

faces ranged themselves before me, every eye beaming with expectation of an intellectual treat. We had a grand subject—Solomon's Temple—and I had worked it up until even my fastidious taste was satisfied. All the books within my reach had been studied; every measurement and plan acutely criticised; diagrams illustrative of the lesson were before me, and an eloquent application of the subject (which I had secretly entitled a "peroration") had been carefully committed to memory. All my lads listened with delight, and I walked home full of self-congratulation, feeling confident that the afternoon had been even beyond my hopes, "a complete success."

"Do you call that nothing?" asked my pride, as I tramped to and fro beside the river. "Worse than nothing and vanity," was the stern reply.

I was startled, and for a few minutes angry. Then a better mood came upon me, and I lifted my eyes to heaven, like the publican, exclaiming, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

There was no one within hearing, and I said the words aloud. In a moment the darkness left me; my soul melted, I sank down, in spirit, at the Saviour's feet. I became as nothing in my own eyes that He, and He alone, might be exalted.

The next half-hour was spent in prayer; such prayer as I had never offered before. In the years that had gone by since my conversion, I had lost the ardour and simplicity of my first love. For some time there had been nothing childlike in my religion. Even in prayer I had been wont to *prate*, to claim prosperity as in some sort my special right, to speak of Christ as an example rather than a Saviour. Now, through God's mercy, I not only saw my error, but was humbled in the dust before Him.

It was midnight when I returned home, but late as it was, I sat down to spend a long hour with my Bible before I slept. On a stand near the window lay my class-books and a portfolio which contained my notes for next Sunday's lessons. I began by opening the latter, and thrusting all its contents into the empty grate, after which I set fire to them with a feeling of inexpressible sadness. It was clear to me that I must, by God's help, start afresh, but how I knew not. More than once I had thought of resigning altogether, but an intense longing to do something for Him who had done so much for me made me shrink from such a step, even while I still doubted whether my "vocation" was that of a teacher.

"One thing, at least, is certain," said my conscience, as I laid aside my journal with a sigh of regret, for the three years which I had, in one important sense, completely thrown away, "I have been brought to a point which I never reached before,—willing now to be nothing but a hewer of wood and a drawer of water in God's service."

It was true, I had reached this point, but I was still, to some extent, in the dark as to the cause of my non-success in winning souls. I had so well instructed my class in the gospel story, that it never once occurred to me that I had not set Christ indeed before them. Turning over my Bible, I saw chapter after chapter marked as having been made the subject of our earnest study. Surely, surely, I might have expected some little fruit from

so much labour! Unworthy though I had been, it seemed but reasonable to expect that God would fulfil His promise that His word should not "return unto Him void." As these thoughts chased each other through my mind, I was perplexed; it seemed almost as if my faith would give way once more.

"If I could but discover the secret of my non-success!" I exclaimed at last, when I had thought over it till I had almost resolved to give up teaching altogether. "What can it be? If Mr. Hamlyn, my predecessor, could but come back from the grave and tell me! It was a foolish speech, and I knew it to be so; but once made it gave rise to a series of conjectures ending in a quotation,—*"If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."* The hint given by this passage led me to search the Scriptures, if haply I might discover there what that blessing would not rise and tell me. In the gospels, first, then in the epistles, I sought diligently for some words from on high especially adapted to my need. It was long before I found it, but as soon as I did so, the secret of my failure was disclosed. "The place of the Scripture" which I read was this,—*"But we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."*

*Not ourselves, but—CHRIST!* I saw it all then, so clearly that I could only wonder at my previous blindness. Through all those years I had been preaching myself, showing off myself, exalting myself,—what wonder then, if I had failed to win souls to Christ! It had been my class, my influences, my superior teaching, my intellectual prowess, my power to win and to retain the affections of the young; and the Saviour whose work I had professed to do had been kept in the background, or only brought forward in order that I might show what I, in my cleverness, could say of His wondrous story! It was a humbling discovery to make, but on my knees I thanked God that I had made it, praying that henceforth, by His gracious help, it might be mine to preach—not myself, but Christ Jesus the Lord.

Thus it was when Sunday came. I was not prepared; or rather, I thought I was not. I had read the lesson, thought about it, prayed long over it, felt my insufficiency, yearned to teach it so that souls might be saved, but I had written out no lengthy notes, no eloquent "peroration," and I went to the class-room as I had never gone before, feeling helpless to teach well unless God, when the time came, by His Spirit taught me what to say.

School had opened with prayer in the large room, down-stairs, but no sooner were the lads in their places than I felt constrained to request that they would kneel again, while I entreated for a special blessing on the lesson before us. The prayer was longer than I intended. I could not help that. My anxiety for the salvation of my class constrained me to besiege the throne of grace in their behalf as if I had never prayed for them before. A conviction that it would be for the honor of the Redeemer that they should at once become His followers, led me to importunate and immediate outpouring of His Spirit. As we rose, a deep silence filled the room. When I broke it, it was to read the lesson, which was Acts xvi. 19–40. On the preceding Sunday I should have enlarged on the history

of Philippi; the Roman, as opposed to Jewish customs; the folly of soothsaying, which term I should have explained and illustrated; earthquakes, their causes and effects; prison discipline as practised by the ancients, and the privileges of the Roman citizen; with a little—I am ashamed to say *how little!*—about the jailer's conversion. But now, these things seemed to be of small importance in comparison with the jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?" and Paul's reply, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." These were the points which now claimed my chief attention, and I endeavoured to induce my class to look at them in the same manner. Two or three clever lads who had carefully "read up" the subject, tried to draw me away from the simple truths which I was led to set before them, but in vain. I was conscious that they would consider my teaching a sort of failure, but I no longer cared for that. I must exalt Christ, preach Christ, win souls for Christ,—if I did that, it was of little consequence whether I taught cleverly or otherwise. The time passed so rapidly that the bell rang to call us down long before I had said all I wished. As a result, I felt stupid and annoyed at my own mismanagement. The fact is, I was new to the work of conversing with my class in such a manner as to fix their thoughts on Jesus. Hitherto they had thought of me as first, last, everything, all the time I sat amongst them. One or two of the quiet ones spoke that day for the first time. I observed this with pleasure, but nevertheless I went home with a heavy heart, calling myself a fool, and feeling like one.

"Never mind that however," said a voice within, "all you want now is to win souls. God often honours even the foolish by making them instrumental in carrying out His mighty purposes. Pray, work on, and wait. Who can tell but that He will give the increase in His time?"

I obeyed, praying, working, waiting; and in His time, in very deed, was increase given. Some few clever lads, proud of intellect, and disdainful of the Gospel, went away; I following them by letter, visitation, and prayer. Of those who remained, not a few were converted to God. After a time, some of those who had left us came back. One, highly gifted, gave his heart to Christ, and became in due time a preacher of the Gospel. Others were placed on the pastor's list as inquirers. When I left them, as I did with extreme regret, for the distant home to which God by His providence called me, it was my happiness to know that for more than eighteen months I had preached CHRIST to my class, and not in vain. *But the three years in which I had preached MYSELF were lost for ever.*—UNION MAGAZINE.

AFTER poor Sabat, an Arabian, who had professed faith in Christ by the means of the labours of the Rev. Henry Martyn, had apostatized from Christianity, and written in favour of Mohammedanism, he was met at Malacca, by the late Rev. Dr. Milne, who proposed to him some very pointed questions; in reply to which he said, "I am unhappy! I have a mountain of burning sand on my head! When I go about, I know not what I am doing." It is indeed an evil thing and bitter to forsake the Lord our God,