

Profit and Loss :

OR, THE

CHRISTIAN

MERCHANT.

MAT. xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

ALSO,

AN ADDRESS

TO THE

Unfortunate Female.

SHĒWING

How she may be delivered from trouble, and become

TRULY HAPPY.

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FROFIT and LOSS.

EVERY merchant is acquainted with the meaning of the words Profit and Loss. They are the title of an account in his books which exhibits the state of his business, and from which, at one view, he may ascertain whether he is prospering or not. When I was a boy at school, I was much puzzled to understand how two such opposite things as profit and loss should be put into the same account; and the Teacher explained the matter by telling me, that the loss went all to one side, and the gain to the other.

There is a book of far more importance than a merchant's Ledger, in which the same words are used in reference to an account that every man should take of himself, in order to ascertain whether his affairs be in a prosperous or a ruinous condition. The words are, Mat. xvi. 26. "What is a man *profited* if he shall gain the whole world, and *lose* his own soul?" Here is a question of profit and loss plainly stated. It is addressed to every man, and to all descriptions of men without distinction, as all are equally interested in it. There is the gain of the world, and the loss of the soul, on one side; and the gain of the soul, with, perhaps, the loss of the world, on the other. There seems, at first view, to be both a profit and a loss on each of the sides; but when the account is examined, and wound up, it will be found that all is loss on the one side, and that all

is gain on other: for the gain of the world is no gain, if the soul be lost; and the loss of the world is no loss, if the soul be gained.

When Jesus Christ addressed this question to his disciples, he was fully aware of the importance of it; as connected with their eternal interest. It is of no less importance to the reader of these pages. He is therefore requested to lay the matter seriously to heart. Let him form for himself an answer to the question, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Jesus Christ knows the value of the world, for he made it and all things in it: and he knows the value of the soul of man, which he created immortal. The world is formed of perishing materials. It is doomed to destruction, and by and by it will be burnt up: but the soul shall live for ever. Millions of ages are not so much as the moment that is past, when compared with the duration of the soul. How precious then must it be! All the angels in heaven cannot calculate its value.

Infinitely precious as it is, it has been lost. Yes, Reader, the soul of every man and woman born into the world is lost. Lost not to existence, for that can never be; but lost to all that is profitable in existence. Lost to the enjoyment of the Divine favour; of course lost to happiness, and liable to all that is dreadful in the anger of Almighty God. This is in consequence of sin, which is the cause of all the misery and death in the world. Sin separated man from God, then he was lost, and every sin he commits is a consequence and evidence of his being lost. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the earth, to see if there were any that did good, but he

found none:—they were all lost, for they had all gone out of the way," Psaim xiv. 1—8. Rom. iii. 10—18.

When the scriptures declare all men to be lost, it is not with a view to drive them to despair, as if the loss were irretrievable; for they testify that the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. We had all gone astray like lost sheep, says the prophet Isaiah, but the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. He bare the sins of all who have believed, or ever shall believe on him. Thus he provided for the restoration of the lost; and, in virtue of what he has done and suffered, an innumerable company of lost sinners have been restored. He gave his life a ransom for the lost. Hence we hear an apostle say, "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed: for ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls," 1 Pet. ii. 24, 25.

In our natural state, we are all debtors to the law and justice of God, for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." A dreadful sum, therefore, stands against us in that account. It is a debt of guilt or unrighteousness which no man could ever pay for himself, and which no creature could pay for him: but when Christ brings any lost sinner to trust in Him, and give up all hope of paying his own debt; his perfect righteousness is placed to the account of that sinner as a full answer to all the claims of law and justice against him: God, the Father and Judge of all, being well pleased with the righteousness

of his beloved Son, reckons it to the account of the believing sinner for righteousness,—cancels the debt of unrighteousness which stood against him, and restores him to the enjoyment of his favour, which is life. Then, it is said of such a one, "He was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found."

"God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ came into the world as sent by his Father; and, whenever he began to speak on his Father's business, he addressed men as lost and perishing sinners. "I am sent, said he, "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "I am come," (for Christ was a willing Messenger,) "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The Scribes and Pharisees murmured against him, saying, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Instead of denying the fact, he admitted it; and justified his conduct by the parable of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal son, (Luke xv.) As much as to say, it is my proper business to seek out and receive sinners. Where should a teacher be but among the ignorant—a physician, but among the sick—a saviour and restorer, but among the lost? Having finished his work on earth by laying down his life for his lost sheep,—he rose from the dead, and gave commission to his apostles to go into all the world, and preach the good news of his death and resurrection to every creature, with a promise that whosoever believed should be saved.

