

and he says it to you, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?"

"But," he persisted, "it says it is impossible, if one has fallen away, to renew him again unto repentance."

"I am sorry you have got hold of that idea. You are referring to Heb. vi., 4-6, but I fear you misunderstand the passage. Let me say, that the last part of it contains the reason for the statement which is in the first part of it: "Seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame." The passage refers to those who had been quite convinced that Jesus was the Christ, but who for some reason or other joined his enemies and spoke of him as an impostor and as deserving all he suffered on the cross. They were apostates. And this was quite a likely thing among the Jews, to whom the epistle was written. But while you have gone far wrong and sinned grievously against God, I am very much mistaken indeed if you have ever spoken a disrespectful word of Jesus, or harbored an evil thought about him even for a moment."

"No, thank God!" he answered, most emphatically; "though I have been a great sinner now for ten years, I have never had a doubt as to Jesus Christ and his work for sinful men."

"Then, what you have got to do is to go to him as you did thirty years ago. Remember, he loved you and gave himself for you; and his love can never change. "Through him is proclaimed unto you the forgiveness of sins." Bear in mind, "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." "And by him all that believe are justified from all things." I plead with you, William, to respond at once to his invitation. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." You are heavily laden with sin, but come back to him with it, make honest confession of it, and he will give you rest—the rest of deliverance, the rest of peace with God. Be encouraged by his precious promise, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The poor man seemed greatly impressed, and sat, while we sailed up through the shipping, evidently deeply engrossed in serious thought.

When we reached the Broomielaw I invited him to accompany me to a temperance hotel in Jamaica street, where we had tea together. Though my way lay in the opposite direction from his, I said I was going home with him. To this, as I expected, he objected; but I was kindly firm with him, and at last he consented. My object was to keep him from getting any drink that night. His wife was surprised to see him home so soon and sober. A word of explanation sufficed to assure her, and the evening was spent in profitable conversation. When I left I was thankful that my time had not been spent in vain. I felt that William Barton, whom I had met in so unexpected a manner, was saved.

It was even so. A few weeks later I was delighted to see him in a suburb of the city in charge of his son's van, and superintending the delivery of goods to certain merchants in it. His looks had greatly improved, and something like the old light was in his eye. And as I beheld him a feeling of joyous satisfaction filled my mind, and I inwardly thanked God for permitting me to

realize more fully than ever I did the meaning of his words, 'Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.'

Holy Ground.

A gentleman was visiting a friend who owned a pretty country place in Northamptonshire.

One morning, as he took an early stroll in the pleasant meadows, from which the new-mown hay had just been carried, he came to a hillock, crowned with some fine old trees, and beneath it was a little dell, where daisies grew so thickly that it seemed as if a white carpet had been spread over the turf. There were weeds among them, too, poppies and campions, and nightshade and rambling briars—a veritable wilderness in contrast with the surrounding meadows, so trim and neat.

"Why don't you clear away all this," asked the visitor of an old laborer working near, "and make it in keeping with the other parts of the estate?"

"Why, sir, th' maister do think that ere spot better than all the rest, tho' I've never heerd for why. He won't let no rake nor spade go anigh it. "'Tis holy ground," he says. It 'ud be as much as my place wur worth t' set spade to it."

The visitor was puzzled. He had heard of graves where sacred memories gathered until the place seemed holy ground, but this was simply a wild dell, where meek-eyed daisies, and flaunting weeds ran riot.

In the evening, being again near the place in company with his host, he said:—

"What a strange fancy of yours to have that spot in such disorder."

A shadow fell across Mr. Russell's pleasant face, succeeded almost instantly by a tender smile, as he replied:—

"It does seem fanciful to those who do not know. You remember our two bairns, Owen and Clarice? They used to pass a great deal of their holiday time in that little dell. In the bright, warm weather they would set out their tea things in the shade, and sometimes they would 'play' at church, there singing hymns and managing between them a little accordion very nicely, which they called their organ."

