

purchase of ease and enjoyment, we pursue it for its own sake till it acquires an enduring power over our affections altogether separate from the power of purchase and command which belongs to it. Thus from being sought after as the minister of gratification to the appetites of nature, it at length brings nature into bondage—robs her of all her pure and simple delights and pours the infusion of bitterness into the currency of all her feelings.—It makes those sad who ought to be cheerful—and he who ought to rejoice in his present abundance is filled either with the cares of an ambition which never will be satisfied, or with the apprehensions of a distress which, in all his pictured and exaggerated evils will never be realized.—That which is subordinate becomes primary and that which is primary becomes subordinate; transferring by a kind of fascination, the affections away from wealth in use, to wealth in idle and unemployed possession; insomuch that to the proprietor of an ample fortune, it would be the very height of enjoyment to be told, with prophetic assurance, that his process of undisturbed augmentation would go on with his children's children to the last age of the world.—But we have the authority of that word which is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart that it cannot have two masters, or that there is not room in it for two great and ascendant affections.—The engrossing power of one such affection is expressly affirmed to be the love of Mammon—i. e. if the love of the things of this world engross the heart, the love of God can have no place there, if we are trusting in uncertain riches, it is certain we are not trusting in God who giveth us all things richly to enjoy. If our heart be set upon covetousness it is evidently set upon idolatry. The true Divinity is removed from its place, and what is worse than Atheism, which would only leave it empty, the love of wealth has raised up another divinity upon its throne.—Thus does covetousness offer a more daring and positive aggression on the Sovereignty of God than even infidelity itself.—The one only desolates the sanctuary of Heaven, the other rears up an abomination in the midst of it.—The one only seeks to strip God of the love and confidence of his creatures, but the other transfers them to another.—Well then may we say in the language of Job, “If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold thou art my confidence—if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much—if I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness—and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge—for I should have denied the God that is above.”

It was observed by our Saviour to his Disciples when the young man who had great possessions “went away sorrowful” at the thoughts of parting with them—“how hardly shall a rich man