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“ALTHOUGH.”

BY LUCY A. BENNETT.

HAB. iii. 17, 18.

“Although the fig-tree blossom not,
Nor vines their fruitage yield,
Though labor of the olive fail,
Nor meat be in the field:
Though flocks should perish from the fold
Nor herd be in the stall,
Yet in the Lord I will rejoice,
And find in Him my all.”

We sang it in the summer-time,
'Mid hills with verdure crowned,
While everywhere the laden boughs
Were bending to the ground,
And graciously the Father heard,
As with a glad some voice
We chanted, “In Thy name, O God,
We always will rejoice.”

“*Although*”—’Twas sung with faltering lips,
Blanched with uncertain fears,
And lifted eyes, whose burning lids
Refused the soothing tears.
For, one by one, the goodly flocks
Were fading from our sight,
And over all the beauteous land
Were tokens of a blight.

And yet, methinks, the Father heard
A deeper note of praise
From that wrung heart, than ever rose
In the untroubled days.
It was the language of a soul
Which answered to His call,
And, even in its anguish, yearned
To own Him all in all.

“*Although the fig-tree blossom not.*”
The storm has fully burst,
The famine stalks where all was fair,
The plague has done its worst.

No fruit, nor herb, nor living thing,
Nor flocks, nor herds remain,
But only emptied hands are clasped
Around eternal gain.

Yet hark! for lo, a psalm of praise,
How full, how sweet, how clear,
And now the very heavens are hushed
And God bows down His ear.
A song, more musical than rose
In that glad summer-time,
When sorrow seemed a thing unknown,
And life was in its prime.

More sweet than was the trustful cry
From lips with grief compressed—
It is the cadence which bespeaks
A heart at perfect rest.
A heart in which Jehovah reigns
Sole Monarch on His throne,
A heart that finds unmingled joy
In Him, and Him alone.

“*Although.*” Ah! do not fear to sing
Thy glad some song of trust;
Nor think thy God will haste to trail
Thy life-joy in the dust.
Ah, no! not lightly hearts are tried,
And those will stand the test
Who cling, thro’ sunshine and thro’ shade,
To Him they love the best.

Now to His name, His glorious name,
Loud let the anthem swell,
Though flocks and herds alike should fail,
“He doeth all things well!”
“*Although the fig-tree blossom not,*
Nor fruit be in the vines,”
The soul is fully satisfied
Which on its God reclines.

It is no matter to live lovingly with good-natured, humble and meek persons, but he that can do so with the forward, wilful, ignorant, peevish and perverse, hath true charity.—*Kempis.*