



THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

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AND returning to himself, he said : How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread and I here perish with hunger ? » (Luc. xv.) God has different ways to touch a young man's heart running after the things of this world, hastening on to perdition, hoping, thereby, to rest his restless soul. That Father sometimes reminds His wayward boy of his former happiness, of the joys of those living in His service ; but He most frequently places before the sinner's eyes a striking tableau of his own degradation and misery. Because the sight of his corporal necessities affects man deeper than that of his spiritual requirements.

Ah ! now the Prodigal has learnt that his body doomed to rot, that his bones which will, ere long, become dry and arid, are not *all* in man. Consumed by his infamous pleasures, disgusted with what he had hoped would calm the yearnings of a soul created for immortality, he experienced a sad and bitter feeling ; remorse had overpowered and crushed him. — Contemplate that unfortunate victim of a degrading passion. Though still in the flower of youth, he is a perfect image of complete decrepitude. See his furrowed brow, his pale hollow cheeks, his care-worn exterior. His dull, deathly appearance denotes that the fountain of pure emotions, of innocent joys, is poisoned. He no longer knows what it is to love, to sympathize, to shed tears of compassion. Like one awakening from a deep sleep, the unfortunate boy understood that wisdom begotten of bitter experience.

O God ! one may truly exclaim, when far from Thee, the soul soon becomes miserable and destitute. « Woe be to the