

are wise already, so we lose the favored seat of Mary when she sat at the feet of Jesus and heard His words. Now sloth rocks us in her cradle to sleep, whilst golden hours go slipping by that might have been filled with holy service for Christ, or perhaps some sinful thought, swifter than a weaver's shuttle, passes to and fro, weaving a web that shuts out the light of God, and "we walk in darkness, because our deeds are evil!" How vigilantly must the watch and ward be kept lest we be utterly destroyed! The armour must never be doffed, and sword never be sheathed, the shield never be cast aside, but be constantly wielded against foes without, or turned against foes within. Who can wonder that at times we wish to escape from the burden of the conflict? I am not surprised that Dr. Watts once sang—

"Could I command the spacious land,
And the more boundless sea;
For one blest hour at Thy right hand
I'd give them both to Thee."

I am speaking to some who would gladly give more than that. Not land or sea, but *life* would some of you give if by laying it down you could at once gain Heaven. Were God to proffer the honours and glories of Heaven on the stern condition that we this day bade adieu to earth and all its joys, not a few would be found ready to make the exchange. Shelley said,

"I could sit down like a tired child,
And weep away this life of care."

"Life," said Charles Dickens, the great novelist, "seems to me the saddest dream that was ever dreamed." "*Vanitas vanitatum*"—such are the words with which Thackeray ended his most famous work. Luther, at one period of his life, cried, "I am weary