

what might be expected. An evil habit when taken into custody becomes more rebellious. The glint when thrust through with a dart often manifests an unexpected strength. So sin, the moment grace lays upon it its restraining hand, becomes more violent and, for a time, seems quickened into a new life and possessed of a new power. But,

2. The discovery of more sin in the heart than we were aware of at the time of a supposed conversion is no evidence against a present gracious state. The discovery of more sin does not prove the actual existence of more sin. There may be less dirt in a brilliantly illuminated room than when it was dark or dimly lighted, and yet the reverse may be apparently true, for the simple reason that the light has discovered what was before hidden. And so there may be really less and yet apparently more sin in the heart now than at any former period, simply because the Holy Spirit has shined into that heart and discovered to us that sin of which we were before unconscious and unaware. Thus the discovery of our sins, so far from casting doubt upon our spiritual state is sometimes evidence of increased sanctification, and so the believer, though thus in darkness, may be as truly advancing, shining more and more unto the perfect day, as the morning sun is mounting up the heavens, though apparently detained for a time behind a cloud. The Christian under the influence of sudden temptation may be surprised in a sin, and indulge desires and thoughts which in a more sober moment he would be the first to condemn. At the moment of sinning there is, of course, no growth, but an actual momentary going backward and decline, and yet when his whole spiritual history and life are brought under view there may be real progress. To an observer standing on the beach at one of our seaports, a vessel entering the harbor and tacking against the wind, may appear at times to be receding, and in fact it may be actually at the moment retrograding, but if he will watch it long enough it will be seen, despite of appearances, to be actually advancing. So the Christian may be caught and driven out of his course, and be apparently declining, and yet upon the whole, despite of his backslidings, truly and substantially advancing and growing in grace.

More. To judge fairly whether there is this advance or not the Christian must pass a large section of his history under inspection. Measured by any particular day, there seems to be no progress, simply because it is slow, and imperceptible during the process, but when he compares his spiritual status to-day with what it was five or ten years ago, the growth is very apparent. There is a star while you watch it there is no perceptible advance, but mark its position, and measure on the sky a considerable section, and then, going away for a while, return and look, and you perceive at once by comparison that it has mounted up the heavens. Thus Christians, by confining their attention to the present moment, and failing to take in a large section of their spiritual life, are filled with discouragements and doubt, when if they would compare distant periods of their history they would be convinced that despite of the present and intervening sins they have progressed.

It is not the mere motions of sin in the heart, or its presence in the life which convicts a professed conversion as spurious, but sin loved, welcomed, submitted to. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." *Rev. E. W. Shanks, in Christian Observer.*

GO THYSELF.

An unconverted teacher in a day-school, where the Bible and religion had not yet been excluded, became very much concerned for the spiritual welfare of his scholars. He went to his pastor and laid the case before him, and asked him to come and talk to his school. The pastor was a wise man, and he replied, "You go and talk to them yourself."

"Oh, that would never do! I am not a Christian, and it would be the blind leading the blind, and we should all fall into the ditch together."

"But God has very evidently laid this work on your conscience, and you are the man He has called to it," replied the pastor. "God is speaking to you, and He does not intend you should throw the work on some one else."

The teacher went with great trembling before his school; he told them how he felt, and how deeply he was concerned for them. As he spoke God opened his lips, and opened his heart, and he was the first

convert in a revival that spread all through his school, and all through the place. Had he followed his own thought, he would have missed the blessing, and probably the work would have been left undone. He felt the impulse God gave him, he saw the need as God revealed it to him. But he would have turned the work over to another. But God said, through his servant, "Go thyself." And as he went, God went with him and blessed him.

A great many Christians miss the richest blessing by throwing on others what God would throw on them. A parent feels an unusual concern for his child and refers it to the Sabbath-school teacher. A teacher feels an intense concern for her class, and satisfies it by urging them to come to some meetings where she hopes they may be impressed. A Christian feels anxious for his neighbour, and satisfies that anxiety by bringing that neighbour out to church. All these things are very well, but they stop short of the Divine call. That call has a personal intent. When God moves the heart of the Sabbath-school teacher to yearn for her scholars, he intends she shall go to them herself. If he had wanted another, he would have called another. If God has touched your heart with a concern for your class, you are in the mood and place to do what no one else can do. When your scholars come to you hungry for the bread of life, you have no right to send them away to find nourishment elsewhere. Do you be sure and feed them yourself. The task may seem large, but when Jesus told the disciples to feed the multitude, He was prepared to increase their five loaves to the needs of the occasion. He has not forgotten how to multiply the feeblest efforts of those who trust Him, and work for Him.

You have often felt an impulse for the spiritual uplifting of some one about you. You have often felt a peculiar drawing towards some special Christian work. If every such impulse were obeyed, how the church of God would arise in her strength! It is the resistance of these gentle impulses that hardens us and bewilders us. We do not heed the Divine voice, and we soon come not to know the voice when we hear it.

