THE VEIL OF LOVE.

Go, weave a veil, nor may thy hand remove
One fold which lends its simple aid
Thy brother's unknown sin to shade;
But interlace thy work with threads of love.

Weave silently, lest some should guess thine art;
Weave closely, that no eye may see
The fault which is but known to thee;
Weave gently, lest thou wound that erring heart.

Tell not thy brother what thy task has been,
Nor 'mind him of repented sin;
He knows a secret pang within,
And weeps—tears which are by his Saviour seen,

Thy task is but to veil from other eyes
The traces which may still remain
Of that tear-damp, and secret stain—
And thy reward shall wait thee in the skies.

M. E. S.

THE STEADFAST FACE.

FROM A SERMON BY THE EDITOR.

"And they did not receive Him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem." (Luke ix. 53).

The passage from which this text is taken sets before us two very striking pictures: the one of the constancy and self-denial of the Son of God; the other the fickleness and self-seeking of the sons of men.

The hour was drawing near when the Redeemer was to be offered up on the cross for the sins of the world. Was there any hesitating, or holding back, or putting off of the evil day? Nay. Mark the language! "And it came to pass when the time was come that He should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." He pressed forward as eagerly to the cross of his humiliation, as a king might hasten to his throne of coronation. The pain and agony seemed literally to allure him, and to quicken his footsteps. Listen: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished,"—as though his sacrificial blood were actually burning in his veins and crowding his very heart-walls in its impatience to go forth in healing tides to a lost world. So willing was Jesus Christ to lay down his life for man! This is the first picture.

Behold now the second. The disciples had gone before their Master to prepare his way; and entering into a Samaritan village, the inhabitants refused to see him, "because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem." They might have had the King of glory for their guest, except for their sectarian prejudices. But the Jews and the Samaritans had a quarrel—the Samaritans contending that Mt. Gerazim was the place where men ought to worship, and not at Mt. Zion. And so the simple fact that Jesus was going to Jerusalem, was quite sufficient to set them against him, and make them refuse to have any communication with him. That fixed and steadfast face setting its gaze toward the holy city, was enough to make them turn away their faces from him. "He was despised, and they esteemed him not; and they hid as it were their faces from him."

And, friends, it is always so. It is not what Christ is, so much as where he is going, that offends men. If He would stop with us and confirm us in our opinions of religion, we would gladly receive him; but if accompanying him is going to commit us to doctrines which we have despised and fought against from our youth, then it is another question. If he would offer himself to us as a teacher, we could admire him; but because throughout all his teaching we see him directing his steps steadily onward to become our sacrifice, we cannot accept him. As it was of old, so it is now—it is that face set steadfastly toward Jerusalem that offends men, and makes them reject the Son of God.

I wish now to tell you how this is so, and who they are that are thus offended.

1. Those have strong prejudice against God's people. Here was the issue. Jerusalem was the true place for the worship of the Most High. God had chosen it, and established there his sanctuary and his service. And the Messiah, in holy obedience to his Father's appointment, was going up to keep the Passover of the Lord. The Samaritans were seceders and schismatics, who hated the Jerusalem worship, and wished to set up a service in a different place and on a different
principle. Hence, giving way to their sectarian prejudices, they said, "If Jesus is going up to Jerusalem, and is thus to give in his influence in favor of that party and that religion, then we do not wish to have anything to do with him." Friends, have you never seen anything like that in these days — men rejecting Christ because they do not like his Church, and prefer not to give countenance to it? In fact, it is the hardest thing in the world to separate the divine and infallible Christ from the human and fallable Church to which he belongs, and which belongs to him. The Church is His body. His face is now set toward it, from glory, in blessing and benediction. There are unworthy members in that body, as there were in the Church of Jerusalem, — Pharisees, who have introduced the leaven of hypocrisy into the true doctrine of God; chief-priests and elders, who make long prayers, and love the chief seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets, — men who have a name to live, but are dead; whose orthodoxy is a mere shell of religiousness, from which the meat and life have long since been gone. And yet Christ is with the Church, and his face is set upon it in approbation, in spite of these men. For His Church is divine, notwithstanding the human corruptions and imperfections that have crept into it. It is the pillar and ground of the truth, notwithstanding among the living stones that constitute its walls there is many a stone of stumbling and rock of offense. What! will you reject Christ, because you do not like some of the people of Christ? Nay! This were like throwing away the gold, on account of the worthless quartz and pyrites with which it lies embedded. It is not sagacity or fine discrimination, as you would make yourself believe, to reject the perfect Christ on account of the imperfect men with whom he is found associated. And yet that is the way it was during all His earthly ministry. When He went to the house of Zaccheus, the publican, the scribes and Pharisees murmured because he had gone to be the guest of a man who was a sinner. And when he was going to worship with these same scribes and Pharisees in the Temple, then the Samaritans complained because he was going to keep company with the righteous. It was not Christ, but his associations, that determined men's estimate of him.

And yet, was He any the less worthy of being accepted by the one party, because found in company with the other? Nay! As we look back now upon that finished earthly life, we see that those very associations which prejudiced him in the eyes of his generation, were the means of bringing out his character into a stronger relief of purity and glory. As the clouds that hang all day about the pathway of the sun, dimming his brightness and checking his struggling rays, pile themselves up at evening into a pavilion of glory, every one, like a burnished shield, helping to reflect and intensify the light which they have dimmed; so those men and those associates that prejudiced and obscured the Sun of righteousness during his earthly life, reveal his character in greater splendor to us now that that life is finished. It is in the face of such as Zaccheus and Mary Magdalene and the penitent thief, that the glory of the Son of man is most brightly reflected. What, then, does a man lose who rejects Christ because he dislikes somebody with whom he is associated?