While those sinners who come to Christ, have all that they had lost fully restored in him; those

who will not come to him must continue as they are, lost and undone. - At present, they are not aware of their real state, but there is a time approaching when it will be impossible to remain ignorant of it. When Christ put the question, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" it was not the present lost condition of men which he had so much in view, as the future loss that must be sustained by all who refuse to hear and obey him. Those who suffer their day of mercy to pass away, and who die in their sins, bring upon themselves a loss that is final and irretrievable,—the eternal loss of their own souls. Where is the profit then, though they should have gained the whole world?

Reader, this question is addressed to you. That you have an immortal soul, is certain; that it has been lost in consequence of sin, is certain; that Christ came to seek and save the lost, is certain. If you believe what He says of himself, and come to him for salvation, you shall certainly be saved; you shall gain your own soul;—the life and everlasting happiness of your immortal spirit. But if you *will not* come to Christ for salvation; if you *will* love the present world, and choose it rather, then, most certainly, your soul shall be lost, and and lost for ever. In asserting these certainties, I do not speak at random. There is the word of God for them all; and there can be nothing more certain than what He says is true. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. He is con-

demned already, because he believeth not on the name of the Son of God." And when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, it will be to be avenged on all them who obey not the gospel of Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

When the question is stated, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" it is clearly implied, that the world stands in competition with the gain of the soul; and that the soul may be lost while the world is eagerly pursued, and much of it gained.

That the world, and the things in it, are the objects of supreme desire, and eager pursuit of many, is as evident as that the world itself exists. What is the meaning of all the bustle and eagerness which we see around us every day? It is solely for the gain of this world, the acquisition of its wealth, a place of distinction in it, or the enjoyment of its pleasures.

Reader, Is the world the object of your supreme delight? Is your heart eagerly set upon being rich? Does this occupy your thoughts by day, and your dreams by night? There are many who, if they would be candid, would answer these questions in the affirmative. There are many labouring every day, and all day long; and whose hearts can take no rest in the night. Even the day of sacred rest is no sabbath to them. They cannot suspend their devotion to the world for one hour; or, if an hour should witness their bodies in the place of worship, their hearts and souls are in the place of business. With such industry and application they will very probably gain

their point. They will have their reward. If they do not gain the whole world, they may gain a great deal more than enough for the gratification of every carnal desire, so far as such desires can be gratified. But after all, where is the profit when God shall require their souls at their hand? That may be very speedily. It will be at an hour when they think not. It may be this very night—this very hour. Reader, suppose this to be your case; then what profit is there in all your wealth? What, then, could the world do for you, though it were all your own? Your soul is lost,—then all is lost, and lost for ever.

Think of these things ere it be too late. “You cannot serve God and Mammon.” If Mammon be your choice, of course you will serve him, and, while you satisfy your conscience with external forms of religion, you will renounce the service of the true God. But can Mammon save you? When you call upon him in the time of trouble, will he answer you? In the hour of death, will he help you, or save your soul? You know that he will not,—that he *cannot*, for he is no God; he has no power; he has no existence but in your own covetous heart and deluded imagination. But the true God has all power in heaven and on earth: that God, whose service you disown, whose law you have broken, and whose gospel you reject, as unworthy of your regard amidst, what appear to you, more important matters: he is able to save and to destroy: to save you, if you come to him by Jesus Christ ere it be too late: but if you allow the day of mercy to pass away, he will destroy you with an everlasting destruction. “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.”

These things are not addressed to those only

who are rich, or who are striving to be rich. They are equally applicable to every one whose heart is set on this world, or in what he possesses of it, whether it be little or much. There is a great world, and there is a little world; there is a gay world, and there is a penurious world; and the devotees of these respective worlds, are all in equal danger of losing themselves. There are some rich men who, through divine grace, have treasure in heaven, and their hearts are there; while they consider the wealth which they have received as the gift of God, to be employed in his service. And there are many poor men, whose hearts are in this world alone, desiring wealth that they may consume it upon their lusts, and coveting what they cannot obtain. Should this tract be read by any such, let them consider, that if the rich are in danger of losing their souls, *they* are not safe because they are poor. There is no more security in the one state than in the other. It is the *love* of the world, and not the *possession* of it, in which the evil lies. It is as impossible to love both God and this world, as it is to serve God and Mammon; for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Reader, are you conscious that you love the things of this world *better* than you love God? then it is certain you love the world alone, and not God at all. Think of the danger of your condition. What will you do when you are called to appear before the judgement-seat of that God whom you do not love? By hard labour and penury, you may acquire a portion of what you do love; but suppose you should acquire all that your heart could hold, and lose your own soul, where is the profit?

