

would give their right hand—all they have indeed—to stand again where some of you do. Oh! let us be wise in time. God can and will take back His penitent prodigal child, and give to him all that a Father's loving heart can bestow, but God cannot and God does not chase away the memories of the sinful past that tramp through the chambers of the mind. If you want no bitter thoughts of the far-off country with its riotous living and husks of the swine-trough, take care you do not wander from the Father's home.

And, further, I want you to come to Christ *now*, because, coming to Him, you will be saved for earnest service. "Repent ye, for—" any reason you like; any motive that really brings you to Christ is a good one; but the Baptist's plea is perhaps still the best; certainly it has lost none of its urgency to-day—"repent ye, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" New fields await the worker, new doors stand open on every side, a thousand voices summon us to that service of God which is the service of man. And I have no greater quarrel with sin than this, that it unfits men for this high service. We pity the unhappy cripple left behind in the race of life. But our churches are full of such—men and women repentant and forgiven indeed; but not for them the difficult task, not for them the high endeavour; they must go softly all their days. Just as a man dragged from the revolving wheels of some machinery may lose one of his limbs and yet may escape with his