

In matters of commerce the invariable object is profit, each party seeking to obtain that which to him respectively is of more value than that which he parts with ; and he who gives an exorbitant price for an inferior commodity, or barterers a rare jewel for a thing of nought, is justly chargeable with folly, and deemed incompetent to manage even the most ordinary affairs. It is some consolation, amidst the losses of trade, to know that their extent may be calculated, and by diligence and attention sometimes repaired. But who can calculate the loss of heavenly blessedness, and who can regain it when once the sentence is pronounced, and *the door is shut* ? The *redemption of the soul is precious* ; but if it be not secured in the present life, *it ceaseth for ever*. We naturally look with surprise and censure upon him who lavishes his fortune upon trifles, or sacrifices the welfare of a whole life for the pleasure of a moment ; but he who prefers the gratifications of sense to the favour of God, and loses his soul rather than give up his sin, is guilty of an infatuation for which language has no name, and which nothing can account for but the melancholy fact that the God of this world *hath blinded his eyes*, and hardened his heart.

There was one of old who contented himself with making provision for the flesh *to fulfil the lusts thereof*, and whose whole pleasure consisted in accumulation, and in plans to secure what he had gained, to whom it was said, *Thou fool ! this night thy soul shall be required of thee : then whose shall those things be that thou hast provided ?* Then, where shall that soul be,