the affections of home occupied a large place in his heart; and he found one of the greatest comforts of his declining years in the society of his children. In a letter to a friend, as early as 1787, he speaks of them as "six excellent girls and two lovely boys;" and there is no reason to suppose that his opinion of them deteriorated as they advanced in years. The eldest boy was named Robert Napier, and was born on the very day that the Sunday-school scheme was first promulgated in the columns of the *Gloucester Journal* (Nov. 3rd, 1783). He was trained for the Church, and adorned his sacred calling by an exemplary life. William Henley, the second son, adopted the profession of arms, and became a colonel in the Guards. The names of the daughters were Anne, Mary, Albinia, Eleanor, Martha, Charlotte, and Caroline. One of them was married to Sir Thomas Thomson, and another to Captain James Sedbrooke. The scene of Mr. Raikes'

death appears to have been a house in the city of Gloucester, situated in Bell-lane, where he took up his residence after his retirement from active life. For some time before his decease he found his health declining; but despite this warning, the end, when it came, came suddenly. Some five-and-twenty years before, when narrating in his newspaper several unexpected deaths, he had urged his readers to reflect on the precariousness of human life; and now he was about to teach the same lesson in a still more forcible way. So unlooked-for was his death that on the previous day he was measured by a tailor for a new black silk waistcoat, and on the very day of his decease his brother was to have dined with him. Towards evening, on the 5th of April, 1811, he experienced an oppression in his chest; a physician, who was immediately summoned, declared his case hopeless; and in less than an hour he was a corpse. Thus died, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, a man whom all succeeding generations will delight to honour. In the *Gloucester Journal*—the paper he had owned and edited so long—there appeared a few days later the following simple obituary notice:—

"On Friday evening last, died suddenly, at his house in this city, Robert Raikes, Esq., aged 75;

who, in the year 1783, first instituted Sunday-schools, and by his philanthropic exertions contributed to the adoption of them in different parts of the kingdom."

Thus summarily was epitomised the life-long work that had been and was to be so potent for good. The family vault in St. Mary de Crypt church, where some sixty years before his father's ashes had been laid, received in due course the mortal remains of Robert Raikes. Mindful of his work to the last, he had left instructions that his Sunday-school children should follow him to the grave, and that each of them should receive a shilling and a plum cake; and these instructions were duly carried out. By his will he left the whole of his property to his widow, who survived him seventeen years, and died in 1828, at the age of 85. An obituary notice in the *Gloucester Journal* speaks of her as "a lady of a pious and benevolent disposition, with an active and well-cultivated mind, and a heart open as day to melting charity." In case she had died before her husband, his will directed that his property should be divided between his children in equal proportions. A plain tablet near his grave bears the following inscription :—

"Sacred to the memory of ROBERT RAIKES, Esq. (late of this city), Founder of Sunday-schools, who departed this life April 5th, 1811, aged 75 years.

"'When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.'—Job xxix. 11, 12, 13.

"Also ANNE RAIKES, relict of the above ROBERT, who died March 9th, 1828, aged 85 years.

"'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'—1 John i. 7.

"'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'—Acts iv. 12."

On the marble monument erected in the same church to the memory of his parents there is also an inscription respecting Robert Raikes. It is in Latin, as follows:—

"ROBERTI etiam horum Filii natu maximi
Qui Scholis Sabbaticis
Hic primum a se institutis,
Necnon apud alios
Felici opera studioque suo commendatis,
Obiit die Apr : 5to,
Anno { Salutis, 1811,
{ Ætatis Suæ, 75."

The following is a translation :—

"Also of ROBERT, their eldest Son, by whom Sabbath-schools were first instituted in this place, and were also by his successful exertions and assiduity recommended to others. He died on the 5th day of April,

In the year { Of our salvation, 1811,
{ Of his age, 75."

In a portrait which has been preserved, Mr. Raikes appears as rather tall, somewhat portly, of fair complexion, and most benevolent expression of countenance. He is dressed after the fashion of the day, in a blue coat, buff waistcoat, drab kerseymere breeches, white stockings, and low shoes.

It would be easy to write glowing eulogies of Raikes' character. Even in his own day the Rev. Dr. Glasse, speaking of him as "the founder of Sunday-schools," could say: "The outlines of a

character so distinguished in the annals of his country as that of Mr. Raikes cannot fail to engage the attention of the reader. In proportion as he feels himself interested in the welfare of mankind, he will interest himself in every particular which concerns this bright example of unbounded philanthropy." But in point of fact eulogiums are unnecessary. The man's life and labours speak for themselves. With the aid of such self-revelations as are to be found in his letters we can see him as a simple-hearted Christian, sincerely desirous to glorify God by benefiting his fellow-men. This was the object of his life; and he achieved it simply by a conscientious discharge of daily duty. As the varying circumstances of the hour pointed out to him new means of doing good, he at once availed himself of them. Both in letter and in spirit he seems to have realized the Apostle's ideal, "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." It was while industriously pursuing his vocation that he saw the evils which then cursed society; and he availed himself of every opportunity, both in a private and professional capacity, to apply the remedy. At first he had but a faint conception of the greatness of his work. When he gathered his first group of ragged children for

Sunday instruction, to none would it seem more unlikely than to him that he was starting a movement which to the end of time would never cease to benefit mankind. He himself spoke of it as "an experiment, harmless and innocent, however fruitless it might prove in its effects." He tried the experiment because surrounding circumstances suggested it as a possible means of remedying the evils he lamented; and when the experiment proved wondrously successful, he followed still further the plain leadings of duty by making it known as widely as he could. The way in which his work progressed step by step proves that he was one of those unpretending benefactors to the world who waste no time in longing after impossible opportunities for unheard-of exploits, but simply do with all their might the work which lies nearest to them. Two other features in his character stand prominently out among a host of minor excellences—his affection for children and his love for the Word of God. Doubtless he had his failings, as have other men, but whatever they were, a grateful posterity may well afford to overlook them. For the sake of the good seed he planted—now become a great tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations—his name will

be held in everlasting remembrance. Every Sunday-school is a monument to his fame, every teacher and scholar a celebration of his work. And who can tell the countless memorials, unmarked by human observation, but carefully recorded in the chronicles of Heaven, of minds enlightened, homes reformed, and lives ennobled by means of the work which Robert Raikes began? In a higher than earthly sense his life and labours are one more illustration in proof of Tennyson's couplet,—

> "Not once or twice in our rough island story
> The path of duty was the way to glory."

FINIS.

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