But perhaps you are in doubt whether men really would have refused Him on such a ground. And yet have you not known of such instances in your own experience?

Here is a company of Christians who are praying for a revival of religion. "Turn us, O Lord, and cause thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved." And the times of refreshing burst upon them; and then the weeping of penitents, and the sighing of the broken in heart, and the joyful burst of thanksgiving and praise from the souls new born! The Lord has evidently set his face toward his Jerusalem, to bless her. And now there comes into the assembly, perchance, a man of strong religious prejudices — a ritualist, may be, who is greatly wedded to the nice, aesthetical properties of worship; or a moralist, who sticks for the frigid rights of a soulless formalism. It is the best opportunity, perhaps, that may ever be presented to him for finding Christ, in the Scripture sense of that expression. But, he receive Christ in such a company as that! Nay! A Christ that countenances such free and unre-
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strained religion as that, is no Christ for him. Of course he does not say that; he is too polite a man for that. But I am reading his thoughts, now. This is what he thinks: "I believe in a Christ, but not in a Christ that can look with favor on such crude extravagances as these. If He countenances this, I cannot countenance him." And he is offended in Him because of the company which he keeps. I believe this is the philosophy of more rejections of Christ than we have any conception of. It is a kind of moral rule of three which settles some of problems of unbelief. A is to B as B is to C. A loves B if B does not love C. The only way I can accept Christ for my Lord, is when he is not the Lord of somebody else whose creed, whose connections and whose personality I exceedingly dislike. Are you inclined to say that a man would allow his prejudices to carry him so far as this? Not consciously, I admit, but unconsciously. There are a great many persons, I haven't the shadow of a doubt, who are not followers of Christ to-day because somebody else whom they exceedingly dislike is. And so, though they perhaps call themselves Christians, they have only a very attenuated and bloodless religion. Their Christ is one that never looks with favor on highly wrought religious exercises, who frowns down a rigid creed, and has no favor to show toward asceticism and unworldliness; but he is a liberal, generous, broad-church Christ, who is willing to let us have our own way, and not trouble us with any exactions which may hurt or annoy us. Oh, what a distorted, meager, attenuated Chrestianism is this! And if he lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Is he speaking of the fruit which he is to bear as the seed and germ of the redeemed humanity? These are His words: "Except a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Is He discoursing of greatness and spiritual pre-eminence? This is the way it is to be attained: "The Son of man came not to be administered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Is He announcing himself as the Good Shepherd of His flock? This is the consummating excellence of his office: "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." And so through all His teach-
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ing. His death, instead of being an accident, the untimely cutting off of a noble life, is the very same and coronation of that life. And whether His head is bowed sorrowfully toward the earth in the Garden of Gethsemane, or lifted up in transfigured glory on Mt. Tabor, as he talks of the decease which he is to accomplish at Jerusalem, we behold that face always steadfastly set toward Jerusalem.

Now, there are a great many to whom Jesus Christ would be vastly more acceptable were it not for this fact. They admire His spotless example, they honor his pure and self-denying life, they are charmed with his lofty and spiritual teachings; but when they see these all centering in the cross of atonement and expiation, as they cannot help seeing, they are stumbled by the fact, and will not receive him because his face is toward Jerusalem.

IN DUE TIME. — A BIBLE-READING.

BY THE EDITOR.

It is the most difficult matter we find in our Christian life, to wait for God's purposes to ripen and for his promises to be fulfilled. And if we look into the Scriptures, we find this striking contrast—that man is always asking God to haste, and God is always exhorting man to wait. "Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation," cries the psalmist. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him," is God's reply to the psalmist. "But I am poor and needy," says David; "make haste unto me, O God; thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying." "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord," is the calm word of God through the prophet Jeremiah.

Now, we ought to learn and to ponder this lesson: that God's promises are not for to-day or for to-morrow. They are fixed according to his own time. Therefore, according to the word of Scripture, "ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Notice now how the promises of God are dated:—

1. "IN DUE SEASON we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9). On this the exhortation "Be not weary in well doing" rests. Harvesting can not follow immediately upon sowing. The husbandman must have long patience "until he receive the early and the latter rain." So the sower of spiritual seed must wait until the reaping season shall come.

2. "IN DUE TIME" comes merited honor and exaltation to such as have borne the cross. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. v. 6). The Christian's time is not yet; and if he seeks for the honor of this world, he is antedating his record, and grasping for an unripe honor. His is the cross now, and the glory hereafter—humiliation now, and exaltation hereafter.

3. "IN DUE SEASON" come food and sustenance from the hand of God. "These wait all upon Thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season" (Ps. civ. 27). This is said of the birds and beasts; in the Gospels it is said also of men (Matt. xxiv. 45; Luke xii. 42). God's promise is not that we shall not wait, but that we shall not want. It does not tell us that we shall not hunger, but that we shall not starve. Many a saint has felt the keen pangs of hunger; but not one of those who have waited on God has been allowed to starve. The steward of the Lord is set over his household, "to give them their portion of meat in due season." And shall not the Lord do as well as his steward, though he tarry long?

"IN DUE TIME" the reward of the wicked will be meted out. We are sometimes very impatient as we see how evil men are exalted, and how the just are cast down. But the Scripture saith expressly, that in the appointed time their judgment shall overtake them. "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense. Their feet shall slide in due time."

We have thus to wait on in patience now. God is silent, for the present, when we often wish that he would speak. But it will surely pay to tarry for Him. One tells of going to visit Rowland Hill, in hopes of a good opportunity for a long talk with him. He found him just getting ready to go out to preach. "Now is my opportunity;"