

lighted in conversation and being read to; often would he break out in snatches of some old familiar hymn, which, with the Psalms of David, were always precious to his soul. Tennyson's last hymn seems particularly applicable to his case, and he often repeated it with a little prompting when memory failed.

"Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;  
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and  
Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have cross'd the bar."  
Stanstead, Que.

## THE GAIN OF WASTE.

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"To what purpose hath this waste of the ointment been made?"—Mark xiv. 4. (R.V.)

### II.

*In this Ministry apparent loss is  
often the truest gain.*

Many people deceive themselves with the false and misleading notion that whatsoever is hoarded, be it wealth or service, is saved, and that whatsoever is dispersed abroad is lost. Even nature teaches better than that. The untrained eye, no less than the sceptical mind, sees everywhere evidences of prodigal waste, and thinks it would be easy to plan the universe so as to effect an enormous saving. But there is another question which must first be settled, namely, what is "waste," and what is "saving"? What if it should turn out that in this, as in other matters, God's thoughts are not our thoughts? What if the Master's paradox, "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, shall save it," should prove true? Here we have a complete reversal of human maxims, and this may be only a hint of what is true all through the universe. The clouds, whose chief

mission is to "drop down fatness," seem to waste much of their liquid treasures on desert places, and sterile mountain heights, and on ocean's wide expanse. But even that which falls upon the ocean may be but one of God's ways of laying up the deep in storehouses,—a vast reservoir to draw upon in time of need, to turn "the parched ground" into "a pool, and the thirsty land" into "springs of water." The copious showers that fall upon rocky mountain heights fulfil their own peculiar functions by disintegrating the softer particles and carrying them down to distant valleys to refresh the "pastures" that "are covered over with flocks," and to enrich the soil that brings forth food for man and beast. And even that which falls upon stony deserts may have a yet higher ministry, preaching evermore to man the solemn truth that "the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned."