

in the pursuit of a gratification, the pangs of want are soon felt. He who had never known what it was to be in need, was soon in the most complete indigency. All that remained to him were the woes attached to incontinency. He had sought fortune, honor and life in a distant land, and what did he find? Hunger, shame and death. — Why does man strive to live in a barren country cursed by God? Why does he seek to calm, to quiet with temporal goods and riches, the desires, the yearnings of his immortal soul? That celestial plant created by God, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, must receive its life from God alone, or wither and die.

But what happened to the wayward son in want and far from his father's home? Those with whom he squandered his fortune must have certainly assisted him? No. His friends (if such they must be called) were friends of money, friends of egotistic pleasure, friends of interest, ignoring that consoling devotedness which exists between the children of God. How could they have sacrificed themselves for his welfare, since they knew not what love is, what it is to love; and without love sacrifice cannot exist, for love is the soul of devotedness. All their protestations and promises of fidelity and unfaltering friendship vanished in the hour of trial.

Seeing himself all alone in that ungrateful country, did the Prodigal sever with those who had abandoned him, did he return to his father's home to seek his father's pardon? His longing for adventures was not satisfied. He was determined to see the bottom of the abyss he had undertaken to explore, he wished to drink his chalice to the dregs. How changed, how different! The happy smile — unerring proof of the soul's innocence — disappeared when his lips touched the cup of death. Bitter remorse began to consume his conscience, but he hoped to still that final call to life. He only sank deeper and deeper into iniquity's mire, into the arms of death. Fruitless efforts to escape! The deeper he sank, the more cruel and ignominious his slavery! « *And the Prodigal went, and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine.* » Frightful idea of the degradation to which a young man may fall for having desired to become his own