

**THOUGHTS OF
SUNSHINE IN SORROW.
WITH A MEMOIR**

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Thoughts of Sunshine in Sorrow. With a Memoir by Ellen St. John Hunt

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ELLEN ST. JOHN HUNT

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THOUGHTS

SUNSHINE IN SORROW.

SECOND SERIES.

BY

ELLEN & JOHN HUNT.

WITH A BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE AUTHORESSES.

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PREFACE.

THE very kind reception of the first series of "THOUGHTS OF SUNSHINE IN SORROW," and the proofs afforded that "the Master," to whose disciples the work was offered as "a cup of cold water," had accepted the offering, induced the authoress to prepare for publication a second series of papers on similar subjects.

This "labour of love" was performed during the last few months of her life, in the midst of constantly-increasing weakness. And ere the final revision could be made, her right hand had forgotten its cunning and her heart had ceased to beat. Her sincere desire to render further service to her Lord on earth may, however, yet be accomplished, now that

she herself serves Him "day and night in His temple." A knowledge of these circumstances will, we do not doubt, avert minute criticism, and ensure a kind welcome from all who are in sympathy with the authoress, and especially from those "who are in any trouble."

MEMOIR.

We are well aware that however kindly a stranger may regard the following brief memorials of one of God's "hidden ones," he cannot enter into the feelings of admiration and affection which are awakened by personal friendship. A remark on the ways of God or the preciousness of Christ, uttered by an unknown Christian, may strike us as true and rather beautiful, but may not produce any special impression on our minds. But if the very same remark has been made by one of our own friends, to whom we have been drawn by the "bonds of love," it comes home to us with more of the power its truth possesses. "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel." Many expressions of devout thought which seem commonplace are not really so; but casual listeners or readers, not seeing or feeling half the truth that is in them, wonder why they should be thought worthy of preservation. Yet the narrative of the simplest Christian life may be very helpful to some who, in spiritual

seclusion, are glad to learn how a "companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" has "walked with God," and has enjoyed "days of heaven upon the earth." Hence we should not feel an apology needed if at greater length we narrated the history of the inner life of the authoress of "Thoughts of Sunshine in Sorrow." We venture to think that no experienced Christian would deem the record of her opinions and feelings commonplace. Her intimate friends look back upon her friendship as a priceless privilege; they unfeignedly confess it to be one of the good and perfect gifts which come down from above from "the Father of lights."

"Her memory long will live alone
In all our hearts, as mournful light
That broods above the fallen sun,
And dwells in heaven half the night."

But the chief object of this brief memoir is to illustrate her profound admiration and intense love for "the word of God," and the influence it exerted on the growth of her Christian character. In these days "of trouble and of rebuke and of blasphemy," it is refreshing to meet with any new illustration of the truth that the word of God is an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever. By the grace of God she was what she was, but the means

by which she attained her remarkable saintliness of character, (we use the term advisedly,) was chiefly the patient and prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, which were especially endeared to her by the lengthened discipline her Heavenly Father was pleased to assign. The three qualifications for a successful preacher, mentioned by Luther—prayer, study, and trials—met, in a remarkable degree, in her experience.

Ellen St. John Hunt was born at Norwich, November 27th, 1837. Nurtured in a pious home, the youngest of a most affectionate family, she had "a goodly heritage." From her earliest days she showed signs of such native talent as would have marked her as no ordinary person, even if the Divine Spirit had not diffused His consecrating influence over her gifted mind. At four years of age she could read well, and her greatest delight was in the Bible. In a paper contributed to the *Bible Class Magazine*, entitled "My three Bibles," she gives the following account of the power exerted on her young mind by the first Bible she possessed:—

"I was a very little girl when the ancient-looking volume found its way into my hands and heart—not much over four years old. Perhaps that is the reason why the Bible has always been so dear, never rivalled by any of the new books

which have since taken their own place in my attention and affection. Let the Bible be the first love of a little child's opening intelligence, and it will probably take such deep hold there, that nothing can displace it. * * * Of course it was for the sake of its word-pictures and life-like descriptions that I thus began to love the holy book; but I cannot think that amusement was the only or the chief fruit of this early introduction to its green pastures. My firm belief is that the gentle teaching Spirit is ever ready to accompany the word, and has His own method of applying its grand and sanctifying truths to all who read it, provided only they bring to the study a child's openness of heart. And when the reader is in very deed a little child, that good Spirit will not fail to make the perusal subservo His gracious purpose of revealing 'the wisdom of God' unto babes. I know, for my own part, that the interested study of these Bible stories must be noted as the source of a real and most influential belief in God as watching, punishing, rewarding, helping, guiding, delivering, *loving* all His creatures; and not only so, but as fixing His attention on particular individuals, knowing their names, regarding their actions, hearing their prayers, and bringing even their thoughts to light. Too young to ask 'How can this be?' my infant mind believed the