

such a happy thought. Had not the sisters wept together in those dark days when the death-tide was bearing their beloved brother towards the gulf of darkness? Did not their hearts break as one heart when they saw the light go out of his eyes and the pulse cease in his body? Had they not watched together, at first with hopefulness and then with increasing trepidation, for the coming of Jesus in answer to their united petition? Had they not afterwards waited side by side in stony despair for His belated appearance? We may be certain that Martha's heart was blessing Mary for this beautiful deed.

But there were some in the company who looked upon the act as one of "wasteful and ridiculous excess." To them it appeared absurd in its lavishness, inexcusable in its prodigality. "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" We know what was behind that ill-natured criticism. We do not need to dwell upon the consuming avarice or the black treachery of the sneak-thief who spat out that complaint. But there may have been others in the company, who, without any baseness in their hearts, would regard the deed with disfavour. They could scarcely think of