"They were good children, giving us very little anxiety, and, at work or play, happy and busy as bees. Of course, they had their childish trials and vexations, real enough for them, but somehow there always seemed a charm in the daisy dell. Whatever the trouble or sorrow, no sooner had they been to their pleasant retreat than it seemed to vanish; the brow grew smooth again, the merry laugh rang out."

"The daisies grew in that dell so quickly that at last I gave my gardener orders to root them out."

"But I had reckoned without my host. Both children came running to me in great consternation, Owen crying out—

"Oh, papa! don't let it be done. You will spoil our carpet; and besides—and besides, we call it "holy ground.""

"He stopped, looking very red and distressed; and then Clarice, who understood why he hesitated, came forward with real Christian courage, though her shy, blushing face showed with what effort, and said, 'Papa, Owen and I often say our prayers there; when anything vexes us we tell Jesus Christ about it. When you were ill the other day, we knelt down on the daisies and asked God very earnestly to make you well again, and he heard our prayer; and ever since then we have called it holy ground. But this has been a secret between us till now.'

"I was greatly touched to find how truly

my dear ones had received the Kingdom of God as little children.

"You may be sure their request was granted. I promised they should do as they liked with their daisy dell. No gardener should touch it; from thenceforth it would be to me also "holy ground."

"They were wild with delight, Clarice insisting on walking round the hill-top on tip-toe, while Owen, simulating a wooden leg, hopped round in her wake. Dear innocent bairns! Their merry laughter floated on the summer air; I have heard it often in memory, I hear it still in my dreams."

"Six months afterwards I lost them both in scarlet fever. Do you wonder that I still leave the daisies to weave their silvery carpet here at will?"

"I call it holy ground

Where daisies wrap the sod,

The place where human need and care
Sent up a voice to God.

"I call it holy ground,

When two or three are there,

And Jesus, standing in the midst,

Breathes peace upon the air."

Have you a 'holy ground,' some sheltered place in the garden, some quiet room where you may be alone with God, where you may speak of him as to a friend, confessing your short-comings, and asking his all-powerful help in every time of need?—*Sylvia Penn, in 'Presbyterian Witness.'*

Johnnie's Balance Sheet.

Johnnie was a born grumbler. If it rained he began to cry. 'It is always so. I was going to that picnic, and now I can't.' If a schoolmate had a new plaything he filled the house with the complaint, 'The other boys are always getting things and I don't.'

Johnnie's father was an accountant, and when one day Johnnie saw him working on a big sheet of paper, he asked, 'Papa, what is that?' 'A balance sheet,' Johnnie asked if he couldn't make out a balance sheet.

So a pen and ink and a big sheet of paper properly ruled was spread out before him. 'What name shall I write at the top?' asked Johnnie. 'Nobody has deposited any money with me.' 'Hasn't anybody deposited anything with you that is worth money? There is your mother. What would you sell her for?' 'Why, I wouldn't take a thousand pounds for her.' 'Who gave her to you? How comes it you have such a sweet, loving mother, and not a cross, drunken one like Bob Blue?' 'I s'pose God did.' 'Yes, and God can take her away. So write God at the top of your sheet, and put on the credit column, "The best mamma in the world, £100,000."' Johnnie made the entry. 'What next, papa?' 'Well, there is Sister Lizzie. Is she worth anything to you?' 'Yes, indeed.' 'Then put down: "The prettiest little sister, £50,000."' Would you change places with poor, blind Tommy for £250,000?' 'No,' with a shudder, 'not for £100,000.' 'Put down, "Eyes, £50,000."' And so they went on until the boy found he owed the Lord quite a sum. 'Nqw,' said his father, 'for the other side. You complained yesterday because it rained. How much are you going to charge God for that disappointment?' 'Nothing,' hanging his head. 'You grumbled when Jimmie Jones got a new kite and you had to fly your old one.' 'But my old kite went up higher than his new one.' It was a strange balance sheet, but it made Johnnie ashamed of his grumbling. A good many older children would do well to make out a balance sheet and write under it: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'—'Word and Work.'