

law operates in relation to the work of the teacher. Passive states are those induced by impressions made upon us through our bodily senses, and without any effort of will on our part. The more frequently these impressions are experienced without any exertion on our part of will-power, the feebler they become. For example, we witness a spectacle of abject poverty and deep distress, and the impression made upon us the first time is strong and vivid; but we do nothing, exercise no volition to relieve the distress. Let this be repeated a sufficient number of times and the impression becomes so feeble as to be almost imperceptible. Let this process be continued long enough and our sensibilities will become slowly but surely deadened, and we will become so hardened by the sight of misery as to be well nigh past feeling. Look now at a correlated law.

3. *Our active mental states are strengthened by repetition.* Active states are those into which we pass by volition, the exercise of our innate will-power. Look again at a case of unmistakable distress. By a deliberate act of will you overcome a feeling of disinclination to deal with it, and you exert yourself to afford relief. That is to say, by an act of resolute choice you turn to proper account the passive state into which you have been thrown by the sight of misery. You do this again and again, ten, fifteen, twenty times. What is affirmed is that these repetitions give greater strength, a larger measure of ability to grant relief. Such actions thus become easy and natural, because a habit of virtue is gradually formed in the direction of benevolence, and you escape the serious danger of personal deterioration by having your feelings of kindness weakened and destroyed through frequent appeals to them without corresponding action on your part.

It is under the silent action of these laws, I go aside to say in passing, that excessive readers of sensational novels and habitual theatre-goers inflict irreparable mischief upon themselves. Their emotional nature is stimulated to the highest pitch by exaggerated representations of imaginary woes over which they weep in their boxes or on their luxurious couches, while they do nothing to relieve the real sufferings of humanity at their doors. Practical action of this sort is wholly lacking with them. And thus their feelings are being worn out, so that a still stronger stimulus is

required to reach and move them, while no really manly or womanly vigor is being gained by the cultivation of active habits of virtue. God pity the preacher whose congregation is composed of such people! What they fervently crave after is sensationalism rather than divine truth. This is the necessary outcome of their bad education.

But what has all this to do with Sunday School teaching, or with the teacher being reproduced in his pupil? Very much. The three laws now stated and illustrated, viz., that touching the diffusion of strongly dominant ideas, that under which our emotional nature may be weakened and virtually destroyed, and that by which we can gain mental strength and rise to true manhood, are all operative during the process of teaching, and success depends in a very large degree upon understanding and following them.

Let me suppose that the teacher has ever present in his heart the over-mastering desire that his pupils may be saved, and that this feeling is so intense that he cannot conceal it. It is seen in his countenance, heard in his voice, breathed in his prayers. Without making any formal announcement of it they become conscious of his vehement wish, and the same feeling spreads among them. They are thus agreed secretly touching what they should ask God.

What then? Then we have the word of the Saviour for it that the issue shall be most blessed. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven."

What an opportunity placed within reach of the instructor of children not merely to imprint his own image upon them but, what is infinitely better, to confer upon them everlasting benefits, by bringing them under the power of saving grace.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!"  
is the inscription carved into the handsome wooden mantel of the Ladies' Parlor and Bible Class room of Knox Church, Hamilton. It is a fine and exceedingly appropriate adornment. The faith that rests on this foundation is not blown hither and thither with every wind of doctrine. Begin young with such instruction if you wish for stalwart Christians.