

present to His mind, in the quiet of his rural home, in all its horror as it was apparent in the voluptuous luxury on the one hand, and the poverty-stricken wretchedness on the other, of the empire that then dominated the world. And with the cognizance of this evil heritage, there was present too in His mind the knowledge of the fearful cost of the sacrifice that was involved in the promise, that "as by man came death, so also by man" was to come "the resurrection from the dead." And so it comes to pass that, as He stands there before us, the desire is in His heart, as expressed still later in His life, that he may drink of the bitter cup quickly. In the realization by the painter of the Saviour at twenty-five, is the expression of the subsequent spirit manifested by Him, the man of sorrows, and the acquainted with grief. And in the momentary unconsciousness of Mary's presence, is depicted that other pain—the hiding from Him of the face of human sympathy. Here then stands the man who *knew* what His Kingdom was to be, and by what blood-stained steps He was to reach His throne.

Now turn to Mary. Momentary unconsciousness of the other's presence there too; and in that isolation there has come over her poor, frail, vain, womanly heart, a dream of one that appeared to the disciples as well, a vision of an earthly kingdom—the liberation of Israel, and the rise of a greater Cæsar. To her, Roman architecture, voluptuous, prostituted art, was familiar in the cities of the Tetrarchs, and these were the foundation of her ideas of splendour, the glory of the kingdoms of this world; and the treasures of the Magi now under inspection, suggest the superstructure of kingly grandeur and royal state; and lovingly she lingers over the beauteous casket of symbols. But what a terrible awaking. The falling of a shadow causes her to turn her head, arresting instantly the thread of her vision, her day-dream of an earthly crown—a crown for her boy, her own dear son, for *her* son—a crown, naught less; and there—there on the dreadful wall—What? Her son stretched on a gibbet. Here is the woman who *imagined* what His kingdom was to be.

A great contrast—God's way to a kingdom on the one hand, and a poor mortal's conception thereof, on the other. Albeit, the first figure is illumined with the light of heaven, the other is lost in the contemplation of a human shadow.

THE AGED WANTING REST.

BY THE EDITOR.

There is a blessing in a "green old age," both to the aged person, who, amid the withering influences of time, has kept the heart young, and to those surrounding them, who in their presence have the enjoyments of both the past and the present. Nevertheless, with regard to our years it is true as the Psalmist says: "If by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is there strength, labour and sorrow." This state is most graphically described by Solomon in his closing lessons in Ecclesiastes. The consciousness of uselessness so far as the activities of life are concerned; the felt absence of most of their life's loved companions who have gone before them; the changes in customs and life since other habits became fixed; the loss of physical power, the dimness of sight and the dulness of hearing; together with the absence of the beckoning of the hopes of the future of this life conspire to cast a dark shadow on their last days. When, in addition to these, the aged suffer, as alas they sometimes do, the neglects and ridicule of those