

regained its power, and seems mightier as an instrumentality for good than ever before. Everywhere crowds attend on the proclamation of the Gospel. The common people hear it gladly under the open canopy of heaven; in theatres, and lecture-halls, and concert-rooms, in cathedrals, and in village sanctuaries, men come to listen to God's message of mercy as they have not come before in our day. Surely this is a manifest token for good—a most gratifying sign of the times—a mighty motive for growing activity.

Nor is this all. The evidence is clear and undoubted that very many souls have been and are being converted to God. Unquestionably great caution is necessary in relation to all statistics on such a theme; but I think we are bound to believe that the truth heard by so many who never heard it before, and so eagerly listened to by multitudes who had been accustomed to hear it with indifference, will not, yea, cannot, return to God void. Many of the facts in reference to the progress and extent of the religious awakening in Ireland are more or less known to all of us. I need not dwell on them. In Scotland a Congregational minister told me a few weeks ago that in the town where he labours, with a population of about 4,000, nearly 100 young men have during the last twelve months been converted to God, and become active in every good work. "The flower of the youth of the town," he says, "are on the Lord's side. Their love to each other, their union of co-operation, although belonging to different denominations, their manly decision, excite admiration, and have told extensively on the general face of society."

I heard that in a village near the place of my temporary residence some young men anxiously cherished the desire to give themselves to foreign missionary labour. I made arrangements to get them together and secure an interview with them. I went to the village where they reside, which does not certainly contain more than 500 souls, and there I conversed and prayed with six young men. Five of them have been brought to Christ during the past year, all of whom wish to devote themselves to the work of preaching the Gospel to the heathen. Such a fact, unimportant as in some respects it may seem, yet speaks much as to the character of the religious work which has been going on in that region.

Nor—blessed be God—is the work confined to Ireland and Scotland: many parts of England have received, and are receiving, a rich blessing. The other day a young man came to me as an applicant for fellowship with the church. He told me that he had recently been at home for a fortnight, on a visit to his relatives, in the county of Salop, and, to his joy, on reaching his native place he heard the voice of praise in the house of his early youth, where such a sound in his boyhood had been unknown. He soon learned that several members of his family had been led to religious decision within the last few months in connection with a revival in the town. Old things in their hearts and in their home had passed away, and all things had become new. And many in the same locality had by grace reached the same experience. But I need not mention such facts here. There are brethren present whose knowledge and experience in relation to the religious awakening are much greater than mine, and who have had means of seeing the tokens of God's gracious presence and power in their own congregations or in their own neighbourhood.

Such things call for devout gratitude, summon us to stronger faith and more zealous action, and are calculated to inspire in us a wider and deeper charity. God is no respecter of sects any more than of persons. He works in all and by all who hold the head and honour Him; and, wherever His work is, there should our hearty sympathy and strong affection be. Still, we have a duty