Be sure and do yourself what God asks you to do, even though He ask you by the gentlest breathing. Obey the gentlest impression of the Divine Spirit, and you will not only find yourself enriched thereby, but you will also find that the same Spirit which spoke to you, has gone before you to prepare the way, and will go with you to guide and help. God always speaks softly. He never comes in the storm, or the thunder, or the earthquake, but always in "the still small voice." But there are rich blessings and large results in store for those who listen and hear when He speaks. We are barren in our lives because we suppress so much of the best impulses that ever come to us. How often have you gone to your class with a yearning heart, and yet never opened your heart? Then you went away burdened and discouraged. In the warm impulse of that yearning, God would have touched every scholar in your class, and left an impression that would have remained. What a change would come over all our schools if all the teachers were true to the best impulses of their hearts; or, it would be more correct to say, if every teacher would be true to the best impulses of the Holy Spirit. A school often seems on the borders of a glorious revival, all the teachers are so impressed with their responsibility. If they would all follow this impression, the result would astonish them. But the voice is hushed within them, and the hovering cloud is lifted. The impression dies because it finds no vent.

When God speaks to you, therefore, be sure you hear Him. When He lays a work on your soul, be sure you do not lay it off on some one else, no matter how poorly you may be furnished. God furnishes us for the work to which He calls us, and He will multiply your gifts as you use them, just as He did the loaves as the disciples brake them.—*S. S. Times.*

PULPIT AND PRESS.

How the religious newspaper may aid the pulpit and benefit the home, is well stated in the following extract from Dr. Murphy's work on Pastoral Theology:—

"In a previous chapter we sought to show that it is for the interests of pastors to keep themselves well informed, through religious journals, of the progress of Christ's kingdom; we would now strongly urge

upon them that they should also use their influence to introduce such journals into the families of their congregations. As almost all great enterprises of the day have their newspaper to support them, so every denomination of Christians, and every important Christian undertaking has its journal. There are papers adapted to every class of minds and to every drift of religious thought. This subject the minister should look into, and endeavor to have his people benefited by the rich stores of instruction which are flowing out from the religious press.

"He may draw much important aid in his work from this source. The periodical religious press, when habitually perused, will undoubtedly make the people more intelligent, and, consequently, more interested in the kingdom of Christ; it will supplement the teachings of the pastor, which must necessarily be limited in extent; it will enforce by adding additional authority, the truths which are uttered from the pulpit. Its assistance will make the work of the pastor easier. It will give the people fuller information than the pulpit possibly can, about the great enterprises of benevolence which the church is carrying on, and so will interest them in those enterprises, and make them more liberal in their support. If religious journals did no more than take the place of, and so crowd out the pernicious literature that is issuing from so many other presses, it would be an unspeakable blessing to the Church and the world. *That pastor is neglecting a splendid auxiliary to his work, who is not using every effort to induce his people to take and read papers which are devoted to the spread of the righteousness of Christ in the salvation of souls, and purifying the lives of believers.*

"We need to give continued thought to the subject, in order to appreciate the value of a good religious newspaper, coming regularly into a family, and being read by its various members. Weekly it preaches its timely sermons to the household. Some of the most able and pious ministers, and other writers, that are to be found in the land, are those who may be heard through its pages. And they send forth, in this way, the very best of their thoughts. The religious newspaper keeps the people informed of what is going on in the Church and the whole kingdom of Christ. It says many things plainly to them which the pastor, from delicacy, or other causes, could not say. Many of the people will scarcely read anything else than newspapers; how deeply important it is that those papers be of the right kind! The family which habitually reads a good religious journal, will undoubtedly have a higher and more intelligent tone of piety than that which neglects this method for growth in knowledge. They will have wider views and more generous impulses towards the truth, whether it is to be supported at home or extended abroad."

IT FRETTED, BUT SAVED.

A prominent merchant, in one of our towns, gives the following account of the way in which he was led to Christ: "I was in B—, buying my stock of goods. On Saturday I was in the store of —, away up in the highest storey of the building, attended by the salesman of that department. Suddenly, and right in the midst of our business transactions, he stopped talking of his goods and began to talk to me about my soul. He talked on a little while, then opened his memorandum book, and went to business again. Now that fretted me at first. I could not help feeling worried that he should interrupt our buying and selling in that way. And how did he know but that I might take offence and quit. The truth is I *did think* of turning on my heel and leaving the store. Well, that night, I could not get rid of what he had said to me. While it worried me, it also kept me thinking of my spiritual condition. I could hardly sleep that night, because the man's words haunted me so. And I never got rid of them. They kept me thinking, until, a short time afterward, I became a Christian. That man fretted me, but I believe he saved me."

A word in season—how good it is! One little conversation, not five minutes long, brought this heedless worldly soul to Christ. Reader, did you ever try such work as this? If not, begin it now. But pray first; then speak to that lost soul near you. How do you know what the result will be? Many a soul would be saved if more of this sort of work were done. And is not many a soul lost because Christians are so dumb? Will you let that man at your side go to hell for want of a word that you can speak?—*Perry, in Central Presbyterian.*