

WIDOWHOOD: ITS DESOLATION AND CONSOLATIONS

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Widowhood: its desolation and consolations by G. E. Jelf

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G. E. JELF

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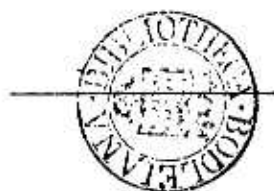
WIDOWHOOD:

ITS DESOLATION AND CONSOLATIONS.

WITH

PREFACE BY REV. G. E. JELF,

Author of "Secret Trials of the Christian Life."



LONDON:

W. SKEFFINGTON, 163, PICCADILLY.

1875.

DEDICATION.

TO THE FAITHFUL FRIEND,
WHO BY GOD'S MERCY,
HAS LED HER SOUL FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT,
THESE PAGES ARE DEDICATED,
WITH MUCH GRATITUDE.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

The Editor has been requested by the widow lady from whose heart these pages emanate, to write a few words, by way of preface, on that condition of life which has a sacredness, as well as a consolation of its own, however great its trials, however terrible its loneliness.

It would have been much more satisfactory to him, for various reasons, had this task fallen into other hands. But anyone who has had long experience of these special sorrows, ought to be ready, if he has been comforted himself, to comfort others who may be troubled in like manner—to comfort them, if not with directly personal utterances, at least with the thoughts and suggestions of those who, like the writer of the present volume, feel themselves unworthy to give counsel, and yet are most anxious to impart to fellow-sufferers each well-tried help and stay.

To further so loving a purpose should itself be a labour of love; and it is earnestly hoped that whatever shall now be said may, on the one hand, help our unknown helper by gaining for her, first the attention, and then the prayers of some who are in the deep waters, and, on the other hand, may draw some anxious, troubled souls, nearer to the uplifting Cross of **CHRIST**, and the sanctifying peace of the **HOLY GHOST**.

Widowhood, like marriage, is a holy estate, consecrated, partly by the will of God, partly by the consenting will of man, to the bitter perfecting of the Christian character, and to the sorrowful acquisition of Christian hope and joy. We must judge of it, not according to the world's false estimate, but according to the true sayings of God, and the trustworthy confessions of the gradually disciplined heart, and the evident accomplishment of a Divine aim in the secret trials and noticeable growth of the religious life—the life which has its treasure in heaven, but its work on earth.

For that there is this holiness in widowhood, may be gathered from God's Providence, from God's Word, from *God's witness* in His saints. We may so far go along with *Tertullian*, (though differing entirely from his *Montanists*,