

ing solemnity. Every village and hamlet contributed its quota to swell the living tide, as it rolled onward toward the Holy City, while caravans from other lands poured in their tributary streams, thus forming a multitude as promiscuous as that which, on the Day of Pentecost, listened to the message of salvation from lips touched with heavenly fire. "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, —in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians,"—all were there: fitting witnesses to behold the offering up of that Sacrifice which was God's ordained propitiation "for the sins of the whole world."

The deep interest which always gathered around the Passover solemnity was, on this occasion, greatly augmented. Nearly three years before a Prophet had arisen in Galilee, the fame of whose teaching and miracles had powerfully stirred the national mind. Gathering around him, at the first, only a few obscure fishermen, the circle of his influence had rapidly widened, until its pulsations were felt on the shores of the distant isles of Greece, and even as far as imperial Rome. That this prophet would appear at the Feast was confidently expected; but the expectation excited widely different feelings in different minds. Among those who were strangers in Jerusalem, the predominant feeling was probably curiosity, as was indicated by the words of certain Greeks addressed to Philip: "Sir, we would see Jesus;" but among the Jews were two parties whose respective attitudes toward the Galilean Prophet were more sharply defined. One party—chiefly Galileans—regarded him not only as a prophet, but as the promised Messiah, the King of Israel, and as such they were ready to proclaim him the moment he would give the word; another party—chiefly composed of the sect of the Pharisees—had gradually assumed an attitude of open and undisguised hostility. Between these Pharisees and Christ collisions had already occurred. His exposures of their hypocrisy and wickedness had excited their hatred, while his growing influence with the people stirred their bitterest envy. These encounters, however, were but preliminary skirmishes—transient gleams of crossing swords; now it became evident a crisis was approaching, and that Jesus and his enemies would soon close in deadly conflict—foot to foot, and hilt to hilt.

Six days before the Passover the Saviour came up to Jerusalem, and for a season found a quiet resting-place in the picturesque village of Bethany—"the town of Mary and her Sister Martha." From thence he went each day to the temple, where he delivered those profound and weighty "sayings," fragments of which are recorded in the 12th chapter of John. It was during one of these morning-walks that the multitude from Jerusalem met him on the slopes of Olivet, and with waving palms and loud acclaim escorted him into the city. This demonstration added fuel to the fire of hate already burning in the hearts of Christ's enemies, and confirmed them in their terrible purpose to put him to death. Their purpose was well known to Jesus, but with a steady eye on "the joy that was set before him," he calmly held on his appointed way, and, when the evening of the feast was come, gathered around him his chosen dis-