

and formed man, giving him a godlike image, became a part of that which he had made."

"John says, 'the world knew him not,' I suppose the apostle meant the great earth world as well as the world of men."

The lad turned the yellow leaves of an old leather covered volume on his knee, and the man looked intently at the fire.

"Yes," continued uncle George, "for knowledge can hardly be ascribed to inanimate nature, the apostle uttered inspired language, and yet I should be almost tempted to think, and should take pleasure in so thinking, that even mother earth with her rocks and flowers and shining star lights, had a mysterious consciousness of his presence. However that may have been, she trembled at his tread, her elements became plastic at his touch, her forces quivered into obedience at his word, and her light was darkened, and her bosom rent at his passion. As for the world of men, "while he spoke memory rolled before him many an historical imagination," so pre-occupied with their dreams of grandeur were they; so married to their vice; so greedy in their lust for wealth and power; so blinded had their selfish souls become to the merit of true worth; so faint had the voices of their conscience grown; so weak their faith in their deities and so dim their spiritual vision; that the divine stranger, the man of meekness, holiness and love, they failed to recognize."

"You told me that the condition of the world was very striking and unusual when Jesus lived, which, it seems to me ought to have taught the people that something extraordinary was taking place."

"True," replied uncle George with an approving glance, "the historical relations of the world were unique in the extreme, for the nations lay quiescent and subdued beneath the wide spread wings of the Roman eagles and a feeling of strange unrest and expectancy was abroad, like that in the air before a storm; but the foolish world's heart was in darkness and could not comprehend the light. There were wise men who saw the import of the time and understood that the great event of the world's history had come, but they were few and men laughed them to scorn. It was the obtuseness and stubborn prejudice of the world that pained the heart of Jesus, and it was the thought which you have expressed that was in his mind when he said, 'O, ye hypocrites ye can discern the face of the sky but can ye not discern the signs of the times?'"

"I should think his own people, I mean the Jews—"

"Yes," interrupted uncle George, "Jesus was a Jew."

"I should think they would have known him and most joyfully received him; but John says here", the lad placed his finger on the passage, "that 'He came to his own and his own received him not.'"

Taking up the cue the faithful instructor went on.

"So one would naturally suppose. The sacred writings of the Jews were thickly studded with promises of Messiah, and we learn from contemporary rabbinical writings, that their expectancy had almost become a national passion. But pride blurred their eyes, and the