

whole family met. All feasts were in the evening; hence the institution of the Pass-

over and the Lord's Supper at that time of day.

### APPLICATION

*And Martha served, v. 2.* In his book, *The Simple Life*, Charles Wagner quaintly writes: "They say there are no such things as fairies, or that there are fairies no longer; but they know not what they say. The original of the fairies sung by poets was found, and still is, among the amiable mortals who knead bread with energy, mend rents with cheerfulness, nurse the sick with smiles, put witchery into a ribbon and genius into a stew". The Marthas are the true fairies, always in demand. In homes, in hospitals, wherever there are sick or weary or hungry folk, the Marthas, trailing clouds of glory as they come, appear, self-appointed to nurse and cheer and feed. Blessings on these indispensable women! Their hands may be hard, and worn, but it is with loving service that is making earth grow like heaven for all around them.

*Then took Mary a pound of ointment... and anointed the feet of Jesus, v. 3.* The Norwegians make elaborate preparations, in all parts of the kingdom, to observe their natal holiday. The centre of all the thought, however, is not fireworks, nor sports, but some one of the great sons of Norway whose names are the pride of the people. Each year one of these is selected, and if he is alive and in Norway, he is required to go from place to place and receive the thanks and praise of his fellow countrymen for what he has done. If the name of the hero to be honored belongs to the dead, his statue is decked with flowers, and his deeds are recalled in grateful speeches. No national hero ever made such sacrifices for his people or won such a deliverance for them, as Jesus for us. Mary, bringing her costly ointment and lavishly pouring it on the Master's feet, teaches us that no gift is too great and no service too lowly or arduous to express the love and gratitude that should well up in our hearts at every remembrance of His love and His sacrifice.

*Why was not this ointment sold... and given to the poor? v. 5.* A hundred critics who

do not do much for the poor themselves, will descant on the waste of money in religious enterprises, and smile condescendingly at the enthusiasts who are so impractical. But love knows its own meaning, though the world does not understand Christian self-sacrifice for ends which seem shadowy, as compared with the solid, and often sordid, satisfying of material wants. The mole criticizes the lark for soaring to the clouds, and says that only burrowing and grubbing are the proper modes of motion. Let the critics carp and growl, but go you on with your lavish loving; for the Master approves, and it matters little who finds fault.

*Suffer her to keep it against the day of my burying (Rev. Ver.), v. 7.* Too many people give frowns to the living and flowers to the dead. Mary was not one of these. In Mark's Gospel we have these words of Jesus, "She hath anointed My body aforehand for the burying". Many people would have kept that box sealed up until He was dead, and then poured it upon His cold, lifeless body. When a man dies, many kind words are said about him; but what good does it all do him? One word of appreciation or affection in his days of stress and strain would have been a priceless boon. Do not keep your eulogies for the dead alone. Do not heap your wreaths only on the coffin. While your friends are with you, cheer, encourage, inspire them with your love, your loyalty, your frank, honest words of affection.

*The poor always ye have with you, v. 8.* In a city park, where the children of the rich rode their ponies, sat a poorly clad woman and a little girl, by whose side stood a crutch. Around the driving course went the happy children. The woman and the child watched their strong, healthy movements in a wistful way. Presently two little girls who had noticed these spectators, dismounted and leading their ponies to their father, whispered something to him. At once he went up to

The Name  
Above Every  
Name

The Mole and  
the Lark

While They  
Are Alive

Happy by  
Making Happy