It is but a little of this world that any man can

gain with all his labour. When the wealth of one world is divided among hundreds of millions it is comparatively a small portion that can fall to each. But Christ makes the supposition of a man gaining it all; and what after all would it signify if he lose his own soul, where is the profit? Reader, thou hast in thy possession what is more valuable than all the world; that is thine own immortal soul. There are many precious things in the world, but what are all these to thee, if thy soul be lost? Every creature of God is good, but thy soul is more to thee than them all. The sun, and the moon, and the stars, are great and glorious objects: but thy soul is more to thee than them all. Suppose, then, it were possible thou shouldst gain a thousand worlds, and enjoy them all a thousand years, where is the profit, if, in the end, thou lose thine own immortal soul?

These reflections will be read and approved by many who, when they have laid aside the book, will think no more of the matter; but will go on and pursue the world as eagerly as ever. They admit the truth of what is stated about the value of the soul, and they cannot but admit that this world is of no use to one who is leaving it, and about to enter into an eternal state. But these convictions have no happy influence upon their present disposition and conduct. The world is enchanted ground. It is full of glittering phantoms, by which the imagination is seduced; and he that breathes its atmosphere, is subject to a fascinating power, under the influence of which he mistakes shadows for substances, attaches himself to the trifles of a day, and turns aside from the important realities of eternity.

This melancholy state of mind is to be traced

to a more remote source than the mere love of riches. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Men are alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, and because of the blindness of their hearts." This is the real cause of their opposition to the truth, their rejection of the gospel, and inattention to their eternal interests. They have sin, and therefore they love the world which presents occasions, and affords the means of indulgence. The gospel is a doctrine according to godliness, therefore they reject it; the way to eternal life is the way of holiness, therefore they will not walk in it; the end is perfect purity, freedom from sin, and the enjoyment of the blissful presence of Him who is holy; but such a state has no charms for them, and they desire it not. Instead of desiring to know, and to enjoy the presence of God, their language is, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

"But these," you will say, "are the wicked."

Yes; but who are they who are not wicked? You are thinking, perhaps, of decent respectable people, who pay their debts, who wrong no man, and who are even useful members of society. There are such people in the world, and God forbid that I should say there is *no* difference between them and those who are openly wicked, according to the common acceptation of the word. In reference to all the concerns of the present life, there is a very great difference which is perceived, and readily acknowledged, by all. But if these respectable persons are trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and rejecting the gospel of Christ; if their hearts are solely occupied about

the things of this world, to the neglect of those things which are eternal; then, whatever they may be in the estimation of men, they are enemies to God, and wicked in his sight: nay, they are so wicked, and their condition is so dangerous, that Christ says of such, "The publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before them."

The Lord seeth not as man seeth. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. For wise purposes he has planted in the hearts of men in general, an abhorrence of those crimes which are hurtful to themselves, such as murder, adultery, drunkenness, theft, and such like. Those who do such things will, of course, be held as odious by all the decent part of society, and it is right it should be so. But men, in general, make a very low estimate of sins done directly against God. They forget that the first and greatest commandment is, To love God with all the heart and soul; and that a violation of the greatest commandment, must, of course, be the greatest sin. This consideration is in general overlooked by men, but it is not overlooked by Him by whom thoughts as well as actions are weighed, whose judgement is always according to truth, and who will judge every man at the great day. Besides, God has given an inconceivably grand expression of his love to men, by sending his own Son to die for them. He commands and invites men every where to submit to him, to believe what is testified of him in the Scriptures, with a promise that whosoever believeth, shall be saved. Now the man who does not believe this testimony concerning Christ, who does not submit to him as the Saviour, not only stands as

wicked in the sight of God, but is actually condemned for his wickedness, and for this branch of it particularly, *because he believeth not on the name of the Son of God.* Such a man may stand high in the opinion of his fellow-creatures, but his case is, notwithstanding, dreadful in the extreme. He is a rebel against the Majesty of heaven, because he refuses God that homage which is his due; he is an ungrateful despiser of the greatest gift of Divine love, because he rejects the only Saviour of the world; and by discrediting the good news of salvation by Christ, he is guilty of the dreadful presumption of calling the God of truth a liar—

O that those who have hitherto been indifferent about these things, would lay them to heart! that those, particularly, who are seeking their portion in the present life, and neglecting the one thing needful, would seriously consider these words of Christ, “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” And if the Holy Spirit is pleased to bless them to any sinner,—to convince him of his own sinful state, and of the Saviour’s perfect righteousness, he will be like one brought into a new world. He will see all things in a new light. He will acknowledge himself a sinner ready to perish; but hearing the Saviour’s voice of mercy, “Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;” he flees for refuge to the hope set before him; and trusts in the Lord alone for righteousness, and strength, and salvation.

Brought thus into a new state, he will live a new life. Formerly he thought only of living to himself, and to the world; now he will live unto God only. While the love of the world

reigned in his heart; he was as really an idolator as the worshipper of Brahma or Juggernaut; (the idols of the Hindoos,) but now he will cast his idols of silver and gold to the moles and to the bats: not that he will inconsiderately throw away the wealth he may have acquired, but as an idol he will renounce it for ever; and regard it only as an instrument of serving God, and promoting his kingdom and glory in the world. The Lord may see fit to strip him of all his earthly possessions, and leave him poor and naked as when he came into the world; but the loss will not make him sorrow, as those who have no hope, nor deprive him of any real comfort; for he has gained his own soul, and he finds all riches in Christ.

Professors of the gospel have a particular interest in this question of profit and loss. It was addressed by Christ to disciples, in the first instance, and with propriety it is addressed to them now. A short time after the first proposal of the question, one of the disciples did, for the sake of a little of this world, cast away, and lose his own soul. He betrayed and sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver; and obtained a name of infamy which will never be forgotten—"the son of perdition."

The love of the world is a sin which, above almost every other, easily besets professing Christians, because it is a sin in which they may indulge without forfeiting the esteem of their fellow creatures, or even of their fellow-professors. The drunkard, or the profane person, can have no place in any well regulated Christian society; but covetousness, or the love of riches, has no great stigma attached to it: it does not usually

disqualify a man from holding a respectable place among Christians; partly, because being an affection of the heart, it cannot be known to others in all its extent and aggravation; and partly, because even where there are evidences of its existence, Christians are criminally remiss with regard to it, and treat it with such tenderness and indulgence, as if they scarcely thought it a crime.

This renders it the more necessary that the word of God should be plainly and faithfully addressed to their hearts and consciences, that they may see their guilt, and be apprised of their danger. Let such be assured, that it is in vain to attempt a reconciliation between the service of God and the service of Mammon. The service of God is quite compatible with a due regard to a man's own comfort in the world, and that of his family.— Nay, the word of God requires a proper attention to these things, and does not forbid the possession of the fruits of honest industry: but all this must occupy a subordinate place in the regards of a true Christian. He must use this world, as not abusing it; he must have his treasure in heaven, and his affections there; and whatever he possesses of this world's wealth, he will consider as not his own, but a talent committed to his care, to be employed in the service of Him who gave it. But vain is the profession of the man whose heart is in the present world, who loves his riches, and delights in their continual increase; who thinks little about the honour of Christ, the propagation of his gospel, or the supply of the poor; who gives nothing for these great objects, or who, if he does give a little, gives it grudgingly, as if it were parting with the blood out of his veins. Such a man may have a

clear understanding of much divine truth; he may be zealous for orthodoxy, and stand high in reputation among Christians; but while the world has his heart, he must be ranked among those who are far from God, who are in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity.

“The love of money is the root of all evil; which some having coveted after, have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows: and they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and divers foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” Alas! what an object of pity to Christians in all ages, is that professor of whom Paul says, “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.” Suppose Demas to have obtained the object of his love, where was the profit if he lost his own soul?

“There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? Eccles. v. 13—16.

AN ADDRESS

TO

The Unfortunate Female.

ACCEPT this paper, as a proof, that though unfortunate, you are not without a friend: True, it was an evil hour in which you listened to temptation, and made a sacrifice of that virtue which by all, and especially by women, should be held more dear than life. Have you not thought thereon and wept? Oh that you may shed the tears of unfeigned penitence, and now, at last, obtain mercy to forgive, and grace effectually to restore you!

The awful step, to which you ascribe your present situation, was accompanied (we are willing to believe,) with sharp misgivings, and immediately followed with confusion and alarm. At the sight of a virtuous friend, you reddened with shame; the growing apprehension of discovery oppressed your life; and fatally, alas! you quitted the shelter which a parent's or some benefactor's wing would have still afforded — The partner of your crime cared not that he had broken up the peace of a family; he soon became weary of his victim, and then thrust her forth upon the unpitying world.

Ah! did you not despond too soon, and desponding, did you not form the most desperate resolution to sin yet more? Had you even *then* taken your guilty and distracted soul to a gracious

God, he would have soothed the wanderer, and opened a door of hope.

But alas! you proceeded to fill up the measure of iniquity; you sought an intimacy with those whose habits of impurity were confirmed; you entered (we shudder to think of it) on the ignominious trade of prostitution! What were your gains? Let the vile procuress, whose frowns and threatenings you so much dread, by whose tricks and violence you have been so much injured; let *her* reply. What forms of wretchedness have you not beheld and encountered? Have you not suffered from more than a brutal cruelty; have you not shivered in the storm; pined in some filthy abode; and, amidst heaps of companions, witnessed infamy not to be told, and shared in wretchedness scarcely to be imagined?

It were well if your history did not supply still more gloomy reflections. But we fear your guilt has kept pace with your misery, or rather outstripped it.

You are now familiar with practices which in happier days would have inspired horror. You can bear to stagger with intemperance; you can pour out the most frightful curses; you can rave like the destroying tempest; you have thrown away the very profession of honesty; you are ripe for all abominations.—Such is the picture that has been drawn of your condition and character; would to God that persons of so unhappy a class, could generally speaking, prove it to be overcharged.

Now and then, perhaps, you afford this picture a glance, and when you do, the momentary pang extorts imprecations on the man who enticed you into this path of ruin. You blacken his memory

with all possible reproach—and if your hatred led you to detest the thought of copying his example, we should not despair; but, do you not, from day to day, in a manner vindicate and applaud him? What mean your evening strolls, your loose attire, your affected smile, your familiar address? Alas! you are a perpetual seducer, and demand innumerable victims.

Often have we seen with aching hearts, a fellow-creature arrested by the voice of a stranger, and consenting to attend her steps. ‘He goeth as an ox to the slaughter; knowing not that it is for his life.’ How many such are blasted in the spring of life!—Once they were lovely and cheerful, and gave high promise to their friends. They met such as *you*,—and now, agonizing with remorse, shattered in constitution, a spectacle to the world, they shorten the sum of their days, they live without principle, and seem likely to expire without hope.

Did you never ask, ‘What have I to expect at the end of my career?’ Did you never think of death, and the judgement that follows? Surely you have not persuaded yourself that there is no God, and that the scriptures are cunningly-devised fables; or if you *have*, remember, we beseech you, what it was that brought you to that persuasion. You first threw aside all law, you determined to be vicious; and we cannot wonder that in the school of vice you have learned the lessons of falsehood. It looks well on the side of religion, that none are its enemies, but such as are enemies to society and to themselves also. Yet if there is a God, have you any thing to hope for? Will he approve? Or can you endure the thunder of his voice, and the fire of his wrath?

Has he not recorded this information—'Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge?' Has he not authorised us to tell you that the time shall come, when the unrighteous and filthy shall remain such, without the prospect of a change? Suppose that the time were come, would you continue to glory in your shame, and so lightly esteem your sufferings, as to view the prospect with calmness? No—to be eternally what you now are, is an idea which does not overwhelm you, merely because, for the present, you contrive to erase it from your mind.

• What then (you ask) shall we do? Is it possible in some measure to retrieve? Remains there a hope? Are we not banished from virtuous company? Do not the modest shun and abhor us, as all human beings fly from the plague? For the sincere and broken-hearted there are assuredly grounds of encouragement. But think not that sorrow and tears are an effectual reform, or that you will easily regain the respect and tranquility which you have lost. We would save you from despair—to flatter you with high expectations were unfaithful and inhuman. Such comfort as we can administer, we will; you owe us respectful attention for the endeavour to serve you: and however faint the ray that shines on your path, it is your duty, and will be found to be your wisdom, to pursue its course.

There are houses opened by the bounty of the public, such as the Magdalen, the Lock-Hospital, the Lock-Asylum, and the London Female Penitentiary. Many have therein recovered health, profited under religious instruction, and been put into a capacity of earning an honest and decent livelihood. These institutions, it is true, are in-

capable of admitting all the sufferers that apply for their generous aid; yet make the trial—you may be successful; and, if not, in the absence of every other provision, you must surely feel the meanest workhouse in the kingdom to be a paradise, in comparison with the most splendid habitation, haunted by such as you have been accustomed to mingle with, in crime and calamity.

Perhaps, even now a mournful voice is asking—‘Where is my sister?’ or ‘Where my child?’ Some heart longs to melt over you; some lips are prepared to say—‘She was lost, and is found; she was dead, and is alive again; it is meet that we rejoice.’

Above all, there is a God, who, though you have not considered it, has witnessed all your conduct, and all your misery. ‘Choose the profound of midnight, and the deepest cavern, his eye perceives you as clearly as in the public street in the midst of day.’ Such, we are informed, was the language of one, whom an unfortunate vainly solicited to attend her home. The unexpected remark fixed, like an arrow, in her conscience; she represented to herself the guilty scenes on which the all-seeing God must have frowned; she sued for mercy; she forsook her shameful occupation; and from that time, devoted her life to industry, purity, and all the pursuits of a genuine Christian. May you go and do likewise.

The door is not yet shut against you. Should father and mother refuse you a sight of them, should the world extinguish all the hopes you placed on its candour, there is one greater than all, who will not only receive you, but do abundantly more than you can venture to ask. The Lord God is gracious, and merciful, and

ready to forgive. You have heard that Jesus his beloved Son came into this depraved world with the design to save sinners. The 7th chapter of Luke records an affecting instance of salvation—to you it applies with unspeakable interest, for, it describes the mercy of which one criminal like you, became a partaker.

‘Behold, a woman, who was a sinner,’ that is, one addicted to lewdness, ‘came to a house where Jesus sat at meat, and brought an alabaster box of ointment. And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, ‘Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.—Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven,—Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.’

Are you young, and but lately led astray?—Draw back your foot this instant, rush from the destructive path. It were ten thousand pities to thicken the cloud that has begun to hide from you the light of heaven; and to employ the energies of youth in preparing arrows which shall pierce and poison the last hope of drooping age.

Are you confirmed in iniquity, in full receipt of its wages? Reflect on the desolation you

have made, of all principle, and all hope; and, when elated by your success, remember that the measure thereof determines your future measure of punishment. The more you succeed, the deeper is the cup, and the bitterer its ingredients.

And you, aged offenders, whose chief province it is to procure victims, and, when you have gained them, to destroy every scruple, every alarm, every sentiment, which may yet remain, of regret and virtue—even you shall share in our pity, even you shall be exhorted not to despair. There are but a few steps between you and death; the unpardoned guilt of such a life would crush you down to the lowest hell: we tremble for you at the moment we advise you. Truly we can expect but little, and we are almost persuaded to say, ‘Let them alone, in vain you invite, in vain you threaten; they are steeled alike against hope and fear.’ Yet the idea of what you will suffer, prevents us from being silent, and to you also we proclaim the promises. ‘Come now (saith the Lord) let us reason together, though your sins are as scarlet and as crimson, return unto me with your whole heart, and I will abundantly pardon.’ ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.’

Unfortunate woman, whether young, matured, or aged, despise not this, perhaps the last token of God’s compassion, which, if despised, will never reach you. There are some, we trust, who will read this address, and consider it, and pray over it; and who knows whether we shall not hereafter meet a crowd of penitents, ransomed from the miserable class, and invited to dwell among the faultless and happy before the throne! We will cherish the idea, while a single gleam discovers the prospect to be still open.

Return, O daughter of reproach, let one hour, after such an age of dissipation, be devoted to thought; shew kindness to yourself—why should you add bitterness to the bitter; why refuse application to the God of grace? The excellent of the earth, say *Come*; the holy angels say *Come*; the Divine Spirit saith *Come*. Come to the fountain of grace and purity; come to the footstool of that throne from which smiles were shed down upon the publican; come to the tender-hearted Christian, who will pity, direct, and encourage you; come to the cheering ordinances of religion; ‘Come out from the wicked, and be separate, and I will receive you as my daughter,’ saith the Lord God Almighty.

Blessed language! Can any thing, but a heart of stone, be insensible to its persuasive import? A prayer rises from each devout reader, that you, whom it principally concerns, may feel all it is calculated to impress. Oh that you may also pray, and that your sorrow, your amendment, your entire conversion to God, may form the solid demonstration that prayer has obtained an answer.

FINIS.