

sick, nor should we ever send out missionaries—preachers and teachers for the heathen—who have not *done* teaching and preaching work, and been blessed to the conversion of souls at home. If a man is not a successful soul-winner in his native land, he is not likely to become such in China or Africa. It is surely unwise in a high degree to commit to unproved men one of the most difficult of tasks. Unless a man has succeeded in turning others to righteousness in these lands where it is comparatively easy, what reason have we to conclude that he will do so in heathendom where it is much more difficult? There are home heathen enough in our crowded cities to afford practical training for missionary students. Just as medical students walk the hospitals, so should our missionary students learn their future work in our courts and alleys—in the centers where sin-sick and perishing souls needing the gospel remedy congregate. East London, for instance, with its vast and varied population, is an admirable training ground for missionary students. It was this fact which led us, many years ago, to plant there our Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, from which, during the last fifteen years many hundreds of missionaries have gone forth. We have more than a million of the working classes in this quarter. We have infidels, Romanists, English and foreign Jews, French, Germans, and Italians; Africans and Asiatics, including Chinese, Hindoos, and other nationalities. We have drunkards and paupers, and multitudes who are heathen in their habits, if not in their creed. Among these the evangelist can prove his gifts; he can either deal singly with individuals, or preach to companies gathered in rooms, mission-halls, lodging houses, or on board ships; and above all, he can address crowds in the open air.

The value of *open-air preaching* as a preparation for missionary work is exceedingly great. It cultivates aggressiveness, boldness, simplicity, directness, and earnestness of style, an extemporaneous delivery, and an interesting and striking manner of presenting divine truths. The open-air preacher must first gather his congregation, and then hold it in spite of surrounding distractions, with nothing but the simple power of his words. He must suit his style to the roughest and shrewdest of his auditors. He must promptly meet objections, answer questions, and quiet disturbances, as he seeks to win an entrance to unwelcome truths in the hearts and minds of neglecters and rejecters of the Word of God. He has to face opposition, and endure at times contempt and shame for the Master's sake. It is not easy work, and there is nothing in it to foster conceit or gratify self-esteem. It is really hard, self-denying service, more analogous to that which would be required of a missionary in the streets of India or China than almost any other form of gospel labor.

To preach from a pulpit to orderly congregations, prepared to listen respectfully and sympathetically, is no preparation for labor among the heathen. There is no trouble in gathering the people under such circumstances. Everything in their surroundings helps religious impression, and intelligent attention is bestowed on the preacher. But there is nothing of this sort in heathendom! One who is only up to work of this conventional type might almost as well stay at home. The missionary has to press his message on men who have no notion of its importance, no disposition even to listen to it, no substratum of religious knowledge on which to work, no enlightened conscience to which to appeal, no habits of reverence or decorum, no sympathy with the preacher's mode of thought, and but an imperfect comprehension of his language. Like the open-air preacher, the missionary must not expect either to be sought, appreciated, or thanked for his service, nor to find