

one of the ways in which God prepares and matures our souls for the final ingathering; in our sicknesses, which, if borne in the spirit of Christ, purify and ennoble our higher nature; in our bereavements, when those we love have been gathered into the granary of God, there to wait for the final threshing and sifting at the last day.

There must ever be in our minds, too, the *spiritual joy* of harvest—that harvest of which our blessed Lord spoke when He told His disciples that the labourers were so few and the work so great. We frequently hear the objection raised to the support of Foreign Missions, “Why should I contribute my money to the efforts for the conversion of the heathen when there are so many ‘living without God in the world’ in every part of our own land?” Is the objection a selfish one, advanced merely as a pretext for niggardliness, or is it seriously and honestly meant? If the former, we would repeat the words of the Lord Jesus, that it is “more blessed to give than to receive.” If the latter, we would

recall the charter of missionary enterprise given by the risen Christ as His last legacy to the leaders of His Church: “Go, make disciples of all nations, and baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” In how many cases the petition, “Thy kingdom come,” is offered day by day as a lip-tribute to “our Father,” while the meaning of the prayer—or, rather, one of its many meanings—viz., that the Kingdom of Christ, and the power of His teaching, may be established in the hearts of those who are groping in blindness and ignorance—is entirely lost sight of!

Here, then, is a joy of harvest which should speak to the hearts of all true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether it be the reclaiming of one poor sinner at our own doors, or aiding those who in the Divine Spirit relinquish all earthly ties in order that they may win the heathen to a knowledge of the truth, let us share with the angels, in this aspect of the harvest, the joy which they feel “over one sinner that repenteth.”

DIVINE DELAY.

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“When He had heard therefore that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was.”—ST. JOHN xi. 6.

THE sisters watch and wait,
But Jesus does not come;
He does not turn, with hastening step,
Towards their village home.
Yet to that village home,
How oft, in days before,
Has He, when tired and weary, come,
And entered at their door.
How often have His feet
The winding pathway pressed,
Which led Him from the city's heat
O'er Olives' lofty crest.
And down the eastern side
Of that familiar hill,
His hastening footsteps would He guide,
With eager mind and will.
For there the loved retreat
Lies on the mountain side;
And there His friends come forth to greet,
And ask Him to abide.
Eut now that sorrow lowers
Upon that village home,
The sisters wait through weary hours,
And Jesus does not come.
Yet they, with steps how quick!
Have sent their piteous cry—

“Lord, whom Thou lov'st is sick;
Come ere our brother die.”

What strange, mysterious love
To thus so long delay!
Could He from Jordan's bank * not move?
Was He too far away?

How can it seem like love
In those grief-moistened eyes,
Which shed such bitter tears above
The grave where Lazarus lies?

Oh, are there any now,
Who, loving their own way,
Find it so difficult to bow
To this Divine delay?

Just read the story through
With care, and it will tell
That Jesus knew what He would do,
And what He did was well.†

The present moment “now”
Is all that *we* can see;
So we must let the “when” and “how”
In God's Hands ever be.

And should that present “now”
Be but a flood of tears,
Leave to His love the “when” and “how,”
And wash away our fears.

* “Jordan's bank.” See St. John x. 40, and i. 28.

† “Well.” For carrying out this thought, see St. John xi. 15, 40, 45, and xii. 17, 18.