

master ! Veritable image of that frightful moral weakness of so many young lives faded and blasted in their first years ! How quickly they change once they leave the *Father's* home, when they attempt to walk unaided and *alone* through life's pleasures. Unhappy boy, yesterday he was still God's child, he was without blemish and beautiful in his first innocence, but to-day, he is impure and a slave to the most heartless of masters ! What thralldom when compared to the liberty of God's children, which was also his before he fell ! How different the tyrant he now serves and the Father whom he deserted ! If he only received treatment becoming a slave !

How did the new master treat the Prodigal ? He sent him into his farm to keep watch over swine ! — the last step of misery, the lowest of degradation ! For, what is the scripturistical sense of that disgusting animal, whose only enjoyment is to wallow in filth, in mire ? It represents that sad state of the sinner's soul when a slave to impurity. And if anything could move the heart of a young man given to forbidden pleasures, glorying in his shame, it should be the conviction set *before* by this parable, that in the eyes of God and His saints, he is more degraded, more despicable than the lowest of creatures is to man.

Let us follow the Prodigal. What did he amid swine ? Holy Scriptures tells us : « *And he fain would have filled his stomach with the husks the swine did eat.* » Ah ! he finally reached the bottom of the abyss he had undertaken to explore ! We remember him erstwhile the child of God, the friend of Jesus, happy in his father's home ; he had never known the pangs of want, and in his *new-found-liberty* he would have been glad to partake of fodder, but, notwithstanding his degradation, he could not have any, « *and no man gave unto him.* »

He could go no further, he could descend no lower. His merciful Father awaited him there !

