

sanctities which the city would pollute, could therefore abide only in the wilderness. This was their ideal of the long-promised Messiah ; and when Jesus came—not a monarch, but a Nazarene—not a recluse, but a “friend of publicans and sinners”—not the retailer of esoteric doctrine to the privileged few, but the great preacher upon whose lips hung the multitude with amazement and delight, their prejudice deepened into an implacable hostility, which pursued its victim to the death. It is difficult to conceive of a course more calculated to provoke them than that which the Saviour consistently pursued. They looked down upon the masses of the people with a contempt which they cared not to conceal. “This people which knoweth not the law are cursed ;” and if there was one class which was held in greater abhorrence than another, it was the class which gathered the taxes of a hated foreign power, and, dressed in a little brief authority, made their office doubly odious by rapacity and extortion. And yet, passing by the anointed priest, the venerable elder, the astute scribe—not to mention themselves, the reputable and ascetic Pharisees—these were the very classes to whom the new Teacher addressed Himself, and in whose companionship He was wont to mingle. Enmity could hardly fail to seize upon so fair an occasion, and she improved it to the uttermost. “Surely,” she would say, in her envenomed addresses and