

### How Rachel Won her Scholars.

A CLASS of eight or ten girls, has been her care for years. Little girls when she took them, looking up to her as vastly their superior in years and experience; but now, fourteen or fifteen years of age, timid and shy, because not understanding themselves; eager to learn, yet afraid to confess their ignorance, or to tell their thoughts; full of contradictions they could not explain, and longing for some one to interpret themselves to themselves. "In short," said Rachel to me, I need to be less of a teacher, more of a friend and companion, and just how to bring about that state of affairs, I know not!"

But in spite of her ignorance, she applied her heart with all diligence to find the open door to their affections, and happening to go into 140 Blank street, one Saturday afternoon some time after our conversation, I thought from the scene I there witnessed, the doors of their hearts were at least ajar.

Rachel was at home, and all her girls were with her. Bright and animated they were; busy fingers flying, and tongues keeping pace with fingers, while bright worsteds and beads, scraps of silk and muslin scattered around, showed they were in the midst of Christmas preparations. And Rachel was as busy as they, giving a hint here, a word of advice there, settling contested points, and making every one feel perfectly at ease. Fearing my presence might be a restraint, I withdrew, but came in again after the girls had all gone home, to ask Rachel how she had managed to bring about such a pleasant state of feeling.

"I did not manage at all," she said, "it grew. Little Patty Morris happened to tell me one Sunday, what a time she was having to finish her mother's Christmas present, hiding her work in drawers and boxes, and stealing a few stitches whenever she could, asking in her trustful way, if I did not want her to visit me a little while next Saturday afternoon and bring her work. That suggested inviting the rest to bring their Christmas work, and though they looked a little uncertain at first, thinking, I suspected, that I would have the Sunday-school lesson in

ambush ready to attack them with it, they came, every one, and stayed until dark, and have every Saturday afternoon since."

"And have you never taught Sunday School lesson to them?"

"No, not yet; I want to know them a little better first, and let them find me out; and though one of these days I hope to study it with them, the time has not come yet. I read to them a little each day, something they would not be likely to read at home; sometimes one of Hale's odd stories to stimulate their minds and draw out their ideas; something of Aldrich's; maybe, one of Saxe Holme's beautiful stories; and each hour I find one more clue to the heart or disposition of one of my girls. And when it gets too dark to sew longer, we drop work and books, and as we sit in the twilight, it seems the most natural thing in the world to drift into quiet little talks. One has a verse that has helped her during the week, another has a question to ask. Patty Morris has a scrap of a hymn, often sings it to us, and without seeming to plan for it, it is so easy to lead them to speak of their inner life. I have found that my girls can help me wonderfully, and they are encouraged by knowing older Christians are troubled by the same temptations and doubts that come to them. And last week, while we were sitting in the dark, our hearts growing soft and tender, little Patty Morris began to pray. It seemed to come right out of her heart, almost without her knowing it, and such a simple earnest prayer it was. It melted my heart and the hearts of all. One after another took up the prayer, till every one had told her heart's desire to the Lord, and it was a blessed meeting. Do you not believe I love my girls better than I did? Why it seems as though I never had them before; but now they are mine, not scholars but friends; and instead of their coming up to my age, I believe I have gone back to my 'teens,' and am as young as any of them."

That is all there is to tell, dear reader; the result you must wait for, as I shall, till by-and-by, when all the sheaves shall have been brought unto